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LETTERS TO THE INTERNATIONAL HERALD TRIBUNE

## Local Culture and History

Ross Douthat (“Life after the end of history,” Views, Nov. 9) argues that liberal democracy and free-market capitalism have prevailed since the fall of the Berlin Wall, supporting Francis Fukuyama’s view that the end of the Cold War marked the disappearance of any enduring threat to the U.S. system.

While the U.S. offers a good model, it should not be seen as the only one. Liberal democracies do not always provide for human dignity. We need political systems that balance the tension between human behavior and the need for such dignity.

Equally important, we need political systems that are mindful of local culture and history. No one culture has a monopoly on excellence.

Nayef R.F. Al-Rodhan, Geneva

Obama’s just getting started

Regarding “Why Europe feels rejected by Obama” by John Vinocur (Politicus, Nov. 17): Lighten up, Mr. Vinocur. President Obama has been in office a short time and the world is a large place. He has a lot of work to do, many fences to mend and a lot of trust to re-earn.

MaryAnn Ready, Gig Harbor, Washington

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