

Project for the New American Century

The **Project for the New American Century** (PNAC) was a neo-conservative think tank (1997 to 2006) that had strong ties to the American Enterprise Institute. PNAC's web site said it was "established in the spring of 1997" as "a non-profit, educational organization whose goal is to promote American global leadership."

PNAC's policy document, "Rebuilding America's Defences (<http://www.newamericancentury.org/RebuildingAmericasDefenses.pdf>)," openly advocated for total global military domination. Many PNAC members held highest-level positions in the George W. Bush administration. The Project was an initiative of the New Citizenship Project (501c3).
[1]

In 2009 two of PNAC's founders, William Kristol and Robert Kagan, began what some termed "PNAC 2.0," The Foreign Policy Initiative.

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History

The PNAC was co-founded by William Kristol and Robert Kagan in 1997^[2], with roots in the 1992 Pentagon (<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/iraq/etc/cron.html>). PNAC's original 25 signatories were an eclectic mix of academics and neo-conservative politicians, several of whom have subsequently found positions in the presidential administration of George Walker Bush. PNAC is noteworthy for its focus on Iraq, a preoccupation that began before Bush became president and predates the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. In 1998, the group wrote a letter (<http://www.newamericancentury.org/iraqclintonletter.htm>) to President Bill Clinton, Mississippi Senator Trent Lott

(then Senate Majority Leader) and Newt Gingrich (then Speaker of the House of Representatives), demanding a harder line against Iraq. By then, the group had grown in numbers, adding individuals such as former Reagan-era U.N. Ambassador Jeane J. Kirkpatrick, and long-time Washington cold warrior/pro-Likud Richard N. Perle.

According to William Rivers Pitt, "Two events brought PNAC into the mainstream of American government: the disputed election of George W. Bush and the attacks of September 11th. When Bush assumed the Presidency, the men who created and nurtured the imperial dreams of PNAC became the men who run the Pentagon, the Defense Department and the White House. When the Towers came down, these men saw, at long last, their chance to turn their White Papers into substantive policy."^[3]

Several original PNAC members, including Cheney, Khalilzad and the Bush family, have ties to the oil industry. Many other members have been long-time fixtures in the U.S. military establishment or Cold War "strategic studies," including Elliott Abrams, Dick Cheney, Paula Dobriansky, Aaron Friedberg, Frank Gaffney, Fred C. Ikle, Peter W. Rodman, Stephen P. Rosen, Henry S. Rowen, Donald H. Rumsfeld, John R. Bolton, Vin Weber, and Paul Dundes Wolfowitz. It should not be surprising, therefore, that while the group devotes inordinate attention to Iraq, its most general focus has been on a need to "re-arm America." The prospect of mining oil riches may explain part of the group's focus on Iraq, but this motivation has been buried under the rhetoric of national security and the need for strong national defense.

To justify a need to "rearm" the country, however, reasons must be found. In the more peaceable world of the late 1990s, with no rival super-power in sight, Iraq and "ballistic missile defense" against "rogue states" were the main games in town. The group's links to advocacy for ballistic missile defense came through Donald Rumsfeld, who in 1998 chaired a bi-partisan commission on the "US Ballistic Missile Threat" and Vin Weber, a registered lobbyist for Lockheed Martin and other Fortune 500 companies.

According to a February 27, 2003, editorial by William Rivers Pitt, PNAC

has been agitating since its inception for a war with Iraq. PNAC was the driving force behind the drafting and passage of the Iraqi Liberation Act, a bill that painted a veneer of legality over the ultimate designs behind such a conflict. The names of every prominent PNAC member were on a letter (<http://www.newamericancentury.org/iraqclintonletter.htm>) delivered to President Clinton in 1998 which castigated him for not implementing the Act by driving troops into Baghdad.

PNAC has funneled millions of taxpayer dollars to a Hussein opposition group called the Iraqi National Congress, and to Iraq's heir-apparent, Ahmed Chalabi, despite the fact that Chalabi was sentenced in absentia by a Jordanian court to 22 years in prison on 31 counts of bank fraud. Chalabi and the INC have, over the years, gathered support for their cause by promising oil contracts to anyone that would help to put them in power in Iraq.

Most recently, PNAC created a new group called the Committee for the Liberation of Iraq. Staffed entirely by PNAC members, The Committee has set out to "educate" Americans via cable news connections about the need for war in Iraq. This group met recently with National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice regarding the ways and means of this education. ...

The Project for the New American Century seeks to establish what they call 'Pax Americana' across the globe. Essentially, their goal is to transform America, the sole remaining superpower, into a planetary empire by force of arms. A report released by PNAC in September of 2000 entitled 'Rebuilding America's Defenses (<http://www.newamericancentury.org/RebuildingAmericasDefenses.pdf>)' codifies this plan, which requires a massive increase in defense spending and the fighting of several major theater wars in order to establish American dominance. The first has been achieved in Bush's new budget plan, which calls for the exact dollar amount to be spent on defense that was requested by PNAC in 2000. Arrangements are underway for the fighting of the wars.^[4]

Key positions

Among the key conclusions of PNAC's defense strategy document (*Rebuilding America's Defenses*) were the following [4] (http://www.fpif.org/papers/o2men/box1_body.html):

- "Develop and deploy global missile defenses to defend the American homeland and American allies, and to provide a secure basis for U.S. power projection around the world."
- "Control the new 'international commons' of space and 'cyberspace,' and pave the way for the creation of a new military service--U.S. Space Forces--with the mission of space control."
- "Increase defense spending, adding \$15 billion to \$20 billion to total defense spending annually."
- "Exploit the 'revolution in military affairs' [transformation to high-tech, unmanned weaponry] to insure the long-term superiority of U.S. conventional forces."
- "Need to develop a new family of nuclear weapons designed to address new sets of military requirements" complaining that the U.S. has "virtually ceased development of safer and more effective nuclear weapons."
- "Facing up to the realities of multiple constabulary missions that will require a permanent allocation of U.S. forces."
- "America must defend its homeland" by "reconfiguring its nuclear force" and by missile defense systems that "counteract the effects of the proliferation of ballistic missiles and weapons of mass destruction."
- "Need for a larger U.S. security perimeter" and the U.S. "should seek to establish a network of 'deployment bases' or 'forward operating bases' to increase the reach of current and future forces," citing the need to move beyond Western Europe and Northeast Asia to increased permanent military presence in Southeast Asia and "other regions of East Asia." Necessary "to cope with the rise of China to great-power status."
- Redirecting the U.S. Air Force to move "toward a global first-strike force."
- End the Clinton administration's "devotion" to the Anti-Ballistic Missile treaty.
- "North Korea, Iran, Iraq, or similar states [should not be allowed] to undermine American leadership, intimidate American allies, or threaten the American homeland itself."
- "Main military missions" necessary to "preserve Pax Americana" and a "unipolar 21st century" are the following: "secure and expand zones of democratic peace, deter rise of new great-power competitor, defend key regions (Europe, East Asia, Middle East), and exploit transformation of war."

According to the PNAC report, "The American peace has proven itself peaceful, stable, and durable. Yet no moment in international politics can be frozen in time: even a global Pax Americana will not preserve itself." To preserve this "American peace" through the 21st century, the PNAC report concludes that the global order "must have a secure foundation on unquestioned U.S. military preeminence." The report struck a prescient note when it observed that "the process of transformation is likely to be a long one, absent some catastrophic and catalyzing event--like a new Pearl Harbor."

Many of PNAC's conclusions and recommendations were reflected in the White House's National Security Strategy document of September 2002, which reflects the "peace through strength" credo that shapes PNAC strategic thinking.

Personnel

Original 25 signatories were:

Source (<http://rightweb.irc-online.org/charts/pnac-chart.htm>)

- Elliott Abrams, a former Reagan-era Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs. During the Iran/Contra scandal, Abrams pleaded guilty to two misdemeanor counts of lying to Congress but was later pardoned by the first Bush administration. He subsequently became president of the Ethics and Public Policy Center. He is currently a member of Bush's National Security Council.
- Gary Bauer, a Republican presidential candidate in 2000, who currently is president of an organization named American Values (<http://www.ouramericanvalues.org/>).
- William J. Bennett, who served during the Reagan and first Bush administrations as U.S. Secretary of Education and Drug Czar. Upon leaving government office, Bennett became a "distinguished fellow" at the conservative Heritage Foundation, co-founded Empower America, and established himself as a self-proclaimed expert on morality with his authorship of The Book of Virtues (<http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/ISBN%3D0671683063/thecenterformedia>).

- Jeb Bush, the son of former President George Herbert Walker Bush and brother of current President George W. Bush. At the time of PNAC's founding, Jeb Bush was a candidate for the Florida governor's seat, a position which he currently holds.
- Dick Cheney, the former White House Chief of Staff to Gerald R. Ford, six-term Congressman, and Secretary of Defense to the first President Bush, was serving as president of the oil-services giant Halliburton Company at the time of PNAC's founding. He subsequently became U.S. vice president under George W. Bush.
- Eliot A. Cohen, a professor of strategic studies at John Hopkins University
- Paula Dobriansky, vice president and director of the Washington office of the Council on Foreign Relations. Currently Dobriansky serves in the Bush administration as Undersecretary of State for Global Affairs.
- Steve Forbes, publisher, billionaire, and Republican presidential candidate in 1996 and 2000. Forbes has also campaigned actively on behalf of the "flat tax," which would reduce the federal tax burden for wealthy individuals like himself.
- Aaron Friedberg, professor of politics and international affairs; Director, Center of International Studies; Director, Research Program in International Security, Woodrow Wilson School, Princeton University.
- Francis Fukuyama, author of *The End of History and the Last Man* (<http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/ISBN%3D0380720027/thecenterformedia>); Dean of the Faculty and Bernard L. Schwartz Professor of International Political Economy at the Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS) at Johns Hopkins University. Appointed to the President's Council on Bioethics by George W. Bush, January 2002.
- Frank Gaffney - conservative columnist; founder and president of the Center for Security Policy in Washington, D.C. Web-site: <http://www.centerforsecuritypolicy.org/>
- Fred C. Ikle, "distinguished scholar" at the Center for Strategic and International Studies
- Donald Kagan, professor of history and classics at Yale University and the author of books including *While America Sleeps: Self-Delusion, Military Weakness, and the Threat to Peace Today*; *A Twilight Struggle: American Power and Nicaragua, 1977-1990*; and *The Origins of War and the Preservation of Peace*. Kagan is also a senior associate at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, a contributing editor at the Weekly Standard and a Washington Post columnist, a member of the Council on Foreign Relations and the Alexander Hamilton fellow in American diplomatic history at American University. Past experience includes: Deputy for Policy in the State Department's Bureau of Inter-American Affairs (1985-1988); State Department's Policy Planning Staff member (1984-1985); speechwriter to Secretary of State George P. Shultz (1984-1985); foreign policy advisor to Congressman Jack Kemp (1983); Special Assistant to the Deputy Director of the United States Information Agency (1983); Assistant Editor at the Public Interest (1981).
- Zalmay Khalilzad, an Afghan-American who was the only Muslim among the group's original signatories and the only signatory who was not a native-born U.S. citizen. Khalilzad has become the Bush administration's special envoy to Afghanistan after the fall of the Taliban as well as is special envoy to the Iraqi opposition to Saddam Hussein. Khalilzad has written about information warfare, and in 1996 (in pre-Taliban days), he served as a consultant to the oil company Unocal Corporation (UNOCAL) regarding a "risk analysis" for its proposed pipeline project through Afghanistan and Pakistan.
- William Kristol, PNAC's chairman, is also editor of the Weekly Standard, a Washington-based political magazine. His past involvements have included: lead of the Project for the Republican Future, chief of staff to Vice President J. Danforth Quayle, chief of staff to Secretary of Education William J. Bennett under the Reagan administration, taught politics at the University of Pennsylvania and Harvard's Kennedy School of Government.
- I. Lewis Scooter Libby, who later became chief of staff for Vice President Dick Cheney.
- Norman Podhoretz, a senior fellow at the Hudson Institute and author of works such as *Patriotism and its Enemies*.
- J. Danforth Quayle, former vice president under President George Herbert Walker Bush and a presidential candidate himself in 1996.
- Peter W. Rodman, who served in the State Department and the National Security Council under Presidents Ronald Reagan and George Herbert Walker Bush, became the current Bush administration's Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security affairs in 2001.
- Stephen P. Rosen, Beton Michael Kaneb Professor of National Security and Military Affairs at Harvard University.
- Henry S. Rowen was president of the RAND Corporation from 1967-1972. He served under former presidents Reagan and Bush as chairman of the National Intelligence Council (1981-83) and Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs (1989-91). He currently holds the title of "senior fellow" at the Hoover Institution on War, Revolution and Peace
- Donald H. Rumsfeld served former President Gerald R. Ford as chief of transition after Richard M. Nixon's resignation, later becoming Ford's chief of staff and secretary of defense from 1974-75. He subsequently served from 1990-93 as CEO of General Instrument Corporation and later as Chairman of the Board of Gilead Sciences, a pharmaceutical company. In 1998 he served as chairman of the bi-partisan US Ballistic Missile Threat Commission. Under President George W. Bush, he once again assumed the post of Secretary of Defense.
- Vin Weber, a former Republican congressman from Minnesota, is now a well-connected lobbyist who has represented such firms as AT&T, Lockheed Martin and Microsoft. Weber is also vice chairman of Empower America and a former fellow of the Progress and Freedom Foundation.
- George Weigel, a Roman Catholic religious and political commentator, is a "senior fellow" at the Ethics and Public Policy Center.

- Paul Dundes Wolfowitz, formerly Dean and Professor of International Relations at the Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies at Johns Hopkins University, became Undersecretary of Defense for President George W. Bush in 2001.

Leadership

Top leadership from their about page as of June 2007:[5] (<http://www.newamericancentury.org/aboutpnac.htm>)

Project directors:

- [William Kristol](http://www.newamericancentury.org/williamkristolbio.htm), Chairman (<http://www.newamericancentury.org/williamkristolbio.htm>)
- [Robert Kagan](http://www.newamericancentury.org/robertkaganbio.htm), Co-founder (<http://www.newamericancentury.org/robertkaganbio.htm>)
- [Bruce P. Jackson](http://www.newamericancentury.org/brucejacksonbio.htm), bio (<http://www.newamericancentury.org/brucejacksonbio.htm>) President of the Project on Transitional Democracies. He was also a member of the Council on Foreign Relations and the International Institute for Strategic Studies. He was on the Board of Advisors of the Center for Security Policy. He is the President of the U.S. Committee on NATO. Past experience includes: US Army intelligence (1979-1990), Office of the Secretary of Defense (1986-1990), chief strategist of proprietary trade operations at Lehman Brothers (1990-1993), high level management positions at [Martin Marietta](#) and [Lockheed Corporation](#) (1993-1999?).
- [Mark Gerson](http://www.newamericancentury.org/markgersonbio.htm), bio (<http://www.newamericancentury.org/markgersonbio.htm>)
- [Randy Scheunemann](http://www.newamericancentury.org/randyscheunemannbio.htm), bio (<http://www.newamericancentury.org/randyscheunemannbio.htm>), founded the [Committee for the Liberation of Iraq](#), served as an advisor to [Rumsfeld](#) on Iraq in 2001.

Other leaders:

- [Ellen Bork](http://www.newamericancentury.org/ellenborkbio.htm), Deputy Director (<http://www.newamericancentury.org/ellenborkbio.htm>)
- [Gary Schmitt](http://www.newamericancentury.org/garyschmittbio.htm), Senior Fellow (<http://www.newamericancentury.org/garyschmittbio.htm>)
- [Thomas Donnelly](http://www.newamericancentury.org/thomasdonnellybio.htm), Senior Fellow (<http://www.newamericancentury.org/thomasdonnellybio.htm>)
- [Reuel Marc Gerecht](http://www.newamericancentury.org/reuelmarcgerechtbio.htm), Senior Fellow (<http://www.newamericancentury.org/reuelmarcgerechtbio.htm>), Director of the [Middle East Initiative](#)
- [Timothy Lehmann](#), Assistant Director
- [Michael Goldfarb](#), Research Associate

Other PNAC members (Updated June 2007)

- [John R. Bolton](#), former U.S. ambassador to the United Nations and Undersecretary for Arms Control and International Security in the Bush administration.
- [Daniel McKivergan](http://www.newamericancentury.org/danielmckiverganbio.htm), Deputy Director (<http://www.newamericancentury.org/danielmckiverganbio.htm>).
- [Christopher Maletz](#), former Assistant Director.
- [Richard N. Perle](#), an AEI associate, former [Reagan administration](#) official, and member (and former chairman) of the [Defense Policy Board](#).

Non-overlapping signatories to a January 28, 2005, letter to Congress

Source: Letter to Congress on Increasing U.S. Ground Forces (<http://www.newamericancentury.org/defense-20050128.htm>), PNAC, January 28, 2005.

- [Peter Beinart](#)
- [Jeffrey Bergner](#)
- [Daniel Blumenthal](#)
- [Max Boot](#)
- [Ivo H. Daalder](#)
- [Michele Flournoy](#)
- [Buster C. Glosson](#)
- [Frederick Kagan](#)
- [Craig Kennedy](#)
- [Paul Kennedy](#)
- [Robert Killebrew](#)
- [Will Marshall](#)

- [Clifford D. May](#)
- [Barry R. McCaffrey](#)
- [Joshua Muravchik](#)
- [Steven J. Nider](#)
- [Michael O'Hanlon](#)
- [Mackubin Thomas Owens](#)
- [Ralph Peters](#)
- [Danielle Pletka](#)
- [Stephen P. Rosen](#)
- [Robert H. Scales](#)
- [Walter Slocombe](#)
- [James B. Steinberg](#)

See the *Right Web* Profile (<http://rightweb.irc-online.org/org/pnac.html>).

Funding

MediaTransparency.org has documented \$600,000 in donations to PNAC since 1997 from conservative foundations. [6] (<http://www.mediatransparency.org/grantsearchresults.php?searchString=New+American+Century>) Funders include:

- [Bradley Foundation](#) (\$500,000)
- [John M. Olin Foundation](#) (\$50,000)
- [Scaife Foundations](#) (Sarah Mellon Scaife Foundation (\$50,000))

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Resources and articles

Related SourceWatch articles

- [American Enterprise Institute](#)
- [Balkan Action Committee](#)
- [Center for Security Policy](#)
- [Citizens for a Free Kuwait](#)
- [Coalition for a Democratic Majority](#)
- [Committee for the Free World](#)
- [Committee for the Liberation of Iraq](#)
- [Committee for Peace and Security in the Gulf](#)
- [Committee on the Present Danger](#)
- [Henry Jackson Society](#)
- [Institute for Advanced Strategic & Political Studies](#)
- [Institute on Religion and Democracy](#)
- [JINSA](#)
- [National Security Advisory Council](#)
- [National Institute for Public Policy](#)

- [New Citizenship Project](#)
- [Neo-conservative](#)
- [Office of Special Plans](#)
- [Project for the Republican Future](#)
- [Project on Transitional Democracies](#)
- [Prodemca \(Friends of the Democratic Center in Central America\)](#)
- [regime change](#)
- [September 11, 2001](#)
- [Study Group on a New Israeli Strategy Toward 2000](#)
- [The Foreign Policy Initiative](#)
- [U.S. Committee on NATO](#)
- [U.S. military bases overseas](#)

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2. [1] (<http://www.newamericancentury.org/robertkaganbio.htm>)
3. [2] (http://truthout.org/docs_02/022203A.htm)
4. [3] (http://truthout.org/docs_03/022803A.shtml)

PNAC documents

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External articles

General

- [America and the New American Century \(http://www.amiraqa.com\)](http://www.amiraqa.com), the new book covering the PNAC, their takeover of American foreign policy, and the War on Terror.
- The [PNAC Info \(http://pnac.info\)](http://pnac.info) weblog is devoted to exposing PNAC and "its plan for a 'unipolar' world."
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2003

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