

## A View from the Ninth Floor

D.H. Garrett

*"A nation can be one or the other, a democracy or an imperialist, but it can't be both. If it sticks to imperialism, it will, like the old Roman Republic, on which so much of our system was modeled, lose its democracy to a domestic dictatorship."*

*Chalmers Johnson*

*"I wept not, so to stone within I grew."*

*Dante Alighieri*



Gustave Doré illustration of Geryon <sup>1</sup> for *The Divine Comedy*.

Once upon a time I was a minor diplomat. My office was in the political section of the U.S. Embassy in Tokyo. To get to my office, depending on who was protesting us, sometimes having to scurry around an unsmiling phalanx or two of tall Japanese policemen with long wooden batons, I would show my badge to the Japanese guards at the outer gate, then cross the courtyard and go up the stone stairs and through the front outer glass doors of the stark wall of concrete and glass that is our embassy. Then I would show my badge and my face to the marine guard behind the bulletproof glass, at which point the door would buzz open and I would be able to go in through the glass inner doors into the Embassy's sanctum itself. Already as I write this I am fearful I am giving away secrets, but if you must know, after entering the elevators are to the left. Just before getting to the elevators are the official portraits of the President, the Vice President and the Secretary of State. When it was the pictures of Bush, Cheney and Rice with their crazed grins, I used to cringe internally and pray silently for protection from their vampirism. When the pictures changed to Obama, Biden, and Clinton, at first I felt a great moral relief, until that is it became clear that the previous policies were to

continue essentially unabated or in some regards, even worsen.

Once you pass the pictures of the “leaders of the free world” you can enter the bank of elevators and climb to the 9<sup>th</sup> floor. If each floor were a circle of hell from Dante’s *Inferno*, then you would start at the circle of Limbo, and rise past Lust, Gluttony, Greed, Anger, Heresy, Violence, and Fraud, and finally arrive at the 9<sup>th</sup> Circle of Hell: Treachery. On the other hand, if this were Dante’s *Purgatorio*, the 9<sup>th</sup> level would be the Earthly Paradise. I leave it to the reader to decide which is more appropriate. Exiting the elevator at the 9<sup>th</sup> floor if you go right, you pass a little alcove waiting area where the pictures of all the U.S. Ambassadors to Japan are displayed. They are all white men, many with beards, and most looking rather grim and forbidding. Towards the end, the more recent pictures are of Ambassadors who adopted the photographic style du jour of smiling ingratiation. Beyond the alcove is another set of secured glass doors and the offices of the Ambassador and his staff. The Ambassadors I served under — while no slight is intended to them personally — were not chosen because of their knowledge of Japan or foreign affairs; they were chosen because they had raised a lot of money for their respective presidents. That said, if instead of turning right out of the elevators you turn left, you come to a nondescript door where you have to key in your code, at which point you enter the Political Section. I could tell you my

code, but I’m sure by now it’s been changed. My office was the 2<sup>nd</sup> door to the left, the smallest office in the section. Half of it was actually taken over by one of the structural columns of the building. In sharing my small office with that very large pillar I liked to think that tasked as I was with the issues of Human Rights, Trafficking in Persons, and International Organizations that I, too, was an important pillar of the Embassy. Sometimes, I would put my arm around the pillar and look out the half of the window that it wasn’t covering and say, “Pillar, the U.S. is a mighty country, what can we do today that will be of help to someone who is suffering?”

The fact of the matter though, was that it was the preservation of the security alliance that trumped everything else. Half of the political section was devoted to supporting, consoling, explaining, expanding, and putting out the occasional fire caused by the security arrangement. One only has to think back to America’s first official visitor to the newly elected Hatoyama government, in what was probably the first truly democratic election in Japan in decades, to understand its priorities. You will remember of course that the first imperial U.S. visitor was Secretary of Defense Gates who came quite abruptly and rudely to tell the new PM in no uncertain terms that the Futenma agreement couldn’t be renegotiated. I remember asking another more senior political officer why the Japanese couldn’t renegotiate terms for the use of their own

country and he answered as if it was the most obvious thing in the world, "Because we are the United States of America." I'm afraid now especially, as I look back, that I was a pitiful fig leaf used to try and cover—or distract from—what America was really doing, and has been doing for a very long time: imperialistic dirty wars, that are illegal, immoral, and not just ineffective, but in fact counterproductive unless one thinks somehow that sowing death, destruction and hatred of America all over the globe, is a viable growth industry.

Why would I ever have thought that my little attempts at being the Embassy's "hero in the white hat" was anything else than a cover for the real perfidy that was at the core of American foreign policy? Ridiculous though it might seem, even the little I tried to do was subject to close inspection for its possible negative effects on the U.S.-Japan security arrangement. We did not want to upset the hosts of our bases with criticism, or even criticism of ourselves for that matter. When Obama was elected for example, I got calls of congratulations from my Japanese human rights colleagues. Thinking that a new page had been turned and that it was time for 'truth and reconciliation' about what we had been up to under Bush-Cheney I tried to arrange for a screening at the American Center of "Taxi to the Dark Side" an excellent documentary about the use of torture by American forces. The film won awards; I won cold shoulders at the

Embassy. Even my work on the human rights situation in Japan was spun, to the extent that some of my superiors could do it, so as not to upset the Japanese lest they think twice about letting us use their country as an "unsinkable aircraft carrier." A cable I wrote that was critical of the Trainee Visa program for example was rewritten to make it sound as if I was actually praising the program. A cable I wrote critical of the type of Japanese labor practices that lead to "karoshi" (death from overwork) was quashed. My mild insistence, as per report preparation instructions, on keeping references to the "Comfort Women" issue in the Human Rights report earned me a disingenuous rebuke in my performance review. There was special sensitivity to even the remotest mention of Okinawan issues. I think the bottom line, and the historical evidence is clear, is that, wherever the U.S. has a security interest it will support dictators, look the other way on human rights abuses, and pretty much prostitute its pretended ideals to satisfy the national security cabal's desire to keep the maximum possible guns for hire in remote locations. I do not need to tell the Japanese how much this little factoid has perverted the true course of Japanese democracy. It used to be that one only had to profess an anti-communist agenda and one could then murder one's own people to one's heart's content with of course the appropriate U.S. training and financial backing. These days, the mantra is "counter-terrorism." Say that phrase and you are onboard,

and the U.S. will absolve you of all sins.

The U.S. has of course used many methods to keep Japan in its fold: bribery, coercion, and yes, at times, genuine respect, cooperation, and friendship. These days “deterrence” is the magic phrase, and the secret ingredient is fear. But I will tell you: objectively, scientifically, logically, rationally, the greatest threat to Japan isn’t North Korea or China, it is climate change. And climate change is something the U.S.—despite being the champion historic greenhouse gas polluter—can’t seem to do anything about. Oh, you will hear nice words from the President—he gives a good speech—but the actions of the U.S. are worse than no action: we are exporting our coal willy-nilly, and the State Department is busy promulgating shale gas as a bridge to a clean energy future when in fact it is a dangerous bridge to climate change catastrophe. In terms then of the greatest threat to Japan’s security, it is allied with its own worst enemy. I tried in my inept way to warn about this back in 2009 with a Dissent Cable I sent called “From Great Collision to Great Transition.” Let me quote verbatim the concluding paragraph (I classified it as unclassified, so I don’t think they can shoot me):

*“Here in Tokyo there were days I wanted to laugh and days I wanted to cry as a large portion of our embassy’s and high-level State Department and DOD time and manpower went to discussions with the Japanese over every tactical detail of basing arrangements rather than the strategic climate*

*catastrophe that was looming. We should have been forging a powerful Green Alliance with Japan. We should have made our presence on the islands as green as possible: models of leading-edge sustainability. We should have been getting our military contractors engaged in bidding for contracts to generate clean energy for our military and government facilities.\*\* We should have been putting together our two countries’ most visionary scientists and entrepreneurs and tasked them with helping to save the planet. We probably should have converted at least one of our carrier groups to humanitarian, development, and climate change adaptation missions and based that carrier group in Japan. I don’t know why we didn’t do these things. It was a time when we needed desperately to do what was necessary, and not what was expedient. I don’t know how we ever thought that borrowing money from China to buy oil from Saudi Arabia, while at the same time bankrupting our own economy, and destroying the earth systems upon which we depend for our very survival, was ever a viable, or sustainable option.”*

Looking back, one can clearly see there are moments in history when nations take the wrong path. Sometimes they recover. Sometimes they don’t. We are at such a bifurcation now. America has clearly decided to choose the wrong way: the way of hyper-militarism, economic hollowing out, and climate change exacerbation; Japan I fear will be dragged along willingly or not. But perhaps not. Perhaps Japan will instead choose a path that leads to a viable future, and in doing so, assume a type of leadership that is also rooted in

the very best, and deepest core of its own traditions. But for it to do so, it will have to ignore the blandishments of America's well-meaning, professional snake-oil salesmen in the Department of State, the Department of Defense and—the no holds barred, rich men take all—Department of Commerce. Their concern is not really for the well being of Japan or even the well being of the great majority of Americans: they serve a government that has been captured from within by corporate elites. They serve an America where war criminals go free, where domestic and international laws are ignored when it suits the President to either use violence or invade what little privacy is left in our era of interconnected information technologies; they serve an America where it is a crime to be poor, and where the rich can steal unto themselves even more of the public good because they now control the politicians that write the laws and the judges that judge them and the police that beat what few awake protestors there are left into bleeding submission.

1) In Dante's *Inferno* Geryon is the Monster of Fraud. It is a winged beast with the face of an honest man, a lion's paws, a wyvern's body, and a tail with a poisonous sting. It dwells somewhere in the depths between the seventh and eighth circles of Hell. Any resemblance to anyone living or dead in or outside the Department of State is purely coincidental.

\* Although China has now surpassed the U.S. in

total annual GHG emissions, the U.S. is still number one on a per capita basis.

\*\*Although the DOD has a number of notable green technology development, it remains the single largest polluter on the planet amongst entities that are not nation-states.

**DISCLAIMER:** Daniel Garrett was a Foreign Service Officer at the U.S. Department of State. The views expressed herein are solely those of the author, and do not necessarily reflect those of the U.S. Department of State or the U.S. Government.

By way of introduction to the complete Dissent Cable (November, 2009) which follows, let me quote from Stephen Glain's excellent book, *State Vs Defense: The Battle to Define America's Empire* (<http://amzn.com/0307408426/?tag=theasipacjo0b-20>). "The State Department's dissent channel, a means through which Foreign Service officers may express constructive opposition to White House policy and air alternative views, languished under the Bush administration and show no signs of reviving itself; in February 2010, the president of the American Foreign Service Association linked the channel's enfeeblement with 'the continuing marginalization of the Foreign Service in the foreign policymaking process.'"

*Recommended citation: D.H. Garrett, "A View From The Ninth Floor," The Asia-Pacific Journal, Vol. 11, Issue 40, No. 3, October 7, 2013.*

**Related Article:**

D.H. Garrett and Yuki Tanaka: A Diplomat's Farewell: An Exchange on US-Japan Relations (<http://apjif.org/events/view/192>)

SENSITIVE (SBU)

CAPTIONS: DISSENT CHANNEL

DEPARTMENT FOR S/P: DIRECTOR ANNE-MARIE SLAUGHTER

E.O.12598:N/A

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**UNCLASSIFIED**

PROG:11/10/2009

AMB: JROOS

POL: DHGARRETT

DCM: JPZUMWALT

POL: MKNAPPER, POL: RLUKE

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

SECSTATE WASHDC,PRIORITY

INFO WHITE HOUSE, CIA, SECSTATE WASHDC, AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN, AMEMBASSY MADRID, AMEMBASSY BEIJING, AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI, AMEMBASSY BRASILIA, AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMCONSUL NAHA, AMCONSUL FUKUOKA, AMCONSUL OSAKA-KOBE, AMCONSUL NAGOYA, AMCONSUL SAPPORO

TAGS: AORC, ASEC, EAGR, EAID, ECON, EFIS, ENRG, MARR, PGOV, PHUM, PINS, PREF, PTER, SENV, SMIG, SOCI, TNGD, TPHY, TRGY, TSPL, US XX JA

SUBJECT: DISSENT CHANNEL: FROM "GREAT COLLISION"<sup>1)</sup> TO "GREAT TRANSITION"<sup>2)3)</sup>

REF: TOKYO 596, Executive Order 13514 (October 5, 2009)

1. (U) The following is a dissent channel message from Daniel Garrett, Embassy Tokyo, to the Director of Policy Planning (S/P).

2. (U) SUMMARY: Given limited time and resources, a realistic approach to multiple problems is to focus on the greatest threat. In terms of levels of destruction, economic damage, disruption of societies, and loss of life, climate change is our greatest threat by at least an order of magnitude. We must quickly shift the preponderance of our national and international efforts and resources in such a way as to recognize this as our central national security challenge. Although President Obama, Secretary of State Clinton, and Special Envoy for Climate

Change Todd Stern have all spoken publically about the urgency of the situation, and significant efforts are being made to solve this problem, if these efforts are insufficient in comparison to the scale of the problem, then the efforts are in fact inadequate. Our present efforts, and presently anticipated efforts, are in fact inadequate as measured by the best and most recent climate change studies.<sup>3)4)5)6)7)</sup> Only a quick mobilization of all our resources, ingenuity, and entrepreneurship at a scale not seen since World War II will prevent a highly probable set of inter-related catastrophes from occurring. END SUMMARY

LETTER TO A FUTURE HUMAN RIGHTS, TIP, REFUGEE OFFICER: PREAMBLE

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3. (U) "Dear Second Secretary. I am writing to you from 2009. The World Health Organization (WHO) is estimating that climate change, including extreme weather events, shifting patterns of disease, and effects on agricultural production is already causing over 150,000 deaths annually worldwide.<sup>11)</sup> Our experts estimate some 250 million people will be forced to move because of rising temperatures, increasing desertification, more powerful monsoons resulting in increased flooding, melting glaciers, risings seas, and the slow and deadly seep of saline water into wells and fields.<sup>12)</sup> The IPCC estimates that a minimum of

207 million people in Latin America, Asia and Africa will not have enough water within a decade. In Asia, an extra 130 million people will be at risk of hunger by the middle of the century. By 2100, crop revenues in Africa will drop 90 percent.<sup>13)14)15)26)</sup>

Now that you are dealing with the results of our inaction, or insufficient actions, as a Second Secretary with a portfolio that includes Human Rights, Trafficking in Persons, and Refugee issues, and no doubt completely overwhelmed by the scale of the problems we have bequeathed you, you must be asking why we didn't act when it would still have been possible. All I can say is that at Embassy Tokyo, we only had one officer whose full time job was Climate Change, and this pretty much reflected the balance throughout the State Department and our Government as a whole. I guess you can say we were too busy with other things, and missed the big picture. Sorry!"

FROM NEGLIGENT MANSLUGHTER TO CRIMINALLY NEGLIGENT HOMICIDE?

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4. (U) In 2007 Nobel Prize Winner R. K. Pachauri, Chairman of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) said "if there is no action before 2012, that's too late. What we do in the next two to three years will determine our future." Climate researchers now predict the planet will warm by 6.3 degrees Fahrenheit by

the end of the century even if our current climate pledges are realized.<sup>3)4)5)6)7)</sup> This is double the speed and scale of change that was forecast just two years ago. Not acting now will entail greatly increased costs if we try and act later.<sup>25)28)</sup> Moreover, many if not most, of the effects of climate change and the “Great Collision” that are emerging now, because they are non-linear will in effect be difficult or impossible to reverse.<sup>8)</sup> Finally, not acting now is immoral, and given that we have sufficient knowledge to understand the problem, the causes of the problem, and the effects of the problem, not acting now may well come to be considered illegal under international law. One might say this knowledge accounts for roughly the difference between negligent (involuntary) manslaughter, and criminally negligent homicide. By analogy, we might imagine that we are in a heavily laden vehicle heading for a great collision that will result in massive destruction and loss of life. Although, it will take a great effort to press the brakes, it is not impossible, and this effort, though costly, will be the far less expensive option, and the far more moral option, by any measure.<sup>25)28)</sup>

#### TWICE AS BAD, TWICE AS FAST

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5. (U) In its 2007 assessment, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) said the average warming by the end of the century would probably lie between 1.8C and

4C (3.2-7.2F). The most recent assessments from the world’s leading climate change institutes roughly double the median value of the “best guess” to 6.3 degrees Fahrenheit. One of the key messages of the International Scientific Congress on Climate Change held in Copenhagen in March 2009 in fact was “Recent observations confirm that, given high rates of observed emissions, the worst-case IPCC scenario trajectories (or even worse) are being realized.”<sup>31)</sup> Many climate scientists in fact consider even these most recent assessments to be themselves inherently low, if nothing else because they do not model even the most well-known and significant positive reinforcers (e.g. increased methane emissions from melting permafrost, reduced CO2 absorption by the oceans, etc.,). Recent data from trigger point indicators such as these also show irreversible changes occurring at a more rapid rate, and at a lower level of CO2 concentration than predicted in 2007. The National Academy of Sciences for example points to alarming rates of increase of ocean acidification and warns that global emissions must be cut by at least 50 percent by mid-century to avoid sharp reductions in marine food supplies and the collapse of coral reefs and polar ocean ecosystems.<sup>9)</sup> A recent paper demonstrates that in the last period on earth with CO2 levels sustained at levels close to where they are today, there was no icecap on Antarctica and sea levels were 25-40m higher.<sup>10)</sup>

SOME LOGIC THAT BEARS REPEATING:



SOME LOGIC THAT BEARS REPEATING

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6. (U) Axiom: A Response to a Problem Should be Commensurate to the Scale of the Problem.

Corollary: If a response is not adequate in scale to solve the problem, then the response is inadequate.

Axiom: If there are multiple problems and limited time, attention and resources must be focused on the problems that are the most time critical and have the most serious repercussions.

Corollary: if time and resources are focused on immediate problems which are less time-critical, and have less serious ramifications, and in this way the resources necessary to solve the most serious, most time crucial problem, are not there, then the response strategy is flawed.

FIGHTING THE WORLD WAR (WE DIDN'T PREPARE FOR)

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7. (U) Depending on the inclusivity (or lack thereof) of the calculation, some 40 to 50% of the U.S. Government's discretionary budget is Defense related. In 2010, government resources allocated to defense were some 50 times higher than resources allocated to climate change/green technology including the Defense Department sustainable energy programs.<sup>16)</sup> Although

budgetary parity is perhaps not necessary, (once the market can be allowed to realistically reflect the true costs of a carbon-based society<sup>30)</sup>), this current state of incredible disparity reflects a profound strategic illusion. Although both military and intelligence analysts now recognize that climate change is a major security challenge this has not translated into much in terms of either "boots on the ground" or "money in the bank" for fighting and preventing climate change.<sup>17)18)</sup>

8. (U) It is worth recalling that Darfur is just one example of a climate change induced conflict. The overlap between climate change and conflict, makes it one of the most predictive of all vectors of conflict.<sup>18)29)</sup> Even if we are successful in Iraq and Afghanistan, the anticipated effects of climate change on those countries is dire: meaning all that we hope to achieve even if achieved, will soon be undone. Not only must we shift military spending to reflect the realities of our greatest enemy (our carbon based economy) we must work to recreate a truly "Green" military, because 98 percent of our government's carbon footprint, is in the military. This will in turn create a "Green" military –industrial-political complex which will in turn provide the concomitant political will, and purse, to carry things through. It will at the same time of course reduce our support for "petro-dictators," increase our energy independence, improve our industrial competitiveness, and reduce the possibility of

resource-driven conflict.<sup>27)</sup> And finally, we must massively shift resources to USAID, so that it has the tools, and the scale of resources to conduct this long, slow climate war in the way it needs to be fought: with the best of green technologies provided to developing countries so they can skip the dirty, unsustainable, intermediate generation of technologies.

SCIENCE CONFIRMS LOCATION OF MAJOR PROBLEM: BETWEEN THE EARS

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9. (U) Our greatest obstacle is perhaps human neuropsychology. It has wired us to have trouble reacting to this sort of slowly emerging (by human time scales) crisis. Weber in the journal Climatic Change detailed some of the psychological reasons that global warming doesn't yet scare us. She concluded that the difficulties of getting humans to act are inherently self-correcting. "Increasing personal evidence of global warming and its potentially devastating consequences can be counted on to be an extremely effective teacher and motivator. Unfortunately, such lessons may arrive too late for corrective action."<sup>21)</sup> We must not be the frog that is able to jump out when put in boiling water, but boils, when the temperature of the water is gradually increased. As Hansen et al stated in "Target Atmospheric CO2: Where Should Humanity Aim?" "If humanity wishes to preserve a planet similar to that on which

civilization developed and to which life on Earth is adapted," it said, "paleoclimate evidence and ongoing climate change suggest that CO<sub>2</sub> will need to be reduced from its current 385 ppm to at most 350 ppm."<sup>22)</sup> If we don't act massively now, our Greening Diplomacy Initiative -as important and hopeful as it is- will rapidly have to be replaced by a Jurassic Diplomacy Initiative, as we enter forcibly a new geological era for which none of us currently on the planet, plants, animals, ecosystems, humans, are adapted to survive.<sup>29)</sup>

A DISTINCT POSSIBILITY: LEADERSHIP

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10. (U) "If we are to win the battle that is now going on around the world between freedom and tyranny, the dramatic results in climate research over the last few years should have made clear to us all, the impact of this adventure on the minds of men everywhere, who are attempting to make a determination of which road they should take. ...I believe we possess all the resources and talents necessary. But the facts of the matter are that we have never made the national decisions or marshaled the national resources required for such leadership. We have never specified long-range goals on an urgent time schedule, or managed our resources and our time so as to insure their fulfillment. ...First, I believe that this nation should commit itself to achieving the goal, before this decade is out, of becoming a zero-

carbon, sustainable society. No single project in this period will be more impressive to mankind, or more critical for the long-range survival of our species and our planet; and none will be so difficult or expensive to accomplish.” (Admittedly Anachronistic Paraphrase of “Special Message to the Congress on Urgent National Needs” by President John F. Kennedy, Delivered in person before a joint session of Congress on May 25, 1961.) The great irony -and delicious hope- of this prospect is that, not only is this goal known to be eminently technically and economically feasible<sup>32, 33</sup> (much more so than the idea of going to the moon was in 1961), but putting funds into clean energy, (and health care and education) is demonstrably a much more effective way of creating larger numbers of decent jobs throughout the U.S. economy than spending the same amount of funds on the military, and military-related activities.<sup>34</sup>

LETTER TO A FUTURE HUMAN RIGHTS, TIP, REFUGEE OFFICER: CONCLUSION

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11. (U) “Dear Second Secretary. I guess saying ‘sorry’ isn’t enough. It must be very clear to you what we should have done. Actually, it was very clear to us, too.<sup>35</sup> First, there should have been a full scale mobilization like in World War II when in the space of a few months U.S. industry was able to radically retool to meet the challenge. One month after Pearl Harbor, Franklin Delano

Roosevelt announced that the United States was going to build 45,000 tanks, 60,000 planes, 20,000 anti-aircraft guns, and several thousand ships. In fact between 1942 and 1944 the United States produced 229,600 aircraft, and some 5,000 ships. By one good estimate<sup>32)</sup> all we needed worldwide was to build: 490,000 tidal turbines (1% in place now); 5,350 geothermal plants(2% in place now); 900 hydroelectric plants (70% in place now); 3,800,000 wind turbines(1% in place now); 720,000 wave converters(1% in place now); 1,700,000,000 rooftop photovoltaic systems (1% in place now); 49,000 concentrated solar power plants (1% in place now) and; 40,000 photovoltaic plants (1% in place now). I don’t think anyone doubted that the United States would have been able to compete well in this global effort to produce a clean power supply system. I don’t think anyone doubted that just as, probably more than the New Deal, it was World War II and its required retooling and reindustrialization which ended the Great Depression, this Green Technology Renaissance would have ended our Great Recession pretty quickly.”

12. (U) “I guess the problem is that we didn’t have a Pearl Harbor event to motivate us. We were already, because of anthropogenic forcing, 100ppm above the CO2 levels that the Earth had been at for the last 400,000 years, all of the science was pointing to the fact that all of the tipping points were in fact tipping, and somehow or other prospects of a permanent dustbowl in the

Southwest, the loss of large portions of our agricultural and forest lands, and the inundations of large areas of our coastline, just didn't register as a surprise attack.<sup>36,37)</sup> We needed to have mobilized all of the federal government's resources in an education effort, both at home and abroad, to get the message of climate change reality across. We probably should have enlisted the Justice Department to seek damages from both the industry-funded front-groups that disseminated climate change disinformation, as well as the damaging industries themselves.<sup>39,40)</sup> We should have put a large-screen (solar-powered) display in front of Main State and in front of every United States embassy and consulate worldwide showing real-time information from the Climate Change War/Green Renaissance."

13. (U) "So Dear Second Secretary. Let me sum this up from where I am in Japan in 2009. No one likes a long cable and you, with all of the catastrophes you are facing, don't have time to read a long apologetic letter from the past. Of course we should have shifted more officers from other duties to working on climate change issues, of course we should have created full-time Green Team/Sustainability Transition officers at each embassy, of course we should have created a full-blown climate bureau in the Department, and of course we should have taken about 187 billion dollars from the Defense Department Budget and given it to USAID to achieve basic Social Goals,

and Earth Restoration Goals worldwide.<sup>35)</sup> And of course we should have given Executive Order 13514 some teeth by mandating a very steep intergovernmental carbon tax."

14. "Here in Tokyo there were days I wanted to laugh and days I wanted to cry as a large portion of our embassy's and high-level State Department and DOD time and manpower went to discussions with the Japanese over every tactical detail of basing arrangements rather than the strategic climate catastrophe that was looming. We should have been forging a powerful Green Alliance with Japan. We should have made our presence on the islands as green as possible: models of leading-edge sustainability. We should have been getting our military contractors engaged in bidding for contracts to generate clean energy for our military and government facilities. We should have been putting together our two countries' most visionary scientists and entrepreneurs and tasked them with helping to save the planet. We probably should have converted at least one of our carrier groups to humanitarian, development, and climate change adaptation missions and based that carrier group in Japan. I don't know why we didn't do these things. It was a time when we needed desperately to do what was necessary, and not what was expedient. I don't know how we ever thought that borrowing money from China to buy oil from Saudi Arabia, while at the same time bankrupting our own

economy, and destroying the earth systems upon which we depend for our very survival, was ever a viable, or sustainable option.”

## References

<sup>1</sup> “Global Change and the Earth System”, Steffen, et al., Springer-Verlag, Berlin 2005

<sup>2</sup> Great Transition Initiative (<http://www.gtinitiative.org/>)

<sup>3</sup> “Probabilistic Forecast for Twenty-First-Century Climate Based on Uncertainties in Emissions (Without Policy) and Climate Parameters (<http://ams.allenpress.com/perlserv/?request=get-abstract&doi=10.1175%2F2009JCLI2863.1>)” Prinn et al., Journal of Climate, October 2009

<sup>4</sup> Met Office Hadley Center Projections (<http://www.metoffice.gov.uk/climatechange/science/projections/>)

<sup>5</sup> “Solving the Climate Dilemma ([http://www.wbgu.de/wbgu\\_sn2009\\_en.pdf](http://www.wbgu.de/wbgu_sn2009_en.pdf))” German Advisory Council on Global Change September 7, 2009

<sup>6</sup> “Planetary Boundaries: Exploring the safe operating space for humanity (<http://www.nature.com/nature/journal/v461/n7263/full/461472a.html>)” Rockström et al., Nature, September 24, 2009

<sup>7</sup> “Climate Change Science Compendium 2009 (<http://www.unep.org/compendium2009/>)”,

United Nations Environment Programme

<sup>8</sup> “Irreversible climate change due to carbon dioxide emissions (<http://www.pnas.org/content/early/2009/01/28/0812721106.full.pdf+html>)” Solomon et al, National Academy of Sciences

<sup>9</sup> Interacademy Panel on International Issues ([http://www.interacademies.net/Object.File/Master/9/075/Statement\\_RS1579\\_IAP\\_05.09final2.pdf](http://www.interacademies.net/Object.File/Master/9/075/Statement_RS1579_IAP_05.09final2.pdf))

<sup>10</sup> “Coupling of CO<sub>2</sub> and Ice Sheet Stability Over Major Climate Transitions of the Last 20 Million Years (<http://www.sciencemag.org/cgi/content/abstract/1178296>)”, Tripapati, et al., Science, September 2009

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