

The American Challenge

Jean-Jacques Servan-Schreiber

Foreword by Paul Krugman,
Winner of the Nobel Prize in Economics



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“The signs and instruments of power are no longer armed legions or raw materials or capital... The wealth we seek does not lie in the earth or in numbers of men or in machines, but in the human spirit. And particularly in the ability of men to think and to create.” -- Jean-Jacques Servan-Schreiber in his international bestseller, *The American Challenge*.

The American Challenge was 50 years ahead of its time in its appraisal of Europe, industrialization, the global economy and digital future, and the sclerosis of French politics. The youth of the World can now rediscover this landmark book, and take measure of all that still remains to be accomplished to bring to fruition the dreams of post-war generation.

“The world we live in is very much the world Servan-Schreiber imagined,” Professor Paul Krugman writes in his preface to this ebook edition, further adding that “JJS was an incredibly insightful prophet.”

With its radically new economic and political vision, *The American Challenge* was a bestseller when first published in 1967. Selling over 2 million copies in France and more than 10 million throughout the world, the book was translated and published in 16 languages and 26 countries.

This first ebook edition provides the original edition’s text in its entirety. Available from all major online retailers, it includes a new preface by *New York Times* op-ed contributor and Nobel Prize winner in Economics, Paul Krugman, acclaiming a book that “marked a whole generation.”

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Jean-Jacques Servan-Schreiber (1924 – 2006) was a WWII fighter pilot, the founder of the French newsweekly *L’Express*, author of several bestsellers, and deputy and President of the regional council of Lorraine. He was also a professor and chairman of the department of strategic thinking at Carnegie-Mellon University in Pittsburgh, where a fellowship in his name was established in 2004.

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• QUOTES •

“Today it’s a commonplace to say that we live in a knowledge economy, that human capital matters more than physical capital, that economic value comes largely from invisible assets, that innovation matters more than accumulation. In 1968 these were radical propositions. Never mind trans-Atlantic rivalry, Servan-Schreiber had a vision of the future that has come stunningly true.”

Paul Krugman, Ph.D, Nobel Prize in Economics

“*The American Challenge*, was not only a game changer for European–American relations, it also provided a new and innovative conception of national competitiveness. The book was a true catalyst in the creation of the World Economic Forum.”

Klaus Schwab, Founder and Chairman, The World Economic Forum

“Jean-Jacques Servan-Schreiber first put forth his bold vision of accelerating American prosperity back in 1967. While this outcome seemed inevitable at the time, half a century later we have fallen far short of that future. The reissue of his landmark book serves as a clarion call for our stagnant civilization to find a way back to the optimistic future of the 1960s.”

Peter Thiel, Co-Founder of Paypal, Managing Partner of the Founders’ Fund

“Jean-Jacques Servan-Schreiber was a true humanist. He understood the importance of the sovereignty for the people in the wake of European colonialism, as well as the potential in federating resources in an increasingly multipolar world, exemplified by his support of the European integration. He also foresaw the possibilities and challenges of modern technology.”

Nicolas Berggruen, President, Berggruen Institute on Governance

“*The American Challenge* is an excellent, vigorous and modern book – that is to say, one free of many of the usual shortcomings and repetitiveness of commonplace thinking.”

Valéry Giscard d’Estaing, President of France, 1974-1981

“*The American Challenge* gave me unqualified joy and set my thoughts alight. It is a great achievement. One that leaves the reader wanting to react, and to succeed.”

François Mitterrand, President of France, 1981-1995

“*The American Challenge* is at the top of the best seller lists. For a tome rich in statistics and dealing with the world of economic and corporate development, computers, satellites and the rivalries of industrial power blocs, this is an astonishing success. If Marx had done as well with “*Das Kapital*”, we might all be waving red flags and eating caviar.”

New York Times, May 19, 1968

“*The American Challenge* is one of those landmark books that leave a trace upon their era. It’s hard to imagine today the huge effect that the book had. Servan-Schreiber proved himself to be one of the most clear-sighted and daring thinkers of his time, and of ours too.”

Robert Badinter, Minister of Justice, 1981-1986

“*The American Challenge* was a huge achievement that influenced a whole generation. It inspired me to leave for the US following my Olympic gold medal to launch my professional career. It’s a book that radiates intelligence and remains pertinent as ever.”

Jean-Claude Killy, triple gold medalist at the 1968 Olympic Games, Grenoble

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"The American Challenge's first publication, which led to my first conversation with Jean-Jacques Servan-Schreiber, was the beginning of my awakening to an awareness of Europe, and to the importance of long-term thinking. This major book had a considerable impact, even for its predictions that didn't come to pass, no doubt because we were able to counter the forewarned menaces."

Jacques Attali, former President of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, economist and writer

"I'm part of the generation for which *The American Challenge* was a cult book. It was a rallying call for us Europeans. The open market, the Euro, and many other of the European Union's political achievements sprang forth from *The American Challenge*. JJSS was an unequalled awakener of ideas."

Alain Minc, writer

The one-hour show tests contestants on their Bible knowledge. Utilizing current as well as historical references, questions will be drawn from the rich, dense narrative found in the world's best-selling book. The contestants will share their compelling back-stories and each team will be playing for a charitable organization. The American Challenge was 50 years ahead of its time in its appraisal of Europe, industrialization, the global economy and digital future, and the sclerosis of French politics. The youth of the world can now rediscover this landmark book, and take measure of all that still remains to be accomplished to bring to fruition the dreams of post-war generation. The Chinese challenge is very different from the American challenge. The Chinese do not possess (at least, not yet) superior management techniques, technological tools and research capacity. The new challenge: Coping with Chinese characteristics. What we will see instead is a new form of challenge, one which bears distinct Chinese characteristics. What that means exactly remains to be seen and will unfold in the decade or two to come. In all probability, the concept of China as the Middle Kingdom will revive.