

The Bush Plan for World Domination

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The Bush administration has now promulgated its plans for world domination. Under the title of "The National Security Strategy of the United States" (*The New York Times*, 20 September 2002), this approach betrays our past heritage as the moral leader of the civilized world and expends our military power for the purpose of promoting our own national self-interest, regardless of the consequences for the rest of the world, in a new form of American imperialism. Its origins are rooted in a study written and published in September 2000, by the Project for the New American Century, a neo-conservative think tank, which lays out the case for US world domination.

The administration's 33-page document, which is available on-line via *The New York Times*, was submitted to Congress in response to a law passed in 1986 that requires such an assessment from each President. It adopts the most aggressive foreign policy in the history of the United States by abandoning non-proliferation treaties in favor of "counterproliferation", which includes scrapping the ABM treaty to undertake the construction of our own missile defense systems, and emphasizing our right to "strike first" at those who would threaten American interests, which the administration takes to be preeminent: *whenever US interests are at stake, there will be no compromise.*

As David A. Sanger explains, while the Clinton administration emphasized reliance upon and enforcement of international treaties--the 1972 ABM Treaty, the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, and the Kyoto environmental accords, for example--this document even "celebrates" the decision to abandon the ABM treaty, because it created constraints upon American efforts to build a missile defense system of its own. The expectation imposed

on countries in Kyoto to reduce their CO2 emissions are now displaced by targets, where meeting them becomes merely voluntary. And it rejects the new International Criminal Court, whose jurisdiction, it claims, does not extend to American citizens, no matter what.

Even though this document is couched in language that expresses appreciation for the UN, the WTO, and NATO, it emphasizes the special status of the US as the world's only superpower and baldly asserts that the President has no intention of allowing foreign nations to compete with the US in military power. This document makes it very clear the US supports multilateral approaches to problem solving only when that happens to coincide with US interests, where the US reserves the right to strike first whenever it perceives that its national interests are at stake. Its underlying premises appear to be that, because the US has the power to impose its interests, it has the right to do so.

The ancient doctrine that "might makes right" has been repudiated by every student of moral theory except, it would appear, the present administration. The reason for entities like the UN and the WTO is supposed to be that differences in military and economic power not compromise the right of nations to be treated alike in accordance with international law. These new Bush policies are blatant examples of what is called "limited utilitarianism", according to which an action is right for a group when it brings about the greatest benefits for that group, regardless of its consequences for everyone else. This is the most pernicious of all moral theories, because the actions of a group, such as those of the Nazis, can be far more devastating than those of mere individuals.

Shallow thinkers sometimes maintain that everyone always acts in his own interest, which exemplifies "ethical egoism". But that position trades upon an ambiguity that freshmen are taught to avoid, namely: that between motives being *our own motives*

(and in that sense being "our interests") and motives being *intended to promote our own self-interest*. Anytime anyone acts from a sense of loyalty, affection, respect, or duty, especially at the expense of one's time, effort, money, or life, they exemplify the poverty of ethical egoism. The inadequacy of limited utilitarianism ought to be even more conspicuous, insofar as Hitler's Germany, Hirohito's Japan, and even Stalin's Soviet Union operated on the basis of the very principles that we are now embracing.

Consider Pearl Harbor. The surprise attack upon US naval and marine forces stationed in the Hawaiian Islands would have been morally justified under "The National Security Strategy of the United States". As Robert B. Stinnett, *Day of Deceit* (2000), has explained, the US undertook a series of actions--including arrangements to use British bases in the Pacific; to use bases and acquire supplies in Dutch East Indies; to give all possible aid to Chiang Kai-shek; to send a division of heavy cruisers and two divisions of submarines into the Orient; to station the US fleet in the Hawaiian Islands; to insist that the Dutch refuse Japanese requests for economic concessions, especially oil; and to join with the British in an embargo of Japanese trade--that were intended to provoke the Japanese.

The key point is this. All of these actions could have been perceived as threats to the national interests of Japan. Under the auspices of some counterpart "National Security Strategy of Japan", it would have been perfectly appropriate for Japan to undertake a preemptive strike at the perceived threat to its national interests represented by the United States. Far from being regarded "a date that will live in infamy", 7 December 1941--consistent with this doctrine--could be recalled as a glorious attempt to uphold the national interests of Japan, whose morality and propriety are beyond all question. That the war ended in a fashion that was contrary to Japanese interests is merely an

accident of history, because nations have the moral right to undertake "first strikes"!

The philosophy that underlies the Constitution, the Bill of Rights, and the UN charter, is not limited utilitarianism or even "classic utilitarianism", according to which actions that bring about at least as much benefit for everyone as any alternative actions are right. In that case, since actions may not benefit everyone the same--our war on Iraq, for example, may be expected to be very costly for Iraqi civilians as well as for Iraqi soldiers--calculations of right and wrong must be made on the basis of net benefits, where the costs for some are subtracted from the benefits for others. This approach, however, like simple majority rule, can be used to justify the most corrupt acts, such as slave-based societies, when they do not properly take into account personal rights.

The Declaration of Independence declares that Americans have inalienable rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. We think that's a pretty good thing, even if the founding fathers did not fully include women and slaves within the scope of the rights it was engaged in enumerating. Those would include the right to vote, for example, or the right to be free from unreasonable search or seizure, or the right to forfeit your life, liberty, or property only after a fair trial by a jury of your peers--something called "due process". These are the kind of rights that motivated the UN Charter, which advocates universal human rights as rights of every human merely because that person is human. They are rights to which every human is entitled.

These rights create reciprocal duties within the framework of what is known as "deontological moral theory". According to this approach, we should always treat other persons as ends--as valuable in themselves--and never merely as means.

This implies treating other persons with respect, including acknowledging a duty

to respect their rights as human beings. When persons violate the rights of others by treating them merely as means, then they are subject to punishment within the framework of due process as it applies to them. In this case, that implies not acting unilaterally to enforce the national interests of the US but taking into account the rights of other nations and other populations, even including the population of Iraq.

Unilateral actions may be morally unobjectionable if one nation poses "an imminent threat" to another. But Iraq poses no such threat to the US. The existence of entities such as the United Nations and the WTO make the class of cases in which unilateral action is required a narrowly circumscribed class. Indeed, the US courts the UN for support because Iraq has violated sixteen of its resolutions intended to bring about the removal of weapons of mass destruction, while simultaneously maintaining that the policy of the US is to bring about "regime change". The US has no right, under international law, to initiate "regime change" merely because it may find that to be in its national interest, and violations of UN resolutions are not "terrorist acts". The appeal to the UN is merely a technique to conceal the violations of international law that the US is about to perpetrate based on its commitment to a corrupt moral theory.

Such unilateral actions even appear to be illegal as well as immoral. As an article in the *Duluth News Tribune* (23 September 2002) reports, "The United Nations Charter imposes limitations on declarations of war. The US Senate approved the Charter after World War II as a legally binding treaty." Indeed, treaties, under the Constitution, are the supreme law of the land. The abrogation of these treaties by this administration probably qualifies as unconstitutional and might well be considered an impeachable offense. If Bush blatantly disregards this nation's commitments under the Charter, it shall almost certainly have violated international law and the Constitution of the US.

But neo-conservatives despise the UN and would like nothing more than to weaken it.

A policy of preemption is not only morally corrupt but inherently destabilizing. As I observed in *Reader Weekly* (19 September 2002), embracing first strikes encourages attacks upon your enemy for perceived threats, real or imagined. Unlike our policies of the past, according to which the US would attack you only if you attacked us first, this new approach functions as an incentive to *use 'em or lose 'em*. It will inevitably encourage Pakistan to attack India, China to attack Taiwan, North Korea its southern neighbor, and--most conspicuously--Iraq to attack US forces in the Middle East. In view of our announced objectives, if Saddam does possess any chemical, biological, or nuclear weapons, it would be immoral for him not to use them against the quite real threat we now present under the auspices of "The National Security Strategy of Iraq"!

According to an article in *Sunday Herald* (15 September 2002), Bush planned to attack Iraq and bring about "regime change" even before he become President. Neil Mackay reports that a masterplan to create a global "Pax Americana" that would exceed the dominance over the world exerted by the ancient Roman Empire. These plans were drafted by a neo-conservative think tank, The Project for a New American Century (PNAC), with input from Dick Cheney, Donald Rumsfeld, and Paul Wolfowitz, among others. The report is available at newamericancentury.org/publicationsreports.htm.

As Mackay explains, this document provides "a blueprint for maintaining global US preeminence, precluding the rise of a great power rival, and shaping the international security order in line with American principles and interests". This approach clearly does not take into account whether such a plan would be beneficial for the rest of the world's population--not even to the extent that it may affect its prospects for survival

and reproduction! If every human being has the right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, however, then the US has an obligation to take into account how actions it might pursue would impact on other nations and the world. It cannot act solely in its own national interest and satisfy the conditions of deontological moral theory, in the absence of which its conduct falls in the same category as that of Hirohito's Japan!

Among the objectives specified by the PNAC report that are explicit or implied by the new strategic policy of the US are these: maintaining relations with allies as means to promote American global domination; treating "peace keeping" missions as requiring US rather than UN leadership; doing whatever is necessary to undermine European solidarity if that could rival US preeminence; permanently occupying Iraq, with or without Saddam, to maintain US influence in the Middle East and its control over oil; creating US "space forces" to control military uses of space; taking steps to insure US control of cyberspace; continuing to develop our own chemical, biological, and nuclear weapons; and maintaining focus on Syria, Libya, Iran, and North Korea as dangerous regimes which, over the long run, along with China, are candidates for regime change.

The article concludes with quotes from Tam Dalyell, a Labor MP in UK's Parliament, who says, "This is garbage from right-wing think tanks stuffed with chicken-hawks --men who have never seen the horror of war but are in love with the idea of war. Men like Cheney, who were draft-dodgers in the Vietnam war. This is a blueprint for US world domination--a new world order of their own making. These are the thought processes of fantasist [those who fantasize, but he may have meant fascist] Americans who want to control the world. I am appalled a British Labour Prime Minister should have got into bed with a crew which has this [low] moral standing".

The overt reason given for opposing the new International Criminal Court, as Bush and Cheney have alleged, is that the United States might become the target of flimsy charges for political purposes by nations that dislike us. But there are more ominous reasons for supposing that we might become parties to suits before this court, such as blatant violations of international law. The US and its ally, Israel, have histories of committing serious crimes against humanity, including terrorism, assassination, and coups. Calling them "regime changes" does not alter their legal or their moral character. The best reason for opposing the Court, in their eyes, may simply be to keep Bush, Cheney, Rumsfeld, Wolfowitz, and Ariel Sharon free from prosecution and out of prison, where the evidence increasingly suggests they properly belong.

Jim Fetzer, a professor of philosophy at UMD, has long been convinced that this is the most corrupt administration in American history. Whether or not this nation and the world survive intact may depend on the extent to which its control of the government is strengthened or weakened during the November off-year elections.