

[ CHAPTER TEN ]

## Reestablishing the American Work Ethic



**H**ow awful the American economy must be at your ascendancy! I can only speculate about the combined percentage of unemployed and underemployed Americans. One in four? One in three? Worse? What term do the politicians at your time use for the economic wreckage they have wrought? On what or whom do they place the blame?

I know that political profligacy brought about hyperinflation and worthless currency. The time of reckoning came when off-budget expenditures, government loan guarantees, benevolent bestowing, and outright theft by lawmakers and their friends could no longer be covered by tax increases and the sale of government bonds. It took eight generations for Americans to amass the wealth that the following two generations squandered.

That a person of your caliber is president makes plain that the economy of the United States is near the bottom. Therefore the rise is equally near, as nothing worthwhile stays down for long. But it is improbable that America can regain world economic supremacy in your thirty-year presidency unless you use the military for conquest. Conquest can produce economic superiority in less than a generation, but withhold that action for now.

To revitalize the economy, the American work ethic must be re-instilled in the population. End government support for those un-

willing to do their work well and for those who refuse to work at all. Ensure that all who want to work will be able to do so. Encourage productivity and competition in business.

When you repealed every federal, state, and local bill and statute that became law from 1964 on, you eliminated the American dole, effectively halting illegal immigration. (After 1964, most illegal aliens came to the United States to work at jobs rejected by those surfeited with government handouts.) Vast numbers of people were added to the labor force when welfare to able-bodied Americans ended. Eliminating mass crime, which sapped America's vitality, gave pause to millions of would-be felons; all but the most foolish seek gainful employment over criminal activity. Additionally, the repeal of all laws since 1964 rid the nation of federal costs associated with employing useless bureaucratic slugs. Former bureaucrats seeking jobs that match their competence benefit those employing unskilled or lackey labor. More important, the absence of bureaucracy encourages entrepreneurs to start new businesses.

Now eliminate civil service. Avoid the corruption and incompetence associated with government employment by establishing rigid hiring practices and allowing supervisors to fire "with cause." Add to your criminal-penalty list any attempted use of political patronage in hiring decisions. It is better to stop political hiring than to suffer the incompetence of civil service employees who cannot be fired. Competition for jobs will be as keen as competition for customers.

Eliminate government-mandated unemployment payments to terminated or laid-off employees, public or private. The more industrious and frugal will accrue savings for such an event and find new employment. (Some employees provoke termination as a means of vacationing until unemployment benefits run out.) Corporations of my time would gladly have paid 3 percent of their pretax profits in additional taxes to rid themselves of unemployment compensation expenses. Most important, employees will work harder and become more productive in order to retain their jobs.

The nation's infrastructure is in decay in my time, certainly rotten in yours. Now that both the federal government and private industry can fire "with cause" and without governmental inter-

vention, make the federal government the employer of last resort; guarantee manual-labor employment for every citizen. (When necessary, provide dormitories for these government-employed manual laborers and child-care facilities for their children.) Expect this to be a temporary measure, as was President Franklin Roosevelt's action almost a century before your ascendancy, when, during the Great Depression of the 1930s, radical federal work programs provided employment for many Americans. The Works Project Administration made few demands for excellence in employee performance, while the Civilian Conservation Corps developed high-spirited teamwork among its hardworking employees. Although results differed among the many methods used to provide gainful employment, the overall results were successful: people had jobs and the dignity that work provides.

Guaranteed federal employment coupled with termination "with cause" by government supervisors provides at best sustenance for those needing a job and at worst a weeding-out way station. It will force those who give lip service to wanting work but who do not work into finding some private individual or charity to support them.

Much can be accomplished with the initial surge in federal employment of the needy. Besides repairing nuclear power plants, bridges, highways, dams, water and sewer works, set them to constructing single-family homes for the elderly poor in rural sections of America, providing space for gardens and livestock so that they can maintain their self-respect and contribute to their food requirements. Make caring for the nation's honest elderly one hallmark of America's new beginning. Stipulate only that all recipients have never committed a felony. It is not fitting to reward society's older criminals by allowing them to mingle with those who led crime-free lives.

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Do not repair Washington, D.C. Consider copying Japan's shogunate "tent headquarters" originated by Minamoto Yoritomo in 1192 and resurrected by Tokugawa Ieyasu in 1600. Relocate your supreme center of operations. Divorce the diseased District of Columbia. Remove yourself, the host, from the now unemployed,

swarming parasites — loathsome lobbyists, unproductive federal employees, and welfare recipients. Without federal access for lobbyists, employment for the near-worthless, and funds for welfare, Washington, D.C., will be abandoned. Allow weather, decay, and fires to destroy the city and its surrounding suburbs. Employ the military to protect only American shrines, anticipating a triumphant return. In time, Mr. President, raze everything except the great monuments to America's past glories, then rebuild the nation's capital around them to reflect the new splendor of the American Empire.

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Six generations ago, in *Democracy in America*, Alexis de Tocqueville wrote about the uniqueness of American bankruptcy: "There is no American legislation against fraudulent bankruptcies. Is it because there are no bankrupts? No, on the contrary, it is because there are so many. In the mind of the majority the fear of being prosecuted as a bankrupt is greater than the apprehension of being ruined by other bankrupts, so the public conscience has a sort of guilty tolerance for an offense which everyone individually condemns."

Tocqueville would not recognize the United States at my time. Not a single American feared bankruptcy prosecution, while the majority were apprehensive of being ruined by the bankruptcies of others. Few if any of those damaged would question that contemporary bankruptcy laws, written by lawyers, increasingly enriched debtors and lawyers to the detriment of legitimate complainants and lenders. Legal "insolvency" and legal "abdication" of wrongful acts made many rich and wronged countless Americans. Current bankruptcy laws mock the work ethic; bankruptcy scams spread as a plague.

Only you can end the injustice that robs Americans of just repayment of loans and just reparations for widespread maleficence. Only you can bring order to bankruptcy disorder, something American leaders before you lacked the courage and resolve to do. Of course you could outlaw bankruptcies altogether, even resurrect old English debtor laws entailing imprisonment, or perhaps something altogether new. Consider rescinding the right to vote and to hold public office for bankruptcy filers — corporate directors, cor-

porate officers, individual bankrupts — and the attorneys representing them. Inevitably, many among the honest and the dishonest bankrupts will secure new debt. The dishonest will again commit wrongs, lawyers will prosper, and citizens will be damaged. However, without the right to vote or hold office and without your blessing, the number of Americans harmed by bankruptcy fraud will be reduced.

Your casting out of all laws since 1964 loosened the many shackles binding manufacturing and trade and fueled entrepreneurship. Should a government-mandated minimum wage still exist, eliminate this financial farce as a keystone of your economic policy. Equality has never really existed in the workplace or in paychecks. With unregulated free enterprise, the marketplace sets employee pay. During your presidency, Americans will rediscover an earlier American belief: a day's work for a day's pay. America will adjust to a return to its early-twentieth-century work ethic, although perhaps not as quickly as it fell into decadence.

Cast out every law that stands in the way of an American work ethic. Adopt a "leave it alone" policy for business. Allow productivity to soar. The businessman's love of money is an evil, but for now your best option is to encourage the matchless abilities of entrepreneurs to sire companies and beget meaningful employment. Rapaciousness and worker exploitation will come, but private-sector jobs are lesser evils than out-of-work despair or lower-paying last-resort government employment. You will need new criminal laws to hold in check dishonest business predators without killing the benefits of competitive industry. Permit workers to organize and honor their strikes without interference. You will be able to correct business abuses in the future, when you have more time.

Combine the competitive way of life that existed in the 1900s with the technology of your time. Encourage the acquisition of money, inspire competition. But do not embrace all the values of that time. For instance, in sawmills of the day it was preferable to have a man die on the job rather than a mule: another man, so went the logic, could be hired, but a mule had to be bought. Avoid such cavalier disregard for human life. Consider reinstating some of the more practical health and safety laws. And do not give em-

ployers the legal right to fire employees without cause. "At will" termination destroys the spirit of honest, industrious, and competitive employees while, at the same time, it unjustly rewards sycophants, toadies, and rectum-kissers. After all, America's strength lies in its hardworking people.

Despite these changes, the favorable ratio of American achievers to nonachievers will not equal those of the 1900s. A large number of the children of the ninth and tenth generations were born to shop, not reared to work. With whatever ratios that exist, America will still have enough entrepreneurs to plant and grow companies and to create new jobs.

Do not listen to those who say that things *and* people are different today. Regardless of the technological marvels that mankind has at your time, or the world position America occupies in manufacturing and marketing, the nature of man has not changed since written history began. People are the same — good, bad, and all degrees between. Ensure equal opportunity for all Americans, but do not concern yourself with creating equality. All men are not equal — mentally or physically. Equality between the simple and the clever, the weak and the strong, is as unnatural among humans as it is among the lower animals. Your task in restoring the United States to greatness does not lie in creating false equality among its citizens.

You brought corrupt legislators to heel and ended pork-barrel legislation, which solved one part of the spending problem. Refrain, however, from tinkering with money or business, either helping or hindering. No matter how well intended, when government intervenes, the value of currency and industry and the well-being of the nation's citizens suffer. No counsel is needed now about the merit of a gold standard to provide Americans with monetary stability. You will find that the government's vaults of gold are either hypothecated or empty, and much time will lapse before government gold coffers are refilled.

Once Americans are at work in productive endeavors, few non-dominant immigrants will arrive to pick over dry bones. Still, various countries continue to punish their dominant moneymakers with adversarial laws and regulations and high taxes, much as America did prior to your ascendancy. Encourage, even solicit, the

immigration of the oppressed, dominant minority of other countries. During the 1950s, many such people moved from England to the United States, helping our country and creating a “brain drain” in theirs. Later, dominant Cubans, Chinese, and Vietnamese who were shunned in their countries became immensely successful here. Dominant individuals such as these will not only better themselves but will deliver beneficial results to the United States.

Each and every citizen has a stake in the country and an obligation to pay for the government. Identify and tax every American, even the lowest paid. No more than three tax rates are needed — a 1-percent tax on the yearly income of the poorest 25 percent of individuals, a 20-percent annual income tax on the wealthiest 25 percent of citizens, and a 10-percent per annum tax on the remaining 50 percent of American income earners. Allow no deductions. Such a three-tiered tax rate will create a monetary surplus for any well-run country. Consider similar tax assessments for American corporations and start taxing all foundations, charitable or otherwise, at corporate rates. States that follow your federal cost-cutting examples will have no need for income taxes and only moderate requirements for sales taxes.

The Internal Revenue Service will be around at your time, though perhaps known by another name. With such simple tax returns coupled with little tax evasion because of your no-nonsense crime agenda, the agency’s employee complement could be reduced, with those remaining being of the highest quality. But resist the urge to further cut the ranks of this agency, Mr. President; you need their eyes and ears to monitor citizen compliance in other areas. One such duty for the Internal Revenue Service could be a written accounting of all citizens. Just as the Normans had their Domesday Book in 1086, so should you.

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Artifacts used in games of chance evidence that humans have gambled for millennia. Since written history and probably earlier — certainly since 3500 B.C., and perhaps for as long as forty thousand years — human nature has been allied with betting. Culture determines the method of betting, whether based on the outcome of strategy or physical skill or games of chance. While

empires have been built by gambling on the outcome of conquest, funds derived from legalized gambling have never built a great nation. Abolish all forms of state-sanctioned betting, as work and luck are contradictions. Legalizing gambling is a nation's final act in dismembering the work ethic.

When you set aside all laws enacted since 1964, you eliminated legal gambling by lot — lotteries. The first modern sweepstakes were held by the state of New Hampshire in 1964. After that, to 1998, lotteries became a nationwide mania. Most, but not all, legalized casino gambling disappeared when you revoked the laws from 1964 on (casino gambling was legal in one state before 1964). In addition, a number of gambling industries such as horse and dog racing were also legal entities before then. Close them.

Do not permit debate on the issue of stopping state-sanctioned betting. Debate could polarize Americans more than any other issue. If you elect to stop all forms of legalized betting, the quicker you take action, the better the results. The question is not whether state-sanctioned gaming is good or evil, only whether you want it around.

Regardless of punishment, however, personal betting will prevail. Ignore it. You have nothing to gain by assessing severe penalties against Americans who bet with each other individually. Organized criminal gambling operations are another matter. Your crime enforcement placed these lawbreakers in overseas prisons to reside with bona fide losers.

If legalized gambling disappears at your direction, expect large-scale dissension from those with vested interests in the gambling industry. Be prepared for an onslaught of unfavorable publicity. People remember for a lifetime if property, money, or goods are taken from them. However, those unaffected pay little attention to what is taken from others. In this instance, all those suffering direct financial loss are gamblers by nature and by trade, otherwise they would not have invested their time and money in gaming ventures. Real gamblers, while expecting to win most of the time, know they will lose sometimes. Therefore, any gamblers who agitate against you are not true gamblers. They are fools. Treat them as such.

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The American Empire's first generation faces the same problems as the Republic's first generation — food and shelter for its citizenry. Treat family-owned farms with the utmost respect and encourage the establishment of new ones. Limit the total tax on these farms to no more than 15 percent of their yield of grain, produce, dairy products, or livestock. Corporate agricultural businesses need little encouragement; tax them the same as other corporate enterprises. Convert vacant farmland to productive use by rewarding the most successful family-owned farms with more land. Let these farmers become wealthy as they feed America. See to it that those who are neither resourceful nor profitable seek other employment. Do not waste the land.

As you look over the decayed and profligate America of your inauguration, realize that your vision can surpass the best of the past of this splendid country. Reestablishing the work ethic in an economically devastated country requires hardships, but no more than those endured initially in building the nation. And such hardships pale in comparison to the suffering caused by the fiscal crisis and physical violence prevalent when your presidency began.