



Max M. Kampelman Papers

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AN INTRODUCTION BY MAX KAMPELMAN

America today faces profound challenges at home and abroad. Taken together, they constitute nothing less than a "gathering storm," the likes of which our nation has not seen in many years. In order to meet these challenges effectively, the next President will need to unite the nation as it has been united in its finest moments—such as the Revolution and World War II—and both devise and carry out a grand strategy for American renewal. It is easy for candidates and Presidents to talk a good line on national unity, but, for the man or woman elected in 2008, restoring this critical source of American strength will be a requirement.

I strongly agree with the frank but wise account of national challenges, Presidential history, and strategic recommendations presented in the pages that follow. David Abshire, a lifelong public servant, has been an advisor to Presidents, an Assistant Secretary of State, an Ambassador to NATO, a founder of the Center for Strategic and International Studies and now heads the Center for the Study of the Presidency. Here, he draws on his own experience as well as his impressive knowledge of past Presidential successes and failures to present an indispensable guide to Executive Office leadership and a roadmap to restoring America's financial freedom, unity of action, and position in the world. David can be a critical judge, and his recommendations may not jibe with the conventional wisdom of campaign politics—but his concept of civility and strategic vision needs to be heard in 2008 more than ever. As the polls tell us, the American public has had enough. They yearn for accountability and competence in both the Executive and Legislative branches.

David Abshire and I came to Washington over four decades ago from very different backgrounds. A West Point graduate who served in Korea, David finished his Ph.D. in History from Georgetown University in 1959, and shortly thereafter became director of the House Republican Policy Committee. I came as a Senate staffer for Hubert Humphrey in 1949. We both witnessed the Cuban Missile Crisis and worked together to overcome the second missile crisis of the mid-1980s. In those years the Soviets were making their final attempt to break the backbone of the transatlantic alliance through deploying SS-20 missiles. David was then our Ambassador to NATO, rallying our allies against the Soviets, while I was the strategic arms negotiator in Geneva, frequently visiting him at NATO headquarters for our reports. As special counselors to the President we were fortunate to have been involved in the successful management of a near-disaster. In both of these missile crises—in 1962 and in the 1980s—the nation and our allies were unified in our strategic goals, and mobilized to respond decisively. If there had been divisions abroad and polarization at home, we would have lost the Cold War, as we seem to be losing our global stature today. The adage for this book is, appropriately, Lincoln's: *"A House Divided Against Itself Cannot Stand."*

In Part I, David offers a tour de force of Presidential history and distills seven characteristics essential to leadership in the highest office. He somberly notes that one or two of these qualities will not be enough. Early in his Senatorial career, John Kennedy, and more recently Michael Beschloss, artfully and powerfully explored the quality of courage. But courage alone is insufficient, and blind courage can be dangerous. If "courage" leads a President to become isolated from potential allies and advisors—if it means retreating into the "White House Bubble," which, as David shows, has brought tragedy to numerous Presidents—then courage ceases to be a virtue. Particularly in a time of war, courage must be leavened with trust. When Presidents have lost trust, we have tended to lose wars.

This document differs from more conventional studies in stressing the power of building coalitions and partners. Both David and I were close to the late professor Richard Neustadt, arguably the "Dean" of Presidential historians, who tirelessly advocated the power of persuasion as a Presidential tool. In this book, David focuses on the power of persuasion in forging alliances and partnerships with Congress and with the private sector as well. Indeed, David effectively demonstrates that unity and civility are not just good-sounding ideals but tools of power in their own right. Too often Presidents have ignored this insight.

We should note and applaud the last section of this book, which calls for the next President to be a grand strategist. The two model Presidential grand strategists are particularly well-chosen. The first, Abraham Lincoln, was a near genius. We may despair if we conclude, with no disrespect to the candidates, that there does not appear to be a Lincoln in sight. The second example is Franklin Roosevelt, who was neither a genius nor a great manager, but a superlative leader. Between them, they elucidate six critical components of effective grand strategy.

Roosevelt knew his weaknesses—he could be impatient and lacked a grasp of detail—and this is what allowed him to so ingeniously organize effort and enlist talent during the Depression and World War II. He also knew how to reach out. A year and a half before Pearl Harbor, the formerly partisan New Deal leader ended his partisanship and started to include talented Republicans in his efforts for victory. This is just one of the lessons from this book with which I strongly agree. If the next President wishes to answer the call to greatness, this is an indispensable guide.



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Max M. Kampelman was from 1980 to 1983 Ambassador to the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe; from 1985 to 1989 Ambassador and Head of the United States Delegation to the Negotiations with the Soviet Union on Nuclear and Space Arms in Geneva; and from 1987 to 1989 Counselor of the Department of State. He then rejoined the law firm of Fried, Frank, Harris, Shriver and Jacobson, LLP.

Ambassador Kampelman serves as Chairman Emeritus of the American Academy of Diplomacy, Georgetown University's Institute for the Study of Diplomacy, the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, and Freedom House.

In 1999, President Clinton awarded him the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the nation's highest civilian award. In 1989, President Reagan awarded him the Presidential Citizens Medal, which recognizes "citizens of the United States who have performed exemplary deeds of service for their country or their fellow citizens."