

John McCain's Chilling Project for America

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John McCain has long been a major player in a radical militaristic group driven by an ideology of global expansionism and dominance attained through perpetual, pre-emptive, unilateral, multiple wars. The credo of this group is “the end justifies the means,” and the end of establishing the United States as the world’s sole superpower justifies, in its estimation, anything from military control over the information on the Internet to the use of genocidal biological weapons. Over its two terms, the George W. Bush administration has planted the seeds for this geopolitical master plan, and now appears to be counting on the McCain administration, if one comes to power, to nurture it.

The Road Map to War

The blueprint for this “new order” was drafted in February 1992, at the end of the George H.W. Bush administration when Defense Department staffers Paul Wolfowitz, I. Lewis Libby and Zalmay Khalilzad, acting under then-Secretary of Defense Dick Cheney, drafted the Defense Planning Guidance (DPG). This document, also known as the “Wolfowitz Doctrine,” was an unofficial, internal document that advocated massive increases in defense spending for purposes of strategic proliferation and buildup of the military in order to establish the pre-eminence of the United States as the world’s sole superpower. Advocating pre-emptive attacks with nuclear, chemical or biological weapons, it proclaimed that “the U.S. must show the leadership necessary to establish and protect a new order that holds the promise of convincing potential competitors that they need not aspire to a greater role or pursue a more aggressive posture to protect their legitimate interests.” The document was also quite clear about what should be the United States’ main objective in the Middle East, especially with regard to Iraq and Iran, which was to “remain the predominant outside power in the region and preserve U.S. and Western access to the region’s oil.” The Wolfowitz Doctrine was leaked to The New York Times and The Washington Post, which published excerpts from it. Amid a public outcry, President George H.W. Bush retracted the document, and it was substantially revised.

The original mission of the Wolfowitz Doctrine was not lost, however. In 1997, William Kristol and Robert Kagan founded The Project for the New American Century (PNAC), a nongovernment political action organization that sought to develop and advocate for the militant, geopolitical tenets contained in the Wolfowitz Doctrine. PNAC’s original members included Wolfowitz, Cheney, Khalilzad, Libby, John Bolton, Elliott Abrams, Donald Rumsfeld, William J. Bennett, and other soon-to-be high officers in the Bush administration.

McCain's Ties to PNAC

John McCain’s connection to PNAC can be traced back to before its formation in 1997. In fact, he was president of the New Citizenship Project, founded by Kristol in 1994. This

organization was parent to PNAC, and served as its chief fundraising organ.

McCain also worked cooperatively with PNAC and Wolfowitz in attempting to overthrow the Saddam Hussein regime in Iraq. In 1998, he co-sponsored the Iraq Liberation Act—drafted by PNAC—which decreed “regime change” in Iraq to be U.S. policy, and which appropriated \$97 million in U.S. military aid to the Iraqi National Congress (INC). The INC was a group of anti-Hussein Iraqi militants whose purpose was to instigate a national uprising against Hussein. It was led by Ahmed Chalabi, the Iraqi informant whose subsequent faulty intelligence—claims that Saddam had weapons of mass destruction and ties to al-Qaida—was used to sell the Iraq war to the American public. In 2004, in response to accusations that he deliberately misled U.S. intelligence agencies, Chalabi glibly stated, “We are heroes in error.”

McCain also was co-chair (with Sen. Joseph Lieberman) of The Committee for the Liberation of Iraq (CLI). Established by PNAC in late 2002, this committee continued to finance Chalabi’s INC with millions of taxpayer dollars, until shortly after the U.S. invasion of Iraq in 2003, when it was discontinued. In 2004, McCain became a signatory of PNAC, ironically signing on to a PNAC letter condemning Russian President Vladimir Putin’s foreign policy for its return to the “rhetoric of militarism and empire.”

McCain has accordingly been a foot soldier for PNAC from its inception, and, although this organization is no longer in existence, its ideology and its signatories (many of whom now serve as advisers to the McCain presidential campaign) are still very much active.

The Master Plan

In September 2000, prior to the presidential election that year, PNAC carefully formulated its chief tenets in a document called Rebuilding America’s Defenses (RAD). This document, which was intended to guide the incoming administration, had a substantial influence on the policies set by the Bush administration and is likely to do the same for a McCain administration if McCain becomes president. Here are some of the recommendations of the RAD report:

Fighting and winning multiple, simultaneous major wars

Among its core missions was the rebuilding of America’s defenses sufficient to “fight and decisively win multiple, simultaneous major theater wars.” And it explicitly advocated sending troops into Iraq regardless of whether Saddam Hussein was in power. According to RAD, “While the unresolved conflict with Iraq provides the immediate justification, the need for a substantial American force presence in the Gulf transcends the issue of the regime of Saddam Hussein.”

The RAD report also admonished, “Iran may well prove as large a threat to U.S. interests in the Gulf as Iraq has. And even should U.S.-Iranian relations improve, retaining forward-based forces in the region would still be an essential element in U.S. security strategy given the longstanding American interests in the region.” Therefore, it had both Iraq and Iran in its sight as zones of multiple, simultaneous major wars for purposes of advancing “longstanding American interests in the region”—in particular, its oil.

McCain’s recent chanting of “bomb, bomb, bomb; bomb, bomb Iran” to the beat of an old Beach Boys tune, his suggestion that the war with Iraq might last 100 years and his recent

statement that the war in Afghanistan might also last 100 years—all of these pronouncements are clearly in concert with the PNAC mission to “fight and decisively win multiple, simultaneous major theater wars.”

RAD also stressed the need to have additional forces equipped to handle ongoing “constabulary” duties such as enforcement of no-fly zones and other operations that fell short of full theater wars. It claimed that unless the military was so equipped, its ability to fight and win multiple, simultaneous wars would be impaired. Along these same lines, McCain has recently stated, “It’s time to end the disingenuous practice of stating that we have a two-war strategy when we are paying for only a one-war military. Either we must change our strategy—and accept the risks—or we must properly fund and structure our military.”

Designing and deploying global missile defense systems

RAD also emphasized, as an additional core value, the need to “transform U.S. forces to exploit the ‘revolution in military affairs.’ ” This included the design and deployment of a global ballistic missile defense system consisting of land-, sea-, air- and space-based components said to be capable of shielding the U.S. and its allies from “limited strikes” in the future by “rogue” nations such as Iraq, North Korea and Iran.

Along these lines, McCain has maintained that a ballistic missile defense system was “indispensable”—even if this meant reneging on the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty of 1972 at the expense of angering the Russians. Unfortunately, while RAD acknowledged the “limited” efficacy of such a weapons system (presumably because it cannot realistically provide a bulletproof shield, especially against large-scale missile attacks), neither it nor McCain addressed the problem that deployment of such a system could be destabilizing: It could encourage escalation, instead of de-escalation, of ballistic missile arsenals by nations that fear becoming sitting ducks, and might even provoke a pre-emptive strike. Further, there is still the question of whether the creation of such costly, national defense shields is even technologically feasible.

The use of genocidal biological warfare for political expediency

Not only did RAD advocate the design and deployment of defensive weaponry, it also stressed the updating of conventional offensive weapons including cruise missiles along with stealthy strike aircraft and longer-range Air Force strike aircraft. But it went further in its offensive posture by envisioning and supporting the use of genotype-specific biological warfare. According to RAD, “... advanced forms of biological warfare that can ‘target’ specific genotypes may transform biological warfare from the realm of terror to a politically useful tool.” In this chilling statement, a double standard is evident. In the hands of al-Qaida, such genocidal weapons would belong to “the realm of terror,” but in those of the U.S., they would be “politically useful tools.”

Rejection of the United Nations

PNAC’s double standard is also inherent in its rejection of the idea of a cooperative, neutral effort among the nations of the world to address world problems, including the problem of Iraq. “Nor can the United States assume a UN-like stance of neutrality,” states the RAD report. “The preponderance of American power is so great and its global interests so wide that it cannot pretend to be indifferent to the political outcome in the Balkans, the Persian

Gulf or even when it deploys forces in Africa. Finally, these missions demand forces basically configured for combat.” Accordingly, a McCain administration founded on a PNAC platform of self-interested exercise of force would oppose giving the United Nations any central role in setting and implementing foreign affairs policy.

Control of space and cyberspace

PNAC’s quest for global domination transcends any literal meaning of the geopolitical, and extends also to the control, rather than the sharing, of outer space. It also has serious implications for cyber freedom. Thus the RAD report states, “Much as control of the high seas—and the protection of international commerce—defined global powers in the past, so will control of the new ‘international commons’ be a key to world power in the future. An America incapable of protecting its interests or that of its allies in space or the ‘infosphere’ will find it difficult to exert global political leadership. ... Access to and use of cyberspace and the Internet are emerging elements in global commerce, politics and power. Any nation wishing to assert itself globally must take account of this other new ‘global commons.’ ”

There is a difference between protecting the Internet from a cyber attack and controlling it. The former is defensive while the latter is offensive. But RAD also advocated going on the offensive. It stated that “an offensive capability could offer America’s military and political leaders an invaluable tool in disabling an adversary in a decisive manner.”

However, state control of cyberspace for political purposes can have serious implications for the Fourth Amendment right to privacy. The Bush administration has already engaged in mass illegal spying on the phone and e-mail messages of millions of Americans through its National Security Agency (NSA) surveillance program. As a result of copying these messages and depositing them into an NSA computer database, it began to assemble a massive “Total Information Awareness” computer network. The FBI has also begun to develop and integrate such personal data with a biometric database that includes digital iris prints and facial images. Combine this with other computerized databases including credit card information, banking records and health files, and the result is an incredible ability to exercise power and control over anyone deemed by a political leader to be an “adversary”—including journalists, political opponents and others who might not see eye to eye with the administration.

In concert with the PNAC mission of control over cyberspace, McCain has supported making warrantless spying on American citizens legal. When asked if he believed that Bush’s warrantless surveillance program was legal, McCain responded, “You know, I don’t think so, but why not come to Congress? We can sort this out. ... I think they will get that authority, whatever is reasonable and needed, and increased abilities to monitor communications are clearly in order.”

Consistent with his conviction that such extended powers should be granted to the president, McCain has also recently voted for Senate Bill S.2248, which vacates substantial civil liberties protections included in the 1978 Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act (FISA). In contrast to the 1978 FISA, S.2248 would allow the president, acting through the attorney general, to spy on the phone and e-mail communications of Americans without individual court warrants or the need to judicially show probable cause.

Despite the fact that McCain has said that Bush’s NSA spying program was not legal, he has also supported granting retroactive legal immunity to the telecommunication companies

(such as AT&T and Verizon) that helped Bush illegally spy on millions of Americans. This means that he has openly admitted that the Bush administration acted unlawfully in eavesdropping on Americans' phone and e-mail messages, while at the same time opted for taking away their legal right to redress this violation. And this unequivocally means that McCain is prepared to allow executive authority to trump the rule of law.

Meet the McCain Team

Given John McCain's firm allegiance to the core missions of PNAC, it should come as no surprise that many of the old PNAC guard have shown up as foreign policy advisers in McCain's current presidential campaign, and are likely re-emerge as high officials in his administration if he becomes president. Here are snapshots of some of these potential members of a McCain Cabinet, giving their PNAC profiles, their advisory capacities in the McCain 2008 presidential campaign, and their politics.

William Kristol

Editor and founder of Washington-based political magazine, Weekly Standard.

PNAC co-founder.

Foreign policy adviser.

Has consistently been wrong in his foreign policy analyses regarding Iraq. For example, on March 5, 2003, he stated, "I think we'll be vindicated when we discover the weapons of mass destruction and when we liberate the people of Iraq."

Robert Kagan

Served in State Department in Reagan administration on Policy Planning Staff.

PNAC co-founder.

Foreign policy adviser.

Has defended global expansionism by claiming it is an American tradition: "Americans' belief in the possibility of global transformation—the 'messianic' impulse—is and always has been the more dominant strain in the nation's character."

Randy Scheunemann

Former adviser to Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld.

Co-director and executive director of Committee for Liberation of Iraq.

Defense and foreign policy coordinator.

With regard to recent National Intelligence Estimate finding that Iran discontinued its nuclear weapons program in 2003, stated "a careful reading of the NIE indicates that it is misleading." And he claimed that the NIE harmed our efforts to achieve a "greater diplomatic consensus" to crack down on Iran.

James Woolsey

Director of CIA, Clinton administration, 1993-1995. (Reported to have met only twice with Clinton during time as CIA chief.)

PNAC signatory.

Energy and national security adviser.

Speaking to a group of college students in 2003 about Iraq, he stated that "... the United States is engaged in World War IV." Described the Cold War as the third world war. Then said, "This fourth world war, I think, will last considerably longer than either World Wars I or II did for us. Hopefully not the full four-plus decades of the Cold War."

John R. Bolton

Former U.S. ambassador to U.N. (Nomination to U.N. rejected by Senate, but George W. Bush put him in place on a recess appointment. Name floated for possible secretary of state for McCain.

PNAC director.

Ardent supporter of McCain for president in 2009.

Publicly derided the United Nations: In 1994, he stated “there is no United Nations. There is an international community that occasionally can be led by the only real power left in the world, and that’s the United States, when it suits our interest, and when we can get others to go along.” Advocates attacking Iran.

Robert B. Zollick

President, World Bank.

PNAC signatory.

Announced in 2006 he would be joining McCain presidential campaign for domestic and foreign policy but instead replaced Wolfowitz as president of World Bank in 2007.

Has touted virtues of corporate globalization under the rubric of “comprehensive free trade.” But as Kevin Watkins, head researcher for Oxfam, stated, he pays no heed to the effects of the “blind pursuit of US economic and corporate special interests” on the world’s poor.

Gary Schmitt

American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research (home to other PNAC members including Wolfowitz and Pearle.)

PNAC director.

Foreign policy adviser.

Defended warrantless eavesdropping on Americans by claiming that Constitution “created a unitary chief executive. That chief executive could, in times of war or emergency, act with the decisiveness, dispatch and, yes, secrecy, needed to protect the country and its citizens.”

Richard L. Armitage

Former deputy secretary of state in George W. Bush administration.

PNAC signatory.

Foreign policy adviser.

By his own admission, was responsible for leaking CIA agent Valerie Plame’s CIA identity to the press. Allegedly involved in Iran-Contra affair during Reagan administration.

Max Boot

Council on Foreign Relations.

PNAC signatory.

Foreign policy adviser.

Stating that U.S. should “unambiguously ... embrace its imperial role,” has advocated attacking other Middle East countries in addition to Iraq and Iran, including Syria. Said McCain’s “bellicose aura” could “scare the snot out of our enemies,” who “would be more afraid to mess with him” than with other then-potential presidential candidates.

Henry A. Kissinger

President Nixon’s secretary of state.

Embraces expansionist power politics.

Consultant.

Played major role in secret bombings of Cambodia during Nixon administration as well as having had alleged involvement in covert assassination plots and human rights violations in

Latin America.

What's in Store for Us if McCain Becomes President

That McCain has surrounded himself with such like-minded advisers who support the narrow PNAC agenda speaks to his unwillingness to hear and consider alternative perspectives. In fact, six out of 10 civilian foreign advisers to McCain are PNAC veterans. Even the newly appointed deputy communications director of the McCain campaign, Michael Goldfard, has been a research associate for PNAC. A die-hard adherent of the “unitary authority” of the chief executive, he recently stated that the framers of the United States Constitution advocated an “executive with near dictatorial power in pursuing foreign policy and war.”

Add to this list other major PNAC figures such as Paul Wolfowitz, Richard Pearle, Zalmay Khalilzad, and Dick Cheney who would probably play a significant role in a McCain administration and it is clear in what direction this nation would be moving.

A McCain administration would be likely to:

- Invest incredible amounts of money in sustaining multiple, simultaneous wars overseas at the expense of neglecting pressing concerns at home, including the economy, health care, the environment and education.
- Stockpile nuclear weapons, while seeking to prohibit its adversaries from having them.
- Attempt to shield the U.S. with a multilayered missile defense system based on land, at sea, in the air and in space, while demanding that nations that are not its allies become sitting ducks.
- Strive to develop more potent chemical and biological weapons—not to mention the genotype-specific variety, while at the same time claiming to be fighting a “war on terror.”
- Legalize “Total Information Awareness”—going through all Americans’ phone calls, e-mail messages and other personal records without needing probable cause.
- Take control of the Internet, globally using it as an offensive political weapon—while claiming to be spreading democracy throughout the world.
- Dispense with checks and balances in favor of the “unitary executive authority” of the president.
- Alienate nations that refuse to join our war coalitions.
- Deny that there is (or can be) a United Nations.

A McCain administration would rule by fear, perceive right in terms of military might and subscribe to the idea of “do as I say and not as I do.” As a consequence, instead of rebuilding the image of America as a model of justice and civility, it would further sully respect for this nation throughout the world.

Elliot D. Cohen, Ph.D., is a political analyst and media critic. His most recent book is “The Last Days of Democracy: How Big Media and Power-Hungry Government Are Turning

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