

tree: “the head, left exposed to buzzards along with the rain and wind, had been stripped to the bone.” Only the papers on the body revealed Münzenberg’s identity. The likeliest explanation for his death is that NKVD goons slew him, as a low-key counterpart to their renowned visitation of Trotsky. Nevertheless a verdict of suicide suited officialdom much better. It suited the NKVD itself, naturally, but it also suited Vichy’s policemen, fearing a Gestapo invasion of their turf, as would certainly have happened once word leaked out that a world-famous German refugee had been assassinated.

To finish *The Red Millionaire* is to be dazed with sorrow. All that energy that Münzenberg expended; all that intense, if hopelessly shallow, brainwork, and with what aim? That the most loathsome and lethal régime ever inflicted upon men—at least until Mao showed a reverential world what mass extermination could really achieve—might shine in the eyes of the public with a greater refugence. Entrapped in his dialectical-materialist squalor, Münzenberg knew nothing of the heroic faith that sustained Stalinism’s great religious victims, such as the Orthodox Solzhenitsyn, the Catholic Mindszenty, and the Protestant Richard Wurmbrand. Maybe in his last conscious moments, as the noose tightened around his neck, Münzenberg felt a surge of contrition for so brilliantly upholding “the culture of the lie.” It would be agreeable to think so; it would also be unjustified by a scrap of available evidence.

Rebecca West, in *The Meaning of Treason*, observed: “What is the sin against the Holy Ghost? It is perhaps to deal with people as if they were things.” Let that be the epitaph for Willi Münzenberg, puppet-master extraordinaire, who never imagined—till too late—that Stalin would lean over the proscenium arch and cut the marionettes’ threads, one by one by one. ■

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[*The Choice: Global Domination or Global Leadership*, Zbigniew Brzezinski, Basic Books, 242 pages]

Dr. Zbig’s Empire Lite

By Leon Hadar

SINCE YOU ARE READING this review in *The American Conservative*, there is a good chance that you opposed the invasion of Iraq and reject the neoconservative agenda of establishing a U.S.-controlled Global Democratic Empire. So I bring you some good news. After reading Dr. Zbigniew Brzezinski’s most recent Big Ideas and Deep Thoughts on America’s place in the world, the future of the universe, and life on Mars, I can report to you that one of Washington’s top Wise Men, who is admired by both Democrats and Republicans, shares your views.

If it had been up to “Zbig,” America would not have launched a unilateral military operation to oust Saddam Hussein and occupy Iraq. The former national security adviser to President Jimmy Carter and architect of the historic 1979 peace accord between Israel and Egypt would have applied American power to force Ariel Sharon to start making real concessions to the Palestinians. And the renowned Polish-American political scientist makes it clear that he is against the neoconservative strategy that “relies largely on assertive domination based on might.”

It is heartening that someone like Brzezinski, who is not only affiliated with the Council on Foreign Relations but is also one of the founders of the Trilateral Commission, agrees with you. It means that the opposition to the neoconservative fantasy is not only becoming mainstream but is gradually taking hold over “elite” thinking.

But don’t get too excited because here is the bad news. Dr. B, who is all of the above and more, and would probably

have some impact on the making of the foreign policy of a John Kerry administration or on that of a second term of a (wishing and hoping and praying) Realpolitik-oriented George W. Bush administration, believes that with a little help from our European friends Washington would be able to promote its global hegemony, also known as “leadership,” worldwide. “American global hegemony is now a fact of life” and “no one, including America, has any choice in the matter.”

The choice, as Brzezinski explains it, is not whether America should be a hegemon or not. It should. “The real choices pertain to how America should exercise its hegemony, how and with whom that hegemony might be shared, and to what ultimate goals it should be dedicated,” he concludes. He wants to see the emergence of American “primacy,” “hegemony,” “leadership,” and “unprecedented global power” based on “consensual leadership enhancing America’s status as the world’s sole superpower.” American hegemony is a “worldwide reality,” Brzezinski asserts. It’s a political-military axiom that we have to take for granted and we must decide whether it should be “boastfully declared” (the neocon choice) or “subtly exercised” (Brzezinski’s choice).

Here the reader might think, “All of this sounds to me like empire.” But Zbig dares not call it empire. Instead, he argues that if Washington follows his prescriptions, America will become what he calls “a Superpower Plus.” Perhaps a more appropriate term would be “Empire Lite.” In fact, in one of his many exercises in dialectical thinking, Brzezinski suggests that the neoconservative imperial strategy is pregnant with its own self-igniting process of declinism, while his more cost-effective approach to hegemony would ensure that America would remain the top dog long after your grandkids return from their peacekeeping service in the Greater Middle East, in Tajikistan or Georgia or Ukraine (which happen to be the places our Polish-American scholar wants to see a large U.S. military

presence, since it would irritate the Russians).

To put it differently, if we take the neoconservative road, we are bound to erode American diplomatic, military, and economic power and make it more difficult to maintain U.S. hegemony in the long run. The result would be that

TERRORISM IS NOT AN ENEMY, BRZEZINSKI STRESSES. "NO ONE WOULD HAVE DECLARED AT THE OUTSET OF WORLD WAR II THAT THE WAR WAS BEING FOUGHT AGAINST 'BLITZKRIEG.'"

America would turn into "a Superpower Minus." Therefore, if you want the U.S. to remain the dominant global power for centuries to come, your choice would be the user-friendly American hegemony that Zbig proposes, one that would make Europeans, Middle Easterners, and Asians more inclined to accept the notion of American Empire—oops... sorry!—primacy.

The book relies on complex sentences with all the mumbo-jumbo that tends to turn on political scientists. But while much as Brzezinski's critique of the Bushies is couched in civil prose, it is quite hard-hitting, if not devastating, as he lashes out against the administration's post-9/11 "war on terrorism" and its "theological" approach against the "evildoers." Culminating in the "axis of evil" formulation, "the American perspective on terrorism increasingly came to be viewed as divorced from terrorism's political context." As a result, "the nearly unanimous support for America [after 9/11] gave way to increasing skepticism regarding the official U.S. formulation of the shared threat." Terrorism in itself is not an enemy, Brzezinski stresses. "One does not wage a war against a technique or a tactic," he explains. "No one, for instance, would have declared at the outset of World War II that the war was being fought against 'blitzkrieg.'" Instead, he says, a "careful political strategy is needed in order to weaken the complex political and cultural forces that give rise to terrorism," In particular,

he emphasizes the need for the United States to play a more active role in resolving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, thus weakening the power of anti-American forces in the Arab and Muslim world.

He deplores "the U.S. inclination, in the spring of 2002, to embrace even the

more extreme forms of Israeli suppression of the Palestinians as part of the struggle against terrorism." The unwillingness of the Bush administration "to recognize a historical connection between the rise of anti-American terrorism and America's involvement in the Middle East makes the formulation of an effective strategic response to terrorism much more difficult."

All of that is true. But Brzezinski seems to underestimate the role that U.S. support for authoritarian regimes in the Arab and Muslim world played in igniting the anti-American sentiments that led to 9/11. As national security adviser, Brzezinski was the driving force in the Carter administration for


strengthening American military and political ties with the Saudis, the Egyptians, and the Pakistanis, and helping to build-up and arm the mujaheddin in Afghanistan as part of the anti-Soviet strategy during the last years of the Cold War. And this, as we know, was the environment in which Osama bin Laden and his gang appeared and the outlines of the "blowback" in New York and Washington were drawn.

An argument can be made that the policy of allying America with those bad guys was necessary and that it proved effective as part of the Cold War strategy. But Brzezinski is suggesting that we continue to maintain strong ties with Mubarak and Musharraf and the Saudis and even recommends that we establish new alliances with other Muslim autocrats in those "Stans" he describes as the "Global Balkans" that stretches from Morocco to India. At the same time, he calls on America to help accelerate the process of reform and secularization in the Muslim world as part of a strategy to confront the sources of Islamic radicalism that help breed terrorism. But the problem is that it's the links with the Mubaraks, the Musharraf, and the Saudis that, together with American support for Israel, are the root causes of anti-American sentiments. To achieve primacy, you have to repress those who

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are opposed to the your interests. Hence, the internal contradiction in the progressive domination project that Brzezinski promotes, not unlike that in the neocons' democratic empire scheme. And the bottom line is that this Empire Lite could end up costing significant American blood and money.

The main question is why Americans should continue sustaining this global "primacy" or "hegemony" status now that the Cold War is over. Why should we extend the post-Cold War "unilateral moment" even under the Brzezinski

primarily on its national power to insulate itself from the international anarchy that would follow a disengagement," Brzezinski warns us.

Really? A gradual U.S. military disengagement could actually give rise to new balance-of-power systems and security arrangements in the Middle East, Asia, and Europe that would help to maintain stability in those regions. Why shouldn't the Europeans, whose economies are dependent on oil from the Persian Gulf (in contrast to the United States, which receives less than

the history of the world. Neither Rome nor ancient Peking—both the capitals of regional empires—nor Victorian London (except perhaps in international banking) even came close to matching the concentration of global power and decision making in a few square blocks of downtown Washington. Decisions made within two overlapping but relatively tight triangles project U.S. power worldwide and heavily influence the way globalization evolves." These two triangles "together signal the degree to which traditional 'foreign affairs' have become inside-the-beltway affairs." And it's inside these two triangles that Brzezinski and his Beltway pals, Republicans and Democrats, in the White House and the Pentagon, neoconservatives and liberal internationalists, residents of the American Enterprise Institute and the Center for Strategic and International Studies, columnists for the *Weekly Standard* and the *New Republic*, have built lucrative careers.

If Americans choose to end the process of empire-building and to initiate instead a policy of "constructive disengagement," that would clearly be bad news for Brzezinski and the establishment elites, since it would mean that there would be fewer government jobs and contracts to fill, less consulting and lobbying work to do, fewer business deals to make, and fewer columns, memoirs, and Big Ideas books to write. In short, there would be less influence to sell and less prestige to win. But for the rest of the American people that choice would mean fewer wars to fight and fewer taxes to pay, which shows that the real choice is not between Superpower Plus and Super Minus, or even between Zbigniew Brzezinski and Condoleezza Rice (although at this historical juncture I would choose Dr. B. over Dr. C.), but between Empire and Republic. ■

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WHY SHOULDN'T WE **ENCOURAGE THE EVOLUTION** OF A—EXCUSE MY FRENCH—MULTIPOLAR WORLD IN WHICH AMERICA WOULD BE **ABLE TO PROTECT ITS CORE NATIONAL INTERESTS?**

strategy, which assumes that the Europeans would agree to share some of the costs? Well, because America and the world don't have really any other choice (as opposed to the choice we do have in managing that dominant role, that is, Zbig's Superpower Plus vs. the neocons' Superpower Minus).

Imagine, he speculates, that Congress were to mandate the retraction of U.S. military power from its three crucial deployments in Europe, the Far East, and the Persian Gulf. Any such withdrawal "would without doubt plunge the world almost immediately into a politically chaotic crisis." He draws the following scenario, which is supposed to make us very afraid. In Europe, there would be a rush by some to rearm but also to reach a special arrangement with Russia. In the Far East, war would probably break out on the Korean peninsula while Japan would undertake a crash program of rearmament, including nuclear weapons. In the Persian Gulf, Iran would become dominant and would intimidate the adjoining Arab states. "Given the foregoing, the long-term strategic alternatives for America are either to engage in a gradual, carefully managed transformation of its own supremacy into a self-sustaining international system, or to rely

20 percent of its oil from that region), pay the costs of maintaining security in that region? Why shouldn't Russia apply its own form of the Monroe Doctrine in its "near abroad" regions in the Caucasus and Central Asia? Why wouldn't we want to see the emergence of a new security system in Asia involving China, Japan, and Korea? Why shouldn't we encourage the evolution of a—excuse my French—multipolar world in which America would be able to protect its core national interests like defending the homeland while co-operating with allies around the world in dealing with common threats?

I suspect that the reason Brzezinski and his buddies in the foreign-policy establishment do not like the idea has less to do with their fear of chaos and more with their concern that a lower global political-military profile by the United States would demonstrate that other countries can actually prosper without American "leadership," which happens to be the product that Brzezinski and the rest of the members of the Washington elite provide.

Here is how Brzezinski describes the U.S. capital in a somewhat lyrical tribute to American global power. "Washington, DC, is the first global political capital in

[*Deliver Us From Evil: Defeating Terrorism, Despotism, and Liberalism*, Sean Hannity, Regan Books, 352 pages]

Hate Clinton, Love Churchill

By Matthew Bargarier

ONE GETS A FEEL for this book before turning the first numbered page. First, there's the cover photo of the author with the Statue of Liberty for a backdrop, earnest sunshine beaming from his head. Then there's the title. With the release of Bill O'Reilly's *Those Who Trespass*, Fox News alone has two current bestsellers with names copped from the Lord's Prayer, surely one of the least obscure references in the Western world. Yet Sean Hannity employs that august passage for an epigraph, with the title phrase in bold, just in case his readers' short-term memory is as poor as he imagines their cultural literacy to be. But not until the preface does one fully grasp the mental bludgeoning in store, when Hannity depicts Saddam Hussein's capture as follows: "He was cornered like a rat, caught in a lizard's den, in a spider hole."

To be fair, these are only stylistic gripes about a book that makes good on its one ambition. That ambition is not timelessness, by the way—if you plan to give *Deliver Us From Evil* as a gift, I suggest you shoot for Father's Day; it will curdle long before Christmas. And don't bother giving it to anyone who isn't voting for President Bush already, for nothing in it is meant to persuade. What Hannity has succeeded in producing is a set of snappy comebacks to use on the co-worker who won't stop dropping nuggets from that Al Franken book. A more accurate subtitle would have been *Appeasement and the Appeasing Appeasers Who Do It*. The word turns up in various forms over 60 times in less than 300 pages, and that's not counting quotations or the use of synonyms such

as "accommodation." The specter of ur-appeaser Neville Chamberlain debuts on page three and provides grave historical context for every accusation thereafter. For today's interventionists, it's always 1938 somewhere. Keep your eyes peeled for "pure human wickedness" and evil so "absolute and aggressive" as to be "unimaginabl[e]."

Hannity names the chief sources of such evil in chapter one, "Terrorism, Despotism, and Liberalism." Since his book is all about helping you devour that Franken-quoter in the next cubicle, he begins with the liberals. Evil exists (as anecdotes about a suicide attempt, a cheating pharmacist, and a molesting priest attest), but most liberals deny it or excuse its perpetrators. We see it all the time in the courts, don't we? As OJ runs cover in the subtext, Hannity slips a dove from his shirtsleeve: Saddam Hussein was behind al-Qaeda. Proof:

Saddam has expressed admiration for the 9/11 attacks, and bin Laden has praised the Iraqi resistance. And neither side would hesitate for a moment to cooperate with the other if it served their common, murderous ends. With Saddam Hussein's ability to manufacture WMDs, and al Qaeda's ability to deliver them under the radar, surely neither side could resist the temptation forever.

Hannity fans know how to cut through the legalese. You don't have to show them a picture of Osama and Saddam playing touch football at the Kennedy compound—they have already drawn their own. This book works because it leaves no preconception unconfirmed.

It also works because it slaloms down the course so quickly that every red flag becomes a blur. Why, for instance, are some Arabs and Muslims so hostile toward the United States? No, no, those aren't explanations we're whizzing past, they're excuses for terrorism. Hannity mentions U.S. support for Israel as a motive for the 9/11 attacks only once, and even then he makes it sound as if

that support is only moral. He depicts an "antiwar lunatic fringe" bursting with villains from Hollywood and academia, but he completely ignores the antiwar Right and its criticisms of President Bush. He makes no reference whatsoever to David Frum's "unpatriotic conservatives," a blacklist that includes the most prominent names at this magazine. Is Hannity afraid his audience might be swayed by conservative and libertarian arguments that interventionism makes America less free and no safer? He never takes that chance, choosing wisely to frame the debate as one between "realists" like himself and "mindless pacifis[ts]." The term "neoconservative" appears only once, in quotation marks to denote a tinge of liberal paranoia.

Of course, the author makes some points that few on the Right would dispute. For instance, after blessing Bill Clinton's foreign meddling, most Democrats have no room to blast George W. Bush's. Those who voted to authorize the use of force against Iraq—sound familiar, Senator Kerry?—deserve contempt for cashing in on the backlash now. The multilateralism they tout is a dubious cure for what ails us; it saps our national sovereignty without decreasing our foreign entanglements. The United Nations is corrupt and ineffectual at best, and the U.S. should withdraw post-haste. Finally, Bill and Hillary have done some awful things and no doubt hope to do many more.

Yes, the Clintons are loathsome, but one of their least palatable byproducts has been the Clinton-bashing industry. Witness a generation of commentators who have read nothing but each other's broadsides, pundits who might be hosting "Morning Drive Time with Goober and Bonzo" in some lonesome nowhere were it not for the Dark Lords of Little Rock, a sex scandal, and a tabloid billionaire with a 24-hour cycle to fill. Having first struck crude with the Clintons, they keep returning to the well. (Hannity stuck his straw down the pipe and slurped up much of his first book, as well as a whole chapter of this one.) But with one bogeyman exiled in Harlem