

Conservatives

Yet the “optimistic conservatism” of the fin de siècle [Anne Applebaum's term for 1990s Republicans] was the outlook that brought us the invasion of Iraq, the legitimization of torture, and the unprecedented, unconstitutional expansion of executive power under Bush and Cheney.

In league with liberal interventionists, these “energetic, reformist, and generous” conservatives [Applebaum's description] ushered in the calamitous policy of regime change – a euphemism that conflates imperial ambition with “ambition to share [American] democracy with the rest of the world.”

In this context, sharing is a bad joke. The regime changers are in effect saying, You know you want to be like us, and if you don't, we have the guns to persuade you.

Jackson Lears, NY Rev. of Books, Jan. 14, 2021