

YOUR KINDLE NOTES FOR:

After the Apocalypse: America's Role in a World Transformed (American Empire Project)

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9 Highlight(s) | 0 Note(s)

Yellow highlight | Location: 227

> The annexation of the Philippine archipelago, seized in a war ostensibly undertaken to liberate Cuba, prompted him to revise the lyrics of “The Battle Hymn of the Republic.”

Note:

Yellow highlight | Location: 234

> After killing an estimated two hundred thousand Filipinos, U.S. forces succeeded in pacifying the Philippines. Twain’s ditty was soon forgotten.

Note:

Yellow highlight | Location: 665

> Substantively more important than MNF-I were the profit-motivated private contractors that descended on strife-torn Iraq like a plague of locusts following the fall of Baghdad. Here was the real coalition of the willing: dozens of firms eager to lend a hand because they saw in Iraq lucrative opportunities. By 2009, to compensate for a shortage of uniformed troops some fifty contractors were employing a workforce of more than thirty thousand employees.22 This contractor “army” easily outnumbered every contingent in the MNF-I, with the sole exception of the United Kingdom. In effect, quasi-mercenary entities such as Blackwater and Triple Canopy now superseded “the West,” with concern for the bottom line taking precedence over adherence to the laws of war or the promotion of democratic values.

Note:

Yellow highlight | Location: 1,127

> Taking the lives of more than six thousand American soldiers while leaving tens of thousands of their comrades with physical or psychological wounds, many of them grievous, the fighting on the ground in Afghanistan and Iraq demolished the Joint Vision's utopian pretensions. While of only passing interest to most Americans, U.S. interventions after 9/11 also left hundreds of thousands of others dead, while displacing millions.11 Peace, democracy, and respect for human rights did not flourish as a result.

Note:

Yellow highlight | Location: 1,723

> With the World Trade Center still smoldering, men fancying themselves the heirs of Marshall, Acheson, and Lovett began pressing for the United States to invade Iraq. Endorsing that prospect was a platoon of influential media figures, also white. Prominent in the former category were Vice President Dick Cheney and Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, along with Rumsfeld's deputy Paul Wolfowitz. Prominent in the latter category were David Brooks and Thomas Friedman of the New York Times; Richard Cohen of the Washington Post; Christopher Hitchens of Vanity Fair; Max Boot, Robert Kagan, and William Kristol of the Weekly Standard; Rich Lowry of the National Review; George Packer of the New Yorker; and the blogger Andrew Sullivan. The urge to oust Saddam Hussein from power, despite the absence of any concrete evidence linking the Iraqi dictator to the attacks on New York and Washington, had an unmistakable racial tint. Iraq was, in sum, a white man's war. The officials who dreamed it up were white.29 So, too, were the journalists who as de facto propagandists labored to sell the war to the American public. Differing on many other issues, these nominal antagonists—the one group wielding power, the other charged with holding the powerful accountable—were as one in arguing for employing force to uphold a conception of America's purpose to which they unanimously subscribed.

Note:

Yellow highlight | Location: 1,747

> It fell to Colin Powell to facilitate their efforts. Doing so cost him his reputation.

Note:

Yellow highlight | Location: 1,812

> The nation's first Black president shied away from abandoning the project that traced its origins to the immediate aftermath of World War II. He signaled his intention through key appointments —retaining his predecessor's defense secretary and appointing as secretary of state a bellicose former senator who had voted in favor of invading Iraq. Robert Gates and Hillary Clinton were both unerringly loyal to the postwar/post–Cold War tradition of militarized American global leadership, as indeed was Joe Biden, Obama's choice for vice president.

Note:

Yellow highlight | Location: 1,816

> The new commander in chief also wasted no time in affirming his own acquiescence to that tradition. During his first year in office, he tripled the number of U.S. troops in Afghanistan.40 For years, the war there had languished in the shadows of Iraq; Obama now brought it to the fore. And although Obama kept President Bush's promise to withdraw from Iraq by December 2011, the end of the American combat mission there proved only temporary. In mid-2014, U.S. forces returned, embarking upon a new fight, this time against the Islamic State, an al-Qaeda offshoot. The new mission was another salvage operation. U.S. troops fought not to liberate, as in 2003, but to prop up a shaky regime installed at great cost following the overthrow of Saddam Hussein. Critics of Obama's foreign policy quibbled and carped. Yet the wars begun after 9/11 continued. The president's actions made it clear that he was not backing away from the received definition of "what America is all about." Were there doubts on that score, his administration's participation in a brand-new campaign advertised under the heading of "liberation," this one focused on ousting Libyan dictator Muammar Gaddafi, squelched them. Hillary Clinton's jocular verdict on the outcome—"We came. We saw. He died."—was as revealing as it was crude. She omitted just a single phrase: "Because it serves our purposes that he should do so." Here, carried into the twenty-first century, was the standard elite rationale for employing force, dating from the first efforts to expel American Indians from land coveted by white settlers.41 Under the nation's first Black president, that rationale remained intact.

Note:

Yellow highlight | Location: 1,831

> In his second term, Obama did pursue several initiatives suggesting a desire to break free from the straitjacket of past policy. Among them were the 2016 Paris Climate Accord, a multilateral agreement to prevent Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons, and preliminary steps toward abandoning a decades-old policy of isolating Cuba. None of those efforts was destined, however, to outlast his administration. What did outlive his presidency, almost unnoticed, was a comprehensive $1.7 trillion program to outfit the U.S. nuclear arsenal with new warheads, bombers, submarines, and missiles.42 The architects of U.S. policy during the Cold War had persuaded themselves—and the American people—that the nation's security and survival depended on keeping a vast…

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