

and its society has extraordinary wealth and capability. Thus, the American hegemony extends in various ways into the private lives of every individual, and into their very homes, notably via radio and television. The sounds of American music and the images of American media (and values as well) dominate our leisure time.

If the political task I see as crucial to the future of the planet is to succeed, we need this reconciliation of confidence and conscience to take place especially in the United States, given its extraordinary influence.

In many instances in its past, the United States has been up to the challenge, even if at times it has been the subject of criticism both inside, and recently, outside the country. Consider that the United States, within the past year, has made its firefighters heroes, just as it has jailed its corporate icons of the 1990s. So, the United States has shown that it can make such an important shift.

Consider Time magazine's Persons of the Year for 2002. They were not business or government leaders, nor were they men. They were the three female whistle-blowers who tried to warn Enron, WorldCom and the FBI about the problems looming on the horizon. That is a sure sign of the growing sense of conscience in the United States. While conscience has been part of the United States' ethic in the past it is one that we need to see even more of in the future.

In the United States, nascent capitalism was marked most by the austere Protestant ethic, by the asceticism of accumulation, by long-term work and by a concern for the benefit of the whole community. It was not simply "get rich as fast as possible and ignore the rest." The nobility of the motives and objectives of the country's founders—fleeing famine, disease and war, and wanting to build a new, classless society—continue to constitute the framework of American public life.

It was in the United States that Franklin D. Roosevelt developed the New Deal that gave birth to the Providence State. The New Deal was a brilliant example of energetic liberalism, the audacity of which salvaged capitalism following the stock market crash of 1929 and the Depression of the 1930s. In retro-