

## EPILOGUE

### A CONSERVATIVE MANIFESTO

SO DISTANT IS AMERICA today from its founding principles that it is difficult to precisely describe the nature of American government. It is not strictly a constitutional republic, because the Constitution has been and continues to be easily altered by a judicial oligarchy that mostly enforces, if not expands, the Statist's agenda. It is not strictly a representative republic, because so many edicts are produced by a maze of administrative departments that are unknown to the public and detached from its sentiment. It is not strictly a federal republic, because the states that gave the central government life now live at its behest. What, then, is it? It is a society steadily transitioning toward statism. If the Conservative does not come to grips with the significance of this transformation, he will be devoured by it.

The Republican Party acts as if it is without recourse. Republican administrations—with the exception of a brief eight-year respite under Ronald Reagan—more or less remain on the glide

path set by Franklin Roosevelt and the New Deal. The latest and most stunning example is the trillions of dollars in various bailout schemes that President George W. Bush oversaw in the last months of his administration. When asked about it, he made this remarkable statement: "I've abandoned free-market principles to save the free-market system."<sup>1</sup>

And he did more than that. In approving the expenditure of \$17.4 billion in loans to General Motors and Chrysler, President Bush overrode Congress, which had rejected the plan, and in doing so violated the Constitution's separation of powers doctrine. Just as another Republican president, Herbert Hoover, laid the foundation for Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal, Bush has, in words and actions, done the same for President Barack Obama—the most ideologically pure Statist and committed counterrevolutionary to occupy the Oval Office.

Republicans seem clueless on how to slow, contain, and reverse the Statist's agenda. They seem to fear returning to first principles, lest they be rejected by the electorate, and so prefer to tinker ineffectively and timidly on the edges. As such, are they not abandoning what they claim to support? If the bulk of the people reject the civil society for the Statist's Utopia, preferring subjugation to citizenship, then the end is near anyway. But even in winning an election, governing without advancing first principles is a hollow victory indeed. Its imprudence is self-evident. This is not the way of the Conservative; it is the way of the neo-Statist—subservient to a "reality" created by the Statist rather than the reality of unalienable rights granted by the Creator.

So, what can be done? I do not pretend to have all the answers. Moreover, the act of writing a book places practical limits

on what can be said at a given time. However, I do have some thoughts.

The Conservative must become more engaged in public matters. It is in his nature to live and let live, to attend to his family, to volunteer time with his church and synagogue, and to quietly assist a friend, a neighbor, or even a stranger. These are certainly admirable qualities that contribute to the overall health of the community. But it is no longer enough. The Statist's counterrevolution has turned the instrumentalities of public affairs and public governance against the civil society. They can no longer be left to the devices of the Statist, which is largely the case today.

This will require a new generation of conservative activists, larger in number, shrewder, and more articulate than before, who seek to blunt the Statist's counterrevolution—not imitate it—and gradually and steadily reverse course. More conservatives than before will need to seek elective and appointed office, fill the ranks of the administrative state, hold teaching positions in public schools and universities, and find positions in Hollywood and the media where they can make a difference in infinite ways. The Statist does not have a birthright ownership to these institutions. The Conservative must fight for them, mold them, and where appropriate, eliminate them where they are destructive to the preservation and improvement of the civil society.

Parents and grandparents must take it upon themselves to teach their children and grandchildren to believe in and appreciate the principles of the American civil society and stress the import of preserving and improving the society. They will need to teach their offspring that the Statist threatens their generation's liberty and prosperity, and to resist ideologically alluring trends

and fads. Parents and grandparents by the millions can counteract the Statist's indoctrination of their children and grandchildren in government schools and by other Statist institutions simply by conferring their knowledge, beliefs, and ideals on them over the dinner table, in the car, or at bedtime. If undertaken on an intimate, purposeful, and consistent basis, it will shape a generation of new conservatives.

And education should not stop at the front door. We, the people, are a vast army of educators and communicators. When the occasion arises in conversations with neighbors, friends, coworkers and others, take the time to explain conservative principles and their value to the individual, family, and society generally.

The Conservative should acquire knowledge outside the Statist's universe. He should not ignore the media, Hollywood, government schools, and universities, but they should not be the primary sources of information that shape the Conservative's worldview. Technology has made access easy to an unprecedented wealth of resources that contribute to the Conservative's understanding, including the Avalon Project,<sup>2</sup> which makes available online, among other things, a large collection of the nation's founding documents; the Atlas Economic Research Foundation,<sup>3</sup> which offers sources of free-market thinking; the CATO Institute, which produces scholarly materials oriented around Adam Smith's philosophy; and the Heritage Foundation, which produces scholarly materials oriented around Edmund Burke. Moreover, established publications, such as *Human Events* and *National Review*, engage in conservative thought relating to current news events. Talk radio provides a dynamic forum for conservative thought and debate. There are academic institutions, particularly

Hillsdale College and Chapman University, that provide formal educational opportunities. Groups such as Young America's Foundation, the Intercollegiate Studies Institute, and the Leadership Institute promote conservatism on college campuses throughout the nation. There are, in fact, many outstanding conservative organizations and institutions, too numerous to list, that are accessible to the public.

The Statist has also become masterful at controlling the public vocabulary. For example, when challenged on global warming, he accuses the skeptic of being a "denier," "favoring corporate polluters," or being "against saving the planet." Draconian measures that threaten liberty and prosperity, such as cap-and-trade, are marketed in appealing and benign slogans, such as "going green." The Statist never destroys, he "reforms." He never disenfranchises, he "empowers."

President Ronald Reagan understood the power of words. He framed the debate on his terms.

*How can limited government and fiscal restraint be equated with lack of compassion for the poor? How can a tax break that puts a little more money in the weekly paychecks of working people be seen as an attack on the needy? Since when do we in America believe that our society is made up of two diametrically opposed classes—one rich, one poor—both in a permanent state of conflict and neither able to get ahead except at the expense of the other? Since when do we in America accept this alien and discredited theory of social and class warfare? Since when do we in America endorse the politics of envy and division?<sup>4</sup>*

Reagan dissected the Statist's language and recast the morality of the message. Americans are not at war with each other over money and class. And when Americans keep the fruits of their labor, it is a good thing. This is both seminal and fundamental. The Statist's vocabulary provides the Conservative with opportunities to highlight the Statist's duplicity and the bankruptcy of his ideas by stripping the rhetorical veneer from his message and contrasting it with the wisdom of the Conservative's principles. The battle over language, like the battle over ideas, is one that conservatives should relish.

The Statist has constructed a Rube Goldberg array of laws and policies that have institutionalized his objectives. His success breeds confidence in the limitlessness of his endeavors. For the Conservative, the challenge is daunting and the road will be long and hard. But it took the Statist nearly eighty years to get here, and it will take the Conservative at least as long to change the nation's direction. Still, there is no time to waste. The Conservative must act now. And in doing so he must reject the ideological boundaries the Statist and neo-Statist seek to impose on him, since they are self-defeating. He must be resolute in purpose yet flexible in approach. He must search out opportunities and exploit them. He must be both overt and covert. He must not reject compromise if the compromise is likely to advance the founding principles. He must reject compromise if the compromise is of little consequence and a diversionary end in itself.

The Conservative must take heart from, and learn the lessons of, his nation's history. America's founding, the Civil War, and World War II were epic and, at times, seemingly insurmountable wars of liberty against tyranny, which would have destroyed the civil society had they been lost. The challenge today is in many

ways more complicated, because the "soft tyranny" comes from within and utilizes the nation's instrumentalities against itself. However, it is also a bloodless struggle and, therefore, should enlist all conservatives with the courage of their convictions.

There is a dynamic to prudential change that makes impossible the production of a step-by-step guide to tactical actions fixed for all circumstances and times. But tactical actions must be taken today, under known conditions, if the civil society is to survive tomorrow. Therefore, based on my own knowledge, observations, and experiences, herewith are some of the hard things the Conservative will have to do if the nation is to improve:

## A CONSERVATIVE MANIFESTO

### I. TAXATION

Eliminate<sup>s</sup> the progressive income tax—replace it with a flat income tax or national sales tax—for its purpose is to redistribute wealth, not fund the constitutionally legitimate functions of the federal government.

All residents of the country must be required to pay the tax so they have a stake in limiting its abuse.

Eliminate the automatic withholding of taxes, for it conceals the extent to which the federal government is confiscating income from its citizens.

Eliminate the corporate income tax, for it is nothing more than double taxation on shareholders and consumers, and penalizes wealth and job creation.

Eliminate the death tax, for it denies citizens the right to con-

fer the material value they have created during their lives to whomever they wish, including their family.

All federal income tax increases will require a supermajority vote of three-fifths of Congress.

Limit federal spending each year to less than 20 percent of the gross domestic product.<sup>5</sup>

## 2. ENVIRONMENT

Eliminate the special tax-exempt status granted to environmental groups, since they are not nonpartisan charitable foundations.

Eliminate special statutory authority granting environmental groups standing to bring lawsuits on behalf of the public, since their main purpose is to pursue the Statist's agenda through litigation.

Fight all efforts to use environmental regulations to set governmental industrial policies and diminish the nation's standard of living, such as "cap-and-trade" to regulate "man-made climate change."

## 3. JUDGES

Limit the Supreme Court's judicial-review power, which far exceeds the Framers' intent, by establishing a legislative veto over Court decisions—perhaps a two-thirds supermajority vote of both houses of Congress, not dissimilar from the congressional override authority of a presidential veto.

Eliminate lifetime tenure for federal judges, given the extra-



constitutional power they have amassed and their routine intervention in political and policy decisions—which the Constitution leaves to the representative branches.

No judicial nominee should be confirmed who rejects the jurisprudence of originalism.

#### 4. THE ADMINISTRATIVE STATE

Sunset all “independent” federal agencies each year, subject to Congress affirmatively reestablishing them.

Require federal departments and agencies to reimburse individuals and enterprises for the costs associated with the devaluation of their private property from the issuance of regulations that compromise the use of their property.

Eliminate unions for federal government employees, since the purpose of a civil service system is to promote merit and professionalism over patronage, and the purpose of federal unions is to empower themselves and promote statism.

Reduce the civilian federal workforce by 20 percent or more.

#### 5. GOVERNMENT EDUCATION

Eliminate monopoly control of government education by applying the antitrust laws to the National Education Association and American Federation of Teachers; the monopoly is destructive of quality education and competition and is unresponsive to the taxpayers who fund it.

Eliminate tenure for government schoolteachers and college/

university professors, making them accountable for the quality of instruction they provide students.

Strip the statist agenda from curricula (such as multiculturalism and global warming) and replace it with curricula that reinforce actual education and the preservation of the civil society through its core principles.

Eliminate the federal Department of Education, since education is primarily a state and local function.

## 6. IMMIGRATION

Eliminate chain migration, which grants control over immigration policy to aliens and foreign governments, and which the Statist defends to expand his electoral and administrative state constituency.

Secure the nation's borders and discourage those who violate them—illegal alien and citizen lawbreaker alike—by enforcing the immigration laws.

End multiculturalism, diversity, and bilingualism in public institutions, which beget poverty, animosity, and ethnic balkanization; promote assimilation and unity of citizenship, allegiance to American culture, and English as the official national language.

## 7. ENTITLEMENTS

Social Security is going bankrupt. Medicare is going bankrupt. Medicaid is going bankrupt. These programs and others have ac-

cumulated more than \$50 trillion in IOUs due and payable by subsequent generations. Educate the young people about the intergenerational trap the Statist has laid for them—which will steal their liberty, labor, opportunities, and wealth—and build a future electoral force for whom the elixir of entitlements is understood as poisonous snake oil. These programs were created in politics and will have to be addressed in politics. Only in this way can they be contained, limited, and reformed.

Fight all efforts to nationalize the health-care system. National health care is the mother of all entitlement programs, for through it the Statist controls not only the material wealth of the individual but his physical well-being. Remind the people that politicians and bureaucrats, about whom they are already cynical, will ultimately have the final say over their choice of doctors, hospitals, and treatments—meaning the system will be politicized and bureaucratized. Remind them that this human experiment has been tried and has failed in places like Britain and Canada, where patients have been subjected to arbitrary treatment decisions, long waiting periods for lifesaving surgeries, antiquated medical technologies, the denial of high-cost pharmaceuticals available elsewhere, and the inefficient rationing of health care generally. And remind them that despite past utopian promises, the Statist rarely delivers.

## 8. FOREIGN POLICY AND SECURITY

Ensure that all foreign policy decisions are made for the purpose of preserving and improving American society.

Reject all treaties, entanglements, institutions, and enterprises that have as their purpose the supplantation of America's best interests, including its physical, cultural, economic, and military sovereignty, to an amorphous "global" interest.

Ensure that America remains the world's superpower. Ensure that at all times America's military forces are prepared for war to dissuade attacks, encourage peace, and, if necessary, win any war.

### 9. FAITH

Oppose all efforts to denude the nation of its founding justification—that is, God-given unalienable, natural rights that the government can neither confer on the individual nor deny to him. The Statist seeks the authority to do both, which explains his contempt for, or misuse of, faith. Moreover, faith provides the moral order that ties one generation to the next, and without which the civil society cannot survive.

### 10. THE CONSTITUTION

Demand that all public servants, elected or appointed, at all times uphold the Constitution and justify their public acts under the Constitution.

Oppose all efforts to "constitutionalize" the statist agenda.

Eliminate limits on and rationing of political free speech through unconstitutional "campaign finance" laws, which benefit incumbent politicians, the media, unions, and other Statist-

related groups. Any American citizen or group of American citizens should be free to contribute to candidates as they wish, as long as the source, amount, and recipient of the contributions are made known.

Defeat all efforts to unconstitutionally regulate the content of political speech on broadcast outlets, such as radio. The Statist now seeks to consolidate the power he has accumulated by silencing noncompliant voices through a variety of schemes that would regulate broadcast content.

President Reagan said, "Freedom is never more than one generation away from extinction. We didn't pass it to our children in the bloodstream. It must be fought for, protected, and handed on for them to do the same, or one day we will spend our sunset years telling our children and our children's children what it was once like in the United States where men were free."<sup>6</sup>

We Conservatives need to get busy.