

# We can meet the challenges ahead

Fareed Zakaria's cover story in the Monday issue of *Time* magazine, "How to Restore the American Dream," should be required reading for all Americans.

In this masterfully written essay, Zakaria clearly and convincingly explains the transformation our economy is currently undergoing. More importantly, he provides a road map of what we need to be doing in light of the emerging paradigm.

Zakaria perfectly captures the prevailing mood of the country.

"Americans are far more apprehensive than usual, and their worries seem to go beyond the short-term debate over stimulus vs. deficit reduction," Zakaria observes. "They fear that we are in the midst of not a cyclical downturn but a structural shift, one that poses huge new challenges to the average American job, pressures the average American wage and endangers the average American Dream."

He is absolutely right.

Americans need to wake up and realize that we are in the middle of a fundamental transformation of the nature of work that will ultimately affect our entire way of life.

"Technology and globalization are working together at warp speed, creating a powerful new reality," Zakaria explains. "While businesses have a way to navigate this new world, the ordinary American worker does not."

To further accentuate his point, Zakaria quotes Louis Gerstner, the former CEO of American Express and IBM:

"Most jobs that will have good prospects in the future will be complicated. They will involve being able to juggle data, symbols, computer programs in some way or the other, no matter what the task."

"To do this, workers will need to be educated and often retrained," Gerstner adds.

We should be optimistic; there is little doubt in my mind regarding our ability to meet the enormous challenges that lie ahead.

But it is increasingly obvious that we are not in Kansas anymore.

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Page 2-C