

## Closing Thoughts on An American Agenda

### National Problem Solving is Difficult – Not Mission Impossible

#### The Problem with Solving Big Problems

This is the basic analogy I like to use to describe what is involved in solving complex business problems:

It is like being challenged to untangle a plate of spaghetti and tomato sauce! Your mission, should you choose to accept it, is to untangle a full plate of warm spaghetti without snapping a single strand of pasta and always keeping the remaining pile on the plate.

At first you might think, no problem, a nice plate of warm spaghetti with plenty of sauce, they will all slide right out. And maybe the first few strands you select do come out easily. However, as you keep pulling one strand will inevitably become entangled, knotted up with some others and won't come along quietly.

You could just decide to keep pulling without first taking the time to carefully separate more of the strands, thus risking your mission with the breakage of a single strand of spaghetti.

You have two basic options. The *first* is to ignore the complications presented by the other strands and run the real risk of not satisfactorily completing your mission.

The *second* is to take the time required to carefully dig into the tangle and separate more of the strands to loosen the knots so they are freed without snapping; and then patiently repeating the same tedious process as many times as it takes in order to successfully deal with all of the knots.

Of course, if you *really* intend to ultimately be successful in your mission — you will select the latter option.

o o o o

I tell you, my fellow Americans that any complex problem in the public or business sectors can be solved. It must be acknowledged from the start that while 90% of any problem-solving process will be relatively straight-forward, it is that last 10% or less that will provide challenges to achieving success. In effectively “dealing with” that final fraction you must be tenacious, strong-minded, and sometimes fearless.

I read somewhere that, “Courage is the mastery of fear – not the absence of fear”. In determining to once and for all address and resolve our Common National Problems, We will be joining together — to face and conquer the all so common human fear of Change itself. Therefore, be assured and also comforted that whatever We the People agree to and decide must be done — can and will be done.

o o o o

### **1776 versus 2008**

In *Common Sense*, Thomas Paine “only” had one problem and solution to present to the America colonists concerning how they could cure their collective ills — just by declaring war on their own country and the British Empire!

Some 230 years later, We find ourselves in a far more complex national situation, to say nothing of the added complications of the overall state of the world. Therefore, We have far more to consider and effectively confront in order to resolve our long-standing national problems. And while several of our hard issues found their way into An American Agenda and other parts of this book, we do have many more things yet to work out.

I have long believed that our people could come find to ways to terms with any and all of the long-standing national problems that plaque our National System, if only a Common National Vision worthy of our American Democracy could be presented for the People’s review, open deliberation, and Common Agreement.

You have just read about how some of those hard, public issues could be effectively addressed by the implementation of the proposals in An American Agenda. My hope is that you have been provided with a better understanding on those issues and most importantly a greater sense of personal comfort that they indeed can be addressed for the Common Good of our people and our nation.

Further, I hope that what you have read thus far in CS2 is beginning to form an acceptable Vision of what America stands for and where We should be heading in the near and distant future.

### **Our Common Problem – A Lack of National Leadership**

A publicly acceptable National Vision requires the presence of viable National Leadership to step forward that will lead us through the struggles required to bring those desirable Changes to reality in our and in the nation’s daily life.

At the highest level America’s problem-solving “problem” rests upon our elected

and too party-minded, national leadership — that they are incapable of presenting us with a viable National Vision.

Today, We as a nation and as a now struggling world leader currently *do not know where we are going!* Please give that point some thought for a few moments! The nation is now some 230 years from the Declaration of Independence on our national voyage, with no particular destination in mind. We are presently on a national voyage to nowhere. And that is a dangerous state of national affairs.

As dreadfully obvious as it may sound, in order for us to ever develop a viable National Vision that will provide us a framework against which to solve our common problems, We must first acknowledge that there is no such Vision or Common Agreement. From that moment of national awareness – that shared national Epiphany — We will begin to build such a National Vision.

From that moment We will also begin to publicly and loudly declare that the problems that have plagued us for so long will not be allowed to continue unresolved. What a concept!

As mentioned early in CS2, fortunately or unfortunately most of those problems are easy enough to identify. You recall the Grievance List of public concerns:

- Automobile/Truck Theft
- Commodity Market Abuses
- Contaminated Food Supply
- Crimes of Physical Assault
- Crimes of Financial Assault
- Drug War in our Streets
- Employment/Income (viable and legal)
- Ending the Iraq War
- Gangs in Our Communities
- Global Warming
- Homelessness
- Housing Costs
- Hunger
- Illegal Immigration – ending it
- Interest Rates on Primary Family Residence
- Katrina Clean-up
- Judicial Legal Complex (JLC)
- Medical Insurance for all American citizens – cradle to grave
- Military Industrial Complex (MIC)
- Oil Industry Windfall Profits and Other Abuses
- Over-weight children, teenagers, and adults
- Poverty Among Our Citizens

- Public Education
- Pre-meditated Murder
- Pre-meditated Pedophile Crimes Against our Youth
- Pre-meditated Rape
- Prescription Medicine Costs
- Stem Cell Research
- Social Security Solvency
- War on Terror

It is fair to say that some of those problems were addressed in some practical manner in the American Agenda proposals. In order to solve our Common Problems, We must:

- Agree what our problems are
- Develop realistic approaches and solutions designed for the Common Good
- Agree on the proper solution to be implemented
- Enact the legislation required to implement the agreed Changes
- And finally to strictly and fairly enforce the Changes

As you can appreciate especially after reviewing the American Agenda proposals, actually confronting and practically resolving various problems in our National System requires determination, but it is possible.

In solving big problems there are always “other strands” that get involved and make the problem solving process more complicated. And the complications presented by those other strands must be addressed at some practical level, in order to arrive at a comprehensive and successful conclusion or result. Otherwise, those problems could very well continue, and cause your incomplete solution to be rejected or fail upon implementation.

That scenario accurately describes the primary difficulty in solving more complex public problems, which is dealing with those often nasty little **complications** — some that were totally unanticipated at first look. All too often these “knots” involve more tedious issues than the original problem itself! And in public problem solving those complications can be very disappointing.

Of course, if the solution development process were easy, We would have far fewer problems! The inter-connected problems I encountered while developing the NDR proposal taught me why more of our public problems are not yet solved. It is simply – difficult! However, I said they are **difficult** to solve, **not impossible** to solve! *As you well know*, our elected leaders are not working independently, creatively or aggressively enough to resolve any of our civil and economic problems.

Over my career I had the opportunity to work on and struggle through many

complex business problems and situations, and was challenged by the absolute tedious nature of the process. The all so real complexity factor, especially in national problem-solving, offers small comfort and rationale for the lack of success on the part of our elected leadership in such areas as implementing National Health Care Insurance or ending the War on Drugs. I said **small** comfort, but no valid excuse or justification for their lack of success on the People's behalf — especially when such problems are causing death and misery among our people, every day.

o o o o

## **On National Change**

### ***Our Struggle – the Common Good vs. Today’s Status Quo***

After all the tough things we living today and our national ancestors have already faced as a nation and conquered together over the last 230 years, we can do anything that we as a united people determine that should be done.

The Changes presented in CS2 represent what I consider to be a practical “ends just the means” mentality, and a prudent attack on bad, if not destructive public policy. That is precisely what the 1<sup>st</sup> American Revolution was all about — an attack against the powerful Few taking care of their priorities and their inner circle of players and hangers-on, with no practical regard for the Masses.

I will repeat the obvious — that the senseless preservation of today’s status quo and where it is irresponsibly leading our nation – is not serving Common Good of the American people on many levels. Continuance is not worth the current hard costs and it will only grow worse with each passing day, month, year, and decade. We can no longer afford to support or allow this Special Interest status quo!

I could be talking any number of public issues, right? Iraq, the Middle East in general, illegal immigration, viable employment, health care insurance for all Americans Homeland Security, the Drug War, gangs, prescription drug prices, the environment, etc., to name just a few issues that makeup the Status Quo of 2008 in America. This ain’t a pretty Big Picture is it? And *We* are allowing it to be painted!

Let’s all look around people! Our younger generations in their thirties, twenties, and a growing percentage of older teens understand that the country is not doing well as they expected and the prospects do not look as good for their future as they could be and should be. And their worries about the future are wrapped around their real concerns about “viable” long-term employment and being able to afford a decent life for themselves and their family.

### **The Obstacles that Challenge Real Public Change at Any Level**

What I learned over my analytical career about solving even complex problems is that with proper research and open dialogue, operationally practical solution options could be determined to resolve any problem. Management could then decide upon which option to implement that would best serve their operational requirements.

However, I also observed that obtaining the management commitment to first implement and then to enforce said improvements was often difficult to obtain

(this is sounding too familiar). The corporate and governmental will (guts) to make real Change was often not provided. Therefore, the implementation of the approved changes could be slowed if not entirely stopped by those invested in maintaining the *status quo*. And so, the beneficial operational improvements were not fully implemented or were dropped all together. Such failures are far more common than any of us would care to imagine and most of us have observed this scenario on a smaller scale where we work.

A glaring daily example of such failure at the Congressional level is their lack of enforcement of existing immigration laws, resulting in the “preventable” problems the Congress has allowed to continue to fall upon our people and American society.

Again, this “resistance to positive change” is true in corporations, as well as in local, state, and federal agencies, Congress, and the White House. Philosophically, government, business, and *even We the People* do want the progress that by definition demands Change in some form. However, all are not so receptive if Change could threaten their piece of the pie. This simple fact about human nature is as old as civilization, and it still applies to peasants, dictators, religious leaders, monarchs, kings, tens of millions of commuters, presidents, and the U.S. Congress, as well. Most if not all of us have felt that odd emotion at sometime in our lives.

### **With No Pain, There is No Gain**

Again, real Change involves and demands individual sacrifice. It cannot help but create both winners and losers — it is a natural, unavoidable by-product of altering the status quo within any country’s National System. Especially when We are talking about social and economic Change in a country of 300 million men, women, and children.

At many points in the coming struggle we will need to deal (reasonably) with those opposing a Change that will have some direct, negative impact on them personally.

We will no longer allow them to defeat Change for their narrow self-interest. In the end the Changes that will be made to the National System will be of practical benefit for the Common Good of the vast majority of our people and therefore, must be accomplished.

**Our Responsibility — Dictate the 2008 Campaign Platform**

As mentioned before and as will be discussed in greater detail in Part 5, We all need to embrace the fact that it is fully within our electoral Rights every two (2) years vote out of office all 435 members of the US House of Representatives, as well as 33/34 of 100 members of the US Senate.

Although, We did not fully execute our Democratic “option” on 11-7-06 — when part of the concerned and displeased electorate made a dramatic “trial run” — We certainly did get the attention of the members of Congress, both Parties, and their lobbyists! Therefore, Congress already knows that the next time more of them are very likely to be involuntarily retired. And in spite of that common knowledge, they are actually accomplishing even less in these *two more years* and We have had enough!

*“The problem with doing nothing, is not knowing,  
when you’re finished.”*

Benjamin Franklin

In the critical months that remain, We do require and must demand an open, national, debate — and it must be very loud at times! It is to be a debate in which only American citizens will be included. All others (foreign and the domestic) must stand back, watch if they like, but just stay the hell out of the way! This will be a family feud and will be accomplished with hard, binding reconciliation.

And the approximately 52 million youngest Americans, that will be ages 18 to 30 in 2008 *must be concerned and involved* for they have the most at stake – the most to lose if We do not act!

With the presentation of An American Agenda – We the People have a primary set of viable approaches to begin resolving several critical problems within our National System, as well as a true People’s Platform that will be our checklist against which We will grade anyone running for the U.S. Congress and any person that considers themselves to be a qualified candidate for President of the United States for 2008.

o o o o

**Be Comforted**

I would encouragingly state that We can be thankful that the answers and/or solutions to any of our problems can be developed. But (there is always a but!), **only** after the Common Agreement by the People on a mandatory set of ground

rules for a civilly responsible society and a Common National Vision.

And the baseline for those commonly accepted civil rules and a shared vision are what CS2 presents for your review and consideration.

We have in the course of this presentation reviewed the basic concepts of a common National Vision and what it will take to bring it to our daily reality. Ours will be a Vision that is independent of party politics and one that does not need to be altered every two, four or eight years to fit whatever party is attempting to maintain or obtain control the Congress, the White House, and our lives. Remember,

**Where there are no rules, there is chaos...**

I am herein addressing the 200 million-plus Americans of voting age regarding how We are to save our country from the future that We are not only headed for, but that We are currently living in. And We all know it! These conditions will only worsen unless We, as a united people, take deliberate, aggressive, and what some will certainly call radical actions to prudently adjust the social and economic structure of day-to-day life in America – the National System.

I have no doubt that We the People can and will do what is needed if the Vision presented in CS2 is found acceptable to you – and the rest of our fellow Americans. I believe that it will be, and I pray that it is.

o o o o

In the remainder of the *Second Coming of Common Sense* we will review the critical actions of our predecessors, the recent political events that have brought us to this our moment in time, and what we can do and shall do to keep our Appointment with Destiny.

*We the People,*

- will Address the long ignored, difficult problems that once seemed unsolvable,
- will Confront the forces that have so jeopardized the Common Good of our fellow Americans,
- will Demand that the U.S. Congress serve the Common Good of our citizens above all others,
- will Prevail over adversaries of the Common Good to set ourselves on the proper national course,
- will Preserve, Protect, and Defend the Constitution of the United States of America,

and in so doing We will insure Life, Liberty, the Pursuit of Happiness for Ourselves and Our Posterity.

It is said the God saved America so that it could do great things for the struggling world. Our Predecessors over the years did what they had to do to preserve the nation – not what they wanted to do.

We must now stand together and do the things that must be done,

***“not because they are Easy, but because they are Hard”***

o o o o