

Foreword

How many times have you read an op-ed in the newspaper that changed the way you think? Most of us would answer, not very often. But if you were lucky enough to read an essay by Charlie Wolf in the *Wall Street Journal*, the *Los Angeles Times*, or the *International Herald Tribune* (or other major publications) in the last few years, your perspective was enlarged and your thinking was enriched.

This is the third collection of Charlie's essays, following two successful publications in 1991 (*Linking Economic and Foreign Policy*) and 1997 (*The Economic Pivot in a Political Context*), published by Transaction Publishers. It has been my privilege to contribute the Foreword to all three, probably because it was at my urging years ago that Charlie publish his work outside RAND, where I first met him. These twenty-five essays were written between 2002 and 2007 and, like good wine, are getting better as he ages.

With his global perspective, Charlie explains such mysteries as Chinese-style capitalism, Japan's relationship with North Korea, what if Iraq had not been invaded, and how to improve public diplomacy. My own favorite is the last essay in this book, "Liberals and Conservatives: Who's What and Where?" in which

Charlie observes that “the policy orientations associated with liberals and conservatives in American politics are the precise opposites of what the labels stand for in the rest of the world.” Think that one over.

A fine mind coupled with clear writing skills is a treasure. Readers of Charlie Wolf’s latest work will find rich rewards indeed.

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