



## News Intelligence Analysis

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# Everything You Need to Know About Michael Ledeen

By Katherine Yurica

Would you be surprised to find that a man who was deeply involved in the Iran-Contra scandal during the Reagan Administration, a man who is the darling of the Bush White House and is an adviser to Karl Rove, a man who loves Machiavelli and studies him, a neo-conservative who has close ties to one of America's leading "Christian" Dominionists—Pat Robertson, and a man who called Pearl Harbor "lucky" and a providentially inspired event—may be the man who is behind the forging of the Niger documents that convinced America to launch a preemptive strike against Iraq?

Ian Masters, host of *Background Briefing*, in Los Angeles, interviewed Vincent Cannistraro, the former head of Counterterrorism operations at the CIA. Cannistraro came close to naming the man who forged the Niger documents. When Masters asked, "If I said 'Michael Ledeen'?" Vincent Cannistraro replied, "You'd be very close."

Who is Michael Ledeen? Or perhaps more importantly, what does he believe? Here are just a few quotes from his book, *Machiavelli on Modern Leadership: Why Machiavelli's Iron Rules Are as Timely and Important Today as Five Centuries Ago*. (Truman Talley Books (St. Martin's Press), 1999.) Ledeen wrote:

"When Jimmy Carter was president, he was so appalled by the assassinations that had been carried out by American officers and agents that he issued a stern executive order forbidding the practice. This had the unanticipated consequence of favoring the forces of evil, because we could not go after individual terrorists....In his moralistic attempt to make murder less likely, Carter made it *more* likely, by both our enemies and ourselves." (pp. 94-95)

"There are several circumstances in which good leaders are likely to have to enter into evil: whenever the very existence of the nation is threatened; when the state is first created or revolutionary change is to be accomplished; when

removing an evil tyrant; and when the society becomes corrupt and must be restored to virtue...Saving a state that has sunk into corruption is Machiavelli's most passionate concern..." (pp. 101-102)

"Moses created a new state and a new religion, which makes him one of the most revolutionary leaders of all time...The execution of the sinners was necessary to confirm Moses' authority." (pp. 102-103)

"The winning formula is threefold: good laws, good arms, good religion. We are back to Moses." (p. 111)

"Good religion teaches men that politics is the most important enterprise in the eyes of God. Like Moses, Machiavelli wants the law of his state to be seen, and therefore obeyed, as divinely ordered. The combination of fear of God and fear of punishment—duly carried out with good arms—provides the necessary discipline for good government."(pp. 117-118)

"American evangelical Christianity is the sort of 'good religion' Machiavelli calls for. The evangelicals do not quietly accept their destiny, believing instead they are called upon to fight corruption and reestablish virtue." (p. 159)

"Once corruption has taken hold of a free nation, it is headed toward tyranny." (p. 172)

Notice that in the next quote, Ledeen's presupposition is that only liberals are "corrupt." He criticized Bob Dole and Jack Kemp in 1996 for refusing to attack Bill Clinton's character during the campaign.

"Refusing to hold public officials accountable for their corrupt practices reinforces the people's perception that turpitude and power are inextricably linked, and undermines even the best laws and institutions. Inevitably, with the passage of time, liberty itself is crushed." (p. 173)

"Paradoxically, preserving liberty may require the rule of a single leader—a dictator—willing to use those dreaded 'extraordinary measures, which few know how, or are willing, to employ.'" (p. 173)

"Machiavelli...has not lost his democratic faith. His call for a brief period of iron rule is a choice of the lesser of two evils: if the corruption continued, a real tyranny would be just a matter of time (making it even harder to restore free institutions), whereas freedom can be preserved if a good man can be found to put the state back in order. Just as it is sometimes necessary temporarily to resort to evil actions to achieve worthy objectives, so a period of dictatorship is sometimes the only hope for freedom." (p. 174)

"Machiavelli's favorite hero...Moses exercised dictatorial power, but that awesome power was used to create freedom." (p. 174)

“We should not be outraged by Machiavelli’s call for a temporary dictatorship as an effective means to either revivify or restore freedom.” (p. 174)

Speaking of Germany following W.W. II, Ledeen wrote:

“We ‘denazified’ the country, hung many of the major leaders of the Third Reich, and forced all adults to answer detailed questionnaires about their activities and associations during Hitler’s rule.” We barred from positions of power and civic influence those who had actively participated in the Nazi regime.” (p. 175)

It would be foolish for America’s political strategists and congressional leaders to ignore Michael Ledeen and his interpretation of Machiavelli. Mr. Ledeen speaks from the cutting edge of a group of men and women who desire nothing more than to reconstruct America in their own image. This nation is in grave danger. Ledeen belongs to a group of men, including Harry Jaffa, Pat Robertson, Willmoore Kendall to Allan Bloom, who, according to Shadia Drury, scholar and author of *Leo Strauss and the American Right*, share “the view that America is too liberal and pluralistic and that what it needs is a single orthodoxy that governs the public and private lives of its citizens.”[\[1\]](#)

The belief in a single voice that governs the public should cause all Americans to understand these men want to convert this nation to a permanent dictatorship. Their inspirer was Leo Strauss, a professor who taught Machiavellian methods to many of them at the University of Chicago. In fact, Paul Wolfowitz earned his doctorate under Strauss and many of the neo-cons in the White House studied under him. Strauss believed every society needs a “single public orthodoxy.” As Drury put it, “a set of ideas that defines what is true and false, right and wrong, noble and base.” Strauss believed that the role of religion was indispensable to the political success of a nation. For a political society had to hold together and act as a unit in lock step with the leader. Strauss believed that religion was the means to inculcate the desired ideas into the minds of the masses. He didn’t care what religion—just as long as it was a religion that could link itself to the political order.

Michael Ledeen singled out the evangelicals as most like the “Machiavellian” model described by Strauss. Evangelicals, while decrying the aberrant power of a Jim Jones over *his* congregation, have always had little Jim Joneses telling them what to do and how to live from their pulpits all over America. Evangelicals thirst for power, submit to power, and now are harnessed to a power that is driving them toward the completion of the take over of the USA. Our only hope is to wake up the churches and call them to repentance. And the irony is, as Ledeen points out, if we will stand up and attack the immorality and corruption within the Republican Party, which has reached the lowest depths in the history of our nation, and which the GOP supports, the bedraggled verbally abused Democrats will sit up and notice at long last that they are recognized as the moral leaders they have always been. What Leo Strauss and Michael Ledeen and the other dominionists really hate, is the loving Christian ethics that established FDR's New Deal. You see, the great success of Christian liberalism is that it threatens their greed and that’s what the fight is all about.

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[1] *Leo Strauss and the American Right* by Shadia Drury, St. Martin's Press, 1999, New York.

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