

NeoCon Markets & Slave Labor

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Recently we have referred to the similarities in the rise of Hitler in Germany of the 1930's, to the rise of the Bush Regime in the early 21st Century USA. It's a similarity that has been noted by a number of writers but not yet grasped by the narcotized masses and totally overlooked by the corporate media.

Another parallel comes to mind. The Neocons are driven by a religious fervor for "free markets" and "free trade" and they endlessly and persistently extol the universal benefits of such goals. It brings to mind the apologists for slavery in the early American South. The latter argued that the system produced great wealth for the country and after all, the slaves weren't so bad off. Later apologists could argue plausibly that the slaves were better off under slavery than they were in the South after Abolition. The current obsession says that with each country doing what it does best, i.e. producing what it is best suited to produce, we all gain. This may be true if we define "we" as "we investors", just as it may be partially true if the "we" is extended to consumers. It conveniently neglects to recognize the extraordinary achievements of American society, and later Western European and Japanese society, in creating a highly productive environment in which democracy and social justice have prevailed, or at least made enormous strides. We are now witnessing a three decade decline of median wages in the US and an acceleration in the widening of the gap between rich and poor. All this while the Neocons' statistics show a growing US economy, reflected in the profits of corporations and the ballooning compensation of CEOs. We hear of the new demand for luxury goods in China as the slave labor generated profits of the recently spawned breed of eastern entrepreneurs grow. The Neocons assure us that this surge of activity is raising all boats and the Chinese are attaining new levels of prosperity, just as the lives of American slaves became more comfortable as their owners' wealth rose until the early 19th century. However, more recently, American (and German, French and Italian) industrial workers did make a good living producing cars, appliances and textiles. Their theoretical option of competing with slave labor is, in reality, non-existent, as their employers simply shut down and move out in the face of the new economic order. The workers can be retrained to serve up fast food or, better, advertise and sell the latest products of slave labor from the third world. For the devout followers of the new Market religion of the West, this is just as God wanted it.