

**Chapter 1 : The Rise of the Jewish Policy Elite | Dissident Voice**

*THE POWER ELITE* Thomas Dye, a political scientist, and his students have been studying the upper echelons of leadership in America since Foreign policy is a.

Wright Mills painted nearly half a century ago. When you were eight years old, the stock market crashed, and the resulting Clutch Plague began just as you started third or fourth grade. Hence your childhood was consumed with fighting off the poverty of the single greatest economic catastrophe in American history. When you were 20, the Japanese invaded Pearl Harbor, ensuring that your years as a young adult, especially if you were male, would be spent fighting on the ground in Europe or from island to island in Asia. If you were lucky enough to survive that experience, you returned home at the ripe old age of 24, ready to resume some semblance of a normal life—only then to witness the Korean War, McCarthyism, and the beginning of the Cold War with the Soviet Union. Into this milieu exploded *The Power Elite*. Wright Mills was one of the first intellectuals in America to write that the complacency of the Eisenhower years left much to be desired. His indictment was uncompromising. On the one hand, he claimed, vast concentrations of power had coagulated in America, making a mockery of American democracy. On the other, he charged that his fellow intellectuals had sold out to the conservative mood in America, leaving their audience—the American people themselves—in a state of ignorance and apathy bearing shocking resemblance to the totalitarian regimes that America had defeated or was currently fighting. One of the goals Mills set for himself in *The Power Elite* was to tell his readers—again, assuming that they were roughly 35 years of age—how much the organization of power in America had changed during their lifetimes. In the s, when this typical reader had been born, there existed what Mills called "local society," towns and small cities throughout America whose political and social life was dominated by resident businessmen. Small-town elites, usually Republican in their outlook, had a strong voice in Congress, for most of the congressmen who represented them were either members of the dominant families themselves or had close financial ties to them. By the time Mills wrote his book, this world of local elites had become as obsolete as the Model T Ford. Power in America had become nationalized, Mills charged, and as a result had also become interconnected. *The Power Elite* called attention to three prongs of power in the United States. First, business had shifted its focus from corporations that were primarily regional in their workforces and customer bases to ones that sought products in national markets and developed national interests. What had once been a propertied class, tied to the ownership of real assets, had become a managerial class, rewarded for its ability to organize the vast scope of corporate enterprise into an engine for ever-expanding profits. No longer were the chief executive officers of these companies chosen because they were of the right social background. Connections still mattered, but so did bureaucratic skill. The men who possessed those skills were rewarded well for their efforts. Larded with expense accounts and paid handsomely, they could exercise national influence not only through their companies, but through the roles that they would be called upon to serve in "the national interest. Mills wrote that the "warlords," his term for the military and its civilian allies, had once been "only uneasy, poor relations within the American elite; now they are first cousins; soon they may become elder brothers. Of all the prongs of the power elite, this "military ascendancy" possessed the most dangerous implications. And within that branch, Mills could count roughly 50 people who, in his opinion, were "now in charge of the executive decisions made in the name of the United States of America. These people were not attracted to their positions for the money; often, they made less than they would have in the private sector. Rather they understood that running the Central Intelligence Agency or being secretary of the Treasury gave one vast influence over the direction taken by the country. Firmly interlocked with the military and corporate sectors, the political leaders of the United States fashioned an agenda favorable to their class rather than one that might have been good for the nation as a whole. Although written very much as a product of its time, *The Power Elite* has had remarkable staying power. The book has remained in print for 43 years in its original form, which means that the year-old who read it when it first came out is now 78 years old. Changing Fortunes The obvious question for any contemporary reader of *The Power Elite* is whether its conclusions apply to the United States today. Each year, Fortune publishes a list of

the leading American companies based on revenues. Roughly 30 of the 50 companies that dominated the economy when Mills wrote his book no longer do, including firms in once seemingly impregnable industries such as steel, rubber, and food. Putting it another way, the list contains the names of many corporations that would have been quite familiar to Mills: General Motors is ranked first, Ford second, and Exxon third. But the company immediately following these giants—Wal-Mart Stores—did not even exist at the time Mills wrote; indeed, the idea that a chain of retail stores started by a folksy Arkansas merchant would someday outrank Mobil, General Electric, or Chrysler would have startled Mills. Furthermore, just as some industries have declined, whole new industries have appeared in America since ; IBM was fifty-ninth when Mills wrote, hardly the computer giant—sixth on the current Fortune list—that it is now. Compaq and Intel, neither of which existed when Mills wrote his book, are also in the top To illustrate how closed the world of the power elite was, Mills called attention to the fact that one man, Winthrop W. Aldrich, the American ambassador to Great Britain, was a director of 4 of the top 25 companies in America in Despite these changes in the nature of corporate America, however, much of what Mills had to say about the corporate elite still applies. It is certainly still the case, for example, that those who run companies are very rich; the gap between what a CEO makes and what a worker makes is extraordinarily high. But there is one difference between the world described by Mills and the world of today that is so striking it cannot be passed over. Mills was disdainful of the idea that leading businessmen were especially competent. If you were the head of General Motors in , you knew that American automobile companies dominated your market; the last thing on your mind was the fact that someday cars called Toyotas or Hondas would be your biggest threat. You did not like the union which organized your workers, but if you were smart, you realized that an ever-growing economy would enable you to trade off high wages for your workers in return for labor market stability. Smaller companies that supplied you with parts were dependent on you for orders. Each year you wanted to outsell Ford and Chrysler, and yet you worked with them to create an elaborate set of signals so that they would not undercut your prices and you would not undercut theirs. Whatever your market share in , in other words, you could be fairly sure that it would be the same in Why rock the boat? It made perfect sense for budding executives to do what Mills argued they did do: Very little of this picture remains accurate at the end of the twentieth century. Union membership as a percentage of the total workforce has declined dramatically, and while this means that companies can pay their workers less, it also means that they cannot expect to invest much in the training of their workers on the assumption that those workers will remain with the company for most of their lives. Foreign competition, once negligible, is now the rule of thumb for most American companies, leading many of them to move parts of their companies overseas and to create their own global marketing arrangements. These radical changes in the competitive dynamics of American capitalism have important implications for any effort to characterize the power elite of today. Wright Mills was a translator and interpreter of the German sociologist Max Weber, and he borrowed from Weber the idea that a heavily bureaucratized society would also be a stable and conservative society. Only in a society which changes relatively little is it possible for an elite to have power in the first place, for if events change radically, then it tends to be the events controlling the people rather than the people controlling the events. But not even they can control rapid technological transformations, intense global competition, and ever-changing consumer tastes. American capitalism is simply too dynamic to be controlled for very long by anyone. Personnel were constantly shifting back and forth from the corporate world to the military world. Big companies like General Motors had become dependent on military contracts. Scientific and technological innovations sponsored by the military helped fuel the growth of the economy. And while all these links between the economy and the military were being forged, the military had become an active political force. Members of Congress, once hostile to the military, now treated officers with great deference. And no president could hope to staff the Department of State, find intelligence officers, and appoint ambassadors without consulting with the military. Mills believed that the emergence of the military as a key force in American life constituted a substantial attack on the isolationism which had once characterized public opinion. He argued that "the warlords, along with fellow travelers and spokesmen, are attempting to plant their metaphysics firmly among the population at large. In this state of constant war fever, America could no longer be considered a genuine democracy, for democracy thrives on

dissent and disagreement, precisely what the military definition of reality forbids. If the changes described by Mills were indeed permanent, then *The Power Elite* could be read as the description of a deeply radical, and depressing, transformation of the nature of the United States. Much as Mills wrote, it remains true today that Congress is extremely friendly to the military, at least in part because the military has become so powerful in the districts of most congressmen. Military bases are an important source of jobs for many Americans, and government spending on the military is crucial to companies, such as Lockheed Martin and Boeing, which manufacture military equipment. Some weapons systems never seem to die, even if, as was the case with a "Star Wars" system designed to destroy incoming missiles, there is no demonstrable military need for them. Yet despite these similarities with the 1950s, both the world and the role that America plays in that world have changed. For one thing, the United States has been unable to muster its forces for any sustained use in any foreign conflict since Vietnam. Worried about the possibility of a public backlash against the loss of American lives, American presidents either refrain from pursuing military adventures abroad or confine them to rapid strikes, along the lines pursued by Presidents Bush and Clinton in Iraq. China, which at the time Mills wrote was considered a serious threat, is now viewed by American businessmen as a source of great potential investment. Domestic political support for a large and permanent military establishment in the United States, in short, can no longer be taken for granted. At the time Mills wrote, defense expenditures constituted roughly 60 percent of all federal outlays and consumed nearly 10 percent of the U.S. By the late 1980s, those proportions had fallen to 17 percent of federal outlays and 3.3 percent of the U.S. And how could he have been right? Business firms, still the most powerful force in American life, are increasingly global in nature, more interested in protecting their profits wherever they are made than in the defense of the country in which perhaps only a minority of their employees live and work. Mills believed that in the 1950s, for the first time in American history, the military elite had formed a strong alliance with the economic elite. The Power Elite failed to foresee a situation in which at least one of the key elements of the power elite would no longer identify its fate with the fate of the country which spawned it. Mass Society and the Power Elite Politicians and public officials who wield control over the executive and legislative branches of government constitute the third leg of the power elite. Mills believed that the politicians of his time were no longer required to serve a local apprenticeship before moving up the ladder to national politics. Because corporations and the military had become so interlocked with government, and because these were both national institutions, what might be called "the nationalization of politics" was bound to follow. The new breed of political figure likely to climb to the highest political positions in the land would be those who were cozy with generals and CEOs, not those who were on a first-name basis with real estate brokers and savings and loan officials. For Mills, politics was primarily a facade. Historically speaking, American politics had been organized on the theory of balance: But the emergence of the power elite had transformed the theory of balance into a romantic, Jeffersonian myth. So anti-democratic had America become under the rule of the power elite, according to Mills, that most decisions were made behind the scenes. As a result, neither Congress nor the political parties had much substantive work to carry out. But he was not necessarily correct that politics would therefore become something of an empty theatrical show. Mills believed that in the absence of real substance, the parties would become more like each other. Yet today the ideological differences between Republicans and Democrats are severe—as, in fact, they were in Joseph McCarthy, the conservative anticommunist senator from Wisconsin who gave his name to the period in which Mills wrote his book, appears a few times in *The Power Elite*, but not as a major figure. Had he paid more attention to McCarthyism, Mills would have been more likely to predict the role played by divisive issues such as abortion, immigration, and affirmative action in American politics today. Real substance may not be high on the American political agenda, but that does not mean that politics is unimportant. Through our political system, we make decisions about what kind of people we imagine ourselves to be, which is why it matters a great deal at the end of the twentieth century which political party is in power.

## Chapter 2 : A Showdown in Moscowâ€™s Power Elite â€™ Foreign Policy

*The power elite theory, in short, claims that a single elite, not a multiplicity of competing groups, decides the life-and-death issues for the nation as a whole, leaving relatively minor matters for the middle level and almost nothing for the common person.*

Become a Member How U. Compared to every other liberal democracy, the U. Safeguards built into the Constitution prevent tyranny, yet they frequently pit Congress against the executive branch, make it difficult to develop and implement a cohesive foreign policy, create uncertainty as to what that policy is, and give foreign governments and special interests an opportunity to apply pressure at many points, not just one. As a result, the actors of foreign policy in the U. Global interdependence and the breakdown of traditional barriers has increased the complexity of foreign policymaking. The distinction between foreign and domestic issues is no longer pronounced, and as the global financial crisis of proved, local decisions have ripple effects abroad. Understanding how foreign policy is made and conducted in the U. Constitution divides power between the three branches of government: It also gives each branch some check on the other. Foreign policy is thus split amongst different governmental structures. Although the President usually cannot spend money not appropriated by Congress, he has always been granted some latitude in emergencies. The Constitution assigns the Senate a distinctive role in the foreign policy processâ€™to advise the President in negotiating agreements, to consent to them once they have been signed, and to approve presidential appointments, including the Secretary of State, other high officials of the State Department, ambassadors and career foreign service officers. The President Under the Constitution, the President serves as head of state and head of government. As head of state, the President is, in effect, the personification of the U. As head of government, he formulates foreign policy, supervises its implementation and attempts to obtain the resources to support it. He also organizes and directs the departments and agencies that play a part in the foreign policy process. Along with the Vice President, he is the only government official elected nationally. He serves as Commander in Chief of the Army and Navy; nominates and appoints ambassadors and other public ministers, subject to the advice and consent of the Senate; and makes treaties, by and with the advice of the Senate, provided two thirds of the senators present concur. For example, executive agreements, which have largely replaced the cumbersome process of treaty-making, comprise most of the understandings and commitments between the U. The President is the Commander in Chief, but the power to declare war rests with Congress- though Congress has only exercised the right in response to a presidential request. Yet it is the rise in covert operations deployed by the President, such as the select group of Navy SEALs who assassinated Osama Bin Laden, that evidence a profound change in the type of wars and manner of their deployment. The President also has the power to receive foreign ambassadors and, in effect, to recognize foreign governments. The President has two additional informal but influential powers in foreign affairs. One of these is the ability to determine the national agenda by bringing issues to the forefront of public attention and concern. The Policymaking Machinery Making foreign policy requires the participation of the President, the executive branch, Congress and the public. Conducting foreign policy, on the other hand, is the exclusive prerogative of the President and his subordinates in the executive branch. The distinction is fuzzy but important: Department of State Until World War II, one agency, the Department of State, established in and the highest-ranking Cabinet department, and one individual, the Secretary of State, who is directly responsible to the President, managed foreign affairs. The traditional functions of the State Department and its professional diplomatic corps, the Foreign Service, include: The Pentagon and Security The U. Military power serves as an instrument of diplomacyâ€™as a means of achieving goals defined by civilian officials of the government. The principal military adviser to the President is the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, a strategy board consisting of the senior officers of the Army, Air Force, Navy and Marine Corps. The department, which oversees 22 separate agencies, has become extremely powerful in matters relating to trade, borders, immigration and security. They collect information for example, how many nuclear weapons China possesses , assess its accuracy and reliability, and disseminate the information to decision makers. In addition, the intelligence community, most

notably the CIA, undertakes, with the approval of the President, clandestine operations. In , the intelligence community was expanded to include the new position of Director of National Intelligence, who directs and manages the activities of the individual intelligence agencies and serves as the main adviser to the President on intelligence matters. Since his day, the difficulty of developing a cohesive, relevant and feasible foreign policy has increased enormously. Theoretically, the process of formulation should begin with a clear definition of the national interests, followed by a delineation of the policies that would promote those interests and the course of action by the various departments and agencies that would further those policies, as well as the allocation of the resources needed to carry them out. In practice, no system is likely to produce a cohesive, viable and supportable foreign policy. The national interest is a cluster of particular interests, and the agencies and staffs involved may have very different views as to what it should be. It is clear that foreign policy is not the prerogative of a few members of government; in fact public opinion is key in affecting policy. The same should be true today.

Chapter 3 : Power elite | Define Power elite at [www.nxgvision.com](http://www.nxgvision.com)

*The Power Elite called attention to three prongs of power in the United States. First, business had shifted its focus from corporations that were primarily regional in their workforces and customer bases to ones that sought products in national markets and developed national interests.*

Senate, the President of the United States negotiates treaties with foreign nations, but treaties enter into force only if ratified by two-thirds of the Senate. Both the Secretary of State and ambassadors are appointed by the President, with the advice and consent of the Senate. The United States Secretary of State acts similarly to a foreign minister and under Executive leadership is the primary conductor of state-to-state diplomacy. Powers of the Congress[ edit ] Main articles: Constitution gives much of the foreign policy decision-making to the presidency, but the Senate has a role in ratifying treaties, and the Supreme Court interprets treaties when cases are presented to it. Congress is the only branch of government that has the authority to declare war. Furthermore, Congress writes the civilian and military budget, thus has vast power in military action and foreign aid. Congress also has power to regulate commerce with foreign nations. These policies became the basis of the Federalist Party in the s, but the rival Jeffersonians feared Britain and favored France in the s, declaring the War of on Britain. After the alliance with France, the U. Initially these were uncommon events, but since WWII, these have been made by most presidents. Jeffersonians vigorously opposed a large standing army and any navy until attacks against American shipping by Barbary corsairs spurred the country into developing a naval force projection capability, resulting in the First Barbary War in The short experiment in imperialism ended by , as the U. It became the basis of the German Armistice which amounted to a military surrender and the Paris Peace Conference. In the s, the United States followed an independent course, and succeeded in a program of naval disarmament , and refunding the German economy. Operating outside the League it became a dominant player in diplomatic affairs. New York became the financial capital of the world, [8] but the Wall Street Crash of hurled the Western industrialized world into the Great Depression. American trade policy relied on high tariffs under the Republicans, and reciprocal trade agreements under the Democrats, but in any case exports were at very low levels in the s. Winston Churchill , Franklin D. Roosevelt moved toward strong support of the Allies in their wars against Germany and Japan. As a result of intense internal debate, the national policy was one of becoming the Arsenal of Democracy , that is financing and equipping the Allied armies without sending American combat soldiers. Roosevelt mentioned four fundamental freedoms, which ought to be enjoyed by people "everywhere in the world"; these included the freedom of speech and religion, as well as freedom from want and fear. Roosevelt helped establish terms for a post-war world among potential allies at the Atlantic Conference ; specific points were included to correct earlier failures, which became a step toward the United Nations. American policy was to threaten Japan, to force it out of China, and to prevent its attacking the Soviet Union. The American economy roared forward, doubling industrial production, and building vast quantities of airplanes, ships, tanks, munitions, and, finally, the atomic bomb. Much of the American war effort went to strategic bombers, which flattened the cities of Japan and Germany. President Richard Nixon , After the war, the U. Almost immediately, however, the world witnessed division into broad two camps during the Cold War ; one side was led by the U. This period lasted until almost the end of the 20th century and is thought to be both an ideological and power struggle between the two superpowers. A policy of containment was adopted to limit Soviet expansion, and a series of proxy wars were fought with mixed results. In , the Soviet Union dissolved into separate nations, and the Cold War formally ended as the United States gave separate diplomatic recognition to the Russian Federation and other former Soviet states. In domestic politics, foreign policy is not usually a central issue. In â€” the Democratic Party took a strong anti-Communist line and supported wars in Korea and Vietnam. Then the party split with a strong, "dovish", pacifist element typified by presidential candidate George McGovern. Many "hawks", advocates for war, joined the Neoconservative movement and started supporting the Republicansâ€”especially Reaganâ€”based on foreign policy. Taft , and an internationalist wing based in the East and led by Dwight D. Eisenhower defeated Taft for the nomination largely on foreign policy grounds. Since then the Republicans

have been characterized by a hawkish and intense American nationalism, and strong opposition to Communism, and strong support for Israel. Substantial problems remain, such as climate change , nuclear proliferation , and the specter of nuclear terrorism. Foreign policy analysts Hachigian and Sutphen in their book *The Next American Century* suggest all five powers have similar vested interests in stability and terrorism prevention and trade; if they can find common ground, then the next decades may be marked by peaceful growth and prosperity. The *New York Times* reported on the eve of his first foreign trip as president: For foreign leaders trying to figure out the best way to approach an American president unlike any they have known, it is a time of experimentation. Embassies in Washington trade tips and ambassadors send cables to presidents and ministers back home suggesting how to handle a mercurial, strong-willed leader with no real experience on the world stage, a preference for personal diplomacy and a taste for glitz Keep it short â€” no minute monologue for a second attention span. Do not assume he knows the history of the country or its major points of contention. Compliment him on his Electoral College victory. Contrast him favorably with President Barack Obama. Do not get hung up on whatever was said during the campaign. Stay in regular touch. Do not go in with a shopping list but bring some sort of deal he can call a victory. The chief diplomat was Secretary of State Rex Tillerson. His major foreign policy positions, which sometimes are at odds with Trump, include: Treaties are formal written agreements specified by the Treaty Clause of the Constitution. The President makes a treaty with foreign powers, but then the proposed treaty must be ratified by a two-thirds vote in the Senate. For example, President Wilson proposed the Treaty of Versailles after World War I after consulting with allied powers, but this treaty was rejected by the Senate; as a result, the U. While most international law has a broader interpretation of the term treaty, the U. Holland , the Supreme Court ruled that the power to make treaties under the U. Constitution is a power separate from the other enumerated powers of the federal government, and hence the federal government can use treaties to legislate in areas which would otherwise fall within the exclusive authority of the states. Executive agreements are made by the Presidentâ€™in the exercise of his Constitutional executive powers â€™alone. Congressional-executive agreements are made by the President and Congress. A majority of both houses makes it binding much like regular legislation after it is signed by the president. The Constitution does not expressly state that these agreements are allowed, and constitutional scholars such as Laurence Tribe think they are unconstitutional. Further, the United States incorporates treaty law into the body of U. As a result, Congress can modify or repeal treaties afterward. It can overrule an agreed-upon treaty obligation even if this is seen as a violation of the treaty under international law. Covert , as well as a lower court ruling in *Garcia-Mir v. ...* Further, the Supreme Court has declared itself as having the power to rule a treaty as void by declaring it "unconstitutional", although as of , it has never exercised this power. Generally, when the U. However, as a result of the *Reid v. Covert* decision, the U. International agreements[ edit ] The United States has ratified and participates in many other multilateral treaties, including arms control treaties especially with the Soviet Union , human rights treaties, environmental protocols , and free trade agreements. The United States is also member of:

## Chapter 4 : The Power Elite by C. Wright Mills

*In political science and sociology, elite theory is a theory of the state that seeks to describe and explain power relationships in contemporary society. The theory posits that a small minority, consisting of members of the economic elite and policy-planning networks, holds the most power—and this power is independent of democratic elections.*

Toggle display of website navigation Putinology: March 16, , Last week officials announced that they had arrested five suspects in the killing of Boris Nemtsov, the opposition leader who was gunned down right outside the walls of the Kremlin on Feb. Among those detained is Zaur Dadayev, who served in an elite security force that answers to Ramzan Kadyrov, the head of the Chechen Republic. The others were friends or relatives of Dadayev. On one side is Kadyrov, a brutal autocrat who has kept tight control over his fractious republic with the blessing of President Vladimir Putin. Now, at a stroke, all that has changed. Meanwhile, the radio station Echo of Moscow ran an online poll in which it asked listeners whom they would pick in a conflict between Kadyrov and the FSB. Only 6 percent chose to side with Kadyrov. This dramatic revelation of serious conflict at the highest levels of Russian power comes at a delicate moment. The mysterious vanishing act of Putin himself, who has just re-appeared in public after staying out of sight for nearly 10 days, added to the jitters. What in the world is going on? Images of security forces with Russian tricolor badges on their uniforms hauling the bearded Chechens into court in handcuffs, arms twisted behind their backs, astonished many viewers. On the other he is also dependent on the support of Kadyrov, who has kept a lid on the restive North Caucasus. Belkovsky says that Putin has opted, essentially, to sit this one out, choosing to lie low until the situation resolves itself. The popular opposition leader and blogger Aleksei Navalny jumped into the fray by claiming that the man who ordered the hit on Nemtsov was Ruslan Geremeyev, the son of a senior politician. Navalny declared that they also had Geremeyev in mind. Chechens have an unnerving tendency to crop up whenever high-profile contract killings occur. Yamadayev had a long history of tense relations with Kadyrov. And shortly before his murder Israilov filed a complaint in an international court of human rights charging Kadyrov with direct responsibility for acts of murder and torture. In , a Viennese court sentenced three Chechens to life terms in jail for the killing of Israilov — and one of them was a man named Suleiman Dadayev. Even the most outspoken Russian public figures have generally been cautious about criticizing Kadyrov. Orlov blamed Kadyrov for issuing a death threat to Natalia Estemirov, a prominent human rights defender who worked for Memorial, in a meeting just months before she was killed. Estemirova was abducted outside of her house in Grozny and murdered in He has made it impossible for rights activists to work in Chechnya. In my three interviews with Ramzan Kadyrov I asked him about the allegations of murder and torture ascribed to him in a number of human rights reports. Kadyrov dismissed them all. In one of his latest Instagram posts Kadyrov blames Europe and the United States for aiming to create chaos in Russia and discredit everybody who was faithful to president Putin. So who, then, actually ordered the killing of Nemtsov? That, of course, is the big question — and on March 14 FSB investigators came up with an official version that could offer Putin a possible path out of his dilemma. That theory was immediately rejected by the friends and relatives of Nemtsov. The socialite-turned-oppositionist Ksenia Sobchak, who knew Nemtsov well, declared that the charges against Osmayev had more to do with anti-Ukrainian propaganda than with a viable scenario. Sobchak recently had to hire personal bodyguards after her own name turned up on a reported hit list. The way things have been going lately, though, no one is expecting plausible answers anytime soon.

Chapter 5 : Elite theory - Wikipedia

*Putinology A Showdown in Moscow's Power Elite A political killing in the center of Moscow triggers an open feud between two of Russia's most powerful clans.*

The Power Elite, C. Changes in the American structure of power have generally come about by institutional shifts in the relative positions of the political, the economic, and the military orders. From this point of view, and broadly speaking, the American power elite has gone through four epochs, and is now well into a fifth. During the first "roughly from the Revolution through the administration of John Adams" the social and economic, the political and the military institutions were more or less unified in a simple and direct way: Many of them were many-sided men who could take the part of legislator and merchant, frontiersman and soldier, scholar and surveyor. They represented several generations of education and standing in the community. The important fact about these early days is that social life, economic institutions, military establishment, and political order coincided, and men who were high politicians also played key roles in the economy and, with their families, were among those of the reputable who made up local society. In fact, this first period is marked by the leadership of men whose status does not rest exclusively upon their political position, although their political activities are important and the prestige of politicians high. And this prestige seems attached to the men who occupy Congressional position as well as the cabinet. The elite are political men of education and of administrative experience, and, as Lord Bryce noted, possess a certain largeness of view and dignity of character. They overlapped to be sure, but again quite loosely so. One definite key to the period, and certainly to our images of it, is the fact that the Jacksonian Revolution was much more of a status revolution than either an economic or a political one. The metropolitan could not truly flourish in the face of the status tides of Jacksonian democracy; alongside it was a political elite in charge of the new party system. No set of men controlled centralized means of power; no small clique dominated economic, much less political, affairs. The economic order was ascendant over both social status and political power; within the economic order, a quite sizable proportion of all the economic men were among those who decided. For this was the period "roughly from Jefferson to Lincoln" when the elite was at most a loose coalition. The period ended, of course, with the decisive split of southern and northern types. Official commentators like to contrast the ascendancy in totalitarian countries of a tightly organized clique with the American. Such comments, however, are easier to sustain if one compares mid-twentieth-century Russia with mid-nineteenth-century America, which is what is often done by Tocqueville-quoting Americans making the contrast. But that was an America of a century ago, and in the century that has passed, the American elite have not remained as patrioteer essayists have described them to us. We are well beyond the era of romantic pluralism. The supremacy of corporate economic power began, in a formal way, with the Congressional elections of 1875, and was consolidated by the Supreme Court decision of 1885 which declared that the Fourteenth Amendment protected the corporation. That period witnessed the transfer of the center of initiative from government to corporation. Until the First World War which gave us an advanced showing of certain features of our own period this was an age of raids on the government by the economic elite, an age of simple corruption, when Senators and judges were simply bought up. Here, once upon a time, in the era of McKinley and Morgan, far removed from the undocumented complexities of our own time, many now believe, was the golden era of the American ruling class. The military was thus off to the side of the main driving forces of United States history. Political institutions in the United States have never formed a centralized and autonomous domain of power; they have been enlarged and centralized only reluctantly in slow response to the public consequence of the corporate economy. That both state and federal governments were decisively limited in their power to regulate, in fact meant that they were themselves regulatable by the larger moneyed interests. Their powers were scattered and unorganized; the powers of the industrial and financial corporations concentrated and interlocked. And as private economic power overshadowed public political power, so the economic elite overshadowed the political. Perhaps there has never been any period in American history so politically transparent as the Progressive era of President-makers and Muckrakers. The New Deal did not

reverse the political and economic relations of the third era, but it did create within the political arena, as well as in the corporate world itself, competing centers of power that challenged those of the corporate directors. When they did so they found themselves confronting other interests and men, for the places of decision were crowded. In due course, they did come to control and to use for their own purposes the New Deal institutions whose creation they had so bitterly denounced. The struggle between big and small property flared up again, however, in the political realm of the New Deal era, and to this struggle there was added, as we have seen, the new struggle of organized labor and the unorganized unemployed. This new force flourished under political tutelage, but nevertheless, for the first time in United States history, social legislation and lower-class issues became important features of the reform movement. These farm, labor, and business groups, moreover, were more or less contained within the framework of an enlarging governmental structure, whose political directorship made decisions in a definitely political manner. These groups pressured, and in pressuring against one another and against the governmental and party system, they helped to shape it. But it, could not be said that any of them for any considerable length of time used that government unilaterally as their instrument. The earlier and middle Roosevelt administrations can best be understood as a desperate search for ways and means, within the existing capitalist system, of reducing the staggering and ominous xis army of the unemployed. In these years, the New Deal as a system of power was essentially a balance of pressure groups and interest blocs. The political top adjusted many conflicts, gave way to this demand, sidetracked that one, was the unilateral servant of none, and so evened it all out into such going policy line as prevailed from one minor crisis to another. Policies were the result of a political act of balance at the top. Of course, the balancing act that Roosevelt performed did not affect the fundamental institutions of capitalism as a type of economy. In fact, the later Roosevelt years " beginning with the entrance of the United States into overt acts of war and preparations for World War II cannot be understood entirely in terms of an adroit equipoise of political power. Like the tempo of American life in general, the long term trends of the power structure have been greatly speeded up since World War II, and certain newer trends within and between the dominant institutions have also set the shape of the power elite and given historically specific meaning to its fifth epoch: In so far as the structural clue to the power elite today lies in the political order, that clue is the decline of politics as genuine and public debate of alternative decisions " with nationally responsible and policy-coherent parties and with autonomous organizations connecting the lower and middle levels of power with the top levels of decision. America is now in considerable part more a formal political democracy than a democratic social structure, and even the formal political mechanics are weak. The long-time tendency of business and government to become more intricately and deeply involved with each other has, in the fifth epoch, reached a new point of explicitness. The two cannot now be seen clearly as two distinct worlds. It is in terms of the executive agencies of the state that the rapprochement has proceeded most decisively. During the New Deal the corporate chieftains joined the political directorate; as of World War II they have come to dominate it. Long interlocked with government, now they have moved into quite full direction of the economy of the war effort and of the postwar era. This shift of the corporation executives into the political directorate has accelerated the long-term relegation of the professional politicians in the Congress to the middle levels of power. In so far as the structural clue to the power elite today lies in the enlarged and military state, that clue becomes evident in the military ascendancy. The warlords have gained decisive Political relevance, and the military structure of America is now in considerable part a political structure. The seemingly permanent military threat places a premium on the military and upon their control of men, materiel, money, and power; virtually all political and economic actions are now judged in terms of military definitions of reality: In part at least this has resulted from one simple historical fact, pivotal for the years since Since the governing apparatus of the United States has by long historic usage been adapted to and shaped by domestic clash and balance, it has not, from any angle, had suitable agencies and traditions for the handling of international problems. Such formal democratic mechanics as had arisen in the century and a half of national development prior to , had not been extended to the American handling of international affairs. It is, in considerable part, in this vacuum that the power elite has grown. In so far as the structural clue to the power elite today lies in the economic order, that clue is the fact that the economy is at once a permanent-war economy and a private-corporation economy. American

capitalism is now in considerable part a military capitalism, and the most important relation of the big corporation to the state rests on the coincidence of interests between military and corporate needs, as defined by warlords and corporate rich. Within the elite as a whole, this coincidence of interest between the high military and the corporate chieftains strengthens both of them and further subordinates the role of the merely political men. Not politicians, but corporate executives, sit with the military and plan the organization of war effort. The shape and meaning of the power elite today can be understood only when these three sets of structural trends are seen at their point of coincidence: Accordingly, at the top of this structure, the power elite has been shaped by the coincidence of interest between those who control the major means of production and those who control the newly enlarged means of violence; from the decline of the professional politician and the rise to explicit political command of the corporate chieftains and the professional warlords; from the absence of any genuine civil service of skill and integrity, independent of vested interests. The power elite is composed of political, economic, and military men, but this instituted elite is frequently in some tension: Now the military and the corporate men are in top positions. Of the three types of circle that compose the power elite today, it is the military that has benefited the most in its enhanced power, although the corporate circles have also become more explicitly entrenched in the more public decision-making circles. It is the professional politician that has lost the most, so much that in examining the events and decisions, one is tempted to speak of a political vacuum in which the corporate rich and the high warlord, in their coinciding interests, rule. Today all three are involved in virtually all widely ramifying decisions. Accordingly, as we have seen, the military are ascendant in two senses: That is why, just now, we can most easily specify the unity and the shape of the power elite in terms of the military ascendancy. But we must always be historically specific and open to complexities. The simple Marxian view makes the big economic man the real holder of power; the simple liberal view makes the big Political man the chief of the power system; and there are some who would view the warlords as virtual dictators. Each of these is an oversimplified view. That short-cut theory may or may not at times be true, but we do not want to carry that one rather simple theory about in the terms that we use to define our problems; we wish to state the theories explicitly, using terms of more precise and unilateral meaning. It should be clear to the reader by now that we do not accept as adequate the simple view that high economic men unilaterally make all decisions of national consequence. Their presence and their ideology are its major legitimations, whenever the power elite feels the need to provide any. Its members exist all over the country, and it is a coalition of generals in the roles of corporation executives, of politicians masquerading as admirals, of corporation executives acting like politicians, of civil servants who become majors, of vice-admirals who are also the assistants to a cabinet officer, who is himself, by the way, really a member of the managerial elite. The power elite today involves the often uneasy coincidence of economic, military, and political power. But we are not, of course, so limited: The power elite is not an aristocracy, which is to say that it is not a political ruling group based upon a nobility of hereditary origin. It has no compact basis in a small circle of great families whose members can and do consistently occupy the top positions in the several higher circles which overlap as the power elite. But such nobility is only one possible basis of common origin. That it does not exist for the American elite does not mean that members of this elite derive socially from the full range of strata composing American society. They derive in substantial proportions from the upper classes, both new and old, of local society and the metropolitan. The bulk of the very rich, the corporate executives, the political outsiders, the high military, derive from, at most, the upper third of the income and occupational pyramids. Their fathers were at least of the professional and business strata, and very frequently higher than that. They are native-born Americans of native parents, primarily from urban areas, and, with the exceptions of the politicians among them, overwhelmingly from the East. They are mainly Protestants, especially Episcopalian or Presbyterian. In general, the higher the position, the greater the proportion of men within it who have derived from and who maintain connections with the upper classes. The generally similar origins of the members of the power elite are underlined and carried further by the fact of their increasingly common educational routine. Overwhelmingly college graduates substantial proportions have attended Ivy League colleges, although the education of the higher military, of course, differs from that of other members of the power elite. But what do these apparently simple facts about the social composition of the higher circles really

mean? In particular, what do they mean for any attempt to understand the degree of unity, and the direction of policy and interest that may prevail among these several circles? Perhaps it is best to put this question in a deceptively simple way: Of course, if they are elected politicians, they are supposed to represent those who elected them; and, if they are appointed, they are supposed to represent, indirectly, those who elected their appointers. But this is recognized as something of an abstraction, as a rhetorical formula by which all men of power in almost all systems of government nowadays justify their power of decision.

*Foreign policy experts say that presidents have accumulated power at the expense of Congress in recent years as part of a pattern in which, during times of war or national emergency, the executive.*

Equally important the increasing power of Jewish justices on the Supreme Court is accelerating: Having totally displaced and replaced the dreaded WASPS, there is nary a word from the plethora of civil rights groups and Jewish organizations claiming to be concerned with issues of discrimination and exclusion. Perhaps the marginalized WASP population lacks any qualified jurists among their scores of millions, an ethno-cultural degeneration unique in US history or perhaps the last few WASPs appointed to the Supreme Court turned out to be among the most ardent and independent defenders of citizen rights, to the chagrin of numerous Administrations. Meaning, among the thousands of WASP graduates of the top law schools with academic awards and publications in prestigious journals, no qualified candidate can be found to address this lack of representation. But scholarship and originality may not be of much merit: A brief perusal of the legal publications of Elena Kagan and Merrick Garland reveals meager, mediocre and pedestrian articles and monographs. Summers, as Harvard President, led a raucous and bullying campaign against any academic critics Israeli policies during his abruptly abbreviated tenure in office. Clearly the problem of ethno-religious nepotism is not confined to Jews, it was an abuse practiced by WASP elites and others before them. Nor does such nepotism benefit the average wage and salaried Jews, who have to struggle side-by-side with their Gentile compatriots to make a living and exercise their rights. However, nepotism or ethno-religious favoritism has become an acute problem now when exclusive control of the Supreme Court compounds the growing problems of abuse in other spheres of the power structure – political, economic and mass communications. This imbalance has profound repercussions on everything from US overseas wars of aggression to the everyday struggle of Americans faced with deepening inequalities and the shredding of the social contract. Various solutions included the granting of citizenship rights following the French Revolution, socio-cultural assimilation, the development of socialism or separation and re-settlement in Palestine through the Zionist movement. The meritocratic argument is partly based on circular arguments contending that the disproportionate number of Jewish billionaires means they are more brilliant in business; that pro-Israel dominance within the US corporate mass media proves that Jewish media moguls are smarter and Israel is a righteous state and the rise of Israel-Firsters in government, academia and finance reflects their higher intelligence, greater work ethic and accomplishments. It is with the latter that we have to deal, because the significance of higher grades, diplomas from prestigious universities and piles of academic awards has to be proven on the ground. It is not simply the achievement of high individual positions and great wealth that matter, but how the policies formulated and practices pursued by these elite individual have affected the lives of million Americans, the nation, its prestige, welfare and moral authority. Both attended elite institutions, both secured numerous prestigious awards, and both imposed disastrous policies on the American nation and people – with complete impunity for their monumental mistakes, while American workers continue to suffer. He graduated from Harvard College summa cum laude and magna cum laude. While Stu Levey was racing around the US and the rest of the world enforcing the economic sanctions against Iran which he authored in line with Israeli directives , narco-terrorists from Mexico, Central America, Colombia and Peru were freely washing hundreds of billions of dollars a year in US banks. Meanwhile, Saudi Arabian officials who funded jihadi terrorists were never prosecuted or sanctioned – even after attacks within the US. Multi-national banks and corporations, which had corrupted officials, swindled investors, evaded taxes and laundered illicit funds were never investigated, let alone charged. Key policymakers in the design and execution of US war policy were prominent Jews bristling with diplomas from the most prestigious universities. Due credit must be given to the midwives of the 21st Century wars of foreign conquest and domestic decay: Abrams had been officially censored for lying directly to the US Congress about his role in the Iran-Contra scandal under President Ronald Reagan in the s. During that administration, Elliot directed US official support for the dictatorial regimes in Nicaragua, Guatemala, El Salvador and Honduras where over ,

Central American civilians were massacred. The new millennium wiped clean his tawdry slate of crimes against humanity and he was appointed a leading National Security Advisor under President George W. These blatant lies pushed to Bush Administration to invade and destroy Iraq. In the s, early in his government career he temporarily lost security clearance for having passed confidential documents to Israeli agents. In this position, he was one of the earliest and most forceful advocates for military interventions against Iraq, Syria, Iran, Lebanon and Libya. He persuaded the American Congress and the Bush Administration that the invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq would be short and self-financing. In fact, the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have cost tens of thousands of US military casualties, over a trillion dollars in military expenditures and they continue over 13 years Iraq , and 15 years Afghanistan with no end in sight but completely devastated societies spewing millions of refugees and thousands of terrorists. The result was the total breakdown of essential services, the pillage of the national and historic patrimony and decimation of civil and secular Iraqi society. Even the most fabulous archeological treasures of Mesopotamia were destroyed or looted for American and European collectors. Perle, there is Dr. Ross made sure that Israel would not be bound to the Camp David agreements even as President Clinton claimed the negotiations as his landmark achievement in diplomacy. In this capacity, he actively opposed diplomatic negotiations with the government of Iran or the Taliban in Afghanistan. This, the most powerful lobby in Washington, serves exclusively as a political fifth column for the Israeli Foreign Office. He thus became the first Ambassador stripped of security clearance. Israel Lobby pressures led to reinstated security clearance for Indyk who was subsequently named Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs. Throughout his career, Indyk sabotaged peace negotiation between Israel and Palestine and he undermined any early diplomatic resolution of the Iraq-US conflict, which might have prevented the disastrous war. Their policies include Free Trade Agreements in Europe, Asia and Latin America which have led to the relocation of US MNC overseas, massive job losses at home, further deepening inequalities and degrading work conditions and wages. Recently, in his stellar public career, Jack Lew was investigated for lying to the US Congress about the national debt, the size and growth of which he deliberately understated. He is also the principal author and promoter of the Trans-Pacific Partnership, which includes eleven Pacific nations and is designed to marginalize and encircle China. Summers, along with co-religionist Alan Greenspan it has been so hard to find any competent Gentiles to steer the US economy , was one of the prime authors of the deregulatory financial policies leading to the financial-economic crash. This crushing success caused double-digit unemployment, three million household foreclosures and forced a trillion dollar bank bailout down the gagging throats of the US taxpayers. He served as Labor Secretary under Clinton He hung on as President Clinton carpet bombed the renowned worker self-managed factories of Yugoslavia. While domestic inequalities deepened and economic deregulation extended, Reich remained in office. Conclusion From our discussion it is clear that there is a profound disparity between the stellar academic achievements of Israel-First officials in the US government and the disastrous consequences of their public policies in office. But this reliance on reputation has not held up in terms of performance – the successful resolution of concrete problems and issues. Meanwhile, the disproportionate number of high officials who have been accused of giving secret US documents to Israel Wolfowitz, Feith, Indyke and Pollard etc. The gulf between academic credentials and actual performance extends to economic policy. Neo-liberal policies favoring Wall Street speculators were adopted by such strategic policymakers as Alan Greenspan, Ben Bernanke and Lawrence Summers. Under their economic leadership, class inequalities have deepened; the financial elite has grown many times richer. Meanwhile, wars in the Middle East have drained the US Treasury of funds, which should have been used to serve the social needs of Americans and finance an economic recovery program through massive domestic investments and repair of our collapsing infrastructure. It is no longer a secret that an entire generation of working class Americans has descended into poverty with no prospects of escape – except through narcotics and other degradation. If economic performance were to be measured in terms of the sustained growth, balanced budgets, reductions in inequalities and the creation of stable, well-paying jobs, the economic elite despite their self-promoted merits have been absolute failures. However, if we adopt the alternative criteria for success, their performance looks pretty impressive: They have been well rewarded for their services: The systematic destruction of the Iraqi civil society and state has

eliminated any possibility of Iraq recovering as a modern secular, multi-ethnic, multi-confessional state. Here, Israel made a major advance toward unopposed regional military dominance without losing a soldier or spending a shekel! The Iran sanctions authored and pushed by Levey and Cohen served to undermine another regional foe of Israeli land grabs in the West Bank even if it cost the US hundreds of billions in lost profits, markets and oil investments. All this might raise questions about the nature of higher education and how performance is evaluated in terms of the larger spheres of the US economy, state and military. What we suggest is that degrees from prestigious universities and the highest awards have prepared academic high achievers to serve the elites but not the workers; to empower the financiers but not the producers. These years of training and achievement have certainly not prevented destructive foreign loyalties from undermining the greater society, nor have they taught basic civic virtues and egalitarian values. Prestigious universities recruit and train graduates in the mold of the dominant elites and increasingly narrow ethno-classes. They purge, intimidate and marginalize effective critics of Wall Street and of the State of Israel – the two major success markers that derive from an increasingly insulated ethno-chauvinist power configuration. Whatever intrinsic intelligence may exist can be blinded and distorted by an irrational doctrine of racial-ethnic superiority: There have been no consequences for the authors of broken economies, impoverished workers, prolonged losing wars, lies and fabrications of data leading to war and the passing of confidential state documents. Why have they continued to receive promotions in the face of policy failures?

## Chapter 7 : Foreign Policy Association

*Congress has used its power to make laws that specifically limit the freedom of action of the president in foreign policy. The Neutrality Acts () are an early example. The War Powers Act, which was a direct response to the Vietnam War, requires that Congress be consulted whenever the president is ready to commit American troops.*

Copy Link TR in France, Library of Congress Theodore Roosevelt came to the presidency intent on expanding U. The former Rough Rider entertained boyishly romantic notions of glory on the battlefield. And it was only near the end of his life, when he experienced great personal tragedy during World War I, that Roosevelt truly realized the brutal nature of war. Two months later, the U. He forever remembered his "crowded hour" in battle as the defining episode of his life and one that helped launch his national political career. In , when negotiations with Colombia for a canal zone lease broke down, Roosevelt quietly supported a revolution in that country. Fighting began on November 3rd. Days later, with tacit support from TR, the independent country of Panama emerged from Colombian control, sporting an American-made declaration of independence, constitution, and flag. Panama rapidly agreed to American terms on a canal zone lease, and the U. Army Corps of Engineers began digging the following year. Under pressure from Roosevelt, the Dominicans requested U. Fond of quoting the African proverb "Speak softly and carry a big stick," the militaristic Roosevelt was also capable of shrewd diplomacy and peace making. When Japan went to war with Russia over control of Manchuria and Korea in , Roosevelt arbitrated the dispute. TR secretly agreed to Japanese annexation of Korea -- in return the Japanese promised to keep their hands off China, Hawaii, and the Philippines. The combatants laid down their arms, Roosevelt won the Nobel Peace Prize -- the first American to win the award -- and the U. In , Roosevelt again brokered peace, this time when France and Germany squabbled over control of Morocco. Many believe that a peaceful resolution to this conflict delayed the start of World War I by a decade. A proponent of U. His joy was short lived. He followed his son to the grave less than six months later, on January 6, [Learn More Related Features.](#)

## Chapter 8 : The Power Elite

*In some broad sense, public opinion does provide a brake on elite policy making - but the boundaries are both relatively loose and weakly defined. Policy elites can get away with a hell of a lot.*

There are class notes, numerous Supreme Court case summaries and information on how to write a research paper inside. These "top positions" encompassed the posts with the authority to run programs and activities of major political, economic, legal, educational, cultural, scientific, and civic institutions. In addition, they direct about 40 percent of the resources of private foundations and 50 percent of university endowments. Furthermore, less than people hold the most influential posts in the executive, legislative, and judicial branches of the federal government, while approximately men and women run the three major television networks and most of the national newspaper chains. Facts like these, which have been duplicated in countless other studies, suggest to many observers that power in the United States is concentrated in the hands of a single power elite. Scores of versions of this idea exist, probably one for each person who holds it, but they all interpret government and politics very differently than pluralists. Instead of seeing hundreds of competing groups hammering out policy, the elite model perceives a pyramid of power. At the top, a tiny elite makes all of the most important decisions for everyone below. A relatively small middle level consists of the types of individuals one normally thinks of when discussing American government: The masses occupy the bottom. They are the average men and women in the country who are powerless to hold the top level accountable. The power elite theory, in short, claims that a single elite, not a multiplicity of competing groups, decides the life-and-death issues for the nation as a whole, leaving relatively minor matters for the middle level and almost nothing for the common person. It thus paints a dark picture. Whereas pluralists are somewhat content with what they believe is a fair, if admittedly imperfect, system, the power elite school decries the grossly unequal and unjust distribution of power it finds everywhere. People living in a country that prides itself on democracy, that is surrounded by the trappings of free government, and that constantly witnesses the comings and goings of elected officials may find the idea of a power elite farfetched. Yet many very intelligent social scientists accept it and present compelling reasons for believing it to be true. Thus, before dismissing it out of hand, one ought to listen to their arguments. Characteristics of the Power Elite According to C. Wright Mills, among the best known power-elite theorists, the governing elite in the United States draws its members from three areas: Even though these individuals constitute a close-knit group, they are not part of a conspiracy that secretly manipulates events in their own selfish interest. For the most part, the elite respects civil liberties, follows established constitutional principles, and operates openly and peacefully. It is not a dictatorship; it does not rely on terror, a secret police, or midnight arrests to get its way. It does not have to, as we will see. Nor is its membership closed, although many members have enjoyed a head start in life by virtue of their being born into prominent families. Nevertheless, those who work hard, enjoy good luck, and demonstrate a willingness to adopt elite values do find it possible to work into higher circles from below. If the elite does not derive its power from repression or inheritance, from where does its strength come? Basically it comes from control of the highest positions in the political and business hierarchy and from shared values and beliefs. In the first place, the elite occupies what Mills terms the top command posts of society. These positions give their holders enormous authority over not just governmental, but financial, educational, social, civic, and cultural institutions as well. A small group is able to take fundamental actions that touch everyone. Decisions made in the boardrooms of large corporations and banks affect the rates of inflation and employment. The influence of the chief executive officers of the IBM and DuPont corporations often rivals that of the secretary of commerce. In addition, the needs of industry greatly determine the priorities and policies of educational and research organizations, not to mention the chief economic agencies of government. The power of the elite has also been enhanced by the close collaboration of political, industrial, and military organizations. Conversely, industry now relies heavily on federal supports, subsidies, protection, and loans to ensure the success of its ventures. To be sure, business people and politicians constantly carp at each other. But the fact remains that they have grown so close that they prosper together far more than they do separately. At the same time, the

Cold War has elevated the prestige and power of the military establishment. The United States has come a long way from the days of citizen-soldiers to its present class of professional warriors whose impact far transcends mere military affairs. The demands of foreign affairs, the dangers of potential adversaries, the sophistication and mystique of new weapons, and especially the development of the means of mass destruction have all given power and prestige to our highest military leaders. As a group, then, this ruling triumvirate of politicians, corporate executives, and military officers has, by virtue of the positions they hold, unprecedented authority to make decisions of national and international consequence. But the mere occupancy of these command posts does not fully explain the effectiveness of their power. Of equal significance is their common outlook on life and their ability and willingness to act harmoniously on basic issues. Shared Attitudes and Beliefs. Leafing through the pages of Time or Newsweek one quickly realizes that the members of the so-called power elite constantly squabble among themselves. Such disagreements, which have become part of the background noise of national politics, occur so frequently as to be taken as proof that not one but a multiplicity of elites exist. According to Mills and others, however, these differences are vastly overshadowed by agreement on a world view. Members of the elite agree on the basic outlines of the free enterprise system including profits, private property, the unequal and concentrated distribution of wealth, and the sanctity of private economic power. They take giantism in the world of commerce for granted. More important, they are united in their belief that the primary responsibility of government is to maintain a favorable climate for business. Other governmental responsibilities, such as social welfare and concern for the environment, are secondary to that task. What produces the acceptance of this world view? Participants in the elite tend to read the same newspapers, join the same clubs, live in the same neighborhoods, send their children to the same schools usually private and the ones they themselves attended, and belong to the same churches and charities. They work and play together, employ one another, and intermarry. They share, in a word, a life-style that brings them together in mutually reinforcing contact. Moreover, they undergo similar apprenticeships. Dye finds that 54 percent of the top corporate leaders and 42 percent of our highest political officials went to just 12 private colleges including Yale, Harvard, Princeton, and Stanford. But it is while advancing through their professions that the unity of thought begins to emerge. By the time men and women reach the top of the corporate or professional ladder, their common experiences have given them a shared way of looking at economics and politics so that they experience and react to events in the same ways. When they enter public service these people cannot, as Mills explains, shed their heritage: The interesting point is how impossible it is for such [political appointees] to divest themselves of their engagement with the corporate world in general and with their own corporations in particular. Not only their money, but their friends, their interests, their training--their lives in short--are deeply involved in this world. The point is not so much financial or personal interests in a given corporation, but identification with the corporate world. To ask a man suddenly to divest himself of these interests and sensibilities is almost like asking a man to become a woman. Insiders and Outsiders Since the early s when politics really began to develop a bad name--a negative reputation over and above the traditional distrust of politicians see the essay on general-welfare liberalism or the quotes about politicians and parties --candidates for national office frequently tell voters that they are outsiders, that they are not part of the "establishment," that they will bring fresh faces and new ideas to Washington. Aspirants to office in the s have been especially noteworthy for making this claim. What is interesting to note is that more often than not these candidates and the individuals they work with or appoint to office are themselves insiders, as the recent cabinet appointments suggest. Distribution of Political Power Having seen how the governing elite derives its strength, it is important to consider how this power is exercised in the political arena. What roles do the three parts of the pyramid--the elite, the middle level, and the masses--play in American politics? With its leaves gone its outline is clearly visible. At the bottom, of course, is the trunk--cut it and the whole tree topples. Higher up three or four main branches support lesser branches, which in turn support still smaller ones until one comes to the twigs at the edges. Cutting the twigs does not change the tree very much. As one saws off branches lower down, however, the shape--and possibly the existence of the tree--is affected. In other words, to determine the direction and extent of growth of the tree, one cannot simply prune off a few boughs at the top but has to cut main limbs or the trunk. Public policies can be thought of in the same way. There is a

hierarchy among them in the sense that some corresponding to the trunk and main branches support others. Trunk decisions represent basic choices--whether or not welfare the federal budget must be balanced in seven years, for example--that, once decided, necessitate making lesser choices--cutting food stamps or Aid to Families with Dependent Children. Whoever makes the trunk decisions sets the agenda for subsequent debates about secondary or branch and twig policies. As important as it seemed, the B-1 in the eyes of power elite theorists is only a twig. In order to appreciate their contention, ask why the United States needs bombers in the first place. Why not rely on land-based missiles and submarines to deter the Soviet Union? The answer lies in a prior decision to maintain a "triad," a nuclear retaliatory force consisting of land-based missiles, submarines, and bombers. Having three separate weapons systems, American defense planners concluded, provides an extra margin of safety in the event of a confrontation with the Russians. Do we need three types, or could we get along with two? This is an important question--far more important than whether we develop a new bomber or keep an old one--and who decides it structures the debate on this and a host of other issues. Suppose, for a moment, the United States had decided that bombers were unnecessary. The B-1 debate would then be moot and resources allocated to it could be devoted to other purposes such as conventional arms or schools or tax reductions. Yet the triad is itself only a branch policy; it rests on an even more fundamental policy, containment. Others took a harder line. Fearing the spread of international communism, they advocated the use of diplomatic, economic, and especially military means to contain what they perceived to be inexorable Soviet expansionism. The first alternative emphasized cooperation, the second containment; the first implied relatively modest national security efforts, the second enormous expenditures for arms and foreign aid. Ultimately the United States adopted the strategy of containment, which has been the backbone of American foreign policy since Containment represents a trunk decision, while most other defense policies such as the triad or the B-1 are either branches or twigs. Containing the Russians put us on a long and arduous path over which we trod for nearly half a century. National defense swallowed a huge portion of the federal budget; it called for the maintenance of an enormous peacetime army; it led us into alliances with nations in the farthest corners of the globe, including some of the most corrupt and dictatorial regimes on earth; it demanded massive military aid programs; it consumed the talents of our scientific establishment and the attention of our national leaders. In short, containment, unlike the B-1, was no ordinary policy but a fundamental commitment of American resources and energies. Who decides trunk decisions like these? According to the power elite theory, the top of the pyramid usually does.

## Chapter 9 : Making Foreign Policy

*A proposed policy change with low support among economically elite Americans is adopted only about 18% of the time, while a proposed change with high support is adopted about 45% of the time. Interest groups have a substantial impact on public policy.*

Toggle display of website navigation Daniel W. When do foreign policy elites matter? When do foreign policy elites matter? My post earlier this week on the role of public opinion in the Big Policy Decisions of the past decade has triggered some interesting responses from the international political economy wing of the blogosphere. May 12, 5: International political economy scholarship tends to have an extremely stripped down, and bluntly unrealistic account of how policy is made. On many important policy issues, the public has no preferences whatsoever. On others, it has preferences that largely maps onto partisan identifications rather than actual interests, and that reflect claims made by political elites e. On others yet, the public has a set of contradictory preferences that politicians can pick and choose from. In some broad sense, public opinion does provide a brake on elite policy making but the boundaries are both relatively loose and weakly defined. Policy elites can get away with a hell of a lot if they want to. The result is that the relevant literature on policy making located largely within comparative political economy and a growing debate within American politics argues that elites play a very strong role in creating policies. These are fair points indeed, Benjamin Page wrote a whole book about the ways in which foreign policy elites in the United States have pursued policies at variance with American public opinion. So, yes, policy elites matter. The word "elites" can cover an awful lot of individuals. So who is part of the elite? Does it include powerful interest group lobbies, or only policy mandarins? In his blog post Farrell seems to imply the latter, which does makes the term more precise. That said, interest groups are a pretty powerful animal, and they will not get confused by elite policy rhetoric. When are policy elites simply doing the work of interest groups, and when are they pushing back? Part of the reason I pushed back against Krugman was that two of the three policy choices he stressed tax cuts, Iraq were very high-profile, publicly debated issues. One would assume that public opinion would form a more powerful brake on high-profile issues than low-profile ones. Now, Farrell might argue that elites can still manipulate a heck of a lot even on high-profile policies. This is probably true on some issues, but on others the public can act as an ex ante or ex post brake on policies. The word "elite" tends to assume an undifferentiated group of privileged policymakers, and anyone who has spent time inside the Beltway knows that partisanship matters a wee bit. When will the foreign policy community or economic policy community reach consensus, and when will there be significant opposition? Consider Operation Iraqi Freedom, for example. A commonly-made argument at least in blog comments is that the public went along with the war because the Bush administration cranked up its PR machine and shaped mass public attitudes. OK, but one of the things us political scientists know is that had the Democrats vociferously opposed the invasion of Iraq, public support for it might have dropped. Part of it, however, is that Democrats feared looking soft on security during the midterm elections. Because of that fear, Democratic policymaking elites were not unified thereby bolstering public support for the war. Now, in this narrative, is public opinion a cause or an effect of the debate that played out among policy elites? A little of both, I suspect. I raise this, however, because one of the difficulties with talking about the role of public opinion as a policy constraint or a policy enabler is that its role is sometimes buried beneath the more proximate causes. This is a good blog conversation to have, because it highlights how difficult it is to develop clear and generalizable models of national policy preferences, and the ways in which the fields of international political economy and foreign policy analysis struggle to cope with this complexity.