

INTELLIGENCE DOSSIER

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OPEN SOURCE INTELLIGENCE (OSINT)

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SUBJECT: PNAC (PROJECT FOR NEW AME...

UNCLASSIFIED // OPEN SOURCE INTELLIGENCE REPORT

OPERATION TITLE: "PNAC (PROJECT FOR NEW AMERICAN CENTURY) ASSESSMENT"

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY (BLUF)

The Project for the New American Century (PNAC) was a prominent neoconservative think tank active from 1997 to 2006, co-founded by William Kristol and Robert Kagan. Its primary mission was to advocate for robust American global leadership through military strength and assertive foreign policy, often described as "Reaganite". PNAC gained significant attention for its "Statement of Principles" and its seminal 2000 report, "Rebuilding America's Defenses," which outlined a strategy for maintaining U.S. military preeminence and the capacity to engage in multiple major theater wars globally.

PNAC's influence peaked with the George W. Bush administration, where many of its signatories and associates, including Dick Cheney, Donald Rumsfeld, and Paul Wolfowitz, held high-level positions. The organization was a vocal proponent of regime change in Iraq, advocating for the removal of Saddam

Hussein even before the September 11, 2001 attacks. Following 9/11, PNAC intensified its calls for military intervention in Iraq, suggesting that a "catastrophic and catalyzing event—like a new Pearl Harbor" would expedite the transformation of U.S. military posture, a statement that drew considerable scrutiny post-9/11.

While PNAC itself dissolved in 2006, its ideas and many of its key figures continued their advocacy through successor organizations like the Foreign Policy Initiative (2009–2017). The legacy of PNAC is largely associated with the intellectual groundwork laid for the 2003 Iraq War and the broader neoconservative foreign policy agenda of the early 21st century.

THREAT LEVEL: LOW (HISTORICAL ENTITY) // MEDIUM (LEGACY & IDEOLOGICAL INFLUENCE)

PNAC itself is defunct. Therefore, the direct threat from the organization is assessed as LOW. However, its historical influence on the initiation and conduct of significant military conflicts, coupled with the continued activity of many of its former members in shaping foreign policy discourse, warrants a MEDIUM assessment for its ongoing ideological legacy and potential indirect impact on geopolitical stability and conflict rhetoric.

IDENTITY & VERIFICATION

- **Official Name:**

The Project for the New American Century (PNAC)

- **Aliases & Successor Entities:**

- Foreign Policy Initiative (FPI) - co-founded by Kristol and Kagan in 2009, dissolved in 2017.
- "PNAC 2.0" - informal term used to refer to FPI.

- **Nature of Entity:**

Neoconservative public policy think tank; non-profit educational organization.

- **Operational Period:**

Established in 1997, largely inactive by late 2005, and formally ceased operations in 2006.

- **Founders:**

- William Kristol (Chairman)
- Robert Kagan (Director)

- **Key Personnel & Affiliations:**

Of the twenty-five original signatories to PNAC's founding "Statement of Principles," ten subsequently served in the administration of U.S. President George W. Bush. Notable figures included:

- Dick Cheney (Vice President under George W. Bush)
- Donald Rumsfeld (Secretary of Defense under George W. Bush)
- Paul Wolfowitz (Deputy Secretary of Defense under George W. Bush)
- John R. Bolton (U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations, Undersecretary for Arms Control and International Security)
- Elliott Abrams (National Security Council advisor on the Middle East)
- Richard Perle (Chairman of the Defense Policy Board)
- Jeb Bush (Governor of Florida)
- I. Lewis "Scooter" Libby (Chief of Staff to Vice President Dick Cheney)
- Zalmay Khalilzad (Ambassador to Afghanistan/Iraq)
- Gary Schmitt (Executive Director)
- Charles Krauthammer (Columnist)

- **Location:**

Washington, D.C., U.S.A..

HUMAN RIGHTS & LEGAL COMPLIANCE AUDIT

As a think tank, PNAC itself did not directly engage in human rights abuses or violations of International Humanitarian Law (IHL). However, its

published policy recommendations and advocacy efforts had significant implications for international law and human rights, particularly concerning the use of military force and regime change.

- **Advocacy for Preemptive Military Action:**

PNAC consistently advocated for an assertive U.S. foreign policy that included preemptive military action and regime change, most notably in Iraq. Its January 1998 letter to President Clinton urged the "removal of Saddam Hussein's regime from power". After the 9/11 attacks, PNAC sent a letter to President George W. Bush explicitly advocating for "a determined effort to remove Saddam Hussein from power in Iraq," even without evidence linking Iraq to the attacks. Such advocacy contributed to the political climate that led to the 2003 invasion of Iraq, a conflict with immense human cost and long-term destabilization effects in the region.

- **"Pax Americana Unrestrained by International Law":**

Academic observers have noted that PNAC's ideology, as summarized in its "Rebuilding America's Defenses" report, advocated a "global Pax Americana unrestrained by international law". This perspective, if adopted in policy, could undermine multilateral frameworks and legal norms designed to prevent conflict and protect civilians.

- **Impact on Civilian Populations:**

While PNAC did not execute military operations, its robust support for military interventions and regime change, particularly in the Middle East, contributed to policy decisions that resulted in protracted conflicts. These conflicts led to significant civilian casualties, displacement, and widespread human suffering, raising concerns about the indirect impact of its advocacy on IHL and human rights.

FINANCIAL FORENSIC ANALYSIS

PNAC operated as a non-profit educational organization (501c3), functioning as an initiative of the New Citizenship Project. Publicly available

information indicates its funding structure was primarily through grants from conservative foundations.

- **Funding Sources:**

Between 2000 and 2003, PNAC received approximately \$170,000 in grants from several conservative foundations. These included the Earhart Foundation, the Olin Foundation, and the William J. Donner Foundation.

- **Financial Illicit Networks:**

No open-source intelligence suggests that PNAC was involved in financial illicit networks, hidden assets, or shell companies. Its operations and funding appear to align with those of a legitimate, albeit politically influential, think tank in the United States.

WARMONGERING & CONFLICT MITIGATION ANALYSIS

PNAC's core agenda was centered on promoting a highly interventionist and militaristic U.S. foreign policy, which has been widely characterized as warmongering by critics.

- **"Reaganite Policy of Military Strength":**

From its inception, PNAC aimed to build support for "a Reaganite policy of military strength and moral clarity" and to promote "American global leadership". This was articulated as maintaining the U.S. as the "world's pre-eminent power" to shape a new century favorable to American principles and interests.

- **"Rebuilding America's Defenses" (2000 Report):**

This key policy document outlined a comprehensive strategy for achieving and maintaining global U.S. military dominance. It advocated for:

- Significant increases in defense spending (an additional \$15 billion to \$20 billion annually).
- Development and deployment of global missile defenses.

- Control of "the new 'international commons' of space and 'cyberspace'".
- The capacity to fight and win "multiple, simultaneous major theater wars".
- Redirecting the U.S. Air Force toward a "global first-strike force".
- **Persistent Advocacy for Iraq War:**

PNAC was a primary advocate for regime change in Iraq. In 1998, several core members signed an open letter to President Clinton, urging the removal of Saddam Hussein. Following the September 11 attacks, PNAC immediately pressed President Bush to target Iraq, stating that "any strategy aiming at the eradication of terrorism and its sponsors must include a determined effort to remove Saddam Hussein from power in Iraq," even without direct evidence linking Iraq to 9/11. This sustained pressure is often cited as a significant factor in the Bush administration's decision to invade Iraq in 2003.

- **The "New Pearl Harbor" Concept:**

The "Rebuilding America's Defenses" report included a controversial statement: "the process of transformation [of the U.S. military] is likely to be a long one, absent some catastrophic and catalyzing event—like a new Pearl Harbor". Critics have argued that the 9/11 attacks subsequently served as this "Pearl Harbor," providing the justification and public mandate for the aggressive military interventions PNAC had long advocated, particularly the invasion of Iraq.

- **Geopolitical Transformation & Unilateralism:**

PNAC promoted the principle that the U.S. should not hesitate to act unilaterally to advance its interests, especially in the Middle East. It envisioned "reshaping the Middle East" to align with U.S. and Israeli interests, including weakening adversaries like Syria and Iran.

Description: This Mermaid graph illustrates the core network of the Project for a New American Century (PNAC), its founders, key documents, policy advocacies, and its significant influence on the George W. Bush administration leading to the Iraq War. It highlights the connections between PNAC's ideological positions and the subsequent military actions.

CONCLUSION & STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusion:

The Project for a New American Century (PNAC) served as a highly influential neoconservative think tank that successfully articulated and promoted a vision for assertive U.S. global leadership through military preeminence. Its core documents, particularly "Rebuilding America's Defenses," provided an intellectual framework for increased defense spending, global military presence, and the proactive use of force. PNAC's persistent advocacy for regime change in Iraq, preceding and accelerating after the 9/11 attacks, critically shaped the foreign policy trajectory of the George W. Bush administration, with many of its members holding key governmental positions. While PNAC itself is no longer active, its ideological blueprint and the continued influence of its former associates represent a significant historical case study in how think tanks can profoundly impact national security policy, leading to major international conflicts.

Strategic Recommendations:

1. **Historical Policy Analysis:** Conduct further in-depth analysis into the long-term consequences of PNAC-influenced policies, particularly the Iraq War, on regional stability, the proliferation of non-state actors, and the erosion of international norms and laws. This should include a critical review of the "New Pearl Harbor" concept and its instrumentalization in policy decisions.
2. **Successor Ideology Monitoring:** While PNAC and its direct successor (FPI) are defunct, monitor the current activities and publications of key former PNAC figures and their new affiliations (e.g., William Kristol's "The Bulwark"), to identify contemporary articulations of

similar interventionist or unilateralist foreign policy agendas.

3. **Discourse Deconstruction:** Analyze current geopolitical discourse for recurring themes and rhetorical patterns reminiscent of PNAC's "warmongering" narratives. This includes identifying calls for preemptive strikes, justification of military action based on ideological rather than purely defensive grounds, and framing international relations in terms of unquestioned national preeminence.
4. **Financial Influence Mapping:** Continuously map the funding sources of think tanks and advocacy groups promoting aggressive foreign policy stances to identify potential patterns of financial backing that support hawkish agendas.
5. **Public Awareness Initiatives:** Support initiatives to educate the public and policymakers on the historical influence of think tanks like PNAC, promoting critical assessment of foreign policy proposals and their potential human rights and IHL implications.

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