

9/11, American Empire, and Christian Faith

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In this essay, I offer a Christian critique of the American empire in light of 9/11, and of 9/11 in light of the American empire. Such a critique, of course, presupposes a discussion of 9/11 itself, especially the question of who was responsible for the attacks. The official theory is that the attacks were planned and carried out entirely by Arab Muslims. The main alternative theory is that 9/11 was a “false flag” operation, orchestrated by forces within the US government who made it appear to be the work of Arab Muslims.

Originally, a false flag attack was one in which the attackers, perhaps in ships, literally showed the flag of an enemy country, so that it would be blamed. But the expression has come to be used for any attack made to appear to be the work of some country, party, or group other than that to which the attackers themselves belong.

I will argue that the attacks of 9/11 were false flag attacks, orchestrated to marshal support for a so-called war on terror against Muslim and Arab states as the next stage in creating a global *Pax Americana*, an all-inclusive empire. I will conclude this essay with its main question: How should Christians in America respond to the realization that we are living in an empire similar to the Roman empire at the time of Jesus, which put him to death for resistance against it.

1. False Flag Operations

The evidence that 9/11 was a false flag operation is very strong. Many Americans, however, reject this idea on *a priori* grounds, thereby refusing even to look at the evidence. The main *a priori* assumption is that America’s political and military leaders simply would not commit such a heinous act. This assumption is undermined, however, once we know something about the history of false flag operations.

False Flag Operations by Other Countries

Far from being rare in the history of warfare, false flag operations are very common. They have been especially popular with imperial powers wanting to expand their empires.

In 1931, Japan, which had been exploiting Manchuria for resources, decided to take over the whole province. To have a pretext, the Japanese army blew up the tracks of its own railway near the Chinese military base in Mukden, then blamed the sabotage on Chinese soldiers. This “Mukden incident” occurred almost exactly 70 years prior to 9/11, on September 18, 1931. It is, in fact, referred to by the Chinese as “9/18.”¹

A year and a half later, the Nazis, less than a month after taking power, started a fire in the German Reichstag, then blamed it on Communists. Their proof that Communists were responsible was the “discovery” on the site of a feeble-minded left-wing radical, who had been brought there by the Nazis themselves.² They then used the Reichstag fire as a pretext to arrest thousands of Communists and Social Democrats, shut down unfriendly newspapers, and annul civil rights.³

That was 1933. Six years later, Hitler wanted a pretext to attack Poland. The solution, known as “Operation Himmler,” was to have Germans dressed as Poles stage 21 raids on the Polish-German border. In some cases, as in the raid on the Gleiwitz radio station, a dead German convict dressed as a Pole was left at the scene. The next day, Hitler, referring to these 21 “border incidents,” presented the attack on Poland as a defensive necessity.⁴

More germane to the question of 9/11, of course, is whether American leaders would do such things.

U.S. Wars Based on False Charges of Enemy Aggression

In 1846, President James Polk, anxious to expand the American empire, had the U.S. army build a fort on the Rio Grande, some 150 miles south of the commonly accepted border between Texas and Mexico. After 16 US soldiers died in a skirmish, Polk told Congress that Mexico had “shed American blood upon the American soil.” This claim was called “the sheerest deception” by a congressman named Abraham Lincoln.⁵ Nevertheless, the Mexican-American war was on and in 1848, Mexico, being out-gunned, signed a peace treaty ceding away half of its country, including California, for a paltry sum.⁶

In 1898, the United States falsely accused Spain of blowing up a battleship, the USS Maine, which President McKinley had sent, uninvited, to Havana Harbor. This accusation, which led to the chant “Remember the Maine, to hell with Spain,” was used as a pretext to start the Spanish-American war, through which America took control of Cuba, Puerto Rico, and the Philippines. In the latter case, the United States, after helping the Filipinos defeat the Spanish, went to war *against* the Filipinos, claiming that they had fired on American soldiers. A quarter of a million Filipinos died in the resulting slaughter, which provoked the usually ironic William James to say: “God damn the U.S. for its vile conduct in the Philippine Isles.”⁷ Many years later, General Arthur MacArthur admitted that American troops had fired first to start a pre-arranged battle.⁸

In 1964, a false account of an incident in the Tonkin Gulf was used to start the full-scale war in Vietnam, which brought about the deaths of over 58,000 Americans and some two million Vietnamese.⁹

Of course, we might be tempted to reply, although Americans have done such things to enemy nations (“All’s fair in love and war”), they would never deliberately kill citizens of friendly countries for political reasons. That assumption, however, is undermined in a recent book, *NATO’s Secret Armies*, by Swiss historian Daniele Ganser. This book demonstrates that during the Cold War, the United States sponsored false flag operations in many countries of Western Europe in order to discredit Communists and other leftists to prevent them from coming to power through elections.¹⁰

Italy suffered a wave of deadly terrorist attacks in the 1970s, including a massive explosion at the Bologna railway station that killed 85 people.¹¹ Between 1983 and ’85, Belgium

suffered a series of attacks, known as the “Brabant massacres,” in which hooded men opened fire on people in shopping centers, “reduc[ing] Belgium to a state of panic.” At the time, all these attacks in Italy, Belgium, and other countries were blamed on Communists and other leftists, often by virtue of planted evidence.¹²

In the 1990s, however, it was discovered that the attacks were really carried out by right-wing organizations that were coordinated by a secret unit within NATO, which was guided by the CIA and the Pentagon.¹³ A former member of the organization that carried out the massacres in Belgium, which was funded by the Pentagon’s Defense Intelligence Agency, explained that the plan was to “make the population believe that these terrorist attacks were done by the Left.”¹⁴ The former head of Italian counter-intelligence, in explaining the motivation behind the attacks in Italy, said: “The CIA wanted to create an Italian nationalism capable of halting what it saw as a slide to the left.” To achieve this goal, he added, it seemed that “the Americans would do anything.”¹⁵

Operation Northwoods

If Americans would do anything to achieve their political goals in Europe, would they do similar things within America itself? Early in 1962, which was shortly after Fidel Castro had overthrown the pro-American dictator Batista, the Joint Chiefs of Staff presented President Kennedy with a plan, called Operation Northwoods. This plan described “pretexts which would provide justification for US military intervention in Cuba,” partly “by developing the international image of the Cuban government as rash and irresponsible, and as an alarming and unpredictable threat to the peace of the Western Hemisphere.” Possible actions to create this image included a “Communist Cuban terror campaign in the Miami area . . . and . . . Washington” and a “Remember the Maine” incident, in which: “We could blow up a U.S. ship in Guantánamo Bay and blame Cuba.” Although President Kennedy did not approve this plan, it had been endorsed by all the Joint Chiefs of Staff in the Pentagon.¹⁶

2. The Probable Motive for 9/11

US political and military leaders, as these examples show, have been fully capable of orchestrating false flag operations that would kill innocent people, including American citizens, to achieve political goals. The political goal during the Cold War was to prevent and overthrow left-leaning governments. But what motive could US leaders have had for orchestrating the attacks of 9/11, a decade after the Cold War had ended? Actually, it was precisely the end of the Cold War that provided the likely motive: the desire to create a global Pax Americana.

Whereas the world during the Cold War was bipolar, the demise of the Soviet Union created in some minds—the minds of that group known as neoconservatives, or neocons—the prospect of a unipolar world. In 1989, Charles Krauthammer published a piece entitled “Universal Dominion,” in which he argued that America should work for “a qualitatively new outcome—a unipolar world.”¹⁷ A year later, he said the United States, as the “unchallenged superpower,” should act unilaterally, “unashamedly laying down the rules of world order and being prepared to enforce them.”¹⁸

The most important neocon has been Dick Cheney. In 1992, the last year of his tenure as secretary of defense, he had two of his assistants, Paul Wolfowitz and Lewis “Scooter” Libby, write a draft of the Pentagon’s “Defense Planning Guidance,” which said America’s “first objective is to prevent the re-emergence of a new rival.”¹⁹ Andrew Bacevich, who is a

conservative but not a *neoconservative*, has called this draft “a blueprint for permanent American global hegemony.”²⁰ An article in *Harper’s* calls it an early version of Cheney’s “Plan . . . to rule the world.”²¹

During the rest of the 1990s, while the Republicans were out of White House, the unipolar dream kept growing. In 1996, Robert Kagan said the United States should use its military strength “to maintain a world order which both supports and rests upon American hegemony.”²²

In the following year, William Kristol, the son of neocon godfather Irving Kristol, founded a unipolarist think tank called the Project for the New American Century, often called PNAC. Its members included Cheney, Rumsfeld, Wolfowitz, Libby, and many other neocons who would become central members of the Bush administration in 2001. In September of 2000, PNAC published a document entitled *Rebuilding America’s Defenses*. Reaffirming “the basic tenets” of the Cheney-Wolfowitz draft of 1992, this document said that “America’s grand strategy should aim to preserve and extend [its present] advantageous position” and thereby “to preserve and enhance [the] ‘American peace.’”²³

What would it take, according to these neocons, to preserve and enhance the Pax Americana? Basically five things. First, *control of the world’s oil*. As Robert Dreyfuss, a critic of the neocons, says, “who[ever] controls oil controls the world.”²⁴ For the neocons, this meant bringing about regime change in several oil-rich countries, especially Iraq. Some neocons, including Cheney and Rumsfeld, had wanted the first President Bush to take out Saddam in 1990.²⁵ They continued to advocate this policy throughout the 1990s, with PNAC even writing a letter to President Clinton in 1998, urging him to use military force to “remov[e] Saddam’s regime from power.”²⁶ After the Bush-Cheney administration took office, attacking Iraq was the main item on its agenda. The only real question, reports former treasury secretary Paul O’Neill, was “finding a way to do it.”²⁷

A second necessary condition for the envisaged *Pax Americana* was a *transformation of the military* in the light of the “revolution in military affairs”—RMA for short—made possible by information technology. At the center of this RMA transformation is the military use of space.²⁸ Although the term “missile defense” implies that this use of space is to be purely defensive, one neocon, Lawrence Kaplan, has candidly stated otherwise, saying: “Missile defense isn’t really meant to protect America. It’s a tool for global domination.”²⁹

In any case, implementing this transformation will be very expensive, which brings us to a third requirement: *an increase in military spending*. The end of the Cold War made this requirement challenging, because most Americans assumed that, since we no longer had to defend the world against global Communism, we could drastically *reduce* military spending, thereby having a “peace dividend” to spend on health, education, and the environment.

A fourth neocon requirement for a *Pax Americana* was a modification of the doctrine of preemptive attack. Traditionally, a country has had the right to launch a preemptive attack against another country if an attack from that country was imminent—*too* imminent to take the matter to the UN Security Council. But neocons wanted the United States to act to preclude threats that might arise in the more or less distant future.³⁰

These four developments would require a fifth thing: an event that would make the American people ready to accept these imperialistic policies. This point had been made in *The Grand Chessboard*, a 1997 book by Zbigniew Brzezinski, who was Jimmy Carter’s

national security advisor. Brzezinski is not a neocon but he shares their concern with American primacy (as indicated by the subtitle of his book: *American Primacy and Its Geostrategic Imperatives*). Portraying Central Asia, with its vast oil reserves, as the key to world power, Brzezinski argued that America must get control of this region. However, Brzezinski counseled, Americans, with their democratic instincts, are reluctant to authorize the military spending and human sacrifices necessary for “imperial mobilization,” and this reluctance “limits the use of America’s power, especially its capacity for military intimidation.”³¹ But this impediment could be overcome, he added, if there were “a truly massive and widely perceived direct external threat.”³² The American people were, for example, willing to enter World War II after “the shock effect of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor.”³³

This same idea was suggested in PNAC’s document of 2000, *Rebuilding America’s Defenses*. Referring to the goal of transforming the military, it said that this “process of transformation . . . is likely to be a long one, absent some catastrophic and catalyzing event—like a new Pearl Harbor.”³⁴

3. Opportunities Created by the New Pearl Harbor

When the attacks of 9/11 occurred, they were treated like a new Pearl Harbor. President Bush reportedly wrote in his diary on that night: “The Pearl Harbor of the 21st century took place today.”³⁵ Many commentators, from Robert Kagan to Henry Kissinger to a writer for *Time* magazine, said that America should respond to the attacks of 9/11 in the same way it had responded to the attack on Pearl Harbor.³⁶ Rumsfeld said that 9/11 created “the kind of opportunities that World War II offered, to refashion the world.” President Bush and Condoleezza Rice also spoke of 9/11 as creating opportunities.³⁷

And it did, in fact, create opportunities to fulfill what the neocons had considered the other necessary conditions for bringing about a *Pax Americana*. With regard to oil, the Bush administration had, during the summer of 2001, developed a plan to attack Afghanistan to replace the Taliban with a puppet regime, thereby allowing UNOCAL to build its proposed pipeline from the Caspian Sea and the US military to build bases in the region.

The official story of 9/11, according to which it was carried out by members of al-Qaeda under the direction of Osama bin Laden in Afghanistan, provided the needed pretext for this operation. In 2004, Rumsfeld told the 9/11 Commission that prior to 9/11, the president could not have convinced Congress that the United States needed to “invade Afghanistan and overthrow the Taliban.”³⁸

9/11 also provided a necessary condition for the attack on Iraq. It did *not* provide a *sufficient* condition. The administration still had to wage a propaganda offensive to convince the public that Saddam was involved in 9/11, was connected to al-Qaeda, and illegally possessed weapons of mass destruction. But 9/11 was a necessary condition. As neocon Kenneth Adelman has said: “At the beginning of the administration people were talking about Iraq but it wasn’t doable. . . . That changed with September 11.”³⁹ Historian Stephen Sniegoski, explaining *why* 9/11 made the attack on Iraq possible, says:

The 9/11 attacks made the American people angry and fearful. Ordinary Americans wanted to strike back at the terrorist enemy, even though they weren’t exactly sure who that enemy was. . . . Moreover, they were fearful of more attacks and were susceptible to the administration’s propaganda that the

United States had to strike Iraq before Iraq somehow struck the United States.⁴⁰

Sniegowski's view is supported by Nicholas Lemann of the *New Yorker*. Lemann says that he was told by a senior official of the Bush administration that, in Lemann's paraphrase,

the reason September 11th appears to have been "a transformative moment" is not so much that it revealed the existence of a threat of which officials had previously been unaware as that it drastically reduced the American public's usual resistance to American military involvement overseas.⁴¹

The new Pearl Harbor also opened the way for the revolution in military affairs. Prior to 9/11, Bacevich reports, "military transformation appeared to be dead in the water." But the "war on terror" after 9/11 "created an opening for RMA advocates to make their case."⁴²

9/11 also allowed for great increases in military spending, including spending for space weapons. On the evening of 9/11 itself, Rumsfeld held a news briefing at the Pentagon. Senator Carl Levin, the chair of the Senate Armed Services Committee, was asked:

Senator Levin, you and other Democrats in Congress have voiced fear that you simply don't have enough money for the large increase in defense that the Pentagon is seeking, especially for missile defense. . . . Does this sort of thing convince you that an emergency exists in this country to increase defense spending?⁴³

Congress immediately appropriated an additional \$40 billion for the Pentagon and much more later.

The new Pearl Harbor also paved the way for the new doctrine of preemptive warfare. "The events of 9/11," observes Bacevich, "provided the tailor-made opportunity to break free of the fetters restricting the exercise of American power."⁴⁴ Bush alluded to this new doctrine at West Point the following June.⁴⁵ It was then fully articulated in the administration's 2002 version of the *National Security Strategy*. The president's covering letter said that America will "act against . . . emerging threats before they are fully formed."⁴⁶ The document itself said:

Given the goals of rogue states and terrorists, the United States can no longer rely on a reactive posture as we have in the past. . . . We cannot let our enemies strike first. . . . [T]he United States will, if necessary, act preemptively.⁴⁷

4. 9/11 as a False Flag Operation

If 9/11 provided the "tailor-made opportunity" for enunciating this new doctrine, as Bacevich has observed, it equally provided the opportunity to realize all the other things that Cheney, Rumsfeld, Wolfowitz, and other neocons had been dreaming about during the previous decade. Should not this fact lead us to suspect that 9/11 was not simply a godsend? In any criminal investigation, the first question is always *cui bono*—who benefits? Why should we not apply this principle to 9/11? Let us now look at some evidence, to see if it supports the

view that 9/11 was a false flag operation, orchestrated to produce precisely the effects that it did in fact produce.

The Alleged Hijackers

The official account of 9/11, by blaming the attacks on Arab Muslims, provided a basis for the attacks on Afghanistan and Iraq wars—not a legal basis, but an emotional basis sufficient to marshal support from the American people and Congress. But there are many problems with this official story.

For one thing, the alleged hijackers are portrayed as devout Muslims, ready to meet their maker. Mohamed Atta, called the ringleader, is said by the 9/11 Commission to have become very religious, even “fanatically so.”⁴⁸ But some journalists found that he loved cocaine, alcohol, gambling, pork, and lap dances. Several of the other alleged hijackers reportedly had similar tastes.⁴⁹

Also, the flight manifests that have been released for the four flights have no Arab names on them.⁵⁰

It appears, moreover, that evidence was planted. Authorities allegedly found two of Atta’s bags at the Boston airport. These bags contained Atta’s passport and his will along with various types of incriminating evidence. But why would Atta have planned to take his will on a plane that he planned to fly into the World Trade Center?⁵¹

The Legend of Osama bin Laden

There are also many problems in the official story about Osama bin Laden. In June of 2001, when he was already America’s “most wanted” criminal, bin Laden reportedly spent two weeks in the American Hospital in Dubai, where he was visited by the local CIA agent.⁵²

Also, after 9/11, when America was supposedly trying to get bin Laden “dead or alive,” the U.S. military evidently allowed him to escape on at least four occasions, the last one being the “battle of Tora Bora,” which the London *Telegraph* labeled “a grand charade.”⁵³

Moreover, although the Bush administration promised that Secretary of State Colin Powell would provide a white paper with proof that the attacks had been planned by bin Laden, this paper was never produced. And although the Taliban said that it would hand bin Laden over if the United States presented evidence of his involvement in 9/11, the Bush administration refused.⁵⁴

Finally, although this administration claims that bin Laden admitted responsibility for the attacks in a video allegedly found in Afghanistan, the man in this video has darker skin, fuller cheeks, and a broader nose than the Osama bin Laden of all the other videos. We again seem to have planted evidence. Indeed, within the 9/11 truth movement, this video is known as “the fake bin Laden video.”⁵⁵

Reasons to believe that 9/11 was a false flag operation are also provided by various features of the attacks that could not have been accomplished by the alleged hijackers. One of these is the destruction of the World Trade Center.

5. The Destruction of the World Trade Center

According to the official explanation, the Twin Towers and Building 7 collapsed primarily from their fires—plus, in the case of the Twin Towers, the impact of the airplanes. But this explanation faces several formidable problems.

First, many people have been led to believe that the steel in these steel-frame buildings was melted by the fires. But steel does not begin to melt until 2800 degrees F, whereas open fires burning hydrocarbons such as kerosene—which is what jet fuel is—can in the most ideal circumstances rise only as high as 1700 degrees.

Second, the fires in these three buildings were not very big, very hot, or very long-lasting, compared with fires in some steel-frame high-rises that did not collapse. A fire in Philadelphia in 1991 burned 18 hours; a fire in Caracas in 2004 burned 17 hours. But neither of these fires resulted in even a partial collapse.⁵⁶ By contrast, the north and south towers burned only 102 and 56 minutes, respectively, before they collapsed. Building 7, which was not hit by a plane, had fires on only a few floors, according to all the photographic evidence⁵⁷ and several witnesses.⁵⁸

The collapse of Building 7 has been recognized as especially difficult to explain. The FEMA report said that the most likely scenario had “only a low probability of occurrence.”⁵⁹ The collapse of building 7 was not even mentioned in the 571 pages of *The 9/11 Commission Report*, even though this collapse was, according to the official account, a historic event: the first time a steel-frame high-rise had ever collapsed from fire alone. The latest official report, put out by the National Institute of Standards and Technology, has claimed that the Twin Towers collapsed because the airplanes knocked the fire-proofing off the steel,⁶⁰ but it has yet to explain why Building 7, which was not hit by a plane, also collapsed.

A third problem with the official account is that total collapses of steel-frame high-rise buildings have never, either before or after 9/11, been brought about by fire alone, or fire combined with externally produced structural damage. All such collapses have been caused by explosives in the procedure known as “controlled demolition.”

A fourth problem is that the collapses of these three buildings all manifested many standard features of controlled demolition. I will mention six:

1. The collapses *began suddenly*. Steel, if weakened by fire, would gradually begin to sag. But if you look at videos available on the Web, you will see that the buildings are perfectly motionless up to the moment they begin to collapse.⁶¹

2. These huge buildings collapsed *straight down*, instead of toppling over, which would have caused enormous death and destruction. This straight-down collapse is the whole point of the type of controlled demolition known as implosion, which only a few companies in the world are qualified to perform.⁶²

3. All three buildings collapsed at virtually *free-fall speed*, which means that the lower floors, with all their steel and concrete, were offering no resistance to the upper floors.

4. The collapses were *total* collapses, resulting in piles of rubble no more than a few stories high. This means that the enormous steel columns in the core of each building had to be broken into rather short segments—which is what explosives do.

5. Fifth, great quantities of molten steel were produced, which means that the steel had been heated up to several thousand degrees. Witnesses during the clean-up reported,

moreover, that sometimes when a piece of steel was lifted out of the rubble, molten metal would be dripping from the end.⁶³

6. Dozens of people, including journalists, police officers, WTC employees, emergency medical workers, and firefighters, reported that explosions went off prior to and during the collapses of the north and south towers. For example, Fire Captain Dennis Tardio said: “I hear an explosion and I look up. It is as if the building is being imploded, from the top floor down, one after another, *boom, boom, boom.*”⁶⁴ Firefighter Richard Banaciski said: “It seemed like on television [when] they blow up these buildings. It seemed like it was going all the way around like a belt, all these explosions.”⁶⁵

One more feature of the collapses of the Twin Towers was that virtually everything except the steel—all the desks, computers, and concrete—was pulverized into tiny dust particles.⁶⁶

The official theory cannot explain one, let alone all, of these seven features—at least, as physicist Steven Jones has pointed out, without violating several basic laws of physics.⁶⁷ But the theory of controlled demolition easily explains all of them.

This evidence for controlled demolition contradicts the idea that al-Qaeda terrorists were responsible. They could not have obtained access to the buildings for all the hours needed to plant the explosives. Agents of the Bush-Cheney administration, by contrast, *could* have gotten such access, given the fact that Marvin Bush and Wirt Walker III—the president’s brother and cousin, respectively—were principals of the company in charge of security for the WTC.⁶⁸ Al-Qaeda terrorists would also probably not have had the courtesy to ensure that these huge buildings came straight down, rather than falling over onto other buildings. They also would not have had the necessary expertise.

Another relevant fact is that evidence was destroyed. An examination of the buildings’ steel columns could have shown whether explosives had been used to slice them. But virtually all of the steel was quickly sold to scrap dealers, trucked away, and sent to Asia to be melted down. It is usually a federal offense to remove *anything* from a crime scene. But this removal of thousands of tons of steel, the biggest destruction of evidence in history, was allowed by federal officials.

Evidence was also apparently planted. The passport of one of the hijackers on Flight 11 was allegedly found in the rubble, having survived not only the fire but also whatever caused everything in the north tower except its steel to be pulverized into dust.⁶⁹

6. The Strike on the Pentagon

The official account of the strike on the Pentagon is equally problematic. According to this account, the Pentagon was struck by American Airlines Flight 77, under the control of al-Qaeda hijacker Hani Hanjour. But this claim is challenged by many facts.

First, Flight 77 allegedly, after making a U-turn in the mid-west, flew back to Washington undetected for 40 minutes. And yet the US military, which by then would have known that hijacked airliners were being used as weapons, has the best radar systems in the world, one of which, it brags, “does not miss anything occurring in North American airspace.”⁷⁰

Second, the aircraft, in order to hit the west wing, reportedly executed a 270-degree downward spiral, which some pilots have said, would have been difficult if not impossible for a Boeing 757 even with an expert pilot. Hani Hanjour, moreover, was known as a terrible

pilot, who could not safely fly even a small plane.⁷¹

Third, terrorists brilliant enough to get through the U.S. military's defense system would not have struck the Pentagon's west wing, for many reasons: It had been reinforced, so the damage was less severe than a strike anywhere else would have been. The west wing was still being renovated, so relatively few people were there; a strike anywhere else would have killed thousands of people, rather than 125. And the secretary of defense and all the top brass, whom terrorists would presumably have wanted to kill, were in the east wing. Why would an al-Qaeda pilot have executed a very difficult maneuver to hit the west wing when he could have simply crashed into the roof of the east wing?

Fourth, there is considerable evidence that the aircraft that struck the Pentagon was not even a Boeing 757, which is what Flight 77 was. For one thing, unlike the strikes on the Twin Towers, the strike on the Pentagon did not create a detectable seismic signal.⁷² Also, the kind of damage and debris that would have been produced by the impact of a Boeing 757 were not produced by the strike on the Pentagon, according to both photographs⁷³ and eyewitnesses.

Former pilot Ralph Omholt, discussing the photographic evidence, writes:

There is no viable evidence of burning jet fuel. . . . The pre-collapse Pentagon section showed no "forward-moving" damage. . . . There was no particular physical evidence of the expected "wreckage." There was no tail, no wings; no damage consistent with a B-757 "crash."⁷⁴

CNN reporter Jamie McIntyre, reporting live from the Pentagon on 9/11, said: "From my close-up inspection, there's no evidence of a plane having crashed anywhere near the Pentagon."⁷⁵ Karen Kwiatkowski, who at the time was an Air Force Lieutenant Colonel working at the Pentagon, has written:

I would think that if a 100-plus-ton aircraft . . . going several hundred miles an hour were to hit the Pentagon, it would cause a great deal of possibly superficial but visible damage to the . . . entire area of impact. But I did not see this kind of damage.⁷⁶

Fifth, evidence was again destroyed. Shortly after the strike, government agents picked up debris and carried it off.⁷⁷ Shortly thereafter the entire lawn was covered with dirt and gravel, so that any remaining forensic evidence was *literally* covered up.⁷⁸ Finally, the videos from security cameras on the nearby gas station and nearby hotels, which would show what really hit the Pentagon, were immediately confiscated by agents of the FBI, and the Department of Justice has subsequently refused to release them.⁷⁹

Evidence again appears to have been fabricated. For example, proof that Flight 77 was hijacked and heading back towards Washington was allegedly provided in a phone call from passenger Barbara Olson to her husband, attorney Ted Olson. But no evidence from telephone records has been provided to confirm that this call occurred. The only evidence that has been submitted is the claim of Ted Olson, who works for the Bush-Cheney administration.

These are only a few of the many reasons, which I have discussed in my books, for concluding that 9/11 was simply one of the latest examples of false flag terrorism.

7. How Should Christians Respond?

I come now to the main question of this essay: How should Christians respond to this realization? The key consideration in answering this question, I suggest, is the evidence that the attacks of 9/11 were carried out for the sake of preserving and extending the American empire. This means that there is a two-way relation between 9/11 and this empire. On the one hand, understanding the ideas driving the present phase of US empire-building enables us to understand why 9/11 occurred. On the other hand, 9/11 serves as a revelation of the nature of the American empire—an empire that has been in the making, on a bipartisan basis, for a long time. 9/11 reveals the nature of the values that have underlay this empire-building project for over a century, especially the past 60 years.

Evil Empire?

If so, then we must ask whether the term “evil,” which US leaders have used so freely to describe other nations, must be applied to our own. There can be no doubt about the application of this term to 9/11. We can here quote President Bush himself, who on the evening of 9/11 said: “Thousands of lives were suddenly ended by evil, despicable acts of terror. . . . Today, our nation saw evil, the very worst of human nature.”⁸⁰ No explanation of why the attacks were despicable was necessary. The proposition was self-evident. This proposition is even more self-evident, of course, if the attacks were orchestrated by our own government.

Accordingly, if we accept 9/11 as a revelation of the American empire—of the basic values it embodies—must we not conclude that this empire is itself evil?

This suggestion, of course, runs directly counter to our deeply inculcated self-image, which has embodied the notion of “American exceptionalism.”⁸¹ According to this view, America is qualitatively different from other countries, hence its empire is qualitatively different from all prior empires. Americans in the 19th century said that whereas other empires were self-seeking, greedy, and brutal, the United States had an “empire of liberty,” an “empire of right.”⁸²

Neoconservatives have recently revived this idea. According to Ben Wattenberg, “The American empire is not like earlier European imperialisms. We have sought neither wealth nor territory. Ours is an imperium of values.”⁸³ Robert Kagan calls the United States “The Benevolent Empire.”⁸⁴ Dinesh D’Souza describe America “the most magnanimous imperial power ever.”⁸⁵ Max Boot says: “America isn’t like the empires of old. It does not seek to enslave other peoples and steal their lands. It spreads freedom and opportunity.”⁸⁶ Charles Krauthammer says that America’s claim to being a benign power is verified by its “track record.”⁸⁷

But many other commentators, who base their views on an actual examination of this track record, have come to opposite conclusions. Andrew Bacevich, in his book *American Empire*, rejects the claim “that the promotion of peace, democracy, and human rights . . . -not the pursuit of self-interest-[has] defined the essence of American diplomacy.” Against those who justify American interventions on the grounds that America’s foreign policy is to promote democracy, Bacevich points out that in previous countries in which America has intervened, “democracy [did not] flower as a result.”⁸⁸

Many other intellectuals have similar views. Chalmers Johnson, who like Bacevich was once

a conservative who believed that American foreign policy aimed at promoting freedom and democracy, now describes the United States as “a military juggernaut intent on world domination.”⁸⁹ A recent book by Noam Chomsky is subtitled *America’s Quest for Global Dominance*.⁹⁰ Richard Falk has written of the Bush administration’s “global domination project,” which poses the threat of “global fascism.”⁹¹

Bacevich sums up the nature of the American empire by employing the statement, made in 1939 by the famous historian Charles Beard, that “America is not to be Rome.”⁹² In the 1990s, Bacevich says, most Americans “still comforted themselves with the belief that as the sole superpower the United States was *nothing* like Rome.” But, he says: “The reality that Beard feared has come to pass: like it or not, America today *is* Rome.”⁹³

This comparison is helpful. To begin answering the question how those of us who are Christians should respond to the realization that we are living in the new Rome, we can ask how Jesus responded to the original Rome.

Jesus and the Roman Empire

This question has been treated by New Testament historian Richard Horsley in his book *Jesus and Empire*. Horsley’s short answer is that Jesus preached an “anti-imperial gospel,” which called for the reign of Caesar to be replaced by a reign of God.⁹⁴

To understand why this would have been central, we need to understand something about Rome and its occupation of Palestine.

Rome was not nice. Although Rome’s rulers spoke of *Pax Romana*, with one of its emperors even calling himself the “Pacifier of the World,”⁹⁵ this pacification was achieved by means of Rome’s overwhelming military might, which it used ruthlessly. As a Caledonian chieftain put it, the Romans “rob, butcher, plunder, and call it ‘empire’; and where they make desolation, they call it ‘peace.’”⁹⁶

By the time of Jesus, Palestine had been under Roman domination for almost a century.⁹⁷ Rome ruled through puppets—first Herod the Great, then Herod Antipas in Galilee and Pontius Pilate in Judea—and this rule was devastating.

Roman legions killed tens of thousands of people and enslaved many more. One traumatic attack was the burning of Sepphoris, only a few miles from Nazareth, near the time of Jesus’ birth.⁹⁸ Some 2,000 rebels were crucified at about the same time.⁹⁹

Besides killing and enslaving the Palestinians, the Romans taxed them severely, pushing many of them permanently into debt. By the time of Jesus, there was “a crisis of debt and dispossession that touched and transformed the lives of nearly every peasant family in Galilee.”¹⁰⁰

Jesus’ anti-imperial gospel is apparent in what we call “the Lord’s Prayer,” which is a modification of the Kaddish, the Jewish prayer for the establishment of God’s kingdom. The central phrase of Jesus’ prayer was, therefore, “thy kingdom come”—an abbreviation of the Kaddish’s petition, “May God establish his kingdom in your lifetime.” That Jesus was not talking about some exclusively otherworldly realm is shown by the next line: “thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.” Thus, says Horsley, “God’s activity was political and Jesus’ preaching of that activity was political—with obvious implications for the ‘imperial situation’ then prevailing in Palestine.” The reign of the Roman emperors was to be replaced by the

reign of God, which would transform “the social-economic-political substance of human relations.”¹⁰¹

The centrality of the economic issue is shown by two other elements in this prayer: the petition for “our daily bread” and the idea that we should “forgive our debtors”—an allusion to the fact that unjust and unforgiven debt regularly forced peasants into servitude to rich landlords (as reflected in the parable of the wicked tenants).¹⁰²

That Jesus opposed Roman rule even more directly is suggested by evidence that Jesus challenged the payment of the Temple tax and the tribute to Rome¹⁰³ and that he protested the Temple’s system of collecting money.¹⁰⁴

That Jesus *was* regarded as a rebel against the empire is implied by the very fact that he was crucified. The death penalty could be authorized only by the Romans, and crucifixion was an exclusively Roman manner of execution, used primarily for those regarded as challengers to Roman authority. “That Jesus was *crucified* by the Roman governor,” says Horsley, “stands as a vivid symbol of his historical relationship with the Roman imperial order.”¹⁰⁵

One dimension of the Roman imperial order that particularly offended Jesus and his fellow Jews was Rome’s claim that its empire was divinely authorized.¹⁰⁶ Early Christians had a very different view, as shown by the final book of the New Testament, which portrays Rome as a dragon, symbolizing Satan.¹⁰⁷ For the early Christians, Horsley says,

Rome was the Beast, the Harlot, the Dragon, Babylon, the Great Satan. They knew that Rome’s empire was made possible not by divine order but by the acquisition of vast territories through the deadly violence of the Roman legions.¹⁰⁸

America as the New Rome

Is Bacevich right to say that today America is Rome? One way to answer this question is in terms of four commonly accepted features of the Roman empire.¹⁰⁹ First, it portrayed itself, as we have seen, as guided by divine providence. Americans have said the same about their own empire. In 1850, an American editor wrote: “We have a destiny to perform, a ‘manifest destiny’ over . . . South America, . . . the Chinese empire . . . and the . . . Japanese. . . . The eagle of the republic shall poise itself over [the rest of the world] and a successor of Washington ascend the chair of universal empire!”¹¹⁰ The Christmas card sent out by Dick and Lynne Cheney in 2003 asked, rhetorically: “[I]f a sparrow cannot fall to the ground without His notice, is it probable that an empire can rise without His aid?”¹¹¹

A second feature of the Roman empire was the development and employment of overwhelming military power. Bacevich, summing up this feature of our own empire, says that the present aim of the U.S. military is “to achieve something approaching omnipotence: ‘Full Spectrum Dominance.’”¹¹¹

A third feature of the Roman empire was rule through puppets, such as Herod, backed up by the empire’s pervasive military presence. Some of the most notorious US puppets have been Batista in Cuba, Somoza in Nicaragua, Trujillo in the Dominican Republic, Papa Doc and Baby Doc Duvalier in Haiti, Marcos in the Philippines, Diem in Vietnam, and Suharto in Indonesia. More recently, America has installed a puppet regime in Afghanistan and has

been trying to do the same in Iraq.

A fourth feature of the Roman empire was that through its imposition of exorbitant taxes, it impoverished the countries it dominated. America's taxation is more indirect, being exercised through the global economy enforced by the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and the World Trade Organization. But it impoverishes just as effectively.

An increasing number of commentators have come to speak of "global apartheid," thereby pointing to the fact that the world as a whole reflects the same kind of systemic inequality that characterized South Africa under apartheid. In a 1992 book on global apartheid, Titus Alexander said:

Three-quarters of the land [in apartheid South Africa] and all its natural resources could only be owned by whites, a sixth of the population. The West also has a sixth of the world's population and commands over three-quarters of global resources. . . . [In South Africa,] democracy for a few meant oppression for the many. So it is for most people in the global economy. . . . Free trade and consumer choice for a few means low incomes, long hours and a struggle for subsistence among the many.¹¹³

The only difference between the two systems is that—as Gernot Köhler, who coined the term, put it—"global apartheid is even more severe than South African apartheid."¹¹⁴

What is the relevance of this to the nature of the American empire? This question can be answered in three points.

First, global apartheid did not exist three centuries ago but is a product of European colonialism.¹¹⁵

Second, since the end of World War II, when the United States replaced Britain as the leader of the global capitalist economy, it has become increasingly responsible for the state of this economy.

Third, during this period, the gap between the rich and the poor has become much greater. As John Cobb has pointed out: "The disparity in per capita income between the US and the undeveloped nations is estimated as having been about thirteen to one in 1947. In 1989, . . . the disparity had reached around sixty to one."¹¹⁶ According to the *Human Development Report* of 2005, moreover, the situation is now still worse, with the richest 10 percent of the world's population receiving 54 percent of the world's income and the poorest 40 percent—meaning 2.5 billion people—receiving only 5 percent of the total income.¹¹⁷

The poverty in which billions of God's children on this earth live has dire consequences. Every year, starvation and other poverty-related causes take the lives of about 18 million people, 11 million of whom are children under the age of 5. This means that about 180 million people are dying from poverty-related causes every decade.¹¹⁸

We have rightly considered the Nazi and Stalinist regimes evil, in large part because each one was responsible for the deaths of some 60 million people. But then what term do we use for an empire that is ultimately responsible for three times that many deaths each decade?

Part of the reason we call the Nazi and Stalinist regimes evil, of course, is that many of their victims were killed deliberately. Do American leaders realize what they are doing?

There is evidence that they do. For example, in 1947, George Kennan, who was Director of the Policy Planning Staff in the U.S. State Department, said in a “top secret” memo:

We have about 50% of the world’s wealth, but only 6.3% of its population. . . . In this situation, we cannot fail to be the object of envy and resentment. Our real task in the coming period is to devise a pattern of relationships which will permit us to maintain this position of disparity without positive detriment to our national security.¹¹⁹

A more recent example showing that our leaders know what they are doing is provided by a 1997 document of the US Space Command entitled “Vision for 2020.” This document, explaining why the United States needs to dominate space so as to have “full spectrum dominance,” says: “The globalization of the world economy . . . will continue with a widening between ‘haves’ and ‘have-nots.’”¹²⁰ In other words, as the United States and its rich allies become still richer while the rest of the world becomes still poorer, the United States will need to be able to attack from space to keep the have-nots in line. In 2005, the head of the US Space Command said that by putting weapons in space, the United States will have the ability to destroy things “anywhere in the world. . . in 45 minutes.”¹²¹

As these parallels between Roman and American imperialism show, we can speak of the latter as evil without even bringing 9/11 into the picture. But the awareness that the attacks of 9/11 were carried out to further America’s global domination project, and hence increase global apartheid, helps us, as I have suggested elsewhere, to “fully grasp the extent to which this project is propelled by fanaticism based on a deeply perverted value system.”¹²² 9/11 can thereby serve as a wake-up call to Christians in America, forcing us to ask how to respond to the realization that we are citizens of the new Rome.

Christians and the New Rome

Any attempt to answer that question would be very long. I will here simply suggest a first step: the formation of an anti-imperial church movement, in which the rejection of America’s imperial project is considered a necessary implication of Christian faith. Such a movement would be analogous to the movement of “Confessing Christians” formed in Germany in 1934, a year after the Nazis had come to power. This movement, two leaders of which were theologians Karl Barth and Dietrich Bonhoeffer, opposed the movement known as the “German Christians,” which treated Hitler as a new messiah who would bring Germany the greatness it deserved. In their famous Barmen Declaration, the Confessing Christians said that support for National Socialism violated basic principles of the Christian faith. One had to choose either Christian faith or National Socialism. One could not affirm both.¹²³

Later in the century, some Christian bodies decided that rejection of the system of apartheid in South Africa was a necessary implication of Christian faith. In 1977, the Lutheran World Federation declared that although with regard to most political questions, “Christians may have different opinions,” the system of apartheid in South Africa was “so perverted and oppressive” that it “constitute[d] a *status confessionis*”—a confessional situation. The Christian faith, these Lutherans declared, required that “churches would publicly and unequivocally reject the existing apartheid system.”¹²⁴

An analogous question before churches in America today is whether the American empire, with its imperialism and global apartheid, is “so perverted and oppressive” that the public rejection of it should be regarded as an implication of fidelity to God as revealed in Jesus of

Nazareth, who died on a Roman cross.

NOTES

1. On the Mukden incident, see Walter LaFeber, *The Clash: U.S.-Japanese Religions throughout History* (New York: Norton, 1997), 164-66; Louise Young, *Japan's Total Empire: Manchuria and the Culture of Wartime Imperialism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), 40; and "Mukden Incident," *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 2006 (<http://www.britannica.com/eb/article-9054193>).

2. The question of responsibility for the Reichstag fire had long remained controversial. But the dominant view, that the fire was set by the Nazis themselves, was confirmed in 2001 with the publication of *Der Reichstagbrand: Wie Geschichte Gemacht Wird*, by Alexander Bahar and Wilfried Kugel (Berlin: Edition Q, 2001). This book presents ample evidence of Nazi responsibility, including the testimony of a member of the SA, who said that he was in the subterranean passageway that night and saw other SA members bringing explosive liquids to the Reichstag. Bahar and Kugel have, accordingly, substantiated the position contained in William Shirer, *The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1990), 191-93.

3. Wilhelm Klein, "The Reichstag Fire, 68 Years On" (review of Alexander Bahar and Wilfried Kugel, *Der Reichstagbrand*), World Socialist Website, July 5, 2001 (<http://www.wsws.org/articles/2001/jul2001/reic-j05.shtml>).

4. See "Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression, Vol. II: Criminality of Groups and Organizations" (<http://www.nizkor.org/hweb/imt/nca/nca-02/nca-02-15-criminality-06-05.html>); Ian Kershaw, *Hitler: 1936-45: Nemesis* (New York: Norton, 2001), 221; and "Gleiwitz Incident," Wikipedia (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gleiwitz_incident#References).

5. Howard Zinn, *A People's History of the United States* (1980; New York: HarperPerennial, 1990), 150. Richard Van Alstyne, *The Rising American Empire* (1960; New York, Norton, 1974), 143.

6. Van Alstyne, *The Rising American Empire*, 146.

7. Quoted in Zinn, *A People's History*, 307.

8. Stuart Creighton Miller, *Benevolent Assimilation: The American Conquest of the Philippines, 1899-1903* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1982), 57-62.

9. George McT. Kahin, *Intervention: How American Became Involved in Vietnam* (Garden City: Anchor Press/Doubleday, 1987), 220; Marilyn B. Young, *The Vietnam Wars 1945-1990* (New York: HarperCollins, 1991), 119.

10. Daniele Ganser, *NATO's Secret Armies: Operation Gladio and Terrorism in Western Europe* (New York: Frank Cass, 2005), 53-54.

11. *Ibid.*, 5.

12. *Ibid.*, 138-39.

13. Ibid., 9-11, 27-29, 241-43.
14. Ibid., 142-43, 146.
15. Ibid., 82, 120. On the evidence linking NATO and the United States to the Bologna massacre, see *ibid.*, 25, 81.
16. This memorandum can be found at the National Security Archive, April 30, 2001 (<http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/news/20010430>). It was revealed to US readers by James Bamford in *Body of Secrets: Anatomy of the Ultra-secret National Security Agency* (2001: New York: Anchor Books, 2002), 82-91.
17. Charles Krauthammer, "Universal Dominion: Toward a Unipolar World," *National Interest*, Winter 1989: 47-49.
18. Krauthammer, "The Unipolar Moment," *Foreign Affairs*, 1990.
19. Department of Defense, "Defense Planning Guidance," February 18, 1992. It might be thought, incidentally, that Dick Cheney cannot be called a neoconservative because he (a) was never a liberal and (b) is not Jewish. But although the term "neoconservative" originally referred to people who had moved to the right after having been on the left, the second- and third-generation neocons, as Gary Dorrien points out, "had never been progressives of any kind" (Gary Dorrien, *Imperial Designs: Neoconservatism and the New Pax Americana* (New York: Routledge, 2004), 16. Also, as Dorrien points out, from the beginning of the movement "a significant number of prominent neocons were not Jews" (*ibid.*, 15). As former neocon Michael Lind says: "[N]eoconservatism is an ideology, . . . and [Donald] Rumsfeld and Dick . . . Cheney are full-fledged neocons, . . . even though they are not Jewish and were never liberals or leftists" (Michael Lind, "A Tragedy of Errors," *The Nation*, Feb. 23, 2004, online; quoted in Justin Raimondo, "A Real Hijacking: The Neoconservative Fifth Column and the War in Iraq," in D. L. O'Huallachain and J. Forrest Sharpe, eds., *Neoconned Again: Hypocrisy, Lawlessness, and the Rape of Iraq* [Vienna, Va.: IHS Press, 2005], 112-24, at 123.
20. Andrew J. Bacevich, *American Empire: The Realities and Consequences of U.S. Diplomacy* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2002), 44.
21. David Armstrong, "Dick Cheney's Song of America," *Harper's*, October, 2002.
22. Robert Kagan, "American Power: A Guide for the Perplexed," *Commentary* 101 (April 1996).
23. PNAC (Project for the New American Century), *Rebuilding America's Defenses: Strategy, Forces and Resources for a New Century*, September 2000 (www.newamericancentury.org), iv.
24. Robert Dreyfuss, "Oil-Control Formula," July 18, 2005 (http://www.tompaine.com/articles/20050718/oilcontrol_formula.php).
25. Stephen J. Sniegoski, "Neoconservatives, Israel, and 9/11: The Origins of the U.S. War on Iraq." In D. L. O'Huallachain and J. Forrest Sharpe, eds., *Neoconned Again: Hypocrisy, Lawlessness, and the Rape of Iraq* (Vienna, Va.: IHS Press, 2005), 81-109, at 86-87, citing Arnold Beichman, "How the Divide over Iraq Strategies Began," *Washington Times*, Nov. 27, 2002.

26. PNAC, Letter to President Clinton on Iraq, January 26, 1998 (<http://www.newamericancentury.org/iraqclintonletter.htm>).
27. O'Neill is quoted to this effect in Ron Susskind, *The Price of Loyalty: George W. Bush, the White House, and the Education of Paul O'Neill* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2004). O'Neill repeated this point in an interview on CBS's "60 Minutes" in January of 2004. Susskind, whose book also draws on interviews with other officials, said that in its first weeks the Bush administration was discussing the occupation of Iraq and the question of how to divide up its oil (www.cbsnews.com/stories/2004/01/09/60minutes/main592330.shtml).
28. PNAC, *Rebuilding America's Defenses*, iv, 6, 50, 51, 59.
29. Lawrence Kaplan, *New Republic* 224 (March 12, 2001), cover text; quoted in Bacevich, *American Empire*, 223.
30. PNAC's letter to Clinton in 1998, for example, urged him to "undertake military action" to eliminate "the possibility that Iraq will be able to use or threaten to use weapons of mass destruction."
31. Zbigniew Brzezinski, *The Grand Chessboard: American Primacy and Its Geostrategic Imperatives* (New York: Basic Books, 1997), 35-36.
32. *Ibid.*, 212.
33. *Ibid.*, 212, 24-25.
34. *Ibid.*, 51.
35. This according to the *Washington Post*, Jan. 27, 2002.
36. Robert Kagan, "We Must Fight This War," *Washington Post*, Sept. 12, 2001; Henry Kissinger, "Destroy the Network," *Washington Post*, Sept. 11, 2001 (<http://washingtonpost.com>); Lance Morrow, "The Case for Rage and Retribution," *Time*, Sept. 11, 2001.
37. "Secretary Rumsfeld Interview with the New York Times," *New York Times*, October 12, 2001. On Rice, see Nicholas Lemann, "The Next World Order: The Bush Administration May Have a Brand-New Doctrine of Power," *New Yorker*, April 1, 2002 (http://www.newyorker.com/fact/content/articles/020401fa_FACT1), and Rice, "Remarks by National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice on Terrorism and Foreign Policy," April 29, 2002 (www.whitehouse.gov); on Bush, see "Bush Vows to 'Whip Terrorism,'" *Reuters*, Sept. 14, 2001, and Bob Woodward, *Bush at War* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2002), 32.
38. See "Day One Transcript: 9/11 Commission Hearing," *Washington Post*, March 23, 2004 (<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A17798-2004Mar23.html>).
39. Quoted in Elizabeth Drew, "The Neocons in Power," *New York Review of Books*, 50/10 (June 12, 2003). Bob Woodward made the same observation, saying: "The terrorist attacks of September 11 gave the U.S. a new window to go after Hussein" (*Bush at War* [New York: Simon & Schuster, 2002], 83).
40. Sniegoski, "Neoconservatives, Israel, and 9/11," 108-09.

41. Nicholas Lemann "The Next World Order: The Bush Administration May Have a Brand-New Doctrine of Power," *New Yorker*, April 1, 2002 (http://www.newyorker.com/fact/content/articles/020401fa_FACT1).
42. Andrew J. Bacevich, *The New American Militarism: How Americans Are Seduced by War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 173.
43. Department of Defense News Briefing on Pentagon Attack, 6:42 PM, Sept. 11, 2001 (available at http://www.yale.edu/lawweb/avalon/sept_11/dod_brief02.htm).
44. Bacevich, *The New American Militarism*, 91.
45. "President Bush Delivers Graduation Speech at West Point," June 1, 2002 (<http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2002/06/20020601-3.html>). America's security, Bush said, "will require all Americans . . . to be ready for preemptive action."
46. *The National Security Strategy of the United States of America*, September 2002 (www.whitehouse.gov/nsc/nss.html), cover letter.
47. *Ibid.*, 15.
48. *The 9/11 Commission Report: Final Report of the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks upon the United States*, Authorized Edition (New York: W. W. Norton, 2004), 116.
49. "Terrorist Stag Parties," *Wall Street Journal*, October 10, 2001 (<http://www.opinionjournal.com/best/?id=95001298>).
50. The flight manifest for AA 11 that was published by CNN can be seen at www.cnn.com/SPECIALS/2001/trade.center/victims/AA11.victims.html . The manifests for the other flights can be located by simply changing that part of the URL. The manifest for UA 93, for example, is at www.cnn.com/SPECIALS/2001/trade.center/victims/ua93.victims.html .
51. For this and other problems in the story about Atta's bags, see Rowland Morgan and Ian Henshall, *9/11 Revealed: The Unanswered Questions* (New York: Carroll & Graf, 2005), 180-83.
52. Richard Labeviere, "CIA Agent Allegedly Met Bin Laden in July," *Le Figaro*, Oct. 31, 2001. This story was also reported in Anthony Sampson, "CIA Agent Alleged to Have Met Bin Laden in July," *Guardian*, Nov. 1.
53. *Telegraph*, Feb. 23, 2002; discussed in David Ray Griffin, *The 9/11 Commission Report: Omissions and Distortions* (Northampton: Interlink Books, 2005), 60.
54. "White House Warns Taliban: 'We Will Defeat You'" (CNN.com, Sept. 21, 2001). Four weeks after the attacks began, a Taliban spokesman said: "We are not a province of the United States, to be issued orders to. We have asked for proof of Osama's involvement, but they have refused. Why?" (Kathy Gannon, AP, "Taliban Willing To Talk, But Wants U.S. Respect" [<http://www.suburbanchicagonews.com/focus/terrorism/archives/1001/w01taliban.html>]).
55. See "The Fake bin Laden Video" (<http://www.whatreallyhappened.com/osamatape.html>).

56. “High-Rise Office Building Fire One Meridian Plaza Philadelphia, Pennsylvania,” FEMA (<http://usfa.fema.gov/fire-service/techreports/tr049.shtm>); “Fire Practically Destroys Venezuela’s Tallest Building” (http://www.whatreallyhappened.com/venezuela_fire.html).

57. A photograph taken by Terry Schmidt can be seen on page 63 of Eric Hufschmid’s *Painful Questions: An Analysis of the September 11th Attack* (Goleta, Calif.: Endpoint Software, 2002) or on Schmidt’s website (<http://www.nycwireless.net/Images/wtc2/>). According to Schmidt, this photo was taken between 3:09 and 3:16 PM, hence only a little over two hours before Building 7 collapsed. It shows that on the north side of the building, fires were visible only on floors 7 and 12. Therefore, if there were more fires on the south side, which faced the Twin Towers, they were not big enough to be seen from the north side.

58. Chief Thomas McCarthy of the FDNY said that while the firefighters “were waiting for 7 World Trade to come down,” there was “fire on three separate floors” (Oral History of Thomas McCarthy, 10-11). Emergency medical technician Decosta Wright said: “I think the fourth floor was on fire. . . . [W]e were like, are you guys going to put that fire out?” (Oral History of Decosta Wright, 11). These quotations are from the 9/11 oral histories recorded by the New York Fire Department at the end of 2001 but released to the public (after a court battle) only in August 2005, at which time they were made available on a *New York Times* website (http://graphics8.nytimes.com/packages/html/nyregion/20050812_WTC_GRAPHIC/met_WTC_histories_full_01.html).

59. FEMA Report #403, *World Trade Center Building Performance Study*, May 2002 (www.fema.gov/library/wtcstudy.shtm), Ch. 5, Sect. 6.2, “Probable Collapse Sequence.”

60. “[T]he towers withstood the impacts and would have remained standing were it not for the dislodged insulation (fireproofing) and the subsequent multifloor fires,” *Final Report of the National Construction Safety Team on the Collapses of the World Trade Center Towers* (Draft), June, 2005: xliii and 171.

61. See Jim Hoffman’s website (<http://911research.wtc7.net/index.html>) and Jeff King’s website (<http://home.comcast.net/~jeffrey.king2/wsb/html/view.cgi-home.html-.html>), especially “The World Trade Center Collapse: How Strong is the Evidence for a Controlled Demolition?”

62. *Implosion World* (<http://www.implosionworld.com/dyk2.html>).

63. Professor Allison Geyh of Johns Hopkins, who was part of a team of public health investigators who visited the site shortly after 9/11, wrote: “In some pockets now being uncovered they are finding molten steel,” *Magazine of Johns Hopkins Public Health*, Late Fall, 2001. Dr. Keith Eaton, who somewhat later toured the site with an engineer, said that he was shown slides of “molten metal, which was still red hot weeks after the event” (*The Structural Engineer*, Sept. 3, 2002: 6). On the dripping steel, see Trudy Walsh, “Handheld APP Eased Recovery Tasks,” *Government Computer News*, 21/27a, Sept 11, 2002 (http://www.gcn.com/21_27a/news/19930-1.html) and Jennifer Lin, “Recovery Worker Reflects on Months Spent at Ground Zero,” *Knight Ridder*, May 29, 2002 (<http://www.messenger-inquirer.com/news/attacks/4522011.htm>).

64. Dennis Smith, *Report from Ground Zero: The Story of the Rescue Efforts at the World Trade Center* [New York: Penguin, 2002], 18.

65. For the testimony of Banaciski and dozens of other members of the Fire Department of New York, see David Ray Griffin, "Explosive Testimony: Revelations about the Twin Towers in the 9/11 Oral Histories," 911Truth.org, January 18, 2006 (<http://www.911truth.org/article.php?story=20060118104223192>).
66. Jim Hoffman, "The North Tower's Dust Cloud: Analysis of Energy Requirements for the Expansion of the Dust Cloud Following the Collapse of 1 World Trade Center," Version 3, 9-11 Research.wtc7.net, Oct. 16, 2003 (<http://911research.wtc7.net/papers/dustvolume/volume.html>). The available evidence, Hoffman says, suggests that the dust particles were very small indeed—on the order of 10 microns. Also Colonel John O'Dowd of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers said: "At the World Trade Center sites, it seemed like everything was pulverized" ("The World Trade Center: Rise and Fall of an American Icon," The History Channel, September 8, 2002).
67. Stephen E. Jones, "Why Indeed Did the WTC Buildings Collapse?" In David Ray Griffin and Peter Dale Scott, eds., *9/11 and the American Empire: Intellectuals Speak Out* (Northampton: Interlink, 2006); also available at www.physics.byu.edu/research/energy/htm7.html . See also David Ray Griffin, "The Destruction of the World Trade Center: Why the Official Account Cannot Be True," in Paul Zarembka, ed., *The Hidden History of 9-11-2001* (Amsterdam: Elsevier, March, 2006), and in Griffin, *Christian Faith and the Truth Behind 9/11: A Call to Reflection and Action* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2006); also available at 911Review.com (<http://911review.com/articles/griffin/nyc1.html>). For videos of the WTC collapses, see "9/11/01 WTC Videos" (<http://911research.wtc7.net/wtc/evidence/videos/index.html>).
68. Griffin, *The 9/11 Commission Report: Omissions and Distortions*, 31-32.
69. See Morgan and Henshall, *9/11 Revealed*, 68.
70. "PAVE PAWS, Watching North America's Skies, 24 Hours a Day" (www.pavepaws.org).
71. Russ Wittenberg, who flew large commercial airliners for 35 years after serving in Vietnam as a fighter pilot, says that it would have been "totally impossible for an amateur who couldn't even fly a Cessna to maneuver the jetliner in such a highly professional manner" (Greg Szymanski, "Former Vietnam Combat and Commercial Pilot Firm Believer 9/11 Was Inside Government Job," *Lewis News*, Sunday, Jan. 8, 2006 [<http://www.lewisnews.com/article.asp?ID=106623>]). Hanjour's incompetence was reported by the *New York Times*, May 4, 2002, and CBS News, May 10, 2002. *The 9/11 Commission Report* acknowledges in places that Hanjour was known to be a "terrible pilot" (225-26, 242), but it elsewhere calls him "the operation's most experienced pilot" (530n147).
72. Won-Young Kim and Gerald R. Baum, "Seismic Observations during September 11, 2001, Terrorist Attack" (<http://www.mgs.md.gov/esic/publications/download/911pentagon.pdf>).
73. See Eric Hufschmid, *Painful Questions*, Chap. 9, and Dave McGowan, "September 11, 2001 Revisited: The Series: Act II," Center for an Informed America (www.davesweb.cnchost.com/nwsltr68.html).
74. Ralph Omholt, "9-11 and the Impossible: Part One of an Online Journal of 9-11" (<http://www.physics911.net/omholt.htm>).
75. For text and video of Jamie McIntyre's statement, see

http://www.global-conspiracies.com/cnn_reported_no_plane_hit_pentagon.htm .

76. Karen Kwiatkowski, "Assessing the Official 9/11 Conspiracy Theory," in Griffin and Scott, eds., *9/11 and the American Empire: Intellectuals Speak Out*.

77. Karen Kwiatkowski reports that "any physical remains of the aircraft that hit the Pentagon were quickly carted away to some unknown location, so we have no physical evidence that the aircraft really was Flight 77 or even a Boeing 757" ("Assessing the Official 9/11 Conspiracy Theory"). Photographic evidence of this removal can be seen on Eric Hufschmid's video, "Painful Deceptions" (available at www.EricHufschmid.Net).

78. A photograph showing this literal cover-up can be seen in Ralph Omholt, "9-11 and the Impossible: Part One of an Online Journal of 9-11" (<http://www.physics911.net/omholt.htm>).

79. On the confiscation of the film from the Citgo gas station and a nearby hotel, respectively, see Bill McKelway "Three Months On, Tension Lingers Near the Pentagon," *Richmond Times-Dispatch*, Dec. 11, 2001 (http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2001/12/1211_wirepentagon.html), and Bill Gertz and Rowan Scarborough, "Inside the Ring," *Washington Times*, Sept. 21, 2001. Scott Bingham, who has tried to get videos of the Pentagon strike released under the Freedom of Information Act, has his lawsuit and the official response posted on his website (<http://www.flight77.info>). See also "Government Responds to Flight 77 FOAI Request," 911Truth.org, Aug. 2005.

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98. Horsley, *Jesus and Empire*, 29.

99. Horsley, *Jesus and Empire*, 6, 15, 28; Horsley and Silberman, *The Message and the Kingdom*, 84-86.

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102. *Ibid.*, 174-75; Matthew 21: 33-46; Mark 12:1-12; Luke 20:9-19.

103. Horsley, *Jesus and the Spiral*, 282, 307-14.

104. *Ibid.*, 299; E. P. Sanders, *Jesus and Judaism* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1985), 69-70, 302.

105. Horsley, *Jesus and Empire*, 132.

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Providence] to us and our descendants as Savior, has . . . become [god] manifest” (quoted in Horsley, *Jesus and Empire*, 23-24).

107. Rev. 12:9, 13:2, 20:2.

108. Horsley and Silberman, *The Message and the Kingdom*, 11.

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