

New Atlantic Initiative

From Powerbase

According to the American Enterprise Institute, the **New Atlantic Initiative** (NAI) was launched on May 10-12, 1996, at the Congress of Prague, "where over 300 political, intellectual, and business leaders gathered to debate the new agenda for transatlantic relations."^[1] Although it was formed earlier, in June 1995. The NAI was established as a form of public policy research center and became headquartered at the American Enterprise Institute in Washington, D.C."^[2] It is represented as part of the AEI's focus on European affairs^[3] and its output mostly features the work of Radek Sikorski.^[4] The AEI also state that:

The NAI's central objective is to strengthen Atlantic cooperation in the post-cold war world by bringing together Americans and Europeans to work toward common goals, including:

- The reinvigoration of Atlantic institutions of political cooperation and consultation.
- The admission of Europe's fledgling democracies into the institutions of Atlantic defense and European economic cooperation, notably NATO and the European Union.
- The establishment of free trade between an enlarged European Union and the North American Free Trade Area as a complement to strengthening global free trade.
- The NAI also sponsors conferences, debates, and roundtable discussions in the U.S., Europe and elsewhere.^[5]

The NAI was initially funded by the John M. Olin Foundation,^[6] in 1995, via the Institute for European Defence and Strategic Studies (IEDSS) and then in 1996 via a "trustee grant designated by Mr. James Piereson" to support the Prague conference and then by The Lynde and Harry Bradley Foundation^[7] from 1999 onwards. The NAI has received 27 grants totaling \$4,108,000.

The NAI had an impressive advisory board which included three members of the IEDSS. Gerald Frost is said to have drafted the document that produced the debate. A former director of the IEDSS (who was also a director of the Centre for Policy Studies) Frost and William E. Odom's (2000) *The Congress of Prague: Revitalizing the Atlantic Alliance*^[8], was a record of the May 1996 meeting at the Cernin Palace in Prague to "celebrate the achievements of Western civilization."

This was possibly the first major public event staged by the NAI, as an offshoot of the IEDSS, where Frost remained a consultant director (the IEDSS is described (p. 223) as "our first organizing home and which did so much to get us started", IEDSS director, Andrew McHallam is also specifically mentioned) and the document was published by the AEI, who's president, Christopher DeMuth, and its scholars Richard Perle, Jeffrey Gedmin, and Irwin Stelzer are also specifically mentioned.

(Lt. Gen) Odom is director of National Security Studies for the Hudson Institute and was director of the National Security Agency from 1985 to 1988 and military assistant to Zbigniew Brzezinski — and had written for the IEDSS. Other contributors to the document included Christoph Bertram, Alun Chalfont, Pete du Pont, Vaclav Havel, Paul Johnson, Max M. Kampelman, Adrian Karatnycky, Lane Kirkland, Vaclav Klaus, Jon Kyl, William Luers, David McCurdy, Antonio Martino, and Margaret Thatcher. The collection of essays is mostly concerned with the expansion of NATO.

The Prague Conference was subsidised by the William H. Donner Foundation, the Margaret Thatcher Foundation, the John M. Olin Foundation, the German Marshall Fund of the United States, the National Review Institute (connected to the magazine), Hollinger International, Pfizer International Inc., Mötet Hennessy Louis Vuitton Inc., Forbes Magazine, Rupert Murdoch, and Conrad Black.

Another IEDSS member John O'Sullivan was the founder and co-chairman of the NAI and thanks Charles Powell, "my former colleague at Downing Street" (O'Sullivan was a speechwriter for Margaret Thatcher; Louise Oliver from the Donner Foundation; Adrian Karatnycky of Freedom House, "who did much to make this a genuinely bipartisan enterprise"; and Peter Rodman of the Nixon Center and National Review.

Attendees from the UK included: Anne Applebaum, Brian Beedham, Max Beloff, Conrad Black, Robert Conquest, Iain Duncan-Smith, Douglas Eden , Daniel Finkelstein, Dean Godson, Miriam Gross, Paul Johnson, Peter Mandelson, Anne McElvoy, Andrew McHallam, Kenneth Minogue, Roger Scruton, Michael Spicer, Alan Lee Williams and others.

Frost also edited the (1998) *The Congress of Phoenix: Rethinking Atlantic Security and Economics*^[9], also published by the AEI, and also held under the auspices of the NAI on May 16-18, 1997. This had more of an AEI slant, although the attendees are much the same as before, new names included Michael A. Ledeen, Paul Wolfowitz, Dan Quayle, Richard N. Perle, John McCain, Bruce P. Jackson, Douglas J. Feith and John Bolton.

The list of attendees is also very similar to the attendees of the (2001) Britain and America: A Strategic Dialogue Participant List^[10], held in London, January 12-13.

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Activities

Characteristic of the views promoted by the NAI is an article in the Wall Street Journal by Vladimir Socor of the Jerusalem-based Institute for Advanced Strategic and Political Studies calling for NATO air policing of the Baltic states entering NATO and the drawing up of contingency plans for their defence in the event of aggression from the Russian Federation.^[11]

Funding

In the 1995-2002 period the AEI received \$2.808,000 from the right-wing Lynde and Harry Bradley Foundation, in part to sponsor the NAI.^[12]

Interpretation

The NAI also sponsors conferences, debates, and roundtable discussions in the U.S., Europe and in Israel and Jordan, according to Sourcewatch^[13] the NAI is an attempt to "carry the lobbying methods of AIPAC to Europe" and it aims to influence policy throughout Europe with an "initial emphasis of these foundations is to foster friendly relations vis-a-vis Israel, to scuttle attempts to impose sanctions, and to crack down on anti-semitism." The Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs ^[14](run by former Israeli Ambassador to the United Nations Dr. Dore Gold) gives a list of co-operating institutions as:

Ari Movement (Istanbul)

Atlantic Club of Bulgaria (Sofia)

Atlantic Council of the United Kingdom (London)

Bohemiae Foundation (Prague)

Center for Democracy and Human Rights (Podgorica)

Center for the New Europe (Brussels)

Centre for European Reform (London)

Civic Institute (Prague)

Freedom House (part of the National Endowment for Democracy network)

German Marshall Fund of the United States (Washington)

Hudson Institute (Washington)

Institute for Public Affairs (Bratislava)

Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs (Jerusalem)

Karamanlis Institute (Athens)

Paradigmes (Paris)

Project for the New American Century (Washington)

Slovak Atlantic Commission (Bratislava)

U.S. Committee on NATO (Washington)

Jim Lobe's (2008) AEI Takes Care of Its Own ...At Least at RFE/RL^[15] has presented the NAI as part of a network which encompasses the US neoconservative propaganda and public diplomacy work including Radio Free Europe (which has strong ties to the IEDSS and is headquartered in Prague) observed that:

Washington Post columnist Anne Applebaum appealed in an April 22 op-ed for Congress to provide a lot more money for RFE/RL, whose budget, despite the addition of Radio Farda in the last couple of years, has dropped steadily since the end of the Cold War to some \$75 million. Applebaum, herself an adjunct fellow at AEI, is married to Polish Defense Minister Radek Sikorski, who, in the run-up to the Iraq war, was the director of AEI's "New Atlantic Initiative," the very same program that was headed by [Jeffrey] Gedmin until he left immediately after 9/11 to head the Aspen Institute in Berlin, a think tank which, under his leadership, became a virtual AEI bridgehead in the heart of Germany. John O'Sullivan, the former National Review editor and columnist, was the founder and co-chair of the New Atlantic Initiative and now works as an editor with Gedmin at RFE/RL.

Gedmin was executive director of the NAI, a founder of Project for the New American Century, Director (2007-) Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty. The NAI was chaired by Edward J. Streator, a former official in the US Embassy in London and a director of the Ditchley Foundation.

The NAI seems part of a 'Neo-Conservative International', indeed Frank Gaffney's (1996) Birth of the New Atlantic Initiative,^[16] stated that the NAI was "the most important new institution for the defense and expansion of freedom since the creation of NATO in 1949."

The work of the NAI can also be seen as an attempt to frame elite policy development^[17] in the aftermath of the Cold War, and a right-wing response to the Clinton and Blair Administration's coming to power in the US and UK; together with the Baltic nations gearing themselves for membership in NATO, the European Union and other pro-Western bodies.

Gaffney, who is part of the network that promote the NAI also stated in his (1997) '*Founding Act*' or '*Final Act*' for NATO?^[18], that one of the IEDSS's main cold warrior:

Albert Wohlstetter must be spinning in his grave. The Clinton administration's gross mismanagement of the NATO enlargement issue, and its ominous implications for the nation's most important alliance, would infuriate Mr. Wohlstetter...

This then adds that:

As Richard Perle — one of Mr. Wohlstetter's most accomplished proteges — noted at a splendid congress of the New Atlantic Initiative held here over the weekend, the agreement reads like a Soviet document. This is, as the communists loved to say, "no accident, comrade." After all, the principal author for the Russian side was an unreconstructed apparatchik and longtime KGB operative from the old Soviet Union, Foreign Minister Yevgeny Primakov.

As regards UK links, the NAI site with the AEI links to The Atlantic Council of the United Kingdom, the Centre for European Reform, the Institute of Economic Affairs and The New World Order Forum "an independent UK-based think-tank that was set up in March 2002." Analysis of the The New World Order Forum is continued in a separate entry.

Patrons

- Václav Havel
- Margaret Thatcher
- Helmut Schmidt
- Leszek Balcerowicz
- Henry Kissinger
- George P. Shultz

Executive Director

- Radek Sikorski

International Advisory Board

Henry Kissinger – Chairman	Dennis L. Bark	Brian Beedham
Christopher Bertram	Alain Besançon	John Bolton
Robert Bork	Zbigniew Brzezinski	Richard Burt
Lord Chalfont	Robert Conquest	Midge Decter
Paula Dobriansky	Pete du Pont	Paul Fabra
Joachim Fest	Edwin Feulner	Thomas Foley
Milos Forman	Herbert Giersch	Newt Gingrich
György Granasztói	Miriam Gross	Fr. Tomáš Halík
Owen Harries	Anthony Hartley	Brian Hindley
Robert D. Hormats	Karen Elliot House	Samuel P. Huntington
Géza Jeszenszky	Tomás Jezek	Josef Joffe
Donald Kagan	Max Kampelman	Adrian Karatnycky
Jack Kemp	Jeane J. Kirkpatrick	Charles Krauthammer
William Kristol	Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie	Michael Ledeen
Henri Lepage	Charles M. Lichenstein	Georges Liébert
Nicholas Lobkowitz	R. F. M. Lubbers	Pierre Manent
Antonio Martino	Mitch McConnell	Ivan Mikloš
Kenneth Minogue	Joshua Muravchik	Luc de la Barre de Nanteuil
William E. Odom	Daniel Oliver	Janusz Onyszkiewicz
Viktor Orbán	Richard N. Perle	Lucie Pilipová
Daniel Pipes	Norman Podhoretz	Sir Charles Powell
Colin L. Powell	David Pryce-Jones	Jean-François Revel

Peter Rodman	Donald H. Rumsfeld	Giuseppe Sacco
Antxón Sarasqueta	Karel Schwarzenberg	Roger Scruton
William C. Steere, Jr.	Irwin Stelzer	Hanna Suchocka
Claudio Veliz	Lord Weidenfeld	W. Bruce Weinrod
Alan Lee Williams	Robert Bruce Zoellick	

Contact

Internet Archive holdings of the NAI website: [aei.org/research/nai/about/projectID.11](http://www.aei.org/research/nai/about/projectID.11)
 (https://web.archive.org/web/*/http://www.aei.org/research/nai/about/projectID.11/default.asp)

Notes

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6. <http://www.mediatransparency.org/allinoneresearchresults.php>
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13. http://www.sourcewatch.org/index.php?title=New_Atlantic_Initiative
14. <http://www.jcpa.org/nai.htm>
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16. Frank Gaffney (1996) Birth of the New Atlantic Initiative, The Washington Times, May 16.
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