

Newsletter No. 59: The Unknown History of a NATO Think Tank

Dear readers,

For this newsletter I take an excerpt from my book, The Think Tanks which has not yet been published. The role of private think-tanks, especially in the United States and UK in developing long-term policy for the leading circles or powers that be with names such as Rockefeller, Kellogg, Soros, is poorly understood by the general public. This is largely by design as the role of those tax-exempt foundations in shaping national and global debates on issues of war or peace, climate change, economics is far from neutral. Here I take a selection about a think tank called the Atlantic Council and look more closely at this highly influential policy group.

I depend on your support to be able to continue offering my work free, more than ever as politically-biased censorship by the likes of Facebook, Twitter, Google are working intensely to silence critical opinion that differs with their agenda. Please consider making a support via my PayPal on my website, www.williamengdahl.com as well as buying one or more of my books.

All my best,

William Engdahl

The screenshot shows a website interface with a teal header. At the top center is a yellow 'Support' button. Below it are logos for various payment methods: Bitcoin, Visa, Mastercard, and Bank. A red arrow points from the text 'Press this Button!' to the 'Support' button. Below the payment logos is a book cover for 'MANIFEST DESTINY: Democracy as Cognitive Dissonance' by F. William Engdahl. The book cover features a globe with a white eagle and a red splatter. Below the book cover is a navigation menu with links: Home, About Me, Articles, Books, Video, Audio, Free / Newsletter, and Contact. Below the navigation menu are social media icons for Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube. The main content area features an article titled 'China's Hidden Economic Time Bomb' by F. William Engdahl, dated 22 October 2019. The article includes a small image of a man and a credit line: 'Image credit: ACasualPenguin - Simplified Potaboy License <https://bit.ly/2T8pTG>'. The article text begins with 'The China government statistical agency just released economic data showing the poorest GDP growth'.

Washington's Atlantic Council

In June 1961 the US initiated a dramatic escalation of the Cold War by placing Jupiter Intermediate Range Ballistic Missiles (IRBM) in NATO-member Turkey, along with Jupiter nuclear missiles deployed to Italy as well as Thor IRBMs to the UK--all nuclear missiles, placed within striking distance of Moscow. Six weeks later, the Communist regime in East Germany began construction of the Berlin Wall that was to divide East and West Berlin for almost three decades until November 9, 1989.

What few were told was that the highly provocative forward-stationing of US nuclear missiles within minutes of Moscow was the true reason that Khrushchev some months later negotiated stationing of Soviet nuclear missiles in Cuba some 90 miles from Miami. Cuba was a response to NATO.

Founding a NATO think-tank lobby

It was in that year, 1961 that leading Cold War circles in Washington founded a new think-tank, the Atlantic Council, to as they put it, "promote constructive US leadership and engagement in international affairs based on the central role of the Atlantic community..." In plain English, to provide a vehicle to make certain that Western Europe follows US global policies even if US military policies risked a global nuclear war.

The nature of the Atlantic Council was clear from its very creation by an elite circle of the Cold War US foreign policy establishment. The founders were

mainly part of the Rockefeller faction which had emerged after 1945 as the unchallenged leaders of Washington global economic and military policies.

The person of John J. McCloy was suggestive of the central, clear Rockefeller influence on US policies after the War. McCloy, a Wall Street lawyer, became the first High Commissioner for Germany. In that role he was responsible for the pardon of convicted war criminals Friederich Flick, Alfried Krupp, and SS *Standartenführer*, Martin Sandberger, commander of *Sonderkommando* 1a of the *Einsatzgruppe*, and of the *Sicherheitspolizei* in Estonia who had been sentenced to death for his role in the mass murder of the Jews in the Baltic states. McCloy was later made chairman of the Rockefellers' Chase Bank and of the Rockefeller-financed New York Council on Foreign Relations. He had been in the Rockefeller circle since he was a student at Harvard with David Rockefeller. Henry A. Kissinger was brought into the Rockefellers' inner circle by McCloy. ⁱ

The persons responsible for creating the Atlantic Council in 1961 were part of those Cold War Rockefeller circles. They included former Secretary of State Dean Acheson, who was described as the "architect" of the Cold War. Acheson convinced President Truman to send US troops to Korea and he shaped NATO as a US-controlled military force. Council founders also included Christian Herter, Eisenhower's last Secretary of State, who had been one of the founders of the Council on Foreign Relations in 1919.

William L. Clayton--who had been Assistant Secretary of the State Department and served in 1940 as Deputy Coordinator of Inter-American Affairs under Nelson A. Rockefeller—was to play a leading role in the new Atlantic Council. As well, William C. Foster, former Administrator of the Economic Cooperation Administration under Truman, responsible for the distribution of Marshall Plan

aid that opened Western Europe to US multinationals such as Mobil and Esso Oil of the Rockefeller group. Foster was later Deputy Secretary of Defense. ⁱⁱ

The initiator of the idea to create the Atlantic Council was Theodore C. Achilles, a leading CFR member and a Bilderberg regular who had headed a CIA secret Task Force under Eisenhower to prepare the Bay of Pigs invasion of Cuba in 1961 that turned into an utter fiasco. As newly-inaugurated President, John F. Kennedy had been deliberately kept uninformed of the plans by Republican CIA head Allen Dulles. Achilles had also played a decisive role in drafting what became the NATO Treaty of 1949. ⁱⁱⁱ

With such a heritage, it was no surprise that the Atlantic Council over the decades had become a central organ of pushing a militarist pro-NATO policy on Europe, even after the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact and collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, a period when many believed NATO no longer had reason to exist.

Military advocacy today

Since the beginning of the new century, after September 11, 2001, US policy elites around the Rockefellers and their junior partners, the Bush dynasty, clearly shifted the focus of US foreign policy. The days of the financial domination of the dollar were in deep decline after the collapse of the Wall Street dot.com stock bubble in March 2000. The major banks were in deep crisis. In that situation, the leading American Oligarchs made a clear decision to use America's unequalled military might as the leading edge of continuing American global supremacy, to use the words of Rockefeller friend, Zbigniew Brzezinski.

The attacks of September 11 provided the new Administration of President George W. Bush the pretext to shift Americans from a focus on financial good times to necessity for wartime sacrifice for the declared War on Terror. The Atlantic Council with its considerable network of influential political voices, beat the drum role for every USA military action since the ill-fated US invasion of Afghanistan and Iraq in 2001-2003.

On economics the Atlantic Council is a major backer of the Rockefeller agenda of free trade, including the destructive Trans-Atlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP), Washington's proposed free trade agreement between the European Union and the United States that would in effect create a multinational corporative domination immune from EU or German national laws, a form of corporate dictatorship over-riding the sovereignty of national elected governments in favor of dubious claims of trade benefit.

Most recently, the Atlantic Council has played a decisive role in the mainstream media one-sided coverage of the US-instigated right-wing coup d'état in Ukraine and in the new demonization of Russia that has led to destructive EU sanctions against Russia that pushed the Germany economy to the brink of recession by early 2015.

Follow the money

To understand what the Atlantic Council represents today and to explain their consistent support for a de facto Washington imperialist agenda, it was only necessary to follow the money that funds their think-tank activities.

According to their website, as of January 2015, the Atlantic Council was financially supported by the USA Pentagon and USA intelligence community.

While they refuse to say amounts, they acknowledge it receives financial support from the US Department of the Air Force; US Department of the Army; US Department of the Navy; US National Intelligence Council. As well the US State Department and Energy Department contribute to the Council. As well, NATO itself is a financial supporter. For such a pro-US think-tank, it is notable that it also takes donations from foreign governmental bodies including the EU Commission.^{iv} Of course Brussels would never mention to Europe's citizens that their taxpayer dollars were going to support a Washington propaganda lobby.

In addition to government funding, the Atlantic Council admits to receiving money from an array of corporate sponsors that includes the world's largest military industries. The list includes Lockheed Martin, Boeing, Northrup Grumman, Raytheon, Textron, leading helicopter and drone producer. Notably, the Council's financial donors also include the German arms maker Krauss-Maffei Wegmann and Airbus Group.

An indication of its true orientation as no longer a German bank representing German interests but, especially since the assassination of Alfred Herrhausen in November, 1989, part of the Anglo-American "establishment," Deutsche Bank is listed as one of the largest contributors to the Atlantic Council, a member of their elite Global Leadership Circle.^v

Other major financial supporters of the Atlantic Council include the global media groups, Thompson Reuters, Bloomberg, L.P.. It includes major tax-free foundations including Germany's Bertelsmann Foundation of the huge Bertelsmann publishing empire; the Carnegie Corporation of New York, the MacArthur Foundation, the Rockefeller Brothers Fund, Rockefeller & Co., and the Smith Richardson Foundation. The Smith Richardson Foundation, from the fortune of *Vicks Vaporub*, was one of the major funders of the Washington

neo-conservative warhawk think tanks that were behind the aggressive military policies of the Bush Administration as well as the neo-conservative policies of President Obama, especially in Syria, Libya and Ukraine. ^{vi}

Those in Charge

The Board of Directors of the Atlantic Council reads like a Who's Who of Washington war politics of the past four decades. The board includes such infamous names as Henry Kissinger and former National Security Adviser and member of the strategic consultancy Kissinger Associates, Brent Scowcroft, who heads the Council's International Advisory Board. The former chairman of the Board until he was named Obama's Defense Secretary was Senator Chuck Hagel. Past Board chairmen included NATO Supreme Allied Commanders for Europe, General Andrew J. Goodpaster and General Lauris Norstad. ^{vii}

It includes Richard Armitage, former Deputy Secretary of State under George W. Bush; former US Ambassador to Germany Richard Burt who now is tied to the neo-conservative CSIS in Washington and to Textron. It includes former NATO Europe commander General Wesley Clark; General James L. Jones; General Colin Powell who was Bush Secretary of State during the 2003 Iraq invasion; neo-conservative architect of the Afghan and Iraq wars under Bush, Zalmay M. Khalilzad; Bush Under Secretary of Defense, Dov S. Zakheim, part of the Project for the New American Century that laid out a strategy in 2000 for a war against Saddam Hussein well before September 11, 2001. ^{viii}

In sum, the Atlantic Council is one of the most influential and least known policy think-tanks for a Washington global military power projection or what the Pentagon calls Full Spectrum Dominance.

Another highly influential Washington think-tank that has had particularly disproportionate influence on Berlin politics of the Federal Republic is the Aspen Institute, where what is termed by some “soft power” is the velvet glove hiding the mailed fist of a Washington global agenda gone awry.

Endnotes:

ⁱ Wikipedia, Martin Sandberger, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Martin_Sandberger

ⁱⁱ Atlantic Council website, History, <http://www.atlanticcouncil.org/about/history>

ⁱⁱⁱ Ibid.

^{iv} Atlantic Council Website, Supporters, <http://www.atlanticcouncil.org/support/supporters>

^v Ibid.

^{vi} Ibid.

^{vii} Atlantic Council Board of Directors, January 6, 2015, Atlantic Council Board Directors
<http://www.atlanticcouncil.org/about/board-of-directors>

^{viii} Ibid.