



Written by [James Perloff](#) on July 23, 2009

Council on Foreign Relations

During his presidential campaign, Barack Obama consistently promised Americans “change.” Such promises aren’t new to the voting public.

When Jimmy Carter ran for president, he said: “The people of this country know from bitter experience that we are not going to get ... changes merely by shifting around the same group of insiders.” And top Carter aide Hamilton Jordan promised: “If, after the inauguration, you find a Cy Vance as Secretary of State and Zbigniew Brzezinski as head of National Security, then I would say we failed. And I’d quit.” Yet Carter selected Vance as Secretary of State and Brzezinski as National Security Adviser; the “same group of insiders” had been shifted around; and Jordan did not quit.



Carter’s administration was dominated by members of the Trilateral Commission, which had been founded by Brzezinski and David Rockefeller. In 1980, when Ronald Reagan was campaigning against Carter, he protested:

I don’t believe that the Trilateral Commission is a conspiratorial group, but I do think its interests are devoted to international banking, multinational corporations, and so forth. I don’t think that any Administration of the U.S. Government should have the top nineteen positions filled by people from any one group or organization representing one viewpoint. No, I would go in a different direction.

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Yet after his election, President Reagan picked 10 Trilateralists for his transition team, and included in his administration such Trilateralists as Vice President George Bush, Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger, U.S. Trade Representative William Brock, and Fed Chairman Paul Volcker. Yet the entire North American membership of the Trilateral Commission has never numbered much over 100.

The reason that presidential candidates’ promises of “change” go largely unfulfilled once in office: they draw their top personnel from the same establishment groups — of which the Trilateral Commission is only one.

Chief among these groups is the Council on Foreign Relations (CFR), the most visible manifestation of what some have called the American establishment. Members of the council have dominated the administrations of every president since Franklin D. Roosevelt, at the cabinet and sub-cabinet level. It does not matter whether the president is a Democrat or Republican. As we will later see, Barack Obama is no exception to CFR influence.

Power Behind the Throne

In theory, America’s government is supposed to be “of the people, by the people, for the people.” While



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this concept rang true in early America, and many individuals still trust in it, the last century has seen the reality of power increasingly shift from the people to an establishment rooted in banking, Wall Street, and powerful multinational corporations. Syndicated columnist Edith Kermit Roosevelt, granddaughter of Teddy Roosevelt, explained:

The word “Establishment” is a general term for the power elite in international finance, business, the professions and government, largely from the northeast, who wield most of the power regardless of who is in the White House. Most people are unaware of the existence of this “legitimate Mafia.” Yet the power of the Establishment makes itself felt from the professor who seeks a foundation grant, to the candidate for a cabinet post or State Department job. It affects the nation’s policies in almost every area.

Roosevelt added that this group’s goal is “a One World Socialist state governed by ‘experts’ like themselves.”

David Rockefeller, the longtime chairman (and now chairman emeritus) of the CFR, acknowledged the role of the establishment in trying to lead America in the one-world direction in his 2002 book [Memoirs](#):

For more than a century ideological extremists at either end of the political spectrum have seized upon well-publicized incidents such as my encounter with Castro to attack the Rockefeller family for the inordinate influence they claim we wield over American political and economic institutions. Some even believe we are part of a secret cabal working against the best interests of the United States, characterizing my family and me as “internationalists” and of conspiring with others around the world to build a more integrated global political and economic structure — one world, if you will. If that’s the charge, I stand guilty, and I am proud of it.

Two major means the establishment employs for controlling government policy: (1) through its influence within the two major parties and the mass media, it can usually assure that both the Republican and Democratic presidential candidates will be its own hand-picked men; (2) by stacking presidential cabinets with CFR members at key positions — especially those involving defense, finance, foreign policy, and national security — it can assure that America will move in the direction it wants. Since the council’s founding in 1921, 21 secretaries of defense or war, 19 secretaries of the treasury, 17 secretaries of state, and 15 CIA directors have hailed from the Council on Foreign Relations.

Background

Prior to the CFR’s founding, what Congressman Charles Lindbergh, Sr. (the father of the famous aviator) called the “Money Trust” — a cabal of international bankers including the houses of Rockefeller, Morgan, and Rothschild — conspired to create the Federal Reserve System. Their agents, such as Paul Warburg and Benjamin Strong, who had secretly planned the Fed at a nine-day meeting on Jekyll Island, were then put in charge of the system itself. This gave them control of American interest rates, and, by virtue of this, control of the stock market, as well as the capacity to have the U.S. government spend without limit by having the Fed create money from nothing. The result has been decades of inflation and skyrocketing national debt. (For full details, see the April 13, 2009 New American or [Our Monetary Mayhem Began With the Fed.](#))

Not just an accumulation of wealth, but a consolidation of political power was involved. The Money Trust had backed Woodrow Wilson in the presidential elections, and then controlled him through their front man, Edward Mandell House, who lived in the White House. The trust recognized how the power of government could be used to advance their own interests.



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Wilson, surrounded by the bankers, traveled to the Paris Peace Conference of 1919, which was settling the aftermath of World War I. His chief proposal there, of course, was the League of Nations — a first step toward world government. However, although the League was established by the Versailles Treaty, the United States did not join because the Senate refused to ratify the treaty.

In response to this rejection, the bankers' circle, still in Paris, held a series of meetings and proposed to establish a new organization in the United States, whose purpose would be to lead America into the League. This organization was incorporated in New York City two years later as the Council on Foreign Relations.

Architects of a New World Order

The CFR's goal was formation of an incrementally stronger world government. Admiral Chester Ward, former Judge Advocate of the U.S. Navy, was a CFR member for 16 years before resigning in disgust. He stated: "The main purpose of the Council on Foreign Relations is promoting the disarmament of U.S. sovereignty and national independence, and submergence into an all-powerful one-world government."

After World War II, the League's successor, the United Nations, was born. Contrary to what the public is commonly told, the UN was not founded by nations who had tired of war. The UN was conceived by a group of CFR members in the State Department calling themselves the Informal Agenda Group. They drafted the original proposal for the UN, and secured the approval of President Roosevelt, who then made establishing the UN his highest postwar priority. When the UN held its founding meeting in San Francisco in 1945, 47 of the American delegates were CFR members.

Though the UN was not initially set up as a world government, the intent was that it would develop into one over time. John Foster Dulles (CFR), an American delegate to the UN founding meeting who later became Secretary of State under Eisenhower, acknowledged as much in his book [War or Peace](#): "The United Nations represents not a *final* stage in the development of world order, but only a primitive stage. Therefore its primary task is to create the conditions which will make possible a more highly developed organization."

Two other postwar institutions, the World Bank and International Monetary Fund, were technically created at the 1944 Bretton Woods Conference. But the initial planning was done by the CFR's Economic and Finance Group, part of their wartime War and Peace Studies Project. The World Bank and IMF act as a loan-guarantee scheme for multinational banks. When a loan to a foreign country goes awry, the World Bank and IMF step in with taxpayer money, ensuring that the private banks continue to receive interest payments. Furthermore, the World Bank and IMF dictate conditions to the countries receiving bailouts, thus giving the bankers a measure of political control over indebted nations.

Despite what Americans were told, the postwar Marshall Plan was not invented by General George Marshall, though he did announce it in a 1947 Harvard commencement speech. The Marshall Plan was dreamed up at a CFR study group with David Rockefeller as its secretary. Marshall was simply selected to announce the plan because, as a general, he would be perceived as politically neutral and help garner bipartisan congressional support for the plan. Unknown to the public, Marshall Plan funds were circuitously rerouted by John J. McCloy — appointed U.S. High Commissioner to Germany — to Jean Monnet, founder of the Common Market, which evolved into today's European Union, a microcosm of world government. McCloy returned home to become chairman of the Council on Foreign Relations in 1953.

The tragic Vietnam War was run almost entirely by CFR members. William P. Bundy (CFR) drafted the



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Tonkin Gulf Resolution before the now-discredited Tonkin Gulf Incident even took place. Bundy's father-in-law, Dean Acheson (CFR), as leader of a senior team of advisers nicknamed "the Wise Men," persuaded Lyndon Baines Johnson to dramatically escalate the war beginning in 1965. And Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara (CFR) helped develop the "rules of engagement" (e.g., preventing the Air Force from attacking critical targets) that guaranteed the war's disastrous prolongation. This generated a huge slide to the left among American college students. When Bundy left the State Department, David Rockefeller appointed him editor of the CFR's journal *Foreign Affairs*. And McNamara, one of the leading architects of the Vietnam War debacle, became president of the World Bank.

Broadening the Scheme

The CFR is not a uniquely American phenomenon. It has counterpart organizations throughout the world — e.g., the Royal Institute of International Affairs in England, the French Institute of International Relations, etc.

To help coordinate policy on an international scale, CFR chairman David Rockefeller and Zbigniew Brzezinski founded the Trilateral Commission in 1973. "Trilateral" refers to the coordination of three global regions: North America, Europe, and Asia. The commission's meetings allow the gathering together of heads of state, banks, multinational corporations, and media. Republican Senator Barry Goldwater called the commission "David Rockefeller's newest cabal," and said, "It is intended to be the vehicle for multinational consolidation of the commercial and banking interests by seizing control of the political government of the United States." The commission, like the annual secretive meetings of the Bilderbergers and the notorious Bohemian Grove, enables the international power elite to privately assemble and plan our destiny.

Jimmy Carter was a member of the commission, hand-picked to be president after meeting with Brzezinski and Rockefeller at the latter's Tarrytown, New York, estate. Carter filled his administration with CFR members and Trilateralists. Indeed, Brzezinski noted in his memoirs that "all the key foreign policy decision makers of the Carter Administration had previously served in the Trilateral Commission." Carter then embarked on a destructive course of foreign policy that included betraying the Shah of Iran, leading to the installment of Ayatollah Khomeini and the U.S. hostage crisis; betraying President Anastasio Somoza of Nicaragua, resulting in a Marxist dictatorship under the Sandinistas; and betraying Taiwan in order to recognize Communist China — a move previously set up by Richard Nixon's overtures to China, dictated by his own CFR advisers.

Under Bill Clinton (a CFR member who selected 12 CFR members for his cabinet), the United States enacted NAFTA, an economic alliance with Mexico and Canada. This arrangement was created by the establishment, not by the American people, who did not suspect the game being played on them. Not only did NAFTA swamp us with cheap, job-destroying imports, but it was designed to be the foundation for a continental economic union leading to *political* union. Robert Pastor (CFR), a key architect of North American integration, acknowledged in the January/February 2004 issue of *Foreign Affairs*: "NAFTA was merely the first draft of an economic constitution for North America." And Andrew Reding of the World Policy Institute said: "NAFTA will signal the formation, however tentatively, of a new political unit — North America. *With economic integration will come political integration*. By whatever name, this is an incipient form of international government. Following the lead of the Europeans, North Americans should begin considering formation of a continental parliament." [Emphasis added.]

A similar stratagem had been used against the peoples of Europe — by first deceptively hooking them into an "economic" alliance called the Common Market, which then, requiring common laws to regulate



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trade, transformed via a series of steps into the European Union, the super-national government of Europe that is swallowing up national sovereignty.

Following the initial step enacted under Clinton, President George W. Bush, whose father was a CFR director, moved toward politicizing the NAFTA alliance. On March 23, 2005, he met Mexican President Vicente Fox and Canadian Prime Minister Paul Martin to launch the Security and Prosperity Partnership (SPP), the rudiments of a North American Union. CNN's Lou Dobbs said of it: "President Bush signed a formal agreement that will end the United States as we know it."

Furthermore, regional alliances such as the European Union and proposed North American Union are not ends, but only steppingstones to world government. As CFR/Trilateralist Zbigniew Brzezinski stated: "We cannot leap into world government in one quick step. The precondition for genuine globalization is progressive regionalization."

In furtherance of this, on April 30, 2007, President Bush stood at the White House beside Angela Merkel, president of the European Council, and José Manuel Barroso, president of the European Commission, and announced the signing of a new agreement to "strengthen transatlantic economic integration." It called for "joint work in the areas of regulatory cooperation, financial markets, trade and transport security, innovation and technological development, intellectual property rights, energy, investment, competition, services, and government procurement," and various other steps toward economic integration. But as usual, "economic integration" is the predecessor of *political* integration. CFR members have dreamed of a political union between the United States and Europe since the 1950s, when the CFR-dominated Atlantic Union Committee promoted a merger they called "Atlantica."

Enter Obama

Candidate Barack Obama revealed he would proceed with the Bush initiatives. In a speech in Berlin on July 24, 2008, he stated:

That is why the greatest danger of all is to allow new walls to divide us from one another. The walls between old allies on either side of the Atlantic cannot stand. The walls between the countries with the most and those with the least cannot stand. The walls between races and tribes; natives and immigrants; Christian and Muslim and Jew cannot stand. These now are the walls we must tear down.... Yes, there have been differences between America and Europe. No doubt, there will be differences in the future. But the burdens of global citizenship continue to bind us together.... In this new century, Americans and Europeans alike will be required to do more — not less. Partnership and cooperation among nations is not a choice; it is the one way, the only way, to protect our common security and advance our common humanity.

Obama had only been president for a little over two months when he traveled to Europe for a series of meetings with European leaders. He attended the G20 Summit, which ended with a tentative agreement to launch a new global financial system, using as the rationale for this major step toward global government the recent Fed- and government-spawned financial meltdown.

Henry Kissinger — foreign policy mouthpiece of the establishment for four decades — wrote an article for the January 12, 2009 issue of the *International Herald Tribune* entitled "The Chance for a New World Order." He stated:

As the new U.S. administration prepares to take office amid grave financial and international crises, it may seem counterintuitive to argue that the very unsettled nature of the international system generates a unique opportunity for creative diplomacy....



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Even the most affluent countries will confront shrinking resources. Each will have to redefine its national priorities. An international order will emerge if a system of compatible priorities comes into being....

The alternative to a new international order is chaos.

Kissinger also stated on CNBC's "Squawk on the Street": "The president-elect is coming into office at a moment when there is upheaval in many parts of the world simultaneously.... His task will be to develop an overall strategy for America in this period when, really, a new world order can be created. It's a great opportunity, it isn't just a crisis."

Past statements reveal that the establishment wants a single currency for the world, just as the EU has consolidated its currencies into the "euro." As far back as the 1944 Bretton Woods Conference, John Maynard Keynes proposed a world currency he dubbed *bancor*. Richard L. Gardner (CFR) wrote in the Fall 1984 *Foreign Affairs*: "I suggest a radical alternative scheme for the next century: the creation of common currency for all the industrial democracies and a joint Bank of Issue to determine that Monetary Policy."

In March of this year, Obama and British Prime Minister Gordon Brown met with reporters at the White House. Brown announced that "there is the possibility in the next few months of a global new deal that will involve all the countries of the world in sorting out and cleaning up the banking system." Obama added that

Globalization can be an enormous force for good.... But what is also true is ... we still have a 1930s regulatory system in place in most countries designed from the last great crisis, that we've got to update our institutions, our regulatory frameworks, so that the power of globalization is channeled for the benefit of ordinary men and women.

If trends continue, however, the changes can be expected to benefit a tiny handful of the global elite, not "ordinary men and women." Further evidence that Obama's administration will simply continue the globalist agenda is indicated by his appointments.

CFR Domination Continues

During his campaign, Obama selected the ubiquitous Zbigniew Brzezinski (CFR), promoter of the "regional" approach to world government, as one of his top foreign policy advisors. Obama called Brzezinski "one of our more outstanding thinkers" and "somebody I have learned an immense amount from." Presumably Brzezinski's teachings included the world government he advocates.

For Treasury Secretary, Obama chose Timothy Geithner: Senior Fellow in International Economics at the CFR, Bilderberger, former head of the New York Federal Reserve, and former employee of both the IMF and Kissinger Associates. One doesn't get more establishment than that! It is Geithner who is managing the bailout of Wall Street with taxpayer dollars. Assisting Geithner at Treasury in overseeing the auto industry bailout is fellow CFR member Stephen Rattner.

For Director of the National Economic Council — a U.S. government agency created by a Bill Clinton executive order — Obama selected Lawrence Summers (CFR, Bilderberger). Former Chief Economist at the World Bank, his last position was at the investment firm of D. E. Shaw & Co, where he earned \$5.2 million in one year while working one day per week. Henry Kissinger had said Summers should "be given a White House post in which he was charged with shooting down or fixing bad ideas."

For Defense Secretary, Obama elected to continue with Bush pick Robert Gates (CFR, Bilderberger).



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During the Carter administration, Gates served as a special assistant to Zbigniew Brzezinski. In 2004, he co-chaired a CFR Task Force on Iran with Brzezinski, who lauded Gates in *Time* in 2008. Joining Gates in the Defense Department are fellow CFR members Michele Flournoy (Under Secretary of Defense for Policy), Jeh C. Johnson (Defense Department General Counsel), and Kathleen Hicks (Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Strategy, Plans and Forces).

For Secretary of State, Obama chose Hillary Clinton, who has attended the top-secret Bilderberger meetings. Hillary is not a CFR member, but husband Bill is, and her State Department is laden with CFR members, including James B. Steinberg (Deputy Secretary of State), William J. Burns (Under Secretary for Political Affairs), Susan Rice (U.S. Ambassador to the UN), Jacob J. Lew (Deputy Secretary of State for Management and Resources), Todd Stern (Special Envoy for Climate Change), and many others.

The Department of Homeland Security, which many Americans fear may turn our country into an Orwellian surveillance society, was conceived before 9/11 by a task force called the U.S. Commission on National Security, nine of whose 12 members belonged to the CFR. The administration of the department under Obama is particularly heavy with CFR members, including Janet Napolitano (Secretary), Jane Holl Lute (Deputy Secretary), Juliette Kayyem (Assistant Secretary, Office of Intergovernmental Programs), and Alan Bersin (Assistant Secretary, Office of International Affairs).

Thus the CFR continues to dominate our government's key areas: finance, defense, foreign policy, and security. To this may be added various other Obama CFR appointees, such as Mona Sutphen (White House Deputy Chief of Staff), Paul Volcker (Chairman, Economic Recovery Advisory Board), Peter Cowhey, (Senior Counsel, Office of U.S. Trade Representative), and Eric Shinseki (Secretary of Veterans Affairs).

The Future

The idea that Barack Obama became president from a "grass-roots" movement is illusory. American government policy continues to be largely dictated by the rich and the few. This is generally unknown to the public — not because it is a bizarre conspiracy theory, but because the same power elite who run our government, mega-banks, and multinational corporations *also run the major media*, as an inspection of the CFR membership roster would reveal.

Membership in the CFR, of course, is not an automatic condemnation. A few people are added as "window dressing" to give the group distinction and a veneer of diversity. An example is movie star Angelina Jolie. No one suspects Jolie knows much about foreign affairs or is a conspirator for world government. But within the CFR are hardcore globalists who, linked with their foreign counterparts through the Bilderbergers and Trilateral Commission, head the drive for one-world government.

Though numerically small (less than 1,000 members during the Kennedy years, less than 4,500 today), this organization has dominated every administration for over seven decades.

As long as the CFR controls our government, we can anticipate more of the same: diminishing national sovereignty; free flow of immigration (which confuses national identity and weakens national loyalties); increasing jobs losses through multinational trade agreements; further internationalization of law (Law of the Sea Treaty, Kyoto Protocol, World Court, global taxation, etc.); increasing loss of freedoms in a "surveillance society"; progressive organization of the United States, Mexico, and Canada into a North American Union; and ultimately, broader merger into a world government where all power will be concentrated in the hands of the elite.



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