

## Global Engagement for National Results

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"This college produces men and women who, whatever their fields of endeavor, will become leaders. I do not mean leaders in the narrow sense of personal success. The first thought is towards the City of God, but I would like to emphasize the civil obligations you have towards the City of Man, but in a global context.

I do not mean that it is necessary that all students should take up politics or government as a career or become Nader-esque in their social activism. I would like to emphasize the obligation of all who have had the benefit of Thiel or college training, to assume their proportionate share of the burden of self-government.

The phrase "self-government" has fallen into disuse these days. The center of government sometimes seems too close for comfort or so far removed from us that we tend to unconsciously in our minds divide ourselves into two groups, the governors and the governed.

The important thing to remember is that uninterest or "indifference" in politics will mean that the various tasks will not be done; or they will be done and usually in a way unsatisfactory to you. After several decades of observing this curious business of self-government, I stress the need for greater participation by people like you to play your proper role in government. I want to focus on the overwhelming need to uncover and decode the reality of globalization and how it has and will continue to affect our cities, states, national decision makers, struggling groups here and abroad, labor, business and agriculture.

Globalization is the process of increasing the connectivity

and interdependence of the world's markets and businesses. This process has speeded up dramatically in the last two decades as technological advances make it easier for people to travel, communicate and do business internationally. In general, as economies become more connected to other economies, they have increased opportunity but also increased competition.

The pro-globalization lobby argues that globalization brings about increased opportunities for almost everyone, and increased competition is a good thing since it makes agents of production more efficient. The anti-globalization group argues that people who are deprived in terms of resources are not currently capable of functioning within the increased competitive pressure that will be brought about by allowing their economies to be more connected to the world.

The harsh reality of globalization is that the illegal trade in drugs, arms, intellectual property, people and money is booming. Like the war on extremists, the fight to control these illicit markets pits governments against agile and resourceful networks empowered by globalization. In my view, no one government can address these challenges alone. Since all of these issues are interconnected, so too must our response be integrated and coordinated. Obviously, the smarter, better, and more responsible answers require new partnerships among government, the private sector, civil society, philanthropies, faith-based communities, Diaspora groups and everyday citizens in order to solve our shared problems.

The anti-globalization groups argue that globalization has hurt the U.S.' economic competitiveness. Some of this fear has been made more pronounced after a year of economic calamity that many fear has sent the U.S. into irreversible decline. "Declinism" is largely a distraction, and the American people should concentrate on what are, finally, our own internal issues to resolve or ignore. And recognize that we cannot insulate ourselves from global threats as well as plain old competition.

The key for President Obama and those who represent us is not to blame the BRIC countries (Brazil, Russia, India and China) for our "decline" or to unleash a populist backlash against bankers, but to make 2010 the beginning of the new American decade of innovation.

Our success as a nation will be determined by the way we approach and utilize modern technology. The next 10 years will be about "transformative" change. This happens when industries democratize, when they're ripped from the sole domain of companies, government and other institutions and handed over to regular folks. The Internet democratized publishing, broadcasting and communications, and the consequence was a massive increase in participation in everything digital. Now the same is happening to manufacturing. Using the Internet, anybody with an idea and a little expertise can set assembly lines into motion in China or Brazil.



There is absolutely no reason for America to feel depressed about the emergence of China, India and others as world powers. We will be better off if China and India do well, than if they flounder. A prospering Brazil will mean a bigger world economy with more opportunities and probably less turmoil—and Brazil and China will be more cooperative on a number of globalization war issues as they will be directly affected by successful solutions.

As the one truly universal nation, the United States continually refreshes its connections with the the world—through languages, family, education, business—in a way no other nation does or will. U.S. higher education and our open doors have essentially been our innovation model. Our challenge should be how to keep our borders open and at the same time somewhat secure.

Never before in our history has there been a greater need for men and women of integrity and courage in public service. Our government is old and broken and fairly dysfunctional, but we have no choice but to get on with it. We will need to embrace globalization and encourage other nations to work with us—economically, diplomatically— rather than against us and each other."