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The Imperial Temptaion: The New World Order and America's Response

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The Imperial Temptation: The New World Order and America's Response

Although the prose style is somewhat convoluted and often redundant, the book is extensively documented. Mendes assumes his reader is fairly well-versed in international trade and antitrust law. The text is spare of background information and elaboration upon the main concepts. Each chapter has endnotes which provide the meat, expanding upon and elucidating the concepts more briefly addressed in the text. Most of the references are English language sources. Mendes also provides access to a broad range of French language sources, thus providing readers fluent in both languages the broadest possible range of information.

In his Foreword, noted GATT scholar John H. Jackson expresses a view shared by many, that "the lack of a set of international competition rules is the largest gap in the world trading system today, and one which will have to be addressed before too long, even though it is not being addressed in the current Uruguay round negotiation." Mendes has provided a compelling illustration of the need for harmonious rules in this area, as our world continues to increase its economic interdependence. He concludes by showing that constant contact has produced some "cross-fertilization" in the divergent U.S. and EEC systems. Mendes cautions that each system is likely to remain fundamentally distinct, but emphasizes the need for nations to consider the impact of their laws in the context of the world economy and not just their own. He thus provides a valuable first step in the process of harmonization.

Kristin K. Rasciner

TUCKER, ROBERT W. AND DAVID C. HENDRICKSON, *THE IMPERIAL TEMPTATION: THE NEW WORLD ORDER AND AMERICA'S RESPONSE*; Council on Foreign Relations Press (1992); \$22.50; ISBN 0-87609-118-4; 240pp. (hardcover) Index.

The "imperial temptation" of which the authors speak is "the brief, massive use of military power in which the emphasis is placed on punishment and not rehabilitation." Tucker and Hendrickson, who have written two other books together as well as publishing extensively on their own, take as their thesis the bankruptcy of American ideals at the end of the Cold War. They focus on the Persian Gulf War as it exemplifies the U.S. vision of the "new world order." In the wake of the Cold War, military force occupies a disproportionate role in U.S. foreign policy. Tucker and Hendrickson maintain that the readiness with which the U.S. used military force against Iraq, despite alternatives, illustrates this disproportionality.

The book is divided into three sections, beginning with an introduction setting out the thesis. Endnotes are placed at the end of the book rather than the end of each chapter. The first part, *America's Road to the New World Order*, begins with a look at the development of the current focus on foreign policy in the Bush administration. First: the exit of Reagan, "the archetype of those who believe in the implacable hostility of the

Soviet Union towards the West," who nevertheless had the imagination and optimism to believe in change. Next: enter Bush, not only of differing temperament, but whose interest lay almost exclusively in foreign, not domestic policy. In Part Two, *The Gulf War: An Autopsy*, the book addresses, among other aspects, the cost and the justification for the Gulf War. This analysis prepares the reader for the authors' exploration of the impact of the War on the very soul of the U.S.. Part Three, *American Security and the National Purpose*, explores this impact in detail, drawing on examples from the history of the imperial powers.

Tucker and Hendrickson offer a controversial, but nevertheless compelling argument for the future of U.S. foreign policy. They warn that Bush's "new world order" is inconsistent with traditional American foreign policy principles. In fact they go so far, in the final chapter, as to quote the words written by William Seward, at the death of John Quincy Adams, during the Mexican War: "All nations must perpetually renovate their virtues and their constitutions, or perish."² They argue persuasively that President Bush has already succumbed to the "imperial temptation" that has seduced and corrupted other great powers in the past. Never has there been a greater need for the U.S. to "renovate" than now, say the authors. As they see it, without renovation, our present course will lead to the end of American history.

The book's publication date is June 10, 1992 — just in time to provoke renovation at the ballot box.

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2. See ROBERT W. TUCKER, *THE IMPERIAL TEMPTATION*, at 198.

