

Inventing an Iranian Threat

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Region: [Middle East & North Africa](#)

Theme: [Media Disinformation](#)

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Iran threatens no one. Western and Israeli leaders know it. So do over 100 Non-Aligned Movement countries coming to Tehran. They'll be there from August 26 - 31. They'll participate in NAM's 16th summit.

Their presence endorses Iran's legitimacy, extends support, shows disapproval of Western hostility and belligerence, and confers prestige when Tehran most needs it.

Washington and Israel target the Islamic Republic relentlessly. Longstanding war plans await implementation. The mainstream Media and right-wing think tanks support it.

The [Jewish Institute for National Security Affairs \(JINSA\)](#) calls itself "the most influential group on the issue of US-Israel military relations."

It "advocate(s) on behalf of a strong U.S. military, a robust national security policy and a strong U.S. security relationship with Israel and other like-minded democracies."

It supports Israeli lawlessness, its regional dominance plans, and belligerence directed at Palestinians and other regional enemies.

Founded in 1976, it seeks full Washington support. It wants both countries in lockstep on policy. It's connected to military/industrial officials in both countries.

In January, the [Jewish Daily Forward](#) headlined "JINSA Leadership in Flux After Ouster," saying:

Firing former executive director Shosana Bryen rankled other members. In protest, neocon stalwarts James Woolsey, Richard Perle, and Michael Ledeen quit Jinsa's advisory board.

The Forward attributed what happened to "a messy transformation of power in the group's top ranks and a struggle to maintain relevance and funding at a time of shrinking budgets and growing competition from other Jewish causes."

Also at issue is a crowded neocon establishment. Organizations vie for influence, credibility, preeminence and funding. Having former high-level officials as board members and/or advisors is key. So are wealthy individuals and others connected to well-endowed right-wing foundations.

Jinsa won't likely run out of influential members who matter. David Steinmann co-chairs its Board of Advisors. He formerly headed the right-wing William Rosenwald Family Organization. He's closely connected to Israeli Lobby, defense, and other corporate interests.

Co-chair David Justman is a JP Morgan managing director and wealth management advisor. Vice chairman Morris Amitay formerly served as AIPAC's executive director. He also founded the Washington Political Action Committee. Like Jinsa, it's hawkishly pro-Israeli.

Board of Advisors members include numerous retired generals and admirals. It's also stacked with pro-Israeli right-wing ideologues. Jinsa has no shortage of key people representing Israeli interests. Often they're at odds with America's.

Stephen Walt and John Mearsheimer include Jinsa among other influential groups comprising the Israeli Lobby's think tank arm. Its agenda supplements AIPAC. The American Israel Public Affairs Committee focuses on influencing administration and congressional policies.

Jinsa works on military issues, ties between Pentagon and IDF officials, and America's military/industrial complex.

Post-9/11 Jinsa and like-minded groups called for expanding Washington's military response. It argued for war on Iraq.

It now wants war on Iran. On July 16, it headlined ["Iran Sanctions Are Dangerously Ineffective,"](#) saying:

Iranian leaders believe they can ride out sanctions and wait for "the world (to) line up to purchase their oil once Iran's status as a nuclear power is secure."

It still has substantial oil income. Its monetary and gold reserves are large. Nothing in place will change policy. Sanctions "are a short-term tactic doomed to failure in the foreseeable future."

Cyber attacks, propaganda, assassinating Iranian nuclear scientists, negotiations, and other actions may slow but won't resolve much. In the meantime, Iran buys "time to enrich more uranium."

Jinsa calls Tehran's "pursuit of nuclear weapons (a) strategic imperative" despite no evidence whatever proving it. It further "believes that defiance in the face of western sanctions is yet another reason for the greater Islamic world to emulate (its) revolutionary example."

Instead of current policies, it advocates discarding containment notions, expanding ties to regional states, increasing the Pentagon's Middle East footprint, and promoting a regional alliance against Iran going nuclear.

Jinsa's punchline came last, saying:

"Prepare to use military force at the optimal time regardless of elections or other political considerations, recognizing that the credible threat of force is the best insurance that measures short of war will have the greatest opportunity for success."

Like Jinsa, the [American Enterprise Institute \(AEI\)](#) wields enormous public policy influence. Founded in 1943, it promotes "free enterprise, a strong defense centered on smart international relations, and opportunity" for dominant segments of US society to gain added wealth and power.

It's connected to the American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC). [Sourcewatch](#) calls it "a corporate bill mill. (Its) not just a lobby or front group. (It's) much more powerful than that."

Corporations use ALEC strategically. They promote legislation benefitting their bottom line. They write laws behind closed doors. Doing so harms popular interests.

In the 1970s, AEI gained major national prominence. It grew from 12 resident "thinkers" to 145 resident scholars, 80 adjunct ones, and considerable support staff.

Ronald Reagan called AEI "a revolution in ideas of which I, too, have been a part. (Its) remarkably distinguished body of work is testimony to the triumph of the think tank. For today the most important American scholarship comes out of our think tanks – and none has been more influential than the American Enterprise Institute."

Post-9/11, AEI was one of the Bush administration's leading foreign policy architects. It was influential in promoting regime change through war on Iraq.

George Bush addressed AEI three times. He expressed admiration, saying he "consistently borrow(ed) some of (its) best people." Over 20 AEI scholars were administration members.

In June 2003, AEI and the Federalist Society for Law and Public Policy Studies founded NGO

Watch. It's a militantly pro-Israeli front group. It spurns truth, equity and justice. When Israel wants war, it champions it.

Corporate CEOs and other top officials comprise AEI's Board of Trustees. Dick Cheney is one of its prominent members. Scholars include Newt Gingrich, Paul Wolfowitz, John Bolton, John Yoo, Richard Perle, Phil Gramm, Larry Lindsey, Glenn Hubbard, Charles Murray, Roger Noreiga, and Lynne Cheney.

AEI powerfully advances Washington's imperial agenda. Currently it's hawkish on Syria and Iran. It supports regime change in both countries. It's not shy about promoting war.

Maseh Zarif is AEI's "Critical Threats Project" research manager. On August 22, he headlined ["Iran's military complex at Parchin and the nuclear connection,"](#) saying:

"Iran's nuclear weapons program poses a serious threat to American national security interests. Iran has been working to develop the key components of a nuclear weapons capability for decades – covertly when it can and openly when exposed – in contravention of nuclear nonproliferation pacts it has signed and international obligations it is required to meet."

"The regime has waged an intensive denial-and-deception campaign intended to facilitate the development of critical technologies and infrastructure and, ultimately, the fulfillment of its nuclear ambitions."

Zarif tried inventing reality and failed. No evidence whatever suggests an Iranian nuclear weapons program. Israeli, Washington, and other Western officials know it. So do AEI scholars. Perhaps Zarif should consult them.

Nonetheless, he persists in saying Iran "advanced along three interrelated, parallel tracks: acquiring fissile material, weaponization and bomb design, and delivery vehicle development."

Panchin, he claims, conducts nuclear weapons-related experiments. His accusations are spurious. Evidence is absent. Rhetoric substitutes for reality. Zarif's credibility is sorely lacking.

He's advancing the ball for war. So do other AEI scholars and trustees. They prioritize imperial dominance. Ravaging the world one country at a time is their way to get it. Jinsa and other hard-right groups concur. Societies they endorse aren't fit to live in.

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His new book is titled "How Wall Street Fleeces America: Privatized Banking, Government Collusion and Class War"

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