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Spheres of influence

Neoconservative think tanks, periodicals, and key documents.

Top neocon think tanks

Project for the New American Century (PNAC)

Established in 1997 by William Kristol and Robert Kagan, PNAC's goal is "to promote American global leadership." Creating a blueprint for the US' current role in the world, PNAC's original Statement of Principles called for the US to return to a "Reaganite foreign policy of military strength and moral clarity."

American Enterprise Institute (AEI)

Founded in 1943, this influential Washington think tank is known as the headquarters of neoconservative thought. In a crucial speech in the leadup to the war in Iraq, US President George W. Bush said this to an audience at AEI: "You do such good work that my administration has borrowed 20 such minds."

Jewish Intitute for National Security Affairs (JINSA)

Based in Washington, JINSA "communicates with the national security establishment and the general public to explain the role Israel can and does play in bolstering American interests, as well as the link

Neocon 101

Don't know much about neoconservatism?
[Learn basic concepts.](#)

Key figures

Who are these guys?
[Learn the path to power for leading neocon lights.](#)

Interactive quiz

[Are you a "neocon"?](#)

Expert Q&A

Two leading US foreign policy thinkers discuss

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between American defense policy and the security of Israel." Some of the strongest supporters of Israel's right-wing Likud Party in the already pro-Israel neoconservative circles are on JINSA's board of advisers.

Center for Security Policy (CSP)

CSP's 2001 annual report boasts of its influence saying it "isn't just a 'think tank' – it's an agile, durable, and highly effective 'main battle tank' in the war of ideas on national security." Securing neoconservatives' influence at the nexus of military policymakers and weapons manufacturers, CSP's mission is "to promote world peace through American strength."

Others...

The Hudson Institute

The Institute for Advanced Strategic and Political Studies

Ethics and Public Policy Center

The Foundation for the Defense of Democracies

Top neoconservative periodicals

Commentary

Describing itself as "America's premier monthly journal of opinion," Commentary magazine is widely regarded as the leading outlet for neoconservative writing. Founded in 1945, this [American Jewish Committee](#) publication steadily gained ideological influence under the editorships of Irving Kristol and Norman Podhoretz, two of neoconservatism's founding fathers. Today, Commentary advocates passionate support for Israel, and regime change in at least half a dozen countries deemed hostile to US and Israeli security and interests.

National Review

Founded in 1955 by precocious conservative William F. Buckley, National Review promised to stand "athwart the path of history, yelling Stop!" AntiCommunist in stance, Catholic in judgment, Republican in preference, the magazine has weaned generations of conservative leaders. Its continued emphasis on traditional moral values and limited government put it outside the neoconservative camp, but in recent years, the magazine has increasingly adopted neocon attitudes.

The Weekly Standard

Weekly Standard editors comprise a "who's who" of neoconservative figures. Currently led by William Kristol and Fred Barnes, the magazine has, since its founding in 1995, encouraged the cultivation of an American empire.

The New Republic

Like neoconservatism's own founding, The New Republic's roots tap into an unlikely intellectual reservoir. Begun as a progressive oriented journal in 1914, the magazine initially supported the Soviet Union and opposed the Vietnam war, but later supported President Reagan's foreign policy and both Gulf Wars. Today, its advocacy of a muscular, pro-Israel, pro-interventionist US foreign policy -coupled with its embrace of Democratic centrist domestic policies -make it a leading neocon voice.

The National Interest

The National Interest claims "it's where the great debates begin." Founded in 1985 by Irving Kristol, the quarterly journal examines international relations from a broad perspective that embraces social issues, religion, and history. Though it does not always promote

the neocon movement.



Max Boot
How much power do neoconservatives really have?



Walter Russell Mead
Which leaders in US history would be neoconservatives today?

Birth of a superpower

Timeline of [key events](#) in the history of US foreign policy.

In their own words

[Remarks from leading figures.](#)

Spheres of influence

[Neocon think tanks, documents, and periodicals](#)

neocon causes, the journal's editorial board is dominated by some of the movement's most influential voices, including Midge Decter, Samuel P. Huntington, Charles Krauthammer, Richard Perle, and Daniel Pipes.

The Public Interest

When he founded the magazine in 1965, Irving Kristol defined the aim of The Public Interest: "to help all of us when we discuss issues of public policy, to know a little better what we are talking about – and preferably in time to make such knowledge effective." The Public Interest focuses more on American domestic culture and politics rather than international affairs. As a result, its contributors reflect a wide diversity of ideological perspectives.

Key Documents

Draft of the 1992 "Defense Planning Guidance" [excerpts]

This classified document, which called for US military preeminence over Eurasia and preemptive strikes against countries suspected of developing weapons of mass destruction, circulated for several weeks at senior levels in the Pentagon. After it was leaked to the media in 1992, it proved so shocking that it had to be substantially rewritten. Many aspects of this document are included in the US' [2002 National Security Strategy](#)

"A Clean Break: A New Strategy for Securing the Realm"

Prepared in 1996 by a group led by Richard Perle for Israel's right-wing Likud Party and published by the Institute for Advanced Strategic and Political Studies, an Israeli think tank, this report called for "a clean break" with the policies of negotiating "land for peace" with the Palestinians. It also advocated "reestablishing the principle of preemption."

"Toward a Neo-Reaganite foreign policy"

Published by Foreign Affairs in the summer of 1996, this neoconservative manifesto by William Kristol and Robert Kagan set the course for the modern neocon cause. By linking Reagan's foreign policy approach with neoconservative ideas, the authors energized Republican foreign policy and moved it away from both Pat Buchanan's "neoisolationism," or Henry Kissinger's "realism."

PNAC letter to Clinton

Leading conservatives, many of whom became senior officials in the Bush Administration, wrote this open letter to then-President Bill Clinton in 1998. The letter, sponsored by the Project for a New American Century, expressed the urgent need to topple Saddam Hussein's regime.

PNAC letter to Bush

Written just weeks after the 9/11 terrorist attacks, this open letter from PNAC to President George W. Bush urging Saddam Hussein's ouster marked the beginning of a concerted effort by neoconservatives to persuade President Bush to take action against Iraq. The letter stated, in part: "...even if evidence does not link Iraq directly to the [9/11] attack, any strategy aiming at the eradication of terrorism and its sponsors must include a determined effort to remove Saddam Hussein from power in Iraq." The relentless campaign worked. Within two years, US forces would occupy Iraq.

President Bush's speech to AEI

Less than a month before the US-led coalition launched its attack on Saddam Hussein's regime, President Bush symbolically chose the de facto headquarters of neoconservative thought, the American Enterprise Institute (AEI), as a venue to outline his vision for a new Iraq – and a new Middle East. AEI had been arguing for regime

change in Iraq and democratization of the Middle East for over a decade.

"Beyond the Axis of Evil"

In this controversial May, 2002 speech to the Heritage Foundation, a conservative think tank, US Under Secretary for Arms Control and International Security John Bolton accuses Libya, Syria, and Cuba of actively developing weapons of mass destruction programs.

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