

A Glossary of Terms to Help De-Mystify This and Future Political Campaigns

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Region: [USA](#)

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I was raised in a small rural Minnesotan town by an essentially apolitical household that had no television, subscribed to no daily newspaper and had very little civics instruction in my high school. By osmosis, I suppose, I somehow came to the erroneous assumption that democracy and capitalism were the same. I suppose that a lot of other Americans fell victim to the same illogic (brain-washing [?]) which I now suspect may have been planned by the powers-that-be rather than because of simple stupidity on my part)

At any rate, it has taken me decades to gradually overcome the disinformation that made me confused about something as basic as economics and politics. So, in an effort to warn some of my fellow citizens about what may have happened to them as well, I submit the following glossary of terms. A lot of the following information was excerpted/plagiarized from the public online encyclopedia, Wikipedia. I hope the lists help to explain why so much of the world regards us as “Ugly Americans” rather than arrogant “Exceptional Americans”.

Lebensraum (German for “living space”) is one of the precepts of Nazism, which is actually no different from the American concept of “Manifest Destiny” which justified the murderous, genocidal theft of Native American ancestral lands of what is now considered the United States of America.

The concept of **Lebensraum** in Germany likewise justified that nation’s attempts at territorial expansion into Eastern Europe (in both world wars) because of the perceived need for (and the willingness of otherwise “Good (and brain-washed) Germans” to send their tanks, storm troopers, Luftwaffe pilots and special forces (“Sondercommandos”) to kill Slavs and Jews and steal their agricultural land and natural resources for the Fatherland. The Nazi policy (as was the case in the nefarious methods used by the United States government and its military against the aboriginal peoples) was to kill, deport, or enslave the Polish, Ukrainian, Russian and other Slavic populations, ethnic groups that were considered racially inferior. The ultimate goal was to repopulate Eastern Europe with “racially-superior” Germans.

As has happened in many of the foreign wars (and domestic conflicts) that most militarized, imperial nations like the US have been engaged in, the populations invaded by Germany were dealt with by acts of terror including genocide, mass murder, torture, arbitrary arrest, imprisonment, extra-judicial executions, rapes, sexual assaults, confinement of civilian populations into ghetto areas (“concentration camps”), hunger, starvation, forcible removal, forced marches, civilian displacement and deportation, deliberate military attacks (or threats of military violence) on civilians and civilian areas, and destruction of homes, safe harbors, hospitals and other property.

The demagogue Adolf Hitler and his brain-washed “my country right or wrong” followers felt it was their nationalistic and patriotic duty to create an agricultural and natural resource surplus that would feed Germany’s military conquerors, satisfy German industry’s insatiable greed for natural resources and allow a German upper class to occupy the newly “cleansed” area for the duration of the “Thousand Year Reich”.

It is important to point out that a common motivation for ethnic cleansing and colonization by the governments that ruled our ancestors (and their obedient military units that did the dirty work) is gaining access to coveted natural resources such as water, coal, oil, arable land, cotton, precious metals, industrial metals and dependency-inducing (and therefore very profitable) crops such as tobacco, sugar, coffee, coca, opium poppies and various fermentable crops (to produce alcohol).

Manifest Destiny, American Imperialism and the Military-Industrial-Congressional Complex

Manifest Destiny was a widely held belief in the United States among its white settlers that they were destined, by some God-given right, to expand across North America while forcibly removing anyone or anything in their way.

American Imperialism is the economic, military and cultural influence of an over-privileged United States on other countries. (Read “[Confessions of an Economic Hitman](#)”, a book about American economic imperialism written by the whistle-blowing, ex-insider author John Perkins.)

American economic hitmen such as Perkins infiltrate, influence or otherwise coerce (thanks to previous predatory loans made by the IMF, World Bank or private lending institutions) a targeted third world nation’s economic system prior to contingency plans that have been made for a military coup d’etat, invasion, military base installation and/or some other military occupation of a sovereign nation.

Imperialist U.S. policies are the products of the excessive influence of certain sectors of trans-national corporate entities (including the IMF and World Bank) and secretive government agencies such as the CIA. (For example, the arms industry is in alliance with military and political bureaucracies and sometimes other mega-industries such as oil and finance, a combination that is often referred to as the “**military-industrial-congressional complex**” [MICC].)



The **Military-Industrial-Congressional**

Complex, which President Eisenhower tried to warn us about in his farewell address, is an informal, unholy alliance between 1) the United States military, 2) the defense/arms industries (which legitimizes militarization and promotes pro-war agendas) and 3) the legislators who fund and cheer-lead for pro-Pentagon agendas around the world. The MICC shapes both foreign and domestic policy agendas and refuses to do anything to really promote planetary peace (Note that there are no short-term profits to be made by corporations if peace ever broke out.)

The MICC includes the entire network of military contracts, right-wing think tanks, corporate lobbyists, wealthy individuals (and their political contributions, aka “investments”), defense contractors, the Pentagon and the executive and legislative branches of government, all aiming to gain public approval for continued excessive military spending.

The MICC also benefits from orchestrated “regime changes”, often at the expense of democratically-elected leaders in order to install corporation-friendly right-wing dictators, always at the expense of indigenous peoples. (Think Iran and every banana republic in South and Central America, most recently the US-supported military coup in Honduras, where Hillary Clinton has blood on her hands with the assassination of environmental activist Berta Caceres.)

American Exceptionalism, Ethnic Cleansing and Genocide

American Exceptionalism is the errant theory that the United States occupies a special niche among the nations of the world because of its alleged “generosity” to immigrants, “mercy” to persecuted religious and ethnic minorities, its “honorable” democratic ideals and its historical origins from an oppressed nation (despite its having evolved into an oppressor nation).

An **Ethnic Group** is a category of people whose members identify with each other based on common language, ancestry or social, cultural or national experiences. Unlike most other social groups, ethnicity is primarily an inherited status.

Ethnic Cleansing - the systematic forced removal, usually via the threat of military violence, of ethnic or religious groups from a given territory by a more powerful ethnic

group. The intent of ethnic cleansing is to make a territory ethnically homogeneous. The forces applied include forced migration, deportation, intimidation, mass murder and/or rape.

Genocide is an international war crime committed by a nation's obedient military, police or secret service forces whose political and business leaders (that are giving the orders to kill) intend to systematically eliminate a cultural, ethnic, linguistic, national, racial or religious group. According to the International Criminal Court definition, genocide involves:

- (a) Killing members of the group;
- (b) Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group;
- (c) Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part;
- (d) Imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group;
- (e) Forcibly transferring children of the group to another group.

The Indian Removal Act of 1830 and Eugenics

The **Indian Removal Act of 1830** was written at the request of President Andrew Jackson. It was passed by Congress on May 28, 1830, and happily signed by Jackson. The law authorized the US government to remove, by force if necessary, southern Native American Indian nations from their valuable, sustainably-developed ancestral lands to undeveloped, arid wasteland west of the Mississippi River (google "Trail of Tears" for more). The Indian nations that were so unjustly victimized in the 1830s were the Chickasaw, Choctaw, Creek, Seminole and Cherokee, often honorably referred to as the "Five Civilized Tribes".

In his 2nd annual message to Congress, Jackson said:

"true philanthropy reconciles the mind to the extinction of one generation of people to make room for another. In the monuments and fortresses of an unknown people, spread over the extensive regions of the West, we behold the memorials of a once powerful race, which was exterminated or has disappeared to make room for the existing savage tribes...What good man would prefer a country covered with forests and ranged by a few thousand savages to our extensive Republic, studded with cities, towns, and prosperous farms, embellished with all the improvements which art can devise or industry execute, occupied by more than 12,000,000 happy people, and filled with all the blessings of liberty, civilization, and religion?"

Indian Removal became a policy of the United States government in the 19th century whereby Native Americans were forcibly removed from their ancestral homelands to regions known as "Indian Territory". That policy was a core part of the genocide of Native Americans in both Canada and the US by European settlers until the mid-20th century

Eugenics Movements around the world peaked in Germany after World War I. It was equally strong in the United States as well, notably, it should be pointed out, at the University of Minnesota (google the "Minnesota Eugenics Society" that was founded in 1923, the same year that Hitler's Nazi Party failed to take over Munich's government). The eugenics movement in Germany assumed the racial superiority of Germans as an Aryan

master race (“Übermenschen”) that, by virtue of their self-proclaimed physical, intellectual, innovative and genetic superiority, had the God-ordained right to displace any people they deemed to be sub-human (“Untermenschen” alleged to be of inferior racial stock). And white Americans assumed the same in America.

And below are some useful definitions that may demystify some political terminology.

Liberalism and Bernie Sanders-style Social Democracy

American Liberalism espouses a wide array of views such as freedom of speech, freedom of the press, freedom of religion, free markets, civil rights, democratic societies, secular governments, and international cooperation. Liberalism inherently opposes fascism, militarism, racism, economic inequality, sexism, and is suspicious of the power of non-democratic, non-voting institutions such as military organizations, hierarchical organized religion and private corporations.

Social Democracy, as espoused by social democrat Bernie Sanders, is characterized by a commitment to policies aimed at curbing social, racial, gender and financial inequality, oppression of underprivileged groups, including support for universally accessible public services such as care for the elderly, child care, education, health care and workers’ compensation while promoting social justice within the framework of a capitalist economy. The social democratic movement also has strong connections with the labor movement and trade unions and is supportive of collective bargaining rights for workers as well as measures to extend democratic decision-making into economic policy-making.

American Conservatism, Neo-Liberalism and Neo-Conservatism



American Conservatism emphasizes respect for American traditions, support of Judeo-Christian values, anti-communism, advocacy of the concept of American exceptionalism, a defense of the conservative’s view of “Western civilization” from perceived threats posed by feminism, cultural Marxism, moral relativism and liberal internationalism. “Liberty” is a professed core value, with a particular emphasis on strengthening free markets and opposition to high taxes, government regulation and labor union encroachment on business/corporate interests.

Neo-liberalism is a term which has been used since the Reagan years to refer to “laissez-faire economic liberalism”. Neoliberals support extensive economic liberalization policies such as privatization, economic globalization, fiscal austerity, deregulation, unrestricted free trade and reductions in government spending in order to enhance the role of the private sector in the economy. Neoliberalism is infamously associated with the economic policies introduced by Margaret Thatcher in the United Kingdom and Ronald Reagan in the United States. The implementation of neoliberal policies and the acceptance of neoliberal economic theories in the 1970s are seen by some academics as the root of financialization, with the

financial crisis of 2007-2008 one of the ultimate results.

Neoconservatism (its advocates often called “**Neocon**”) is a political movement born in the United States during the 1960s. Many of its adherents became politically infamous during the Republican presidential administrations of the 1970s, 1980s, 1990s and 2000s. Neoconservatives peaked in influence during the administrations of George W. Bush and George H. W. Bush when they played a major role in promoting and planning the invasions of Iraq (read more about the neoconservative think tank, Project for a New American Century (PNAC) at <http://911review.com/motive/pnac.html> to see the entire list of prominent members in the George W. Bush administration calling for “A New Pearl Harbor”. The PNAC neocons included this short list: Dick Cheney, Donald Rumsfeld, Paul Wolfowitz, John Bolton, Richard Armitage, Scooter Libby, Elliot Abrams, Richard Perle and Paul Bremer.

Republican neoconservatives continue to have influence in the Obama White House and they have continued to be a major factor in Obama’s foreign policy.

Neoconservatives typically advocate the promotion of America’s professed political system “democracy” (but the public has been brain-washed to think that “democracy” is somehow synonymous with America’s economic system “capitalism”). Neocons aggressively promote corporate and political power over international affairs even if military force has to be used. The movement had its intellectual roots in the conservative Jewish monthly review magazine *Commentary*, published by the American Jewish Committee.

Libertarianism, the Cato Institute, the Council on Foreign Relations and the Manhattan Institute

The **Libertarian Party** is a political party in the United States that promotes civil liberties, free markets, non-interventionism overseas and laissez-faire economics (an economic system that opposes regulation by the government in economic affairs, similar to caveat emptor, ie “let the buyer beware”). Libertarians say that their party is more culturally liberal than the Democrats but more fiscally conservative than the Republicans. Current policy positions include lowering taxes, allowing people to opt out of Social Security, ending welfare programs, ending the prohibition of illegal drugs, and supporting gun ownership rights. One of the Koch brothers (David, the major sponsor of PBS’s NOVA) ran for vice president on the Libertarian Party ticket in 1980. The godmother of libertarianism is atheist author Ayn Rand, who has inspired the politics of two major Wisconsin Republican, congressman and Speaker of the House Paul Ryan and governor Scott Walker (whose campaigns have been generously funded by the Koch brothers).

It is instructive to point out several portions of the “privatize everything” Libertarian party platform from 1980 (source <http://www.sanders.senate.gov/koch-brothers>). It postulated

- 1) The repeal of all federal campaign finance laws (check: the Koch Brothers lobbying group, the American Legislative Exchange Council [ALEC - <http://www.alecexposed.org/>] and their high-powered lawyers finally achieved that one in the 2011 Citizen’s United SCOTUS decision. The Libertarian Party are presumably still working on the other platform planks below).
- 2) the abolition of Medicare and Medicaid and any compulsory insurance or tax-supported plan to provide health services, including those which fund abortion services.

- 3) the deregulation of the medical insurance industry and the repeal of the Social Security system.
- 4) the abolition of all personal and corporate income taxes, capital gains taxes, minimum wage laws, compulsory education laws and the government ownership, operation, regulation, and subsidy of schools and colleges.
- 5) the abolition of the US Postal Service, Environmental Protection Agency, the Department of Energy, the Department of Transportation, the Federal Aviation Administration, the Food and Drug Administration, the Occupational Safety and Health Act, the Consumer Product Safety Commission.
- 6) the abolition of all tax-supported services for children, government welfare, relief projects, and all “aid to the poor” programs.
- 7) the privatization of all railroads, public roads and the national highway system.

The **Cato Institute** is an American Libertarian Think Tank headquartered in Washington, DC. It was founded as the *Charles Koch Foundation* in 1974 but the name was changed to the Cato Institute two years later. Cato scholars have consistently called for the privatization of many government services and institutions, including NASA, Social Security, the US Postal Service, public transportation systems and public broadcasting. Cato opposes minimum wage laws.

The **Council on Foreign Relations (CFR)** is another good example of a pro-corporate, conservative think tank in the US. It has 4,900 members and specializes in US foreign policy and international affairs. Its membership has included wealthy businessmen, senior politicians, secretaries of state, CIA directors, bankers, lawyers, professors and media figures. The CFR promotes globalization, free trade, reductions of financial regulations for transnational corporations, and economic consolidation into regional blocs (Ex: NAFTA, TPP and the European Union).

The **Manhattan Institute** is another example of a conservative think tank. It was co-founded by Nixon CIA director William Casey. It promotes policies such as conservative-style reforms of law enforcement (ie, increased incarceration) and the welfare system. It promotes the privatization of educational institutions such as charter schools (and school voucher programs) and opposes Medicare’s logical need to negotiate with the pharmaceutical industry for lower drug costs for patients. The institute also promotes hydraulic fracking.

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