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Do we want an American empire?

Richard Perle, who recently resigned as Defense Policy Board chairman, apparently agreed with a Rand Corp. presentation that viewed attacking Iraq as the "tactical pivot" in a plan for American world domination, found in a document of the Project for a New American Century. Inherent in this plan, our military, by force of arms, is to create a global empire in America's image. In the PNAC's September 2000 report, "Rebuilding America's Defenses," U.S. forces are advised to be ready to fight and decisively win multiple, simultaneous major theater wars.

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How many Americans swept away in a tide of patriotism realize that Iraq is just the first step for this 1997, fiercely pro-war think-tank's grand strategy for America's future? Jeb Bush, Dick Cheney, Donald Rumsfeld, Paul Wolfowitz, Perle and others have signed on to PNAC's principles. Norman Podhoretz, another signatory, has stated that not only the three regimes of the "Axis of Evil" should be dealt with, but also Syria, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Libya and the Palestinian Authority.

Has anyone in the Bush administration thought to ask Americans about their willingness to send their children to fight multiple pre-emptive wars to fulfill the dreams of this war circle, or about how the hundreds of billions of dollars to be expended in conquering other people could be used for underfunded domestic programs in America? Is anyone asking what has happened to good will and to persistent efforts to find peaceful solutions to world problems?

Will United Defense, the major defense contractor whose parent company, the Carlyle Group, for whom G.H.W. Bush and former Secretary of State James Baker act as senior advisers, be the only winner in this future scenario?

I hope Americans will start asking this administration some critical questions.

Norma Hamilton

Punta Gorda

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