



The Endangered State of Democracy in America

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MATERIAL REVISION SOON TO BE POSTED

Choices are being made in secret that will define America for generations to come. Our “betters” have decided to treat the American people like children who should be seen and not heard. Without honest information Democracy breaks down. Why what we are presenting here is not common knowledge can only be surmised. We leave it to the reader to judge its credibility. We hope to open Americans’ eyes to what is happening at the World Trade Center before it really is too late. First Freedom was attacked on 9/11 and then Democracy got mugged. It is up to all of us to turn what threatens to become Ground Zero for our republic into a new birth of Freedom instead.

In just the most recent ploy to defeat the will of the American people, the Port Authority has put the “Freedom Tower” on steroids in a “too bad, it’s too late” bid to defeat the will of the people. *Too wrong.* A recent MSNBC poll showed that close to 90% of Americans want to see new Twin Towers built. This is a fierce struggle to restore America's moral integrity and cultural substance. Those who want to pretend it is about mere architecture instead of national character are going to find themselves on the wrong side of history.

This always has been and always will be about whether or not America rings true. As Ken Gardner, *Twin Towers II's* creator has noted, the only reason he put his life on hold for more than five years, devoted his own resources, and jeopardized his professional standing was because he had to know whether or not the America he grew up believing in really exists. We are all driven by the same need.

The Twin Towers Alliance is engaged in an all-out effort to repair the damage being done to our country at Ground Zero by our own people. We are tired of this fight. It has been going on for much too long. We want to lay down our arms and go back to simple lives that make simple sense. But some of us bear the burden of knowing that nothing makes sense as long as America is missing her Twin Towers.

Competing Visions of America

As long as people call or write the Twin Towers Alliance to say that they don't know *anyone* who doesn't want to see the Twin Towers rise again – while at the same time our elected representatives seem to find our quest tiresome and irrelevant – the social contract is under attack.

This struggle is between competing dreams. Since 1993, the dream of Osama bin Laden and Co. was to destroy the Twin Towers and all they stood for in their minds. He boasted in October, 2001: “Those awesome symbolic towers that speak of liberty, human rights, and humanity have been destroyed. They have gone up in smoke.”

We all know what would have been built if the bomb that blew up in February of 1993 had succeeded in bringing down Tower One. Only the destruction of both Towers made a total redesign of the site possible. There was even a group of architectural elites following 9/11 who said that it would be a shame “to erase the erasure” of the Towers from the skyline. No doubt some would be highly offended by the suggestion that Bin Laden made that viewpoint possible, but there is no denying that their agenda served to ratify his intention to remove the Twin Towers from our sight.

If not for those who wanted to stamp their own image on the World Trade Center and tried to make the issue one of design instead of honor and respect, those towers would be standing today. What is especially rank is the way officials went about it – excluding the Towers from their “competition” knowing that, if included, they would have won a landslide of support. In other words, first, Freedom was attacked at Ground Zero and then, Democracy got mugged.

For the American dream — the one that is competing with Bin Laden’s — to have meaning, we have to treasure our heritage. The Twin Towers were woven into the fabric of our identity. Whether one liked their design or not (and most Americans surely did) we cannot allow them to permanently disappear. It would be like an accident victim having the bandages removed after reconstructive surgery and rushing to the mirror to find the shocking reflection of a complete stranger looking back.

Not Good Enough

Officials have tried to make this about design, but what is plain is that they can’t even compete on that field. They have a chaotic, disjointed project that they have spent years trying to retrofit to the realities of the site. Their plan has never found favor with the public and it clearly failed to enthruse the real estate market because, to begin with, *Fortune 500* companies want to be in buildings with fabulous lobbies. The reflecting glass veneer on the ‘Freedom Tower’ can never hide the fact that the lobby is a bunker.

The foolish fixation on reintroducing the pre-WTC street grid is irrational. It is emblematic of the high-handed, senseless way the entire project has been mismanaged from the start. The [*Twin Towers II*](#) plan on the other hand creates a marvelous neighborhood setting without sacrificing the protective moat around the “superblock”. A great deal of research and planning went into the design from the beginning. It was re-engineered in partnership with an architect on the original World Trade Center project. It powerfully addresses all the considerations that the official plan is still grappling to solve through endless adjustments – including security, healing, sustainability, and market appeal.

What distinguishes the *Twin Towers II* plan is that it’s been right from the start. Suggestions that we should lower our expectations and accept the inevitability of the “Freedom Tower” are foul – we won’t accept it because it is wrong for New York and wrong for America. Those who suggest that we try to push for Twin Towers beside the “Freedom Tower” are not thinking clearly. It doesn’t belong there and official

willfulness makes it even less appropriate now than it was to begin with. Even if they were offering a truly remarkable plan instead of just a glorified suburban office park it would still be wrong. It's really that simple. The Directors of the Port Authority know it, Mr. Silverstein knows it, and our "leaders" know it.

Most people fail to understand why we should settle for less than the best on this hallowed ground. The original Towers embodied the mantra of the great Port Authority Director Austin Tobin: "Dream no small dreams, for they have no power to stir the blood." We would add that the price of diminished expectations at Ground Zero would be more than we can afford. Officials try to pretend that the Twin Towers were just "real estate" and suggest that in a contest of opinions ours lost. But they cannot disguise the fact that most Americans have always agreed on what belongs at the World Trade Center – new Twin Towers and a fitting memorial. We will never accept that just good enough could ever be good enough and it would become more obvious and more depressing with the passage of time that we made a bad mistake.

But it clearly is not too late. From a practical standpoint the advantages of new Twin Towers are compelling:

- The current design does not lend itself to efficient construction. Two identical towers can be built far more economically and quickly than four buildings with scores of unique floorplates. The square footage is essentially the same.
- Noted experts in the field share our belief that making the change in the near future would result in a completed World Trade Center years ahead of the current schedule.
- The official plan failed in the marketplace during the boom years, so it is not likely to fare well in the bust. Director Ward recently claimed that Tower 2 is the most feasible of the Silverstein towers because the Port Authority and City have agreed to occupy (at the public's expense) two-thirds of it!
- The *Twin Towers II* vision would have lenders who are leery of investing in the current project fighting for a piece of it because it would be an exponentially more valuable property.
- The mixed-use model enhances the value and allows for flexibility in suiting the space to prevailing market needs. The New York and New Jersey legislative variances should be easily secured.
- Far from being problematic, the transition would be seamless. For example, one of our lower buildings would use the base of the "Freedom Tower" as a platform. We doubt that anyone would suggest that the steel that was put in place to baffle the good will of the people is a reason to accept the wrong plan.
- The bulk of the ground work that has been done suits our plan. Suggestions that the time and money invested in excavation and infrastructure would be wasted do not take into account that the very same work would have had to be done for either plan. Suggestions that contracts and procurement would be difficult to convert are misleading.

We do not share the sense that the current project is inevitable because it most certainly is not. It is an extravagant and unfortunate strategy on the part of the Port Authority to accelerate work on a building that isn't marketable before doing due diligence on the advantages of the *Twin Towers II* plan. They have been informed that there is considerable support within the industry for the superiority of our plan.

If they could have defended their position against our claims that making a swift transition would save money, save time, give the families a far more meaningful memorial, give Larry Silverstein a far more profitable property, give the public what it has always wanted, and give the world a far more inspiring vision, then they would have. They don't address those claims, because they can't refute them.

There is no end to the hubris and wastefulness of the official project. Do officials, along with their cheerleaders in the media, really think that they will never have to answer for their choices? And do those who have enabled this travesty by giving the public propaganda in place of information really think they will get away untarnished?

Attaching the word 'iconic' to every mention of the official plan will never make it so. Icons are not manufactured – they are endowed. The Pataki/Libeskind vision of the spiral around the footprints culminating 1776 ft. in the air may sound like a tribute to them but it leaves the public cold.

The manifest symbolism of the *Twin Towers II* plan is not contrived. The Twin Towers were one of the most potent images of our age. For many people around the world they had replaced the Statue of Liberty as the premier symbol of America. They were the ultimate goalpost and gateway to America. The vision of them crumbling horrified billions of people. The world needs to see us convert that horror into a breathtaking rebirth.

The Spirit of September 12th

The overall incoherence of the site plan is made worse by a memorial that is offensive to many 9/11 families, unbelievably expensive, and extremely problematic. For one thing, pumping and heating tons of water is not environmentally friendly or sustainable. In the end, the public would have to be charged admission to something that should belong to everyone. And all they would have to show is generic, dispiriting voids, which carry the unfortunate and inevitable connotation of flushing something precious down the drain.

Most of us do not want to wallow in the depravity of 9/11 or to reflect on the absence of those who were murdered, *but instead to sense their presence*. Most of us want to recall and rededicate ourselves to the transcendent Spirit of September 12th – knowing that the only way to redeem the unbearable tragedy of those who lost their lives is to build a better country in their honor.

With that purpose in mind, we challenge Mayor Bloomberg, the 9/11 Memorial Board Members, corporate donors, individual 9/11 Families, and the public at

large to look at the [Twin Towers II Memorial](#) and decide which vision would bring more inspiration and healing. Isn't that the only criteria to consider when deciding how best to proceed?

In the overriding interest of restoring the skyline, Ken Gardner made sure that the Port Authority knew that his Twin Towers would work alongside the official memorial and transit hub. But in just the last week, the *Twin Towers II* Memorial that has so much support with the general public and was designed in consultation with many 9/11 families has just gotten better by joining forces with the [WTC World Memorial](#).

The details are still being worked out, but the result is incredibly moving. Officials cannot possibly hope to justify something that has clearly become a huge mistake when there is a far less expensive, far more inspiring memorial ready to put in place. If, in their greater wisdom, they insist on forcing that on us too, then the *Twin Towers II* memorial could still be retrofitted over the space in the future with a minimum of deconstruction. But we believe that the contrast between our memorial and the official memorial is so apparent that whatever it takes to make it happen needs to be implemented.

America at Its Best

The Twin Towers symbolized the optimism and confidence of America. That is why they were destroyed – *they were proxies for our way of life*. The new birth of the Twin Towers would be a renaissance of what is best in America, while the current project represents the underbelly of America – the greed, the secrecy, the self-importance of the mediocrities embedded in our society.

The current project exudes what scholar Victor Davis Hanson, political essayist and former Classics professor at Stanford, branded in a recent column “The Death of Trust – Elites Gone Bad.” He pointed out that the unraveling of classical Athens and imperial Rome came with the unwinding of the social contract that resulted from the breakdown of trust between the elite and ordinary citizens.

Why should willful politicians be indulged like spoiled children with no limit to the damage they can do? We don't have to wait until election time rolls around to say “Stop!” The Founders gave us a stop-loss mechanism in the First Amendment that keeps functionaries from squandering our political and social capital, just the way Wall Street stops trading when it is in a freefall.

After what they had just endured under the haughty George III, our founders knew too well that we had to have the right to petition the Government for a redress of our grievances – and to require that our petitions would be given a proper and timely response.

The manifest abuses surrounding the redevelopment of the World Trade Center cannot be swept under the rug. Efforts to fast-track the "Freedom Tower" are going to boomerang on the Port Authority and every other supporter of that

stratagem. To have been notified that there are significant material benefits to adopting *Twin Towers II*, which include a considerable savings of money and time, and to fail to investigate the validity of those claims, would be a dereliction of duty under any circumstances, but particularly at a time of such fiscal hardship. To have been told that the vast majority of the people prefer new Twin Towers to the current plan and to then respond by misappropriating public funds to intensify the effort to raise enough steel to defeat efforts to redress the wrong is an abuse of power that requires strong censure. If the Port Authority's position is so defensible they should try to defend it instead of conniving to undermine the democratic process.

The Twin Towers were symbols of America at its best. Building 21st-century Twins would be a phenomenal stimulus that would translate into every aspect of our economy and our culture. People want their Towers back – now more than ever. The people who have brought us the disgrace at Ground Zero make George III look reasonable.

How Can I Help?

The Twin Towers Alliance petition is a stunning compendium of the voices of We the People. As a statistical sampling it is a very significant body. And yet, since most people have no idea that it even exists, it can only be imagined what sort of support would register if it were common knowledge that we can still make the World Trade Center all that it should be.

That possibility is really much more likely than most people recognize. There are any number of ways that the freest people in the freest country in the world can take control of this situation. We will explore a number of possible scenarios that could result in a speedy decision to adopt *Twin Towers II – America's Plan* to save the World Trade Center. They are not offered as either/or possibilities, but could work together to make it happen.

In the section that follows the scenarios, an excerpt from a defining speech by Bobby Kennedy reminds us that Archimedes promised, "Give me a place to stand, and I will move the world." For the people of the United States, that place is Ground Zero. All that remains to be seen is who will rush to join this noble effort and who will hold back. Everyone has an equal opportunity to recognize the error of past choices and change their mind. Anyone, no matter how identified with the current plan, even George Pataki, could become an instrument of this awakening. All it will take is: "I didn't get it. I get it now. What can I do? How can I help?"

The Obama Scenario

President Obama's command of the "stimulus" debate showed how capable he is of taking charge. If he could maintain such high poll numbers while promoting something with which many Americans do not agree, then just imagine how easy

it would be for him to promote something that has tremendous popular support and resonates powerfully across the political and demographic spectrum.

Coming in his first 100 days it would be linked to him the way putting a man on the moon is linked to JFK. Rebuilding the Twin Towers would become the emblem of his commitment to rebuild the economy, the infrastructure and, above all, the spirit of America. And it would encourage the world to have faith in the spirit of *Yes We Can*.

Spectacular 21st-century Twin Towers would energize our nation as nothing else could. Mobilizing the will-power to get them topped off beside the stirring 9/11 Memorial and Museum by the 10th anniversary of 9/11 would be the ultimate stimulus.

It would be a wonderful moment if the President would come to Ground Zero, lift a bullhorn – figuratively or literally – and tell the American people that he really does hear us and that he is ready to give the nation, the whole world, and those who knocked down our Towers breathtaking proof that Democracy is shining brightly in America.

There are many reasons to be hopeful for the future of the new administration and the country, but the most promising of all is the way President Obama dealt with the fallout over Tom Daschle and Nancy Killefer. In a segment on NBC Nightly News the President said: “I’m here on television saying I screwed up, and that’s part of the era of responsibility. It’s not never making mistakes; it’s owning up to them and trying to make sure you never repeat them and that’s what we intend to do.”

If change does come to America, this new standard will be a major factor. The CYA School of Governance is a controlling reason why the WTC is such a disgrace.

The Paterson Scenario

We wonder if Gov. Paterson recognizes the true nature of what’s really possible for The World Trade Center. He told the New York Times editorial board six months ago that he was amazed at how reluctant those in authority are to exercise it. There is a general sense that he is an earnest and honest individual. That is why people like him so much. He knows he can say the word and transform the face of Ground Zero. We don’t believe he would forgo the opportunity to do something wonderful for his state and his country if he really understood what *Twin Towers II* is all about, so he must not. But that can be easily remedied.

This is his opportunity to show that the "accidental" Governorship was a "Happy Accident" (in architectural jargon) and that he is not just another placeholder instead of a leader. He did not create this problem and bears no blame for it, but he is embattled and fighting for his political life, because he has displeased the New York kingmakers. He may therefore be reluctant to enrage the entrenched self-servers in politics and the media who engineered the sellout of Ground Zero. But if he did go out on a limb for the people, he would find himself in a very secure place.

The inconvenient fact for his detractors is that people really do like David Paterson and all the backroom efforts to undermine him would fail if he looked into the *Twin Towers II* plan and decided to give it his support. He would be like a coach who's losing the Super Bowl until he discovers that he has Tom Brady sitting on his bench.

Winning over Gov. Paterson would certainly be the most direct way to resolve this issue. Independent oversight would quickly establish the economy of time and money that converting to the *Twin Towers II* plan would afford. And if a commitment were made soon, he could flip a switch on September 11, 2011, that wouldn't just turn on the traditional Memorial beams of light, but the dazzling outline of topped off Twin Towers.

The Silverstein Scenario

It is inconceivable that a man of Larry Silverstein's reputation and business acumen could fail to see that *Twin Towers II* would be the crowning glory of his career. He once said that he wanted to make the WTC the Rockefeller Center of Lower Manhattan. Without a doubt, he was severely hampered by the Pataki agenda and has been trying to manage the crisis and make the best of it ever since.

Regardless of the illustrious gentlemen who have been involved in the designs of his three office towers, the effect doesn't begin to approach a Rockefeller Center. But genuinely iconic new Twin Towers with their glorious lobbies, thirty-story atriums and forty-inch wide floor-to-ceiling windows, would become magnets for the world market and exist in a rarefied zone above the cyclical economic climate. Instead of following the real estate market down, they would lift it up and bring a luster to Lower Manhattan that otherwise will be gone for good. An ultra-prime 24/7 community would be the best shot the financial services sector would have to coalesce and renew itself in Lower Manhattan. What's more, the open mega-spaces would invite the entertainment industry to create Hollywood on the Hudson.

Those who are so stuck on the current design have done their best to suggest that the choice is between modern new skyscrapers and forty year-old towers. In fact, when the design elements of *Twin Towers II* are considered there is no contest over which development would be more worthy of the World Trade Center mantle. There is no contest over which is the more exciting and "forward thinking," which would be the more stellar development.

Two identical towers can be built with much greater speed and economy than four unique towers involving scores of different floorplates – putting completion ahead of schedule, not behind. The groundwork that has been done, even the foundation of the "Freedom Tower," can accommodate the *Twin Towers II* plan. And whenever possible the materials already procured would be incorporated into the overall design to keep waste to a minimum. Finally, the benefit of allowing construction workers to build what they have always longed to build can't be overestimated.

To begin with, restoring the “superblock” would create the secure environment that allows for spectacular seventy-foot high lobbies drenched in sunlight. The lobby of each tower would be an awe-inspiring 21st-century urban cathedral to the human spirit. Two 60-story office buildings form the base of the towers. The floorplates are column-free without compromising the enhanced structural resilience. Over each commercial base is an upper tower, with an atrium rising through each edifice, successfully addressing the density concerns inherent in the upper floors.

Seventy-sixth floor skylobbies will open onto spectacular skyparks and some of the most extraordinary interior space ever built. The soaring atriums will be encompassed by either the most extraordinary residences or the most exclusive corporate suites anywhere, boasting some of the most amazing views in the world.

In the South Tower, the atrium will be crowned by a faceted skylight. In the North Tower, dual spiral staircases within the ornamental mast will echo the ascent to the top of the Statue of Liberty, taking those who make that climb over 1700 feet into the sky. A splendid new Windows on the World at the top of the South Tower will overlook the atrium, as well as the vista beyond.

Advances in communications now allow for twin rooftop decks. Above the restaurant and banquet facilities would be a spectacular open-air rooftop café, with an observation deck around the perimeter. Atop the North Tower, surrounding the entrance to the commemorative mast would be an observation deck and tribute to the vision of America enshrined in the Statue of Liberty below.

Back on the ground an underground galleria would be accessible through all buildings on the complex. A marvelous tree-covered streetscape, including restaurants and boutiques, as well as major retail chains, will create a vibrant 24/7 neighborhood setting for Lower Manhattan and a wonderful pedestrian environment. The integration into the neighborhood that was the ostensible reason for reintroducing the street grid is addressed and enhanced by the delightful pedestrian thoroughfares at grade level.

The latest green technology will be employed in the generation and consumption of energy, in the most advanced fresh-air circulation, and in embracing a spirit of innovation and sustainability. The latest advances in safety technology – such as fire-relief floors and escape elevators will pioneer advances in skyscraper safety in the United States.

When invited to be part of the most famous buildings on earth, the banks would recognize a far more profitable venture than is currently projected – and the Liberty Bonds would become far more attractive to investors. There are a number of different ways that the property could be divided between Silverstein Properties and the Port Authority that would maximize profits for both, but the overriding consideration attached to the future of the site must always be how to satisfy the legitimate goals of the stakeholders while making the very most of the opportunity to bring inspiration and healing to the American people.

To fall short in that department would be a blight that we would never fully overcome. But new Twin Towers beside the [Twin Towers II / WTC World Memorial](#) would change the atmosphere of the site from dark and maudlin to hopeful and proud. Then, even the retail galleria would not be a disconnect that offends those who lost loved ones on 9/11, but vibrant evidence that America triumphed over tragedy. When the site is a thriving, but reverent place, we will have finally, truly recovered. In the end, resurrected Twin Towers would be the most stirring and profound memorial of all, a testament that we will always overcome the worst adversity.

The Bloomberg Scenario

Given the Mayor's track record, it doesn't seem likely that he will think better of his current stance. Nevertheless, we don't completely rule it out, because he is increasingly vulnerable to criticism for being an autocrat with no real regard for the people. Embracing new Twin Towers would certainly undercut that argument.

Michael Bloomberg is clearly has a strong pragmatic streak. He is running a city that would be far better off with the *Twin Towers II* plan than by pursuing the current course. If he were curious about that, Ken Gardner could quickly impress him with the facts. The Mayor likes to suggest that you can't please everyone, but the question that remains regarding Ground Zero is *who is he trying to please and why?*

The Congressional Scenario

Our contacts with Congress are well-documented. Some public servants were more respectful than others – some were contemptuous and rude. Not one showed any true understanding of the significance of our concerns or a sense of responsibility for the course of events. We were amazed at the general lack of knowledge of the well-documented facts about the process. We were even more amazed at the calls that went unanswered at every level.

We made multiple requests in 2007 of Congressman Rangel's office for a General Accounting Office audit of the billions spent at Ground Zero and for information on what made the General Services Administration think that they could justify using tax dollars to occupy the "Freedom Tower" – particularly since that pledge was instrumental to the project going forward. Therefore, all of the procurement of materials and costs related to the "Freedom Tower" since August of 2007 are suspect, since responding to the citizens' request for accountability would have called the feasibility of the project into question.

Those who think there is something to be proud of in what is being done at Ground Zero are seriously misinformed. Even at the highest levels officials seem to have been fooled. There may be no shame in that, because most Americans have been on the receiving end of a powerful disinformation campaign. But in the case of Congress, we have made a concerted effort to educate them to the facts.

To control the power of the purse of the richest nation on earth must be intoxicating, but one would have to be in a downright stupor to think that we will walk away from this fight. There are none so blind as those who will not see – and, when they are running the country, none so dangerous either. The country can't afford to lose this battle and we are confident that sooner or later, we will prevail.

It could even come with a Capraesque conversion because one thing is certain, just as in *Mr. Smith Goes to Washington*, there are people in power who do know that we are speaking the truth and do know that they are complicit in a very dark deed. One courageous individual could turn this affair from sad to wonderful overnight. Speaking out would be a very honorable thing to do.

The Silver Scenario

When Speaker Silver recently called for independent oversight of the progress at the WTC, Executive Director Christopher Ward said “absolutely not” and that was apparently the end of that. As the Speaker of the New York Assembly and the Assemblyman for Lower Manhattan, he can't accept “no” for an answer. It's not as if the Port Authority's performance gives them the moral high ground.

More money and more time has been spent building and rebuilding temporary PATH stations and raising steel 100 feet above street level than it took to plan, excavate, and build the entire World Trade Center to begin with. The argument that there are many competing interests and constituencies is feeble – there always are. The complications resulting from the tragedy cannot hide the lack of leadership that is most responsible for the disappointing state of Ground Zero.

While the Assembly has no jurisdiction over the Port Authority, both entities are ultimately responsible to the people. A lot of money is gone and people want to know exactly where it went. We want a breakdown of where it went and *when it was spent*. Until that is done, it all looks suspiciously like voodoo economics.

One January 29th Christopher Ward testified at your hearing that the infrastructure investment was \$2 billion. The next day on MSNBC, when the Director wanted to give the impression that it would all be wasted if *Twin Towers II* were adopted, that figure became \$4.5 billion. He knew that so much of the work that he was pointing to had to be done in any case. We believe that the public has every right to scrutinize the allocation of funds to date.

Furthermore, since the Port Authority failed to make a good faith effort to evaluate our claims of a savings of time and money, then any actions to hasten the current development on the “Freedom Tower” since September 18, 2008 when we met with Mr. Ward in his office may well have gone to contravene the public's best interests. We therefore specifically request an independent analysis of the cost of accelerating the development to determine if public funds have been misspent. We hope that we can count on the Speaker's guidance and good will to get the accounting we request.

The Cuomo/Wiener/Thompson Scenario

If any one or all three of these gentlemen who are looking to the 2010 elections were to champion the *Twin Towers II* solution, they would be distinguishing themselves by respecting the will of the people and showing the vision that has been so lacking.

The Media Scenario

In Development

The Construction Unions Scenario

Construction workers are among the most patriotic Americans anywhere. Although they are proud to be engaged in rebuilding the World Trade Center it can easily be imagined how much prouder they would be to be building new Twin Towers. And it can also be imagined how disgusted they would be if the contents of this report were made known to them. Those in power have had only one strategy – to keep people from talking and asking questions – but they can't really expect to keep a lid on this forever.

What happens when good people find out they were tricked into being part of something shameful? What happens when they find out that the only thing standing between us and new Twin Towers was Madison Avenue slicksters figuring out the best way to keep people in the dark and get their clients what they wanted?

Contrary to what construction workers may hear in an effort to undermine real progress, the transition to *Twin Towers II* could be accomplished swiftly. As part of the most monumental and inspiring building project ever, their jobs would be secure. But we don't think they need anyone to tell them to put their country first.

The Celebrity Scenario

The failure to rebuild the Twin Towers is a failure of imagination on the part of officials and citizens alike. Officials don't realize how powerful the people are and the people don't know it either. So who better to bring it to life than those who live large?

Rebuilding the Twin Towers – 21st-century Twin Towers – would be the quintessentially American thing to do. In the portion of the speech that follows the scenarios, Bobby Kennedy told his audience in South Africa that “moral courage is a rarer commodity than bravery in battle or great intelligence. Yet it is the one essential, vital quality for those who seek to change the world which yields most painfully to change.”

Celebrities are uniquely suited to remind us that wonderful, startling things can happen. But they can't wake people up to the dangers of complacency if they first weigh the risks before deciding how much moral courage they think they can muster. Most of our lives are far removed from the sort of raw courage required to race into a burning skyscraper. But refusing to be swindled out of a World Trade Center we can be proud of is the least each one of us can do. It's time for everyone to stand up and speak out – starting at the top.

Celebrity oblige.... Given the stealth nature of the opposition, those who have gained celebrity status are honor-bound to use it on behalf of the country that gave them every opportunity to shine. A sure way to break the embargo on truth would be by enlisting the support of those who are already standing in the spotlight.

Nations have characters and ours is being tested. Ralph Waldo Emerson said, "What you do speaks so loud that I cannot hear what you say." If we fail to meet the challenge at the World Trade Center, we will be remembered as the generation that let go.

The Class-Action Scenario – REVISION SOON TO BE POSTED

The First Amendment to the Constitution guarantees Americans the right to petition the Government for the redress of grievances. We will soon publish *Let It Begin Here*, our companion volume to the Twin Towers Alliance report to the nation – *Saving the Dream*. It will begin with a very clear list of legitimate grievances, in the manner of the Declaration of Independence. We will then lay out our specific efforts to redress our grievances with State and Federal officials over the past two years. Following the litany of abuses will be hundreds of the most powerful comments that have been left on the TTA petition.

In the stealth campaign that has characterized the "rebuilding" effort from the start, we have been shown very little official respect. Apparently, taking an oath to uphold the Constitution does not extend to the First Amendment right to petition the Government to redress grievances – let alone *redress* them, our officials won't even *address* them.

According to Supreme Court Justice William O. Douglas "The right to petition for redress of grievances has an ancient history, and is not limited to writing a letter or sending a telegram to Congressman; it is not confined to appearing before local city council, or writing letters to the President or Governor or Mayor. Conventional methods of petitioning may be, and often have been, shut off to large groups of our citizens. Legislators may turn deaf ears, formal complaints may be routed endlessly through a bureaucratic maze; courts may let the wheels of justice grind very slowly. Those who do not control television and radio, those who cannot afford to advertise in newspapers or circulate elaborate pamphlets may only have a limited type of access to public officials."

By extension, they are entitled to an answer, which may invite more questions, which are entitled to more answers. And if the questions are rational the response must follow. That's how it works.

The record of how public officials have responded to or ignored our inquiries for information and accounting is prima facie evidence that the First Amendment rights of every American citizen who signed our petition were repeatedly and willfully violated by those elected to serve our best interests.

We appeal to legal scholars from Common Cause to the Landmark Foundation to look at this issue and advise us how to proceed. Because none of our other rights will save this country if we cannot compel our representatives to honor our right to petition for redress of grievances by giving us their attention.

If the people can be defeated by nothing more than a refusal to address our concerns in a substantive way, if all it takes to keep things under control is to ignore us *and make sure that the media ignores us*, then we should just give up the pretence of being the country the Founders dedicated their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor to establish. We might as well take a permanent vacation from the burdens of citizenship and say goodbye to the joys as well – because our days as a democracy are numbered.

The Power of Reconciliation

New York recently renamed the Triborough Bridge the “Robert F. Kennedy Bridge” to mark the 40th anniversary of his assassination. During the speeches at the commemoration, President Clinton expressed the hope that New Yorkers would pause to think of R.F.K. and the meaning of his life “whenever we cross this bridge, for the rest of our lives.” That’s not a bad idea.

In June of 1966, Senator Kennedy gave a speech in Capetown, South Africa, known as the Day of Affirmation Address. In the memorable, remarkable address he noted that there is “nothing more difficult to take in hand, more perilous to conduct, or more uncertain in its success than to take the lead in the introduction of a new order of things.” He went on to enumerate the chief obstacles to success and they are very instructive for those who want to make the best of our opportunity to heal America.

First is the danger of futility; the belief there is nothing one man or one woman can do against the enormous array of the world's ills -- against misery, against ignorance, or injustice and violence. Yet many of the world's great movements, of thought and action, have flowed from the work of a single man. A young monk began the Protestant reformation, a young general extended an empire from Macedonia to the borders of the earth, and a young woman reclaimed the territory of France. It was a young Italian explorer who discovered the New World, and 32-year-old Thomas Jefferson who proclaimed that all men are created equal. “Give me a place to stand,” said Archimedes, “and I will move the world.” These men moved the world, and so can we all. Few will have the greatness to bend history; but each of us can work to change a small portion of the events, and in the total of all these acts will be written the history of this generation. Thousands of Peace Corps volunteers are making a difference in the isolated villages and the city slums of dozens of countries. Thousands of unknown men and women in Europe resisted the occupation of the Nazis and many died, but all added to the ultimate strength and freedom of their countries. It is from numberless diverse acts of courage such as these that human history is thus shaped. Each time a man stands up for an ideal, or acts to improve the lot of others, or strikes out against injustice, he sends forth a tiny

ripple of hope, and crossing each other from a million different centers of energy and daring those ripples build a current which can sweep down the mightiest walls of oppression and resistance.

"If Athens shall appear great to you," said Pericles, "consider then that her glories were purchased by valiant men, and by men who learned their duty." That is the source of all greatness in all societies, and it is the key to progress in our own time.

The second danger is that of expediency; of those who say that hopes and beliefs must bend before immediate necessities. Of course if we must act effectively we must deal with the world as it is. We must get things done. But if there was one thing that President Kennedy stood for that touched the most profound feeling of young people across the world, it was the belief that idealism, high aspiration and deep convictions are not incompatible with the most practical and efficient of programs -- that there is no basic inconsistency between ideals and realistic possibilities -- no separation between the deepest desires of heart and of mind and the rational application of human effort to human problems. It is not realistic or hard-headed to solve problems and take action unguided by ultimate moral aims and values, although we all know some who claim that it is so. In my judgment, it is thoughtless folly. For it ignores the realities of human faith and of passion and of belief; forces ultimately more powerful than all the calculations of our economists or of our generals. Of course to adhere to standards, to idealism, to vision in the face of immediate dangers takes great courage and takes self-confidence. But we also know that only those who dare to fail greatly can ever achieve greatly.

It is this new idealism which is also, I believe, the common heritage of a generation which has learned that while efficiency can lead to the camps at Auschwitz, or the streets of Budapest, only the ideals of humanity and love can climb the hills of the Acropolis.

A third danger is timidity. Few men are willing to brave the disapproval of their fellows, the censure of their colleagues, the wrath of their society. Moral courage is a rarer commodity than bravery in battle or great intelligence. Yet it is the one essential, vital quality for those who seek to change the world which yields most painfully to change. Aristotle tells us, "At the Olympic games it is not the finest or the strongest men who are crowned, but those who enter the lists... so too in the life of the honorable and the good it is they who act rightly who win the prize." I believe that in this generation those with the courage to enter the conflict will find themselves with companions in every corner of the world.

For the fortunate amongst us, **the fourth danger is comfort;** the temptation to follow the easy and familiar path of personal ambition and financial success so grandly spread before those who have the privilege of an education. But that is not the road history has marked out for us. There is a Chinese curse which says "May he live in interesting times." Like it or not, we live in interesting times. They are times of danger and uncertainty; but

they are also the most creative of any time in the history of mankind. And everyone here will ultimately be judged -- will ultimately judge himself -- on the effort he has contributed to building a new world society and the extent to which his ideals and goals have shaped that effort.

So we part, I to my country and you to remain. We are -- if a man of forty can claim the privilege -- fellow members of the world's largest younger generation. Each of us have our own work to do. I know at times you must feel very alone with your problems and with your difficulties. But I want to say how impressed I am with what you stand for and for the effort you are making; and I say this not just for myself, but men and women all over the world. And I hope you will often take heart from the knowledge that you are joined with your fellow young people in every land, they struggling with their problems and you with yours, but all joined in a common purpose; that, like the young people of my own country and of every country that I have visited, you are all in many ways more closely united to the brothers of your time than to the older generation in any of these nations; you are determined to build a better future. President Kennedy was speaking to the young people of America, but beyond them to young people everywhere, when he said "The energy, the faith, the devotion which we bring to this endeavor will light our country and all who serve it -- and the glow from that fire can truly light the world."

And, he added, "With a good conscience our only sure reward, with history the final judge of our deeds, let us go forth and lead the land we love, asking His blessing and His help, but knowing that here on earth God's work must truly be our own."

During the R.F.K. bridge rededication, his daughter, Kerry Kennedy, recited a poem by Langston Hughes, "Let America Be America Again." It ends with these words:

O, let America be America again--
The land that never has been yet--
And yet must be--the land where every man is free.
The land that's mine--the poor man's, Indian's, Negro's, ME--
Who made America,
Whose sweat and blood, whose faith and pain,
Whose hand at the foundry, whose plow in the rain,
Must bring back our mighty dream again.

Sure, call me any ugly name you choose--
The steel of freedom does not stain.
From those who live like leeches on the people's lives,
We must take back our land again,
America!

O, yes,
I say it plain,
America never was America to me,
And yet I swear this oath--
America will be!

Out of the rack and ruin of our gangster death,
The rape and rot of graft, and stealth, and lies,
We, the people, must redeem
The land, the mines, the plants, the rivers.
The mountains and the endless plain--
All, all the stretch of these great green states--
And make America again!

The World is Waiting for the Sunrise

In closing, we don't think that things would have gone the way they did if, in the years after 9/11, New York had had a Sen. Kennedy or a Sen. Moynihan. And yet, our bogeymen shall be faceless and nameless. In the Spirit of September 12th we would even observe that if Gov. Pataki had insisted on rebuilding the Twin Towers right after 9/11 they would be standing now, and they would be inspiring. But maybe that wasn't his destiny, because nothing could compare to the brilliant testimony that they will now proclaim: The government of the people, by the people, and for the people still works the way it was intended to work.

Thomas Paine said in *Common Sense*: "The cause of America is in a great measure the cause of all mankind." He went on to immortalize our founding creed: "We have it in our power to begin the world over again."

What will be dramatically reinforced when this "impossible" dream comes true is that *it is still in our power to do just that.*

The fact that we the citizens, operating year after year with a shortage of funds and no political clout, will have used the tools we all possess to enforce the government's compliance – in spite of all the money and power arrayed against us – will be a milestone in the saga of America. The dedication it took was motivated by an oath to our 3,000 brothers and sisters who were assassinated on September 11, 2001: "*America will be.*"

The lesson of all of this is that we have to stop following the followers – we have got to start leading our leaders. Democracy is a full-time job. Supreme Court Justice Brandeis observed that "The most important political office is that of citizen." If officials couldn't do something as logical and popular as rebuilding the Twin Towers, why should we trust them to get anything else right? Where has all the expertise in Washington gotten us? The powers that be have been running

this country like Masters of the Universe for much too long and we can see where that has led. It's time to tell the man cranking away behind the curtain that we are ready to work together to make our dreams come true.

How those in power ever thought they could get away with ignoring what 90% of the people favor is hard to fathom. It must be due to their control of the information channels. *But their confidence was misplaced because the idea of America has a life of its own and our Democracy is coming of age.*

The famous admonition to "never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world – indeed, it is the only thing that ever has" was never more compelling. *We can* "fight City Hall" and we *must* when those we elect forget their place. It is our solemn duty as free people.

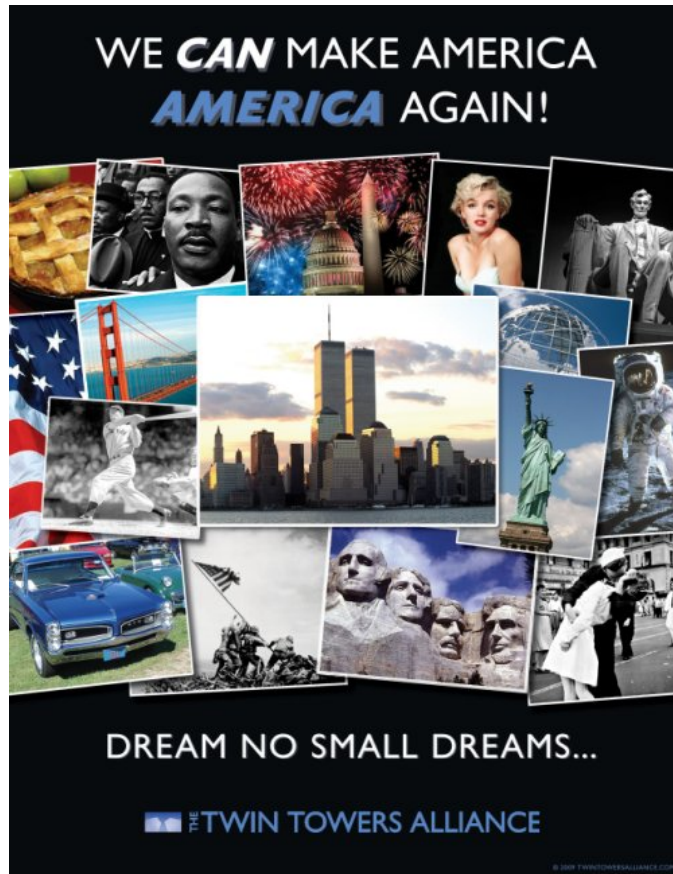
We are willing to forgive, because we are one country, one family, but we can't afford to forget. From where we stand those who are trying to force a bad project on the rest of us are digging their heels into quicksand.

We'd like to show them that there is a marvelous way out of this mess. We'd like to think that it really has been a series of misunderstandings and honest mistakes. We can make this a win-win for every American and for our friends around the world. The obstacles are so much less daunting than the mountain of wreckage that brave men and women conquered after September 11, 2001.

We can do it. *Yes, we can.* Benjamin Franklin said, "The Constitution only guarantees the American people the right to pursue happiness. You have to catch it yourself." We are doing our best. How much more money has to be wasted before officials will listen to reason is their call. Whether or not they will get away with it is ours.

In the end, the whole world has been waiting for the sunrise since those towers and the lives within them disappeared. The years since then have been very dark and *everyone* can be forgiven for whatever part they played in the confusion that followed. It is human nature to fall short, but on September 11, 2001, we saw how astonishing and exalted human nature really can be.

The challenge today is to revive the Spirit of September 12th and come together without rancor in service to the common cause of Freedom. If we will only mobilize our better angels now we can transform a very dark night into a very bright day and, as the saying goes – The Sun Shines For All.



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