



Written by [Warren Mass](#) on February 21, 2017

Trump Picks CFR Member for New National Security Advisor

In a statement to reporters at his Mar-a-Lago estate in Florida on February 20, President Trump named Lieutenant General H.R. McMaster as his national security adviser (NSA). In his statement, Trump described McMaster as “a man of tremendous talent and tremendous experience.”

The post (officially called the assistant to the president for national security affairs — APNSA) is filled by appointment by the president and does not require confirmation by the Senate.



McMaster will replace Michael Flynn, who was asked to resign after allegedly misleading Vice President Mike Pence and the FBI about conversations he had with the Russian ambassador to the United States about U.S. sanctions against Russia over Russian activity in Crimea. Flynn held the post for less than a month before resigning on February 13.

Retired Lieutenant General Keith Kellogg served as acting NSA during the interim vacancy, and he will remain on the National Security Council (NSC) as chief of staff.

McMaster will remain on active duty in the Army.

During his statement to reporters, Trump sat with McMaster and Kellogg and said the two would be “working together.” “That combination is very, very special,” the president added.

McMaster thanked Trump for the opportunity to serve as NSA and Kellogg said that he was honored to serve with McMaster, who he called “a great statesman, a great soldier.”

“This is a great team,” Trump said. “Our country is lucky to have two people like this.”

McMaster is a veteran of the 1991 Gulf War, during which he served as captain commanding Eagle Troop of the 2nd Armored Cavalry Regiment at the Battle of 73 Easting. During that battle, the nine tanks of Eagle Troop destroyed over 80 Iraqi Republican Guard tanks. McMaster was awarded the Silver Star as a result of his performance. Following that service, his military career showed impressive accomplishments:

- From 1999 to 2002, McMaster commanded 1st Squadron, 4th Cavalry Regiment, and then took a series of staff positions at U.S. Central Command (USCENTCOM).
- McMaster rose through the ranks to colonel working on the staff of USCENTCOM as executive officer to Deputy Commander Lieutenant General John Abizaid.
- In 2003 he completed an Army War College research fellowship at Stanford University’s Hoover Institution.
- In 2004, McMaster was assigned to command the 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment (3rd ACR), which



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soon deployed for its second tour in Iraq and was assigned the mission of securing the city of Tal Afar. That mission culminated with Operation Restoring Rights and the defeat of the city's insurgent strongholds. This successful operation was praised by then-President George W. Bush.

- From August 2007 to August 2008 McMaster was part of what was described as an “elite team of officers advising U.S. commander” General David Petraeus on counterinsurgency operations while Petraeus directed a revision of the Army's Counterinsurgency Field Manual during his command of the Army's Combined Arms Center.
- McMaster was promoted to brigadier general in 2008. Army Chief of Staff General Martin Dempsey remarked in 2011 that McMaster was “probably our best Brigadier General.” He was nominated for the rank of major general in 2012 and selected to be the commander of the Army's Maneuver Center of Excellence at Ft. Benning, Georgia. In February 2014, Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel nominated McMaster to his present rank of lieutenant general. He subsequently became deputy commanding general of the Training and Doctrine Command and director of TRADOC's Army Capabilities Integration Center.

McMaster authored a book in 1997 entitled *Dereliction of Duty: Lyndon Johnson, Robert McNamara, The Joint Chiefs of Staff, and the Lies that Led to Vietnam* that was critical of the high-ranking U.S. military leadership conducting the Vietnam War. In that book, which was written as part of his Ph.D. dissertation at UNC, McMaster criticized the military leadership for insufficiently challenging Defense Secretary Robert McNamara and President Lyndon Johnson over their war strategy. He charged that these leaders did not develop a plan of action that would defeat the communist Viet Cong insurgency or the regular North Vietnamese Army.

In the conclusion to that work, McMasters stated, “The war in Vietnam was not lost in the field, nor was it lost on the front pages of the *New York Times* or the college campuses. It was lost in Washington, D.C.”

Interestingly, McMaster's prime target in his exposé, former Defense Secretary Robert McNamara, was a longtime member of the same elite internationalist organization of which McMaster is himself a member — the Council on Foreign Relations (CFR). We wrote in detail about the CFR in [an article last March](#) about then-presidential candidate Senator Ted Cruz's (R-Texas) proposed “high-profile national security coalition” that would have advised Cruz on foreign-policy issues had he been elected president.

In that article, we noted that one of Cruz's picks for his proposed security coalition was former Assistant Secretary of State Elliott Abrams. Abrams, we observed, is the very personification of the “Washington establishment” that Cruz had frequently condemned. Trump also ran for the presidency on an anti-Washington establishment platform that used “drain the swamp” as its catch-all rallying cry.

Abrams was an assistant secretary of state in the Reagan administration and a deputy national security advisor in the George W. Bush administration; he is also a senior fellow for Middle Eastern Studies at the Council on Foreign Relations, making him what many would call an “establishment insider.”

Two other members of the proposed Cruz team are also CFR members: Stewart Baker, who served as assistant secretary for policy at DHS, as general counsel of the National Security Agency, and as general counsel of the bipartisan commission that investigated intelligence failures involving WMD and Iraq; and Michael Pillsbury, who was a Reagan campaign advisor in 1980, served as assistant undersecretary of defense for policy planning under President Reagan, and is the author of three books on China.



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We observed in that article:

Apparently, the Cruz campaign believes (perhaps justifiably so) that so few conservatives know anything about the Council on Foreign Relations (CFR) that it is no longer considered to be politically risky for a conservative, self-proclaimed “anti-establishment” candidate to openly place a man who is not merely a CFR member — but a CFR senior fellow — in a prominent slot.

We continued by observing that perhaps Christian economist Gary North was correct about the relative obscurity of the CFR when he wrote in a column for [LewRockwell.com](#) four years ago:

The story of the CFR is well known to those of us who have been in the conservative wing of the party for over 50 years. It has been over half a century since Dan Smoot wrote *The Invisible Government* (1960). In late 1964, Robert Welch of the John Birch Society shifted his entire life’s work from anti-Communism to anti-conspiracy, and forced the restructuring of the Birch Society’s magazine, *American Opinion*. The story of the CFR/Federal Reserve alliance has been known to the hard-core Right for a generation. But it is still not known to the standard conservative, who came into the movement in 1980 or later.

Since Trump owes his election to the presidency primarily to those “standard conservatives,” what we applied to Cruz (i.e., that it is no longer considered to be politically risky for a conservative, self-proclaimed “anti-establishment” candidate to openly place a man who is a CFR member in a prominent slot) also applies to Trump. For the “standard conservative,” the fact that McMaster is a CFR member is largely irrelevant.

When considering how relevant McMaster’s CFR membership may be in his strategic position in the Trump administration, we should examine how closely he adheres to the CFR’s record for advancing internationalism, eradicating national borders, and entangling the United States and other nations into a number of supranational organizations of which the UN is the outstanding, but not the only, example.

In 2006, McMaster joined the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) in London as a senior research associate with a mandate to “conduct research to identify opportunities for improved multi-national cooperation and political-military integration in the areas of counterinsurgency, counter-terrorism, and state building,” and to devise “better tactics to battle terrorism.”

There are several disturbing phrases (e.g., “multi-national cooperation,” “political-military integration”) found in that description of McMaster’s mandate — along with his association with the IISS, which has a decidedly internationalist bent. For example, a newsletter posted by the Royal Institute of International Affairs (commonly known as Chatham House), which has long been a type of “sister” counterpart to the CFR in Britain, announced a conference at the Ritz Carlton in Berlin on October 17-19, 2014 entitled “Europe’s Strategic Choices: Building Prosperity and Security.” Listed on the program as one of the conference’s keynote speakers at a plenary session, “Defining Europe’s Global Role and Agenda,” was François Heisbourg, chairman, International Institute for Strategic Studies.

It seems incredible that Chatham House would invite the chairman of the IISS to co-chair a plenary session if both organizations’ objectives were not compatible. As for cooperation between Chatham House and the CFR, the two groups have a long history together, ever since both were founded after World War I. Chatham House started as the Royal Institute of International Affairs in London in 1920 and the CFR was founded in New York in 1921. The internationalists who founded both organizations received a setback of their objective to establish a worldwide “parliament of man” when the U.S. Senate rejected the treaty that would have allowed the United States to join the League of Nations. They



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responded by cooperating throughout World War II to cement the U.S.-British alliance and to try again to form a worldwide parliament of nations by founding the UN in 1945. Their important influence is discussed in the book *Think Tanks and Power in Foreign Policy: A Comparative Study of the Role and Influence of the Council on Foreign Relations and the Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1939-1945*, by I. Parmar.

A 2014 article posted by *The New American*, "[Internet Control: CFR/Chatham House Globalists Conclude Secret Summit, Issue Study](#)," discusses the threatened control of the Internet by the internationalists of the Global Commission on Internet Governance (GCIG). But it also highlights the interconnection between American CFR members and Chatham House. It states:

As we reported earlier this year, the high-powered GCIG was appointed by the Royal Institute of International Affairs, the British globalist group more commonly known as Chatham House (see [here](#) and [here](#)). The commission membership includes such establishment one-worlders and prominent members of the Council on Foreign Relations (CFR) as Nobel Prize-winning economist Michael Spence, author of *The Next Convergence*; and Professor Joseph Nye, former dean of the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University and current North American chairman of the Trilateral Commission. Former Secretary of Homeland Security Michael Chertoff is also a GCIG member.

McMaster's long military career and successes are impressive and worthy of much recognition. And his exposure of the failures of our nation's conduct of the no-win war in Vietnam indicates that he is well aware of the pitfalls of an interventionist foreign policy gone wrong. Yet, his membership in the CFR and his association with the IISS are a disturbing indication that he is very much at home among internationalists. One would have expected an interventionist, neoconservative CFR member such as John McCain to have appointed a man such as McMaster to his inner circle. McCain, in fact, did express hearty approval of Trump's pick, saying, "I have had the honor of knowing [McMaster] for many years, and he is a man of genuine intellect, character, and ability." McCain tweeted: "Lt Gen HR McMaster is outstanding choice for nat'l security advisor — man of genuine intellect, character & ability."

Considering how critical of Trump's performance McCain has been thus far, such approval should raise suspicions.

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