God Against Empire: Implicit Imperialism, Deliberative Democracy and Global Civil Society

Gary M. Simpson

Follow this and additional works at: http://scholars.wlu.ca/consensus

Recommended Citation
Available at: http://scholars.wlu.ca/consensus/vol29/iss2/2
God is against empire, obviously. Or is it so obvious? Throughout the ages Eastern and Western Christians have lived comfortably within empires. Regularly, we have even legitimated, constructed, and ruled Christian empires. Eusebius of Caesarea (c. AD 260-340) made the classic Christian argument, largely persuasive in that epoch. First, the biblical God had personally and precisely directed history to culminate in the Roman Empire. Second, God had personally raised up Constantine and precisely equipped him to be the emperor capable of making the Roman empire godly, indeed, Christian. So, given the long history of Christian arguments, which adopted and adapted Eusebius’s basic case, why does it appear so obvious to many Christians today that the biblical God is against empire? Ironically, we unwittingly promote empire to the extent that we simply assume that God is self-evidently against empire. Call this assumption “routinized empire ungodliness.”

Those today who intend empire and who aspire to invent a US empire count on routinized empire ungodliness. In fact, the United States is a classic instance of routinized empire ungodliness. We are a country born by a revolution against imperial power because God is against empire. We have engraved this in our most sacred document, The Declaration of Independence. Tragically, however, routinized empire ungodliness helps to cloak an emerging implicit imperialism.

Implicit imperialism looms just beneath the surface of US routinized empire ungodliness. Actually US public life seems more like an amorphous muddle of implicit imperialism and routinized empire ungodliness. But it could get worse! The inventors of implicit imperialism will – when the time is right (say, for example, after a horrific terrorist attack of staggering proportions beyond even the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 [hereafter 9/11]) – uncover
and unleash a full term, full spectrum, explicit empire. The world’s only hope!

Now again is the time to make an explicit public case that God is against empire and how God is against empire. This case will help us to see through the implicit imperialism already being prototyped right under our noses. Since the Soviet Union and its empire collapsed in 1989, the US has taken on the self-consciousness of “the only remaining superpower.” Neo-con internationalists have used the 9/11 atrocity to stimulate an erotic of imperial power. Finally, we must root a persuasive critique of empire in what the biblical God is “for” in the international sphere.

Our inquiry will take seven turns. First, I will explore the nature of the assertion, “God is against empire.” Second, I will outline the historic modern forms of empire and the classic rationales for empire as a backdrop for perceiving “implicit imperialism.” Third, I will pose the question of implicit imperialism in the context of an emerging and ascending neo-con internationalism. Fourth, I will examine “the Bush doctrine” as the public face of implicit imperialism. Fifth, I will analyze the 2003-2004 Iraq War within the context of implicit imperialism. Sixth, I will explore how the biblical God is accomplishing epoch-making good through the emergence of civil society and deliberative democracy. Finally, I will suggest that by honouring God in the emerging global civil society we are critical participants in God’s preferential option for an international rule of just law.

1. The Nature of the Assertion, “God Is against Empire”

Biblically speaking, empire is neither commanded nor forbidden. The ancient Stoics provided the category for such phenomena: adiaphora or, as the Latin scholars translated it, “indifferent things.” Throughout the centuries Christians have appropriated this Stoic category, sometimes uncritically and thus detrimentally, and at other times more critically and thus fruitfully. An example of the former is when Christians appropriated the Stoic claim that passions and emotions per se are indifferent, merely bodily externals that make no positive contribution to the moral life and, indeed in the view of some Christians, even mortally imperil the moral life. A critical and fruitful appropriation happened when, during the Reformation era adiaphorist controversy, Lutheranism’s Formula of Concord deemed that under certain circumstances even adiaphora, things neither

http://scholars.wlu.ca/consensus/vol29/iss2/2
commanded nor forbidden by God, could be an occasion for *tempus confessionis*, a time for confessing.\(^1\) The so-called Second Adiaphorist Controversy of the seventeenth century pertains to our situation regarding empire because it involved Christian theological assessments of public life.\(^4\)

Christian public theology and ethics addresses things both biblically commanded and forbidden by God as well as things neither biblically commanded nor forbidden by God, that is, adiaphora. An example of something commanded by God, which public theology and ethics addresses, is divinely instituted political authority. An example of something forbidden by God, which public theology and ethics addresses, is holy war and crusade executed under the sign of the cross.\(^5\) An inquiry regarding empire entails public theology and ethics addressing an adiaphoron.

"Now wait a minute!" perhaps you are thinking, or even shouting. "Empire cannot be an adiaphoron because it is so weighty. Are not adiaphora ‘indifferent’ things and therefore unimportant?" Lutherans usually remember clearly that polity, especially church polity, is a matter of adiaphora. That is, neither churchly nor worldly polity is scripturally laid down in stone for all times and places. From this conviction, however, we have drawn the false conclusion that adiaphora are theologically unimportant, uninteresting, even neutral. Calling adiaphora “indifferent” things lulls us towards this supposition. But that supposition goes against the intention of this Lutheran teaching.

Our Lutheran memory needs sharpening in three ways. First, polity matters! Without doubt, both churchly and temporal polity matter. They matter to the world because they matter to the biblical God who created this world to flourish and continually creates it so. Second, because neither churchly nor worldly polity is scripturally laid down in stone for all times and places, therefore both entail the historical variability of God’s continuing creativity. Finally, because churchly and temporal polities are adiaphora, thereby debatable variables of God’s continuing creativity, we ought, of course, therefore, to deliberate them. We ought to deliberate them, vigorously, for each time and place with all the theological and ethical resources and skills that we can bring to the task. Such theological and ethical deliberation is the very prototype of a theological-ethical task.\(^6\)
We study empire in the concrete and this brings a difficulty. Our inquiry meets partisan politics. In the 2000 US presidential election the electorate was evenly divided. A January 2004 Gallup Organization study revealed that Republicans and Democrats were evenly divided, each holding 45% of the popular vote. In one way the divide in 2004 looks a lot like the 2000 presidential divide. In another way the divide is different. Since 9/11 and the 2003-04 Iraq War, issues that often internally divide Democrats have moved to the foreground, while issues that often internally divide Republicans have moved to the background. The form of the United States’ international spirit is such an issue.

A caveat is therefore prudent. There is a risk in the way that I make my case, especially because I situate the Iraq War and “the Bush doctrine” squarely within the context of imperialism. To many that seems, well, just plain extreme, conspiratorial, or even unpatriotic. Take for example, the reprimand by David Horowitz, a well-known convert to neo-conservatism from left liberalism.

And while it may be perfectly reasonable to argue about the justification to go to war, calling the president a deceiver and accusing him of sacrificing Americans for no particular cause is not a reasonable argument. It is a stab in the back of the commander in chief and the nation whose security he is defending. And not only in respect to the president but to all Americans, especially the troops in harms way.7

To guard the nation against back-stabbing traitors is a rational suspicion. I, myself, have this suspicion though the “back-stab” rhetoric tends toward repression. Surely, in a nation “of the people, by the people, for the people” everyone bears the calling of vigilance. To safeguard the President and the Presidency is normative patriotism. A nation of, by, and for the people, however, dare never confuse critical vigilance with quiet compliance.8 Doth Horowitz commend compliance?

Generally, critics of the President do not rebuke him for executing the War “for no particular cause.” That certainly is not my objection. Quite the contrary! The President, under neo-con influence, has a “particular cause,” implicit imperialism. To explicate

http://scholars.wlu.ca/consensus/vol29/iss2/2
that cause is one important task; another is to expose deception and its historic rationale and purpose.

2. Empire and Implicit Imperialism

In his January 20, 2004 *State of the Union Address* President George W. Bush sought to reassure the United States, an assurance heard around the world: “America is a nation with a mission, and that mission comes from our most basic beliefs. We have no desire to dominate, no ambitions of empire.” That the president had to tender this assurance itself indicates that real “empire” merits investigation. Four days later in Davos, Switzerland, Vice President Dick Cheney sought again to disavow any US ambition to empire. “If we were to empire, we would currently preside over a much greater piece of the Earth’s surface than we do. That’s not the way we operate.” Of course, the 2003-2004 Iraq War precipitates these executive disavowals. The Vice President’s definition of empire as one nation-state politically presiding over other nation-states’ territories obliges us to examine the different forms of empire less we miss the factual form before us and how the Iraq War reveals implicit imperialism.

Empire always carries both internal and external dimensions. Implicit imperialism does likewise. I concentrate on external international dynamics, but this does not imply that internal domestic dynamics are less significant. International and domestic dynamics remain linked. For instance, domestic systemic deception facilitates the execution of imperial internationalism. Indeed, systemic deception is a tell-tale mark.

One recognized definition of empire states: “the policy of a state aiming to establish control beyond its borders over people unwilling to accept such control.” The word “control” is a strong word and may seem on a first read to imply the control of territory by means of military force or by an imposed law backed by force. Of course, it can mean that and, as we will see, that is one classic form of empire; but it is not the only form. Since the fifteenth century there have been three broad periods of empire. The first period runs roughly from the fifteen through the eighteenth centuries. The empires built by England, France, Netherlands, Portugal, and Spain, and often in competition with each other, colonized the Americas, India, and the East Indies. Spain and Portugal geographically partitioned the non-Christian world by drawing a line through the Atlantic Ocean. Each
could claim and occupy territory on their agreed upon side of the line. Portugal agreed to stay east of the line and Spain to stay west of the line. While Portugal’s territory made for barely an empire, Spain colonized a great swath of the Americas. Spain’s overseas territories became and remained the King’s private estate.

The second period runs from the nineteenth century until World War I. Russian, Italy, Japan, and the United States all, to some extent, entered the empire picture. Legalized ownership backed by military force receded into the background as the defining form of empire. Indirect, especially financial, control became the preferred form of imperialism. The birth of the League of Nations at the close of World War I kept this form of imperialism in check for barely a decade.

The third period runs from 1930 through the 1980s. Imperial Japan, fascist Italy, nationalist-socialist Germany, and communist Russia invented empire in an aggressive totalitarian form that incorporated elements of both previous forms. Vice President Cheney rejects only the form of empire characterized by “legalized,” territorial ownership and backed by military force, which dominated the first period of empire and which was revived in totalitarian mode in the third period. History teaches that the economic costs of that form are high and unsustainable for the seat of empire. Further, it teaches that the burden of misery where the boot of control meets the seized territory is not humanly tolerable for long. Neo-cons know this. They also know that “legalized” territorial seizure is not the only historic form.

We can see how different forms by reviewing the four classic justifications for the modern forms of empire. The first justification draws on an economic rationale. Simply put, an efficient empire provides economic benefits for all. Classical liberals like Adam Smith (18th century) and David Ricardo (early 19th century) rejected the economic argument for empire. They noted that a few elites do benefit greatly, but the nation as a whole and the empire as a whole does not proportionately. Ironically, Smith had inspired the more economically focused form of empire because he had argued that territory was not the sole source of imperial wealth and that labor was an increasing source of wealth. Classical Marxists like Vladimir Lenin (20th century) and Nikolai Bukharin (20th century) also rejected the economic argument in its particularly capitalist form. They viewed capitalism and imperialism as identical in capitalism’s late stage. National
capitalist economies become monopolistic and are forced to conquer foreign outlets to accommodate their overproduction and foreign sources to acquire cheaper raw materials and labor.

A second modern justification for empire draws on a human nature rationale. In brief, human beings engage in a natural struggle for survival and for dominance. Niccolo Machiavelli (16th century), Francis Bacon (17th century), Thomas Hobbes (17th century), Herbert Spencer (19th century), Ludwig Gumplowicz (19th century), Adolf Hitler (20th century), and Benito Mussolini (20th century) among others typify this argument. The overwhelmingly powerful will ruthlessly rule over the masses — masses who otherwise would only engage in a perpetual war of all against all. Classic political liberalism has rejected this view and offered the equal rights tradition in its place.

A third modern justification for empire draws on national security and strategic arguments. This rationale for empire aims to establish and maintain buffer states equipped with military bases, and to control communication and strategic command of military resources. The seat of empire uses vassal buffer states as satellites. These satellite nations receive both security and economic assistance, not much different from the ancient practice of a mercenary army. This has been the dominant post-World War II imperial rationale.12

A fourth modern justification for empire feeds off a moral rationale, at times harmonized with a religiously missionary tenor. This is the classic noblesse oblige of a permanent aristocracy now practiced on an international stage.13 Those of high birth, social standing, economic wealth, and political-military power carry special obligations of generosity to care for those of lesser birth, standing, wealth, and power for the latter’s own good. The seat of empire armed with this moral rationale stresses the sacrifices it makes for the betterment of those ruled and the resolve that it takes on the part of the empire to be so sacrificially beneficent. After all we aristocrats “wouldn’t have to” and “it’s for their own good.”

People typically assume that ancient Rome justified the pax Romana according to a human nature rationale akin to the second one above. There is an element of truth in that assumption. But the human nature argument requires a ubiquitous, overwhelming military force. Roman moralists offered a more effective strategy based upon an aristocratic moral vision. Aristocrats resolutely practiced their
honour-shame culture on a daily basis throughout the Empire. This comprehensive set of practices maintained the Empire more effectively and in a way that no standing army could possibly do because of the expensive.

When the honour-shame society frayed, which constantly happened, the Empire would send in the cavalry to apply force and to mend the tear in the honour-shame cloth. When the cavalry met a full-scale revolt, the Empire would deploy the overwhelming power of its standing army until the cavalry could handle it again and eventually hand back the honour-shame cloth to the aristocracy. The *pax Romana* relied upon critical intelligence, preemptive force, precision strikes, and military mobility.¹⁴

These four rationales are not mutually exclusive. Historically imperialists have combined them. Sometimes hegemonic theorists use one rationale to reinforce another; at other times an imperialist will publicly hail one rationale in order to provide cover for the true justification of empire. In the latter situation imperial advocates publicly air and aim a certain rationale to convince a broad public with common needs and concerns. The tacit rationale, inaudible to the general public, serves the interests of a few who are spoken to quietly though clearly. For instance, an imperial herald might publicly proclaim a national security rationale for empire that masks a tacit, crony capitalist, economic rationale primarily benefiting the elite.

This is the classic setting of ideology. Historically, those with imperial ambition use arguments that draw from the natural right to safety in the third historic rationale or from the natural obligation to beneficence in the fourth historic rationale in order to cloak the first two historic rationales, which appear to many to be little more than slavery or tyranny. These public cloaking strategies divulge systematically distorted communication. Moreover, systemic deception funds the *implicity* of implicit imperialism. Finally, systemic deception is the feedback loop between the international and domestic sides of implicit imperialism.¹⁵

Nearly fifty years ago Reinhold Niebuhr said, "The final question is where the empire of the American super-state fits into this gradation of value [the costs and benefits both intended and collateral of the various forms of empire]; and where the empire which is so desperately anxious not to be an empire stands."¹⁶ At the close of the 1950s Niebuhr argued that balancing the two great empires was the
only real way forward. To make this argument he had to confess empire. Today’s neo-cons refuse to make that confession publicly, a refusal they consider to be wise. We must engage neo-con internationalists because they frame both President Bush’s disavowal of empire and “the Bush doctrine” that executes implicit imperialism.

3. Neo-con Internationalism as Implicit Imperialism

Neo-con theorists aim to sculpt the future by controlling the form of US internationalism. Paul Wolfowitz notes, “In a world where American primacy seems so overwhelming ... [t]he ultimate test of foreign policy is how successfully it shapes the future.” Neo-cons assert that during the last quarter century “the world [has] indeed been transformed in America’s image.” They seek to strengthen and extend that benevolent transformation, “above all, preserving and reinforcing America’s benevolent global hegemony” (6). This discourse of “benevolent global hegemony” corresponds to the moral rationale for empire. Neo-con internationalists refuse – wisely as they see it – to use the word “empire.” Despite this refusal they sponsor and speak “empire” nevertheless. Call it, “implicit imperialism.” How is this so?

Neo-con internationalists denounce “a return to normal times” and decry the US ever becoming again “a normal nation” (9-12). Instead, they compare US power and prestige to that exercised when “Rome dominated the Mediterranean world” (6). They do not envision America being a mere “saviour of last resort” for world peace or a “reluctant sheriff” enforcing justice (15-16). Such callings betray a weak and wimpy America. George Will, the influential neo-con journalist, thinks this wimpy leadership is due to “the feminization” of leadership, of politics, and of internationalism. Will desires “manly” leadership, “the modern prince,” re-masculinization.

Neo-con theorists announce the new calling, the preferred future. The “United States would instead conceive of itself as at once a European power, an Asian power, a Middle Eastern power and, of course, a Western Hemisphere power” (15-16). Above all, neo-cons pursue a “unipolar era” (6). “A multipolar world ... would be far more dangerous” than the unipolar world of US “benevolent global hegemony.” Later, we will follow up on the clue given by George Will regarding “the prince.”
The 1990s saw little difference between Democrats and Republicans, between liberals and conservatives, say the neo-cons. Everyone confessed and practiced either wimpy "liberal internationalism" (by and large Democrats) or international "isolationism" (by and large Republicans), or a Cold War realism with a missing rival (both Democrats and Republicans). During the mid to late 1990s the neo-cons strategized to transform the Republican Party by denouncing isolationism. This denunciation bore abundant fruit only after 9/11.

During the 1990s neo-cons internationalists enunciated pre-emptive "regime change" "as a central component" of its doctrine. Neo-cons "regard military force as an instrument of foreign policy to be called upon when necessary to achieve our goals. A bit more abstractly, but no less importantly, [neo-con] internationalists find worth and dignity in the nation committing itself to this kind of enterprise ...." Theodore Roosevelt set the precedent at the dawn of the twentieth century. Theodore Rex, after all, privileged "warlike intervention by the civilized powers [which] would contribute directly to the peace of the world."

Neo-con internationalists claim that "America's benevolent global hegemony" comports and conducts itself by blending universal moral principle with US national interest. The principles cited are democracy and free-market capitalism. Many find it difficult to object to neo-con rhetoric because of the abstract manner in which they time and again intone these principles. In fact, they stay on message so monotonously and vacuously that you might even imagine them hiring a Madison Avenue marketing firm to write this part of their script. Publicly they intone these principles as abstractly as possible. Among themselves they hold a specific, concrete form of democracy, an aristocratic form of democracy, which we will investigate in part six below.

The neo-con notion of "statesmanship" betrays their aristocratic ethos. Neo-cons note that the move from principles to the application of principles means taking contingent circumstances into consideration. This move to application, say the neo-cons, distinguishes them from idealists, who also claim to be principled. Neo-cons are adamant in this. Applying principles means always weighing competing interests and objectives. Neo-con "statesmanship" consists of "melding the necessities of the moment with our strategic objectives and moral ideals."
Well, so far so good. Neo-con statesmanship partakes of a classic difference between Plato and Aristotle. Plato, the idealist, would have the philosopher-king, angelically from above, employing his pure reason (*nous*) to rule disinterestedly (and thereby in self-delusion by Aristotle's judgment). Aristotle, the principled pragmatist, would have the statesman, fully embodied in the contingencies and ambiguities of this world, employing his practical wisdom (*phronesis*) to rule the mix of interests and situations before him. If this were the forced choice I would recommend Aristotle's path. In part six below, we will see how civil society significantly revisions "practical reason," which signals a critical departure from an aristocratic ethos toward a deliberative ethos.

At this point, however, neo-con internationalists self-consciously take the troubling turn that *constitutes* the imperialist impulse itself, and that legitimates the systemic deception at the heart of implicit imperialism. Paul Wolfowitz immediately follows up the statecraft "melding" of circumstantial necessity, strategy, and moral ideal with this conclusion: "Thus, foreign policy decisions cannot be subject to the kind of 'rule of law' that we want for our domestic political process."¹⁴ Note the cleavage! The neo-con future privileges an enduring aristocratic internationalism! Four great millstones fasten around this conclusion and plunge it into the swirling sea of empire.

In the neo-con moral world the United States should aspire – aspire! – to live autonomously from the rule of law. The first millstone! Neo-con internationalists desire the US to be "the man" of the world. "Who, then, will rule the ruler?" This is an ancient Western inquiry, asked classically by Plutarch and debated throughout the Middle Ages and Renaissance.²⁵ The US settled the question for itself at its founding. We are a nation "of laws, and not of men."²⁶ Will neo-cons overturn this birthright of the United States of America?

Plutarch reasoned that "law" was embodied in the person of the ruler, and, as we mentioned at the outset, Eusebius of Caesarea gave Plutarch's reasoning a Christian theological spin. Neo-con internationalists have decided resolutely in Plutarch's favor.²⁷ Law is embodied in the corporate person of the US empire and its President. This will be the burning international question for the foreseeable future, and it will be the context for our inquiry into global civil society.

Published by Scholars Commons @ Laurier, 2004
The neo-con antinomian aspiration surely contradicts the stated aspirations of the US. The US has not, however, always conducted itself accordingly. At times our national conduct has unintentionally yet certainly failed to follow rule of law; at other times our intentions have been more hypocritical. Still, even hypocritical conduct proves the old maxim: hypocrisy is the compliment that vice pays to virtue. But neo-cons reject the virtue itself, the rule of law. A definitive indicator of empire!

A second rope, fastened to the millstone of international antinomianism, fixes a second millstone: “The downside is that this [rejection of the rule of law] can cause difficulties in securing public understanding; it often seems too much like ‘trimming’ or insincerity.”

Now, there is an understatement! The downside – more like the depths of the sea – is that the rejection of law eviscerates public trust by undercutting the publics’ vocation to hold political authority accountable both domestically and internationally. The second millstone!

Neo-cons do not think highly of the US publics’ capacities for public understanding and judgment. US publics lack the requisite “perspective” and “steadfast manner.” Indeed, neo-cons see public understanding as “an obstacle to statesmanship,” more so in the international arena. As Wolfowitz is quick, and right, to point out, “observers of democracy” for the last two hundred years have criticized democratic publics in this way. Actually, that so-called observation is a value laden, politically inspired criticism of the democratic thrust. That critique of democracy has existed for over two thousand years. It springs from aristocratic superciliousness, which has always judged the hoi polloi incapable of public understanding and thus of self-rule embodied in the rule of law.

A third millstone shows itself immediately as neo-cons bemoan the hardships of statesmanship: “The widely-recognized ‘CNN effect,’ the fact that foreign policy decisions must now be made in the glare of intensive and instantaneous publicity, certainly makes statesmanship harder.” Oh, for the days of imperial opacity! For the days of smoke-filled rooms where only “the manly,” who see clearly and carry no doubts, decide policy! This bemoaning, while it may sound like only the personal whining of individual neo-cons and thus merely a character weakness, entails in fact a well-considered, comprehensive political philosophy that funds implicit imperialism.

http://scholars.wlu.ca/consensus/vol29/iss2/2
Here we find the seed of *intentional* — note, not unintentional! — systemic deception, the third millstone.\(^{31}\) The people’s public incompetence requires the practice of systemic deception for the sake of global order. There is a moral tone here. The third millstone: systemic deception as public moral virtue! Can this be possible?

Neo-cons discipline themselves not to let publics get in the way of their superior understanding and will. Neo-cons justify systemic under the category, “linguistic problems.”\(^{32}\) Use language that will not offend the sensibilities of the US and world publics, they say. Do not use words like “imperium” or “hegemon” because they “carry strong connotations of dominion and empire.” Such words, true in themselves as they concede, “give offense” to publics who do not understand their scientific, “purely descriptive” use. After all, the embryonic empire of neo-con internationalism aspires “not directly to rule others,” the decisive word being “directly.” This routine disavowal merely masks again the other historic forms of and rationales for empire.

Neo-cons learned the discipline to deal with “linguistic problems” from personal experience. In 1992 Pentagon staffers of Paul Wolfowitz penned the now-famous Pentagon draft of a grand new strategy designed to preserve unipolarity by preventing the emergence of any global rival. The draft talked about American “primacy and predominance” and “maintain[ing] mechanisms for deterring potential competitors from even aspiring to a larger regional or global scale.”\(^{33}\) Criticism came swiftly and harshly. Neo-con linguistic discipline emerged. From here on out, expunge “indiscreet language”! Use the discourse of “leader” or “indispensable nation,” which was Bill Clinton’s during the 1990s; saturate it, however, with doctrines advanced by “hegemonic theory.”\(^{34}\)

Neo-cons take the “systemic deception” page for their treatise on implicit imperialism right from an all-star chapter in Western political thought: chapter eighteen of Machiavelli’s *The Prince*.

Every one admits how praiseworthy it is in a prince to keep faith, and to live with integrity and not with craft. Nevertheless our experience has been that those princes who have done great things have held good faith of little account, and have known how to circumvent the intellect of men by craft, and in the
Consensus

end have overcome those who have relied on their word ... and he who has known best how to employ the fox has succeeded best.

But it is necessary to know well how to disguise this characteristic, and to be a great pretender and dissembler; and men are so simple, and so subject to present necessities, that he who seeks to deceive will always find someone who will allow himself to be deceived.  

Machiavelli models the effective ruler after Achilles of old, who is “given to Centaur Chiron to nurse,” Chiron the “half beast and half man.” In fact, two beasts make up the beast half: the lion and the fox. The lion provides the overwhelming power and the fox provides the “morally” necessary deceit and secrecy.

Unsurprisingly, neo-cons do not directly credit Machiavelli, not usually. Far too foxy are they. Truly, “so much notoriety has gathered around Machiavelli’s name that the charge of being a Machiavellian still remains a serious accusation in political debate.” While reading the neo-cons, the following observation rings as true today as it did more than half a century ago:

Therein lies the importance of The Prince in the subsequent history of the Western world. Machiavelli wrote a grammar of power, not only for the sixteenth century, but for the ages that have followed. Read The Prince today and you will be struck by the denotations which its sentences set off in the corridors of our experiences with present-day rulers ....

Standard historical accounts depict Machiavelli’s justification for overwhelming and, when necessary, ruthless power as amoral.

The Prince has become, for better or worse, a symbol of a whole body of literature and a whole approach to politics. Just as in literature and art we must always face, under whatever names, the polar
conflict of classic and romantic, so in the history of political thinking we have always faced the polar conflict between the ethical and the ruthlessly realistic.  

This depiction is not exactly correct. On the one hand, it is true; Machiavelli did intend merely a “factual, realist” account of the effectiveness and efficiency of overwhelming power. On the other hand, he intended this “factual, realist” account to be nothing less than a new kind of moral argument superior to Aristotle’s. Machiavelli thought that aristocracy was too burdened and bogged down by classical Western virtue morality, Aristotle’s and Cicero’s, not to mention Augustine’s and Aquinas’. He kept the aristocratic political structure but replaced the classic aristocratic virtues with his effectiveness-plus-efficiency, consequentialist ethic. His revolutionary proposal convinces many still today. Seldom, however, do the convinced publicly confess their conviction regarding the axis of overwhelming power, deceit, and secrecy.

Tethered to the neo-con rejection of international law is a fourth millstone: “order” replaces law. World “order” not “law” is the basis of hegemonic rule. A world, decently ordered toward US interests, is of the highest national interest.

[The neo-con notion] of national interest begins with the obvious point that our power relationship to the rest of the world has changed dramatically in the last decade. As the only nation in the world able to exert significant power beyond its own immediate geographical location, America now has the opportunity to enforce an order in all theaters where the local powers are not very great. If this opportunity exists, so too, arguably, does an interest in doing so, for having a decent order in the world is clearly to our benefit. If so many of our statesmen in the nineteenth century publicly denied this view, especially with regard to any potential benefits accrued from the order established by the British Empire, this was for reasons of our own particular interest at a time when we were a secondary power.
This is an ancient and weighty failure deep in Western public ethics. Plato and Aristotle precipitated it in two different but related forms. Order takes precedence over justice; or, the other form, order is the form of justice. Reinhold Niebuhr’s pithy summary is still on target. The ancient western world, including Plato and Aristotle,

emphasize[d] order, not only as the primary but usually as the sole end of political life .... [They] insisted on paying an excessive price in justice for the sake of order, because the community and their order was never secure in the internal cohesions of the community and therefore depended upon an undue emphasis upon the authority of the ruler and upon the value of the boon of order which his authority maintained.

The obvious difference of modern democratic communities is that they insist on justice, rather than order.

What Niebuhr attributed to democracy he could also have ascribed to the biblical God.

In addition to substituting order for law, neo-cons enjoin the familiar cant: “can” – power plus opportunity – means “ought”-interest. With this combination neo-con internationalists revive once more the aristocratic impulse now globalized as an imperial impulse. Subordinating justice to order once again is an intolerable price to pay. The fourth millstone! Truth be told, subordinating justice has always been unsustainable as history time and again teaches. So does the apostle, “God is not mocked.”

Neo-con internationalists constantly counsel and practice “resolve.” “Resolve” is both a personal and a public character trait that has become a key marker whereby neo-cons self-identify one to another. They use numerous historical examples but none more powerfully and revealingly than the example of the British Empire

http://scholars.wlu.ca/consensus/vol29/iss2/2
during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Briefly stated, "the British lacked the will" to maintain, strengthen, and extend its empire."

Again, neo-con internationalists take their cue from Machiavelli. Like his fellow Renaissance humanists Machiavelli retrieved an ancient classic insight in order to gain wisdom for his own time. High on the humanist agenda is the question of "fortune." In the famous, penultimate chapter of *The Prince* Machiavelli explores how a prince might possess Lady Fortune, literally, and thus be the successful prince. It will not be easy; she is wild.

I compare her [Fortune] to one of those raging rivers ... everything flies before it, all yield to its violence, without being able in any way to withstand it; and yet, though its nature be such, it does not follow therefore that men, when the weather becomes fair, shall not make provision, both with defenses and barriers, in such a manner that, rising again, the waters may pass away by canal, and their force be neither so unrestrained nor so dangerous. So it happens with fortune, who shows her power where valor has not prepared to resist her, and thither she turns her forces where she knows that barriers and defenses have not been raised to constrain her.\(^8\)

The successful prince must, when all else is said and done, possess the virtue of manly valor in order to possess Lady Fortune. Machiavelli makes his point with a violently erotic image – though, surely, violence eclipses true eros.

I conclude therefore that, fortune being changeful and man steadfast in their ways so long as the two are in agreement, men are successful, but unsuccessful when they fall out. For my part I consider that it is better to be adventurous than cautious, because fortune is a woman, and if you wish to keep her under, it is necessary to beat and ill-use her; and it is seen that she allows herself to be mastered by the adventurous rather than by those
who go to work more coldly. She is, therefore, always, woman-like, a lover of young men, because they are less cautious, more violent, and with more audacity command her.49

Neo-cons discipline themselves toward manly “resolve” because they know their three opponents – not to mention raging Lady Fortune – are formidable, the three being international isolationists, realist internationalists, and liberal internationalists. As in classic aristocracy, neo-con moral resolve arrives with an epistemological resolve rooted in superior knowledge and understanding. This erotics of superior knowledge destines aristocrats, old and new, toward an erotics of overwhelming power, of global empire; and vice versa. Our theological vocation disciplines us to ask how the biblical God might come in opposition. In parts six and seven we ask this pointedly in the context of emerging publics of domestic and global civil society, publics pitied if not despised by neo-aristocrats. Presently we will see how “the Bush doctrine” within the comprehensive context of implicit imperialism presses the President toward epistemological resolve, toward a “no doubt presidency.”50

4. “The Bush Doctrine” as Implicit Imperialism

“The Bush doctrine,” as neo-con internationalists affectionately call it, integrates, indoctrinates, and executes the “much broader” vision of neo-con internationalism.51 President Bush did not possess “the Bush doctrine” when he was elected in 2000. Neo-cons, of course, knew that. Truth be told, the President was not elected as a neo-con; neo-cons converted him, as they are well aware. When elected, he was some pathetic combination of isolationist and realist internationalist, according to neo-con lore, and on that they are right. Neo-cons detest both, especially when wimpishly combined. “The Bush doctrine” has steadily evolved since 9/11. Neo-con lore: after 9/11 neo-cons breathed into George W. “the Bush doctrine” and he became a living President.

Nine/eleven traumatized the President. He, like every US citizen and citizens throughout the world, was psychologically traumatized. As President his trauma quickly surfaced at the visionary level of international polity. His undisciplined diet of a little isolationism here and a little realism there left him and the country impotent, incapable

http://scholars.wlu.ca/consensus/vol29/iss2/2
of responding, say the neo-cons. Neo-con internationalists saw this clearly; indeed, they anticipated it. They immediately named the “crisis” and seized the “opportunity.” They convinced the President that his trauma was a “crisis,” doubly rooted, in his own faulty view of the presidency – the President thought presidency was primarily about domestic leadership – and in his own flabby vision of international polity. It’s the vision thing; and neo-cons knew the way forward, implicit imperialism.

Neo-cons have been developing their comprehensive vision at least since 1992 and had laid it out in 2000 in Present Dangers.53 Neo-cons identify three periods that the US is going through on its way toward realizing the imperial aspiration for “The New American Century”: (1) 1989 to 9/11/2001, the period of “American confusion and indecision”; (2) 9/11 to March 18, 2003, the day before the invasion of Iraq, the period of “illusions destroyed”; (3) March 19, 2003, the invasion of Iraq, the period of “a new era of Pax Americana.” Each period contains both a crisis and an opportunity. Each period is a stage in the Empire’s coming of age. And, each stage of Empire depends of course on a parallel stage in the neo-cons’ own work agenda. Period one is preparation, period two is indoctrination, and period three is execution. Prepare the comprehensive vision of empire, indoctrinate the President to indoctrinate the nation in “the Bush doctrine,” and execute the empire, for the moment, as implicit imperialism. The present moment, like the previous, will produce crisis and thereby present opportunity. Readiness and resolve comprise the neo-con discipline for The New American Century. The next crisis will likely entail the opportunity for explicit empire. Neo-cons have made themselves the great influence. The King’s philosophers! Plato’s “I Have a Dream.”

The neo-con account of “the Bush doctrine” contains three elements: active American global leadership, regime change, and promotion of liberal democratic principles.55 Note the words used: “leadership,” “promotion of democratic principles,” even “regime change.” These words are purposefully conventional. The two administrations prior to President George W. Bush’s – the elder Bush’s administration and Clinton’s administrations – had already used these very terms. So what’s the big deal, neo-cons routinely say in public. Neo-cons have learned the lesson of 1992, and they have honed their linguistic discipline accordingly. The true trinity of “the
Bush doctrine” is: resolute unipolar hegemony, resolute preemptive war realism, and resolute mercenary-benevolent-capitalism (coalitions of the billing) – unshakeable building blocks of empire. Neo-cons base this trinity on the cleavage between a domestic rule of law and an international aristocratic ethos, as we have already seen. In part six we will note how neo-cons root this cleavage in a peculiar form of aristocratic democracy.

“The Bush doctrine” has developed in four stages.56 First, on the evening of September 11, 2001 the President vowed to a national and international television audience to bring justice “to those who are behind these evil acts” and to “those who harbored them.” Second, in his September 20, 2001 address to the US Congress, he noted that the US is at war not only with particular terrorists but with terrorism itself, with “every terrorist group of global reach ... [and with] nations that provide aid or safe haven to terrorism.” Third, on November 6, 2001 he defined “our [US] mission and our moment” to the Warsaw Conference on Combating Terrorism in this way: not only will the US fight the evil of terrorism “until we’re rid of it,” but, “[w]e will not wait for the authors of mass murder to gain the weapons of mass destruction.” This was the first time that the President placed the question of weapons of mass destruction within the context of a comprehensive war on terrorism. Also it was the first definitive, though still embryonic, identification of his “doctrine of preemption.”

The fourth stage of “the Bush doctrine” arrives in the President’s January 25, 2002 State of the Union address. This stage is the crucial stage, “the completion” stage, of “the Bush doctrine.”57 In this stage three elements congeal and thus solidify “the Bush doctrine.” The President notes that the war has “two great objectives.” The first is to defeat terrorism. For neo-cons that’s fine, but in itself defeating terrorism is not “great.” It is too small. In itself it is still “America-lite.” Only the second of the President’s “great objectives” is truly “great.” Only the second is “the true Bush doctrine”: “to prevent regimes that sponsor terror from threatening America or our friends and allies with weapons of mass destruction.” Prevent threats. Prevent them whether imminent or not. And imminent or not, prevent them in any way that is effective and efficient. Prevent threats is the first element toward completion.

The President then identifies North Korea, Iran, and Iraq as an “axis of evil.” The neo-cons:

http://scholars.wlu.ca/consensus/vol29/iss2/2
So much for our previous diplomatic efforts with North Korea. So much for the claim that Iraq has been successfully kept “in a box.” So much for our new “constructive” relationship with Iran. No. These regimes constitute a growing danger, the president asserted – breaking definitely with the complacency of his predecessor and the wishfulness of his own State Department.58

Neo-cons consider Bush’s “axis of evil” remark to go beyond the mere identification of three “rogue states.” It is a declared “‘Axis of Evil’ doctrine.”59 It has a teaching function. It teaches that in “the unipolar era” the world is always self-evidently divisible between good and evil. The good are those who are unquestioningly with us. This renders everyone else against us, in effect accomplices of evil.

What is becoming clear is that even the so-called war on terrorism is only a front, a stooge for empire. Evil is not even some other real pole; evil is privation pure and simple, a depraved lack of recognition of unambiguous unipolarity, of “The American Century.” Evil is the un-real. Good-or-evil unipolarity is the second element of the completion stage. Apocalypticism!

“Powell’s Moment” signals the progress of “the Bush doctrine.” In neo-con chronology this refers to the week between February 2 and 9, 2002, when Secretary of State Colin Powell abandoned the “dovish sensibilities” of “the Powell doctrine,” which till then had infested the George W. presidency as it had softened the first Bush presidency a decade earlier. Being “a late convert to the Bush doctrine,” “ironically” makes Powell “its most effective proponent .... Once deployed, Powell could be America’s most formidable non­exploding weapon.”60 This comes true exactly a year later when Powell appears before the United Nations. Truly prescient!

Now the third element solidifying the fourth stage of “the Bush doctrine” appears. Resolve! Again, the President, January 25, 2002: “The United States of America will not permit the world’s most dangerous regimes to threaten us with the world’s most destructive weapons.” Neo-cons consider this “the most significant sentence spoken by an American president in almost 20 years.”61 “Resolve” pertains not just to one or another strategic plan or tactical engagement; rather, it pertains to the comprehensive vision,
indoctrination, and execution of implicit imperialism on the way to the explicit empire of “The New American Century.” Christened with resolve “the Bush doctrine” actualizes neo-con expectations. “The Bush doctrine” is complete; the indoctrination period culminates.

The enduring “doctrines” of unipolarity, preemption, evil axis, and resolve place the crown on implicit imperialism. In September 2002 the President released *The National Security Strategy of the United States*. This is “the Bush doctrine” as finished product.62 “The Bush doctrine” is no longer a mere collection of themes that the US can prudentially take or leave depending on circumstance. Using the categories of classic political philosophy, neo-cons have created – or helped the President to create, whichever – “the Bush doctrine” as both a “treatise” and a “tract.”

A treatise decrees enduring, even timeless principles; a tract for the times transmits the decrees to the appropriate audience.61 As a treatise *The National Security Strategy* is “the most significant US foreign policy statement since NSC 68, the 1950 paper that codified the containment doctrine.”64 As a treatise neo-cons aim only to extend its global reach to encompass not just Afghanistan, al Qaeda, Iraq, North Korea, and Iran, but also “Central Asia,” “Southeast Asia” especially Indonesia and the Philippines, “East Asia” especially China, and not to forget “the Balkans” and “the Sinai.”65 Neo-cons compare US unipolarity to that enjoyed by history’s grandest empires – the Roman Empire, the Persian Empire, Charlemagne’s Empire, the Chinese Empire, the British Empire and then conclude: “no comparison.”66 US unipolarization can and thereby ought to surpass every previous empire.

Neo-cons proudly declare that “the Bush doctrine” entails “quite a change from US tradition.”67 Again, note the linguistic discipline, “quite a change.” Indeed! “The Bush doctrine” erodes the gathering consensus of US normative tradition, though an imperial attitude has always had hold claimed a hold, and it cuts against US normative patriotism.68 Having successfully breathed “the Bush doctrine,” neo-cons have only to compose a tract-for-the-times. This includes securing the financial funding – big-time funding – for “the Bush doctrine’s” “bold new course.”69

http://scholars.wlu.ca/consensus/vol29/iss2/2
We have already located Machiavelli’s unrivaled, overwhelming power – the lion – in the neo-con, aristocratic moral rationale for hegemonic, unipolar power and seen it enthroned in “the Bush doctrine.” We have also located Machiavelli’s deception – the fox – in neo-con aristocratic morality and have seen it embodied in the neo-con linguistic discipline of systemic deception. Now we can accurately locate the other trait of Machiavelli’s fox, its “secrecy,” the loyal twin of deception. Systematic deception functions in public arenas. It habitually disseminates misinformation. Further, when publics do discern truth, disseminators resolutely claim that the disinformation is merely misinformation. This erodes public trust and inhibits public accountability. “Secrecy” functions publicly to hide the personal life and character of a public person, in our case, the person of the President. Secrecy, then, is different from privacy, which public persons need and to which they have a right. Machiavelli counsels.

Therefore it is unnecessary for a prince to have all the good qualities I have enumerated, but it is very necessary to appear to have them. And I shall dare to say this also, that to have them and always to observe them is injurious, and that to appear to have them is useful; to appear merciful, faithful, humane, religious, upright, and to be so, but with a mind so framed that should you require not to be so, you may be able and know how to change to the opposite ....

For this reason a prince ought to take care that he never lets anything slip from his lips that is not replete with the above-named five qualities, that he may appear to him who sees and hears him altogether merciful, faithful, humane, upright, and religious. There is nothing more necessary to appear to have than this last quality, inasmuch as men judge generally more by the eye than by the hand, because it belongs to everybody to see you, to few to come in touch with you. Every one sees what you appear to be, few really know what you are, and those few dare not oppose themselves to the opinion of the many,
who have the majesty of the state to defend them;
and in the actions of all men, and especially of
princes, which it is not prudent to challenge, one
judges by the result.70

An irony arises when secrecy meets US public life, and
Machiavelli could not have anticipated it. US normative patriotism
rejects the aristocratic ethos. Emma Lazarus poetically engraved this
refusal on the Statue of Liberty in the first words spoken by the
Mother of Exiles.

Keep ancient lands, your storied pomp.
In this refusal the Mother of Exiles is emphatically
Not like the brazen giant of Greek fame,
with conquering limbs astride from land to land.71

In part six we will explore the preferred horizon that Lazarus
illuminates. For now it is enough to observe that public persons
regularly elect not to appear aristocratic, especially if they really are –
the heightened publicity of a president intensifies this choice.
Aristocrats conceal themselves. President Bush does this with aplomb.

The President intentionally and effortlessly lives a double life. In
public he emphasizes his “aw shucks” persona and does so in two
prominent ways. First, as a Texas cowboy, he appears about as
“common” as one can get in a country steeped in cowboy lore.
Second, he speaks with a strong evangelical Christian accent – often
modulating fundamentalist and Pentecostal accents as well – that
appeals to the middle, even working, class. For instance, he skillfully
employs the one discourse that unites the otherwise quite different
accents found in Christian evangelicalism, fundamentalism, and
Pentecostalism: the discourse of “I once was morally lost but now am
morally sound.” The President occasionally plays up his background
in major league baseball, “America’s pastime.” But the reputation of
billionaire owners renders that persona too precarious. Notice, he
never publicly trumpets his oil persona!

Now comes the secrecy. Behind the doors that close off the US
public from his aristocratic kin and ken, the President readily presents
and practices his full aristocratic credentials.72 Here we have the sheer
reverse of the “double consciousness” that African-Americans

http://scholars.wlu.ca/consensus/vol29/iss2/2
learned in order to survive slavery and continued to practice with aplomb long after legalized slavery ended.\textsuperscript{73}

5. The Iraq War as Execution of Empire – Implicitly, Explicitly

Neo-cons \textit{invented} the Iraq War. They invented it long before 9/11. That is, they invented, even \textit{created}, its comprehensive purpose and meaning.\textsuperscript{74} They did this during the preparation period, chronicled above. Only since the crisis of 9/11 did the opportunity arise to vest the President and US publics with their invention. Their invention? The Iraq War as the Empire’s first strike and its first outpost. This is what neo-cons mean by “taking the [Iraq] war beyond terrorism.”\textsuperscript{75}

Under linguistic discipline the President would not, however, present the explicit imperialist invention to US or global publics. He offered, instead, an imminent threat rationale that would sound plausible within the just war tradition’s moral criteria. Further, as neo-cons imagined, and likely planned, he sent Secretary of State Colin Powell, “America’s most formidable non-exploding weapon” to make it happen.

Armed with epistemological resolve Secretary Powell admonished the world on February 5, 2003. “The gravity of this moment is matched by the gravity of the threat that Iraq’s weapons of mass destruction pose to the world. Let me now turn to those deadly weapons programs and describe why they are real and present dangers to the region and to the world.”\textsuperscript{76} Numerous other US officials, each a prominent neo-con, had made similar assertions prior to Powell’s.\textsuperscript{77} On October 7, 2002 the President said in a speech in Cincinnati, OH: “The danger is already significant and it only grows worse with time. If we know Saddam Hussein has dangerous weapons today – and we do – does it make any sense for the world to wait to confront him as he grows even stronger and develops even more dangerous weapons?” Even after the invasion the President said in May 2003 in Poland, “We found the weapons of mass destruction. You know, we found biological weapons.” Neo-con George F. Will calls such remarks “accumulating errors ... [due to] “rhetorical carelessness and overreaching.”\textsuperscript{78} “Overreaching”? Indeed, as in Empire. “Rhetorical carelessness”? Not so! Empire begets epistemological resolve. Is it true, Mr. Will, that foxes never blink? Empire breeds systemic deception.
Oh, what a tangled web we weave,
When first we practice to deceive!

Prior to the invasion many who opposed the Iraq War knew of the neo-con invention and contested it accordingly. Others opposed the War because it did not meet "just war tradition" moral criteria like just cause and/or last resort. Numerous events beginning especially in January 2004 have increasingly exposed the Iraq War for what it has always been, the prototype invention of implicit imperialism. The absence of Iraqi weapons of mass destruction after the intensive, nine-month search has sent neo-cons scrambling to paste together a new "moral" justification for the War. In reality it appears that neo-cons will invent numerous rationales and flood the public with several at a time; cats, and foxes, are famously difficult to corral.

Some War apologists simply deceive by denying that the President ever justified the War because of an imminent threat of WMD.79 The President never used the phrase "imminent threat," they say with the churlish delight of sophomores with crossed fingers behind their backs. This blatant deception approach is then followed with a host of other items that supposedly were the real sufficient reasons given by the President. These apologists cite eleven reasons: Saddam 1) twice invaded his neighbors, 2) used chemical weapons to commit genocide against the Iraqi Kurds, 3) ethnically cleansed the Marsh Arabs, 4) maintained terrorist training camps, 5) tried to assassinate a former US president, 6) threatened to take revenge on America, 7) was shooting at American aircraft over Iraq's "no-fly" zones, 8) was sending money to Palestinian terrorists, 9) had violated more than a dozen U.N. resolutions agreed to in exchange for the 1991 ceasefire, 10) forced out U.N. weapons inspectors, and 11) convinced "every major intelligence service in the world ... that he was continuing to develop weapons of mass destruction."80 Apparently, Saddam convinced them by patently telling them that he did not have WMD. Furthermore, the eleventh rationale is simply false; there were major intelligence services decidedly and vocally not convinced.

Since January 2004 other War apologists are publicly propagating a justification for the war that has nothing to do with weapons of mass destruction and little to do with that laundry list of Saddam mad-man items, though these apologists may also include
some of those items *ad hoc*. This new public rationale is actually the originally invented rationale, never publicly declared due to neo-con linguistic discipline. Ironically, this War apologetic exposes the Iraq War for what it has always been, that is, the neo-con prototype of Empire, implicit imperialism. In his 2004 *State of the Union Address* the President himself used this new War apologetic. This innovative rationale is quite different from the justification argued in his 2003 *State of the Union Address*.

The 2004 justification goes like this. "Because of American leadership and resolve, the world is changing for the better." Notice the neo-con identity marker "resolve." Notice, too, the strict linguistic discipline regarding "leadership." Neo-cons know this means "imperial hegemony." In neo-con discourse the President is saying that "the world is changing for the better" because of "the Pax Americana," "The New American Century." The President immediately follows up "changing for the better" by pointing to Libya’s recent pledge to disclose and dismantle its weapons of mass destruction. The Iraq War is and always has been about "sending a message." The President again, "For diplomacy to be effective, words must be credible, and no one can now doubt the word of America."

Hegemonic theorists, who study the ways of effective and efficient empires, know that an empire, especially during a nascent and more implicit phase, must learn to "send a message." Maintaining and expanding an empire is costly, both from an economic perspective and from a domestic and international public opinion perspective. War intervals are especially costly and precarious in both ways. Effective empires must increase their efficiencies by well-timed, properly planned and publicized events of "shock and awe." A "shock and awe" message "heard 'round the world" is the efficiently effective way to put the world on alert. The President’s War does not put only terrorists and "rogue nations," who might aid and abet terrorists, on alert. Remember, neo-cons readily take the War beyond terrorism. Rather, the President’s War puts everyone on alert, anyone who is not totally, uncritically with the empire stands against the empire. This is what the world famous "freedom fries" humbug is all about. This is what the President means by "no one can now doubt the word of America." This is why imperialism and war realism are the identical twins that habitually execute wars of desire as normal politics. The President’s rhetoric
strategy in the 2004 State of the Union Address is well-known. He intentionally employs a classic fallacy of logic, which every high-school student who has ever taken Debate 101 and Logic 101 learns: post hoc, ergo, propter hoc — “after this, therefore, because of this.” After the Iraq War, therefore, because of the Iraq War! Neo-con discourse will credit the President’s “leadership and resolve” — really their own superior understanding and character — for every economically, morally and politically desirable outcome from here to eternity. We will be treated with a never-ending, progressively ascending, slippery slope of wonderful consequences. In these ways empire is “strategically sound and morally right.”

We must restore debate and logic to our core curriculums.

Neo-cons routinely counter the public disapproval of the War’s imperialist meanings in one of three ways, or in some combination. First, neo-cons advise stonewalling though this regularly backfires with global and US publics. Second, they employ classic “red herring” linguistic practices. A bucket of red herrings has always been effective. Neo-cons throw out one or another of the War’s possible many, minor meanings, which we cited earlier. These many meanings, each likely containing an element of truth, are epiphenomena, i.e., side issues, in comparison with Iraq’s comprehensive meaning. Like the “red herring,” these side issues bear less weight but yield big smells. Practiced bloodhounds recognize the big smell for what it is and refuse to be distracted from the critical pursuit. Neo-cons also use creative combinations. Third, as already noted, they practice delicate linguistic discipline. Dismantling stone walls, eluding red herrings, and discerning the linguistic discipline of implicit imperialism are tough but terribly important tasks, which critics of the War’s imperialist meanings must maintain. It takes resolve. This prophetic resolve is not based, however, in re-masculinized violence but is rooted in the hope of a deliberative ethos.

Finally, neo-cons expertly co-opt “multilateral” internationalists for the neo-con creation. This is a key strategy for ending “the battle between American primacy and multipolarity, [which] is nearing an end — and what is to come is a world that no one ever imagined,” “an enduring Pax Americana.” Thomas Friedman, well-known columnist at the New York Times, is a good case study. In an editorial, Friedman laments the “dichotomy” between the National Football
League’s “frivolous and gross” 2004 Super Bowl and the ongoing War in which soldiers continually die daily bearing the whole burden themselves. How can the US be “just sailing along” normally?

Friedman continues his scold. “And what bothers me ever more is that this dichotomy is exactly what the Bush team wants.” Well, of course, Mr. Friedman. At the heart of neo-con logic is that the US is no longer a “normal nation” as normally conceived. Rather, neo-cons passionately – erotically – desire that the US be a normal Empire, actually to be the normative Empire by which any future empire must be normed. This “dichotomy” is imperially normal and normative. While Friedman continues as he has in the past to criticize “the antiwar left,” no matter “how mangled was the Bush road to war,” he holds his harshest criticism for “the Bush conservatives.” The War “can’t be won with an ‘idealism’ that is selfish, greedy, arrogant, incapable of self-criticism and believing that all that matters is our will and power and nothing else.” Friedman deludes himself by thinking that he could prescribe just one additional ingredient, something “else,” that would balance out, or absorb, or some such, all those other foibles.

Friedman’s something “else” is multilateralism, multipolarity. “We can defeat Saddam alone. But we can’t build a decent political center alone. We don’t have enough legitimacy or staying power. We need to enlist all our allies – including France, Germany and the U.N. Security Council – in this titanic struggle.” Friedman calls this “the great mistake of the neo-cons and this administration.” First, the elements in his list – in itself an accurate enough listing – are not merely unfortunate foibles accidentally attached to neo-con internationalism; these elements are its substance. Friedman’s list is neo-con imperialism, heart and soul. Second, neo-cons have already ingested and digested Friedman’s other ingredient, his something “else.” How is this so?

Neo-cons call it, “multilateralism, American style.” Most American multilateralists are unilateralists at the core.” They call this the “quintessentially American view.” Neo-cons think that the US should always seek to “enlist” – the term Friedman uses – as many allies as possible, even the United Nations, on any issue we want to. This is the vaunted coalition of the willing. Routinely, however, the willing looks more like a coalition of the billing – nations whose economic bills the US promises to pay off. No matter the outcome of
this enlisting, "we'll do what we want." The neo-con creation of "American multilateralism" is not "a principled multilateralism" tied to "an international legal order." The latter vision belonged to President Clinton, the target of neo-con derision.

As we have seen, neo-cons reject an international rule of law as the first commandment of neo-con internationalism. This makes them "instrumental internationalists," "pragmatic internationalists," as they argue. Neo-con multilateralists employ "a cost-benefit analysis, not a principled commitment to multilateral action as the cornerstone of world order."

"In an age of American hegemony, it will be multilateralism, American style," say the neo-cons. They speak a rhetoric of multilateralism, actually a "blend of unilateralism and multilateralism [which] reflects," they claim, "a broad and deep American consensus." Their "multilateralism" remakes the US in their own image. Internationally, neo-cons desire "a government of men" not "of law," a world of 'the man,' not a world 'of law.' This reverses US normative patriotism. The difference between instrumental internationalism and principled internationalism is not one of style but of substance. Neo-cons know this, despite the cutesy, pop T.V. allusion. Instrumental internationalists are principled imperialists. The cloak is foxy; don't you think, Mr. Friedman?

Rejecting the rule of law leads neo-cons to imperialism and war realism. The just war tradition fits the world of law. Indeed, historically the just war tradition has propelled the Western world toward an international rule of law. For neo-con internationalists the just war tradition is just one more thing to instrumentalize. They will use just war criteria when it suits them and they will dispose of just war criteria when the criteria are a nuisance.

Neo-cons use the just war tradition as they use multilateralism, as just so much cover. The biblical "not in vain" command – the Second Commandment as Lutherans number them – prohibits blasphemy, prohibits defaming God's name, God's fame, God's character. That is, it prohibits taking something that is Godly and using it as cover, as a cloak. On the political level the Second Commandment demands truth not deception; on the moral level candor not craft; on the theological level repentance not denial, honour not blasphemy.

Just war tradition apologists, as am I and as is the Lutheran heritage, must expose instrumentalizing a Godly tradition.
President said, "I am a war president." Just war presidents, too, can be saved! Neo-cons, however, have breathed "the Bush doctrine" into the President and he has become a living, war-realist, an implicit imperialist. A more Godly case can be made for a different US internationalism.

6. Deliberative Democracy and Emerging Civil Society

Neo-con discipleship prods US and international publics "to stop worrying and love the Pax Americana." I urge a different international discipleship. This different discipleship can be, and is, rooted in numerous religious and non-religious traditions. Though not uniquely Christian it is characteristically Christian and characteristically Lutheran. In its characteristically Lutheran form it begins by acknowledging that the biblical God creatively continues to call things into being (Rom 4:17). Beginning thus, Christians seek to discern where and how and for what purposes the triune God is bringing new things into being, new natural, social, and political realities. Indeed, God commands people, all people, to honour God precisely in these worldly places and ways and purposes.

Can we imagine a different international discipleship in which God is bringing an emerging global civil society into social and political being? Can we honour God by critically participating in this emerging international phenomenon? To make this different discipleship plausible for Christians, indeed, for anyone, we will explore what we mean by an emerging global civil society and how it contributes to the Godly character of international life. This will provide a warrant for our claim that God is against empire creating, instead, a preferential option for a civic internationalist ethos. Only a sketch is possible in this essay.

Like many before and after him, Martin Luther, too, addressed Plutarch’s "Who, then, shall rule the ruler?" Luther, also, said "law." For Luther, however, law is always God’s just law. Luther’s theological question, then, is how God holds rulers accountable to God’s law of justice. Rulers, as Luther was quite sure, sometimes (perhaps often) do whatever they please; and what they fancy does not always, perhaps not often, conform to God’s just law. What, then, are God’s this-worldly media for ruling the ruler?

Luther discerned four – more like three and a half – this-worldly media. First, there are "God’s extraordinary leaders." Sometimes
these "extraordinary leaders" are themselves political rulers; often times they are not. They have "a special star before God" and are not so much trained or made as "created" and taught directly by God. They possess a special endowment of "natural law and natural reason." God raises up "such jewels, when, where, and to whom He pleases" "not only among His own people but also among the godless and the heathen; and not only in the ranks of the nobility but also among the middle classes, farmers, and laborers."

Luther’s second this-worldly medium of God’s rule of the rulers is the "office" of “a preacher by whom God rebukes” political rulers. They are to exercise the wide admonitory power of the preaching office “uprightly and honestly,” “openly and boldly.” This admonitory duty of the preaching office is “not seditious,” but “on the contrary a praiseworthy, noble, and rare virtue, and a particularly great service to God.” In many treatises Luther himself consciously exercised the admonitory power of his office.

A third medium is external enemies. God can use a ruler’s external enemies in order to hold a ruler accountable to God’s just law. God even uses external enemies who themselves do not practice justice in order to rule an unjust ruler, a sort of medium of last resort on God’s part. The aggressive Turkish army under Suleiman the Magnificent was Luther’s contemporary instance. Because the Holy Roman Empire, including the German people, practiced injustice and persecuted the gospel, “the Turk … is God’s rod and the devil’s servant [Is 10:5]; there is no doubt about that.” “God has mastered the art of punishing one thief by means of another,” also in the political arena.

Luther identifies – rather, intuits – a fourth this-worldly medium through which God rules the rulers. Addressing his own soon-to-be prince Luther notes, “The common man [sic] is learning to think.” He takes this as a political hermeneutic for interpreting Psalm 107:40 “God pours contempt upon princes.” The common people of his time were acquiring the necessary capacities for moral and political reflection about the public world of political rule. “Men will not, men cannot, men refuse to endure your tyranny and wantonness much longer. Dear princes and lords be wise and guide yourselves accordingly. God will no longer tolerate it. The world is no longer what it once was, when you hunted and drove the people like game.”

http://scholars.wlu.ca/consensus/vol29/iss2/2
Luther’s world was changing as the moral and political capacity of common people was changing. This impressed Luther and thus he advised rulers, “therefore, no man is to be despised, [for God] once spoke through the mouth of an ass [Num. 22:28].” Luther, of course, could not imagine any enduring medium capable of institutionalizing his intuition. Biblical and historical precedent and his personal experience were the sources of his intuition. The best he could do was to urge rulers to develop the personal virtue of seeking moral wisdom in common people. Only one of Luther’s three and a half media of divine accountability was institutionalized, was an “office.” The extra-ordinary leaders, the external enemies, and the nascent political capacities of common people were all ad hoc media, random acts of divine accountability, one might say. Luther’s access to Plutarch’s question likely came through his reading of Cicero, also a likely source for his intuition regarding common people’s political capacity.

Cicero (106-43 BC) had examined these questions over a century before Plutarch. Cicero, like Aristotle before him, identified three basic forms of rule: monarchy, aristocracy, and democracy (republic). Each has strengths and weaknesses, though a democracy “is the least to be preferred” and a monarchy “is far the best.” Cicero really prefers a fourth form, “a mean and a mixture” of the previous three, enshrined in a written constitution. The constitution was a mechanism with weights and counter-weights. But a state, according to Cicero, is more than a machine; it is a living being directed by spirit. The spirit is the public opinion of all the classes of people together. Cicero’s problem comes at this point and he is quite aware of it. In his day there was no medium for public opinion, for the formation, testing, and reformation of spirit. There was no press, no “fourth estate” as the eighteenth century would come to call it. The growth of news media in the eighteenth century was socially and politically revolutionary because it initiated a democratic public sphere. This made possible what Cicero could merely imagine but not pull off. That was left to the US founders with much help from their many thoughtful forerunners.

We come to the story of constitutional democracy and its three forms: aristocratic-republic, liberal, and deliberative. Historically the aristocratic-republic form goes back to ancient Rome at least. Its communitarian and aristocratic shape influenced certain streams of the US founders. In this form the virtuous, organically homogenous
community precedes the state and the constitution’s purpose is to ensure that the state as a whole becomes virtuous. Therefore, the constitution must especially guarantee that the trustees of community virtue are enabled to train both the young and the ‘fallen’ citizenry in the ways of the virtuous community.

The liberal form is often associated with John Locke – though not exclusively – who stressed the rights of individuals. In this form the constitution’s purpose is to establish and protect well-defined zones of privacy where individual citizens are free from state coercion and protected from communal compulsion. In this more atomistic model individuals are free to own private property, enter into contracts to increase property, and generally to determine one’s own life plans according to private choice as long as this does not prohibit others from doing the same. The prime mandate in the liberal form of democracy is the constraint of neutrality. Never disagree in public about the things that are morally most important. Keeping our really big ethical disagreements private, especially those with an obvious religious timbre, promotes tolerance.

These two forms of the democratic constitutional state have remained in tension throughout US history. Each has been accompanied by a “third sector,” as it is often called. The third sector is that sector of public life that is neither the constitutional state nor the economic market, sectors one and two in whichever order. The third sector is simply “numbered” because its purposes and functions remain fluid. In fact, the third sector’s purposes and functions depend on which form of democracy it is paired with. When paired with the aristocratic-republic model the third sector entails institutions that mediate – mediating institutions – communitarian virtues. This certainly involves forming the virtues of the young. It likewise involves forming the virtues of the domestic and immigrant masses, especially the workplace virtues of the laboring classes. Mediating institutions provide the advantaged class with opportunities to do works of mercy and otherwise offer charity to those who have “fallen” through the cracks of the economic system or who have “fallen” on bad fortune. The offer of charity also goes to those who have “fallen” victim to their own vices and who desire to amend their lives. This latter form of charity fulfills the highest obligation of the virtuous because it meets the greatest need of the fallen. It is the charity most esteemed and therefore most pursued.

http://scholars.wlu.ca/consensus/vol29/iss2/2
In the liberal form of constitutional democracy the third sector is composed of voluntary associations with different purposes and functions. In the liberal model the third sector may also provide safety-net services and opportunities for charity as indicated above. But the third sector has two loftier purposes. First, it functions as a border, so to speak, clearly partitioning public and private spheres. Voluntary associations that specialize in maintaining the partition receive the highest regard. Second, voluntary associations proliferate, which aim to refresh and enhance the well-being of private individuals who regularly get worn down in the grind of the economy and of life in general. Within the liberal form voluntary associations aim to be havens in an otherwise heartless world. This purpose covers the waterfront of body, mind, and spirit.

The deliberative form of constitutional democracy embodies a communicative ethos, different from the private-choice focus of the liberal form or the virtue-training focus of the aristocratic-republic form. The communicative focus of the deliberative form highlights the public reasoning of all citizens who continuously speak together for the purposes of coming to mutual understanding, just law, and public action. Paired with deliberative democracy the third sector has a primary purpose different from the purposes served within the other two forms, though without excluding those purposes. With the deliberative form the third sector locates, indeed, embodies a citizenry of communicative reasoning. Only with deliberative democracy does the third sector emerge as "civil society." Or, perhaps a better way to put it, a gradually prevailing communicative ethos transforms the third sector into "civil society," and this transformation brings about a more deliberative form of the democratic constitutional state.

Deliberative democracy takes key elements from both the aristocratic-republic and the liberal forms. It, then, roots these elements in the richer soil of everyday speech and conversation. Like the aristocratic-republic form, deliberative democracy gives center stage to the political formation of public moral opinion. In this way deliberative democracy invests the political process with ethical connotations more robust than found in the liberal model but with less communal homogeneity and paternalism than found in the aristocratic-republic form.

Like the liberal and unlike the aristocratic-republic, however, deliberative democracy also prioritizes the equal rights of citizens to
participate in the political formation of public moral-ethical opinion. This priority includes the corresponding participatory procedures. Not only must political decision-makers be political consequence-takers, but also political consequence-takers must be political decision-makers. The equal right of citizen participation implies the equal obligation of citizens to participate. Indeed, how deliberative democracy obligates its citizens to participate politically is crucial! Deliberative democracy obligates citizen participation by providing an economic, political, and humane infrastructure at least minimally sufficient to sustain all citizens for participation.

Finally, deliberative democracy prioritizes a circulation of political power that is vigorously open to a third sector now communicatively transformed into civil society. First, it is important to note that the word "civil" in civil society does not mean "civilized," as in a civilized society. "Civil" also does not here mean the virtue called "civility" as in "a society that practices civility." It is true that from time to time people use the phrase "civil society" with those meanings. And, certainly, there is nothing wrong with "civility." Generally speaking, when a major newspaper, for instance, uses the term "civil society," it is a sociological and political category.

Civil society is a component of the general architecture, so to speak, of public life. Civil society is that great plurality of movements, associations, and institutions which emerges out of the everyday life of citizens and residents for the prevention and promotion of this, that, and the other thing. In this way civil society is a public threshold that in one direction mingles and overlaps with the less public sides of life. As a public threshold in the other direction civil society mingles and overlaps with the great systems of the market economy and the political state. Here we can look only at the overlap with the political state.

Because civil society is this two-sided threshold, its preferential purpose in a deliberative democracy is to be a "sleuth" comprised of citizens attaining moral wisdom by reasoning together about problems encountered, opportunities presented, obligations faced, and rights required. Civil society's purpose in a deliberative democracy is to be a "sluice" for circulating moral wisdom concerning common goods into the political spheres of the legislative, executive, and judicial workings of the state. These
preferential purposes of sleuth and sluice can also encompass purposes which the third sector held within the aristocratic-republic and liberal forms of democracy.

Within deliberative democracy civil society’s preferential purposes involve citizens in the public work of ethics. The historic co-emergence of civil society and deliberative democracy addresses Plutarch’s question in a fashion that Cicero could only faintly intuit. Abraham Lincoln’s digest of deliberative democracy as “government of the people, by the people, for the people” remains provocative still today. Lincoln knew monarchy as government “for” the people. He knew aristocracy as government “of” and “for” the people. He experienced democracy as government “of, by, and for” the people. The “by” is the constant feedback loop testing, strengthening, and reforming the “of,” and deliberating the entire range of goods needed “for” all the people to be “We, the people.” In this experience he understood the “by” as the deliberative reality that encompassed his own life from the Kentucky log cabin to the US legislature, to the Washington White House, to the Gettysburg graveyard.

Lincoln understood the “by” as the deliberative reality of equality that must embrace the public life of these United States of America. Emma Lazarus would indelibly inscribe this reality in her famed words:

Give me your tired, your poor,
Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore.
Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me,
I lift my lamp beside the golden door.

Aristocrats, ignoring Liberty’s rebuke of “storied pomp,” regularly mouth these words, sensing mostly the need for workers in the fields and the factories and the markets. Despite her aristocratic upbringing, Lazarus knew, because she had been a frequent victim of anti-Semitism, that only Lincoln’s egalitarian “by” could satisfy that “yearning to breathe free.”

Lincoln was America’s public theologian, many say our greatest. It comes as no surprise, then, that immediately prior to his famous democratic digest Lincoln invoked God to deliver “a new birth” of precisely such a government of, by, for the people. Lincoln, too, knew
Cicero, and he was quite aware of monarchist, aristocrat, and imperialist renunciations of Cicero’s *vox populi est vox dei*.

Yet, he was neither persuaded nor deterred. He simply thought that monarchists, aristocrats, and imperialists were theologically hard of hearing. He believed the biblical God capable of delivering new birth and he discerned in the still small voice of the people the voice of the living God. God does not grant new births in vain, thought Lincoln. Therefore, a deliberating people is God’s preferred future for mediating just law; it ought “not perish from the earth.”

What was barely conceivable for Cicero and only randomly perceivable by Luther became normatively operable in Lincoln.

### 7. Honouring God in Global Civil Society

If, indeed, God is creatively working moral wisdom in the sleuthing and sluicing purposes of civil society and deliberative democracy, then we have a warrant for posing our claim. The biblical God is against empire and for something else, for a nascent international rule of law emerging in and with global civil society.

Early signs of global civil society include the burgeoning *non*-governmental organizations (NGOs) and international *non*-governmental organizations (INGOs). Christians and Lutherans have for some time been in full communion with NGOs and INGOs. Note, however, the negative identity! We know what they are not; do we know what they are, what purpose they have? Their *non* character mirrors the anonymity of the so-called “third” sector. The transformation of the “third” sector into civil society has come about for various reasons. A chief reason was their coming to purpose, to public ethical purpose.

Civil society emerged with vigor during the 1980s and 1990s, in Eastern Europe with the coming of Solidarity in Poland and of Vaclav Havel’s movement in Czechoslovakia; and in South Africa with Mandela’s movement, among others. Not surprisingly there has often been a churchly dimension in the mix. When these ethical movements come to public purpose, they develop and expand rapidly. The ensuing transformation to civil society spread to the West, including the US. No wonder neo-cons have now established NGOWatch.

Neo-con internationalists are worried because global civil society will alter nation-state sovereignty. They are vexed because global civil society introduces an international deliberative ethos. They are

http://scholars.wlu.ca/consensus/vol29/iss2/2
epistemologically resolute because global civil society subverts America's benevolent global hegemony. Neo-cons will not give up on The New American Century, on the Empire.

Will the transformation of INGOs into global civil society bring with it an institutionalizing thrust toward an enduring and principled international rule of law? There are numerous complex questions beyond what we can investigate here. The nature of national sovereignty looms large. What kind of "civic internationalism" might emerge? Likely, some deliberative form of democracy will be in the international mix. That is, of course, if the world does not devolve into the new era of empire, being dreamed and it to be deliberated as publicly as possible.

In which ways both randomly and regularly will God rule the rulers? What future might God initiate through churchly engagement in global civil society? What ecclesial forms will serve this critical participation? How will Christians honour God in global civil society?

Notes


2 Throughout this essay I use the term "neo-con internationalists," or simply "neo-cons," to designate the architects of and/or activists for an implicit imperialism in expectation of explicit empire. "Neo-cons" is their self-identification, though recently some are shedding the term because it has taken on negative connotations in the public opinion. The movement of neo-con architects and activists has taken numerous institutional forms and formats. Among the most intellectually sophisticated – and they truly are! – are those who gather around *Project
for the New American Century at www.newamericancentury.org and American Enterprise Institute at www.aei.org. The former deals almost exclusively with international polity; until just recently the latter has weighted itself toward the domestic. Project for the New American Century set out its basic program in Robert Kagan and William Kristol, eds., Present Dangers: Crisis and Opportunity in American Foreign and Defense Policy (San Francisco: Encounter Books, 2000). It contains scholarly analyses by sixteen distinguished authors and continues to be the best single collection of neo-con internationalist thinking.


The sixteenth-century controversy also had a public political context in which temporal government trespassed on specifically churchly, gospel matters, and churchly authorities, then, binding Christian freedom and consciences regarding things not divinely mandated.


Abraham Lincoln, already as a US Representative, exquisitely rejected this confusion. His *Gettysburg Address* (November 19, 1863) is the source for “government of the people, by the people, for the people” at http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/gadd/4403.html. See my “‘By the Dawn’s Early Light’: The Flag, the Interrogative, and the Whence and Whither of Normative Patriotism,” *Word & World* 23.3 (Summer 2003):274-278.

The President’s 2004 *State of the Union Address* is at www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2004/01/print20040120-7.html; see p. 4.


“Imperialism,” in *The New Encyclopedia Britannica*, ed. Philip Goetz (Chicago: Encyclopedia Britannica Inc., 1987), vol. 6, p. 272. I use this classic and concise account of imperialism because it was written well over fifteen years ago and thus is not skewed by current events.


The classic argument goes back to Aristotle’s aristocratic notion of the benefactor *polis*; see Aristotle, *Politics* I, chap. 2, sec. 15.


Niebuhr, *Nations and Empires*, p. 28. However one assesses Niebuhr’s Christian realism, reading his extensive critical analysis of empire is well worth the effort. What is particularly missing in the 1950s of Niebuhr’s time is the emergent global civil society that we will describe in parts six and seven below and its critical contribution to any inquiry regarding empire.

Paul Wolfowitz, “Statesmanship in the New Century,” in Kagan and Kristol, *Present Dangers*, pp. 312, 314. Wolfowitz, as Assistant Secretary of Defense under the first President Bush, was third in command at the Pentagon, and now, as Deputy Secretary of Defense in President George W. Bush’s administration, is second in command at the Pentagon. G. John Ikenberry, Peter F. Krogh Professor of Geopolitics and Global Justice at Georgetown University, has concisely and insightfully articulated seven elements that form the neo-con internationalist “new grand strategy” (see Ikenberry, “America’s Imperial Ambition,” *Foreign Affairs* 81.5 [Sept-Oct, 2002]: 44ff.). I base my exposition of neo-con internationalism on my reading of Kagan and Kristol, *Present Dangers* as well as other resources at *Project for the New American Century*, pp. 312-314. Ikenberry does not cite *Present Dangers* and he does not offer any footnoted references.


The significant and complex question of the neo-con market economy lies beyond the scope of this essay.


John Adams inscribed this criterion in the opening clause of the original draft of the Massachusetts’ Constitution (1779).

Plutarch’s stunning imperialist argument is:

But if he [the real statesman] were given the choice among governments [monarchy, aristocracy, democracy], like so many tools, he would follow Plato’s advice and choose no other than
monarchy, the only one which is able to sustain that top note of virtue, high in the highest sense, and never let it be tuned down under compulsion or expediency. For the other forms of government in a certain sense, although controlled by the statesman, control him, and although carried along by him, carry him along, since he has no firmly established strength to oppose those from whom his strength is derived, but is often compelled to exclaim in the words of Aeschylus which Demetrius the City-stormer employed against Fortune after he had lost his hegemony, “Thou fanst my flame, / methinks thou burnst me up.”

See “On Monarch, Democracy, and Oligarchy,” in Moralia, op. cit., par. 827. Plutarch believes that the contingencies of Fortune, which spark the desire for Fame, always threaten death — “burnst me up” — and this belief leads Plutarch to pursue superior “control.”

39 Ibid., p. 334-5.
40 Ibid., p. 335.

Joseph Cirincione, Jessica T. Mathews, and George Perkovich investigate the systemic deception that has been perpetrated regarding the weapons of mass destruction justification for the 2003-03 Iraq War in WMD in Iraq: Evidence and Implications (Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2004) at:


32 Caesar, “The Great Divide,” p. 41. Quotations in this paragraph come from p. 41.
34 Wohlfarth gives this account of neo-con linguistic discipline in “Unipolar World,” op. cit.
35 Niccolo Machiavelli, The Prince (Chicago: Encyclopedia Britannica, Inc., 1952), chap. 18, p. 25. In chapter fifteen he had already offered this foretaste: “Hence it is necessary for a prince wishing to hold his own [remain in power] to know how to do wrong [to act immorally], and to make use of it or not according to necessity” (chap. 15, p. 22). See Quentin Skinner’s exposition of Machiavelli’s rejection of classic humanist as well as Christian virtue traditions in Machiavelli, pp. 38-53.

Ibid., p. xxxiv. Lerner rightly places the ethical opposite the ruthless, but the ethical need not be the polar opposite of realism.

See Skinner’s exposition of Machiavelli’s critical overturning of Western public ethics, classical humanist and Christian (*Machiavelli*, pp. 23-53). In part 2 above I complied with the standard account and grouped Machiavelli with the second modern justification for empire. He actually fits within the fourth “moral” rationale. Machiavelli addressed quite a different treatise to the ruled than he did to the rulers; see Leo Strauss, *Thoughts on Machiavelli* (Glencoe, Illinois: Free Press, 1958). pp. 15-53.


Ibid. Wohlfarth’s bases “unipolarization” on ordered stability; see “Unipolar World,” pp. 5-41.

Wohlfarth (*op. cit.*) uses both the logic of “can means ought” and the logic that “order” is the form of justice that results in peace. The “unambiguously unipolar” world is, therefore, inevitably and durability “prone to peace.” Peace is the byproduct of a “decisive preponderance in all the underlying components of power: economic, military, technological, and geopolitical.” These are the four “deeply embedded material condition[s]” that make peace real. “Hence both the overall size and the comprehensiveness of the leader’s power advantage are crucial to peacefulness. If the system is unipolar, the great power hierarchy should be much more stable than a system of more than one pole.” In hegemonic theory this is called full-spectrum dominance. Just call it “empire”!

Published by Scholars Commons @ Laurier, 2004


Ibid., p. 350.


President Bush’s February 8, 2004 interview on NBC’s *Meet the Press* with Tim Russert is a good example of the overall ethos of epistemological resolve; see the transcript at http://msnbc.msn.com/id/4179618/. Russert: “Mr. President, the Director of the CIA said that his briefings had qualifiers and caveats, but when you spoke to the country, you said, ‘there is no doubt.’ When Vice President Cheney spoke to the country, he said, ‘there is no doubt.’ Secretary Powell, ‘no doubt.’ Secretary Rumsfeld, ‘no doubt, we know where the weapons are.’ You said, quote, ‘The Iraqi regime is a threat of unique urgency.’ ‘Saddam Hussein is a threat that we must deal with as quickly as possible.’ You gave the clear sense that this was an immediate threat that must be dealt with.” President Bush: “I think, if I might remind you that in my language I called it a grave and gathering threat, but I don’t want to get into word contests. But what I do want to share with you is my sentiment at the time. There was no doubt in my mind Saddam Hussein was a danger to America. No doubt.”

Caesar, “The Great Divide,” p. 43.

Recall the subtitle of *Present Dangers – Crisis and Opportunity in American Foreign Policy and Defense Policy*.

Donnelly identifies these three periods; see “The Proof of Primacy,” *National Security Outlook* (February 2004): www.aei.org. Donnelly’s *National Security Outlook* represents a more internationalist agenda for AEI.


Kristol, “Taking the War Beyond Terrorism.”

Kristol, “Taking the War Beyond Terrorism.”

Kristol, “Taking the War Beyond Terrorism.”


Kristol, “Taking the War Beyond Terrorism.”


Boot, “Doctrine of the ‘Big Enchilada,’”


Donnelly, “The Underpinnings of the Bush Doctrine.”

Boot, “Doctrine of the ‘Big Enchilada,’”

Simpson, “‘By the Dawn’s Early Light.’”

See Kristol, *et al.*, “Dear Mr. President.”

Machiavelli, *The Prince*. Because William Bennett, Mr. Virtue (*The Book of Virtues* [New York: Simon and Schuster, 1993]), writes the “character” chapter in *Present Dangers* with an onslaught on President Clinton, he would be an excellent case study for secrecy, given his now ousted gambling habit, secreted for years even from his wife. Still, in a paraphrase, secrecy is the compliment that vice pays to virtue. “O, Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid, cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit that ...”
For the full text of Lazarus’ famous poem, for an excellent resource about her life, for a brief, critical analysis of her poetic contribution to American public life, and for a helpful bibliography see http://www.jwa.org/exhibits/lazarus/.

See the stunning investigation by renowned Republican political analyst, Kevin Phillips (American Dynasty: Aristocracy, Fortune, and the Problem of Deceit in the House of Bush (New York: Viking Penguin, 2004). Four chief components have over time established the Bush dynasty: financial cronyism, manipulation of energy markets, cozy connections with the bounty of the military-industrial complex, and the secret ties within the national security and intelligence community. Democratic expectations make cloaking necessary. Machiavelli did not have such democratic “hardships.” Luther insightfully and decisively notes how “cloaking” violates the Second Commandment’s prohibition of blasphemy, and he theoretically bases his own critical theory in the Second Commandment (see Luther, The Large Catechism in The Book of Concord: The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, eds. Robert Kolb and Timothy Wengert [Minneapolis, Minnesota: Fortress Press, 2000], pp. 392-396).

W.E.B. DuBois, The Souls of Black Folks, ed. Herbert Aptheker (Milwood, New York: Kraus-Thomson, 1973). DuBois noted that this double consciousness, the one of slave culture and the other of master culture, gave blacks a double dose of cultural knowledge and thus an emancipatory epistemological advantage. Worth considering is whether Bush enjoys a reverse, imperialist epistemological advantage.

For the neo-con claim to have “created” the Iraq War see Donnelly, “Brave New World.” “A US victory [in the Iraq War] . . . will define the start of a truly new world order; to steal Dean Acheson’s famous phrase, we are present at the creation.” Also see Robert Kagan, “Multilateralism, American Style,” The Washington Pos, September 13, 2002 at www.newamericancentury.org/global-091302.htm; Kagan calls the War “an American-created reality on Iraq,” actually a neo-con created War.


Colin Powell, “Remarks to the United Nations Security Council,” at www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2003/17300.htm. Note in his statement the neo-con discourse of “present dangers.” Secretary Powell had forty-five slides with his address. He used nine specially designed slides that emphasized his epistemological resolve. Each of these nine featured an ominous grey-black background. Each said, “IRAQ – Failing To
Disarm .” At his “gravity of this moment” statement he featured “IRAQ – Failing To Disarm – Biological Weapons.” As his speech continued he piled on the certainty with “IRAQ – Failing To Disarm – Chemical Weapons,” then “IRAQ – Failing To Disarm – Nuclear Weapons,” then “IRAQ – Failing To Disarm – Delivery Systems,” then “IRAQ – Failing To Disarm – Terrorism,” then “IRAQ – Failing To Disarm – Human Rights Violations.” Everyone knows that the last certainty-slide is true; everyone also now knows that the “certainties” of the previous five lie along a spectrum from disinformation to misinformation.

These officials include Vice President Dick Cheney on August 29, 2002 to veterans of the Korean War in San Antonio, TX; the President on September 12, 2002 at the United Nations; Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld on September 18, 2002 before the US House of Representatives Armed Services Committee and on September 19, 2002 before the US Senate Armed Services Committee. You can find all of these speeches at either the Associated Press site www.newslibrary.com/sites/apab/ or http://nl.newsbank.com/nl.search/we/Archives?

George F. Will, “To win, Bush will have to tell it like it is,” Washington Post, February 8, 2004. David Kay, President Bush’s Iraq arms inspector, resigned from his post in January 2004 and was interviewed by Liane Hansen on National Public Radio’s Weekend Edition. Since then the world knows that Iraq’s alleged weapons of mass destruction have been missing in action for many years. Likely, Will’s sudden case of conscience has arisen due to the imminent threat of an election.

See Jonathan Snow, “The Case for War in Iraq,” February 3, 2004 at http://www.defenddemocracy.org/publications/publications_show.htm?doc_id=205195; Snow is Manager, Research and Messaging, The Foundation for the Defense of Democracies. Employing rhetorical discipline Snow quibbles about words denying that the Bush administration ever used the term “imminent threat” when justifying the Iraq War. It undoubtedly and abundantly used many publicly equivalent phrases. Further, in his 2003 State of the Union Address the President did in fact point to Iraq as an “imminent threat” by mocking those who “have said we must not act until the threat is imminent” (at www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2003/01/20030128-1.htm. It is likely that the President had actually jettisoned the “imminent threat” portion of the “just cause” criterion of the just war tradition, at least in his own thinking; and that he had substituted a neo-con war realist and imperial rationale that advances “a wider view of the traditional doctrine of ‘imminent danger.’” Neo-cons, at least, say this about the
President; see Donnelly, "Underpinnings of the Bush Doctrine.” The President’s strategic abandonment of this traditional just war criterion, even as he professes fighting “in a just cause and by just means,” leads to his imperialist preemption doctrine.


George Will’s Johnny-come-lately advise surely fits the case here: “Once begun, leakage of public confidence in a president’s pronouncements is difficult to staunch;” see Will, “To win, Bush will have to tell it like it is.”

See, for instance, Thomas Donnelly’s analysis in “Iraq Is the Central Front,” National Security Outlook, American Enterprise Institute, (October 2003). Donnelly notes, “The most forceful argument against the [Bush] doctrine is that it is too audacious, too costly for America to accept – even after the attacks of September 11 supposedly woke us from a decade’s slumber.” “Too audacious” is neo-con linguistic discipline. “Too audacious” really means too imperialist. Neo-cons know that they are most vulnerable in the court of US and international public opinion when the imperialist charge is made to stick. Neo-cons orient their linguistic discipline to combat the charge of imperialism. For this reason discerning implicit imperialism is crucial!


Donnelly, “Brave New World.”

Thomas Friedman, “What really was gross about halftime show,” New York Times, February 9, 2004. The following paragraphs in the main text refer to this editorial.

Russett’s February 8, 2004 interview with President Bush, op. cit.


This stands at the heart of “Honour your father and your mother” as Christians throughout the ages have taught. Luther is a good example among a host of possible examples in this regard. He finds key aspects of his doctrine of vocation in the “fourth” commandment, especially in regard to “honour;” see Simpson, “Lutheran ‘Delight,’” pp. 26-29.


Martin Luther, “Commentary on Psalm 101,” (1534) LW, Vol. 13, pp. 154-175. Luther, referring to Aristotle, imagines these extraordinary leaders as a kind of non-hereditary, free-floating, ad hoc aristocracy (LW, Vol. 13, pp. 161). Shortly after the failure of the 1530 Diet of Augsburg to bring peace within the empire, Luther readies the German people for just such a “raising up” by God. Increasingly, he invokes the figure of Judas Maccabeus; see Luther, “Dr. Martin Luther’s Warning to His Dear German People” (1531) LW, Vol. 47, p. 17.

Martin Luther, “Commentary on Psalm 82,” (LW, Vol. 13, pp. 49-51). This is often called “Luther’s Treatise on the Christian Prince.” In “A Sermon on Keeping Children in School” (1530) Luther again extols the role that the office of preaching plays vis-à-vis political authority (LW, Vol. 46, pp. 226-227). Significantly, he argues that preachers should exercise the admonitory obligation of their office a fully public and open forum (LW, Vol. 47, pp. 21-29).


Martin Luther, The Large Catechism, p. 419; also see Martin Luther, “Admonition to Peace,” (1525) LW, Vol. 46, pp. 32, 41.


Ibid., p. 121.


Ibid., I, xxvi, p. 41; I, pp. xlv, 69.

Ibid., II, pp. xxxii, 57.

Simpson, Critical Social Theory, pp. 101-122.

Published by Scholars Commons @ Laurier, 2004
Lincoln, "Gettysburg Address."


"The voice of the people is the voice of God." The Latin phrase appears in striking gold leaf on the sky blue wall of the legislative chambers of the State Capitol in St. Paul, MN. This is Ciceronian common place in Western political discourse. It likely appeared in one of the numerous missing sections Cicero's *The Republic.* A famous rejection of it was issued by Alcuin in the year 800 A.D. Alcuin was Emperor Charlemagne's court theologian and imperial apologist. Monarchists discern God's voice in the well born, aristocrats in the well bred, and imperialists in the coercively empowered.


NGOWatch is "A project of The American Enterprise Institute and the Federalist Society, at www.ngowatch.org. NGOWatch is quite careful how it articulates its purpose. While clearly worried and suspicious, it projects – or is it feigns? – respect. It is particularly interested in the effect that INGOs have on "sovereignty." Sovereignty touches, of course, the question of the international rule of law. See "http://www.ngowatch.org/treaties.htm#Sov"

See Elaine L. Chao, "Address to The Federalist Society," November 14, 2003 at "http://www.ngowatch.org/ChaoAddress.pdf. U.S" Chao, US Secretary of Labor, recognizes the significance of NGOs and INGOs for the future of nation-state sovereignty and is exceedingly anxious about this. From this address I can make no judgment either whether she considers herself a neo-con internationalist or whether she could legitimately be placed ideationally among them.