

Politics 101: The Influence of Money on U.S. Foreign Policy. The Cases of Iraq, Libya, Syria and Iran

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Region: [USA](#)

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*"I am driven with a mission from God. God would tell me, 'George go and fight these terrorists in Afghanistan'. And I did. — And then God would tell me 'George, go and end the tyranny in Iraq'. And I did." - U.S. Republican **President George W. Bush** (1946-), in a conversion with a Palestinian delegation in July 2003, during the Israeli-Palestinian summit at the Egyptian resort of Sharm el-Sheikh.*

*"They [the George W. Bush administration] lied... They said there were weapons of mass destruction [in Iraq]. There were none. And they knew there were none. There were no weapons of mass destruction... We spent \$2 trillion, thousands of lives. ... Obviously, it was a mistake. George Bush made a mistake. We can make mistakes. But that one was a beauty. We should have never been in Iraq. We have destabilized the Middle East." - U.S. Republican **President Donald Trump** (1946-), statement made during a CBS News GOP presidential debate, on Saturday, February 13, 2016.*

*"I know what America is. America is a thing you can move very easily, move it in the right direction. They won't get in the way." - **Benjamin Netanyahu** (1949-), current Israeli Prime Minister, in a video in 2001, addressing Israeli settlers.*

*[After 9/11 in 2001, I was shown] "a memo that describes how we're going to take out seven countries in five years, starting with Iraq, and then Syria, Lebanon, Libya, Somalia, Sudan and, finishing off, Iran." - **General Wesley Clark** (1944-), in a video interview on Tues. Mar. 2, 2007 by journalist Amy Goodman.*

Just as Republican [George W. Bush](#) invented the pretext of "weapons of mass destruction", in 2003, to deceive Americans and the rest of the world and to justify a military invasion of Iraq, **Donald Trump** seems to follow on Bush's footsteps in actively searching for a pretext for another military confrontation in the Middle East, this time against Iran. George W. Bush had even claimed, at the time, that [religion](#) was behind his military interventionism when he said, in the summer of 2003, in a bout of hubristic delusion, that "God told me to end the tyranny in Iraq."

Now another American Republican president, Donald Trump, appears to see himself on a similar mission, i.e. to attack another country, in violation of international law. This time the target of his nasty [attack du jour](#) is the country of Iran, a country run by [theocrats](#), which is facing deep domestic problems, both economic and political. Indeed, for some time now, Trump has been making inflammatory remarks against that country's domestic affairs, in the hope of provoking a response and thus justifying a military aggression.

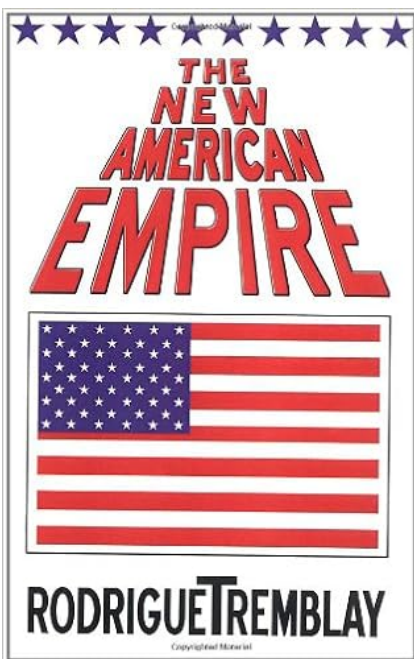
According to Donald Trump, “We Should Have Never Been in Iraq.”

Donald Trump’s attacks against Iran are all the more amazing and unreal because, on multiple occasions during the last U.S. presidential campaign, candidate Trump openly accused George W. Bush of [lying to invade Iraq](#), adding during a CBS News GOP presidential debate, on Saturday, February 13, 2016,

“We should have never been in Iraq. We have destabilized the Middle East.”

Is Donald Trump suffering from amnesia, or is he simply incoherent in his thoughts?

As a matter of fact, and despite the neocon propaganda to the contrary, the Bush-Cheney administration did [destabilize](#) the Middle East, and these politicians caused the death of hundreds of thousands of men, women and children, and they created millions of refugees, many of them ending up in Europe. But possibly worse, from a U.S. and Israel point of view, the 2003 American military invasion of Iraq has resulted in significantly increasing the geopolitical influence of Shiite Iran in the region, by removing from power the Sunni government of Saddam Hussein (1937-2006) and by installing a Shiite government in its place.



This is a question that I raised in my book about the Iraq war, [The New American Empire](#). In it, I not only questioned the legality of such a military invasion of a sovereign country, in violation of the U.N. Charter, but also its wisdom, since Iran was undoubtedly going to profit immensely from a newly installed Shiite government in Baghdad... as it did.

What is doubly amazing is that both Republican American presidents, George W. Bush and Donald Trump, received the same uncritical financial and political support from the very same super rich [American Zionist donors](#) and from American [Evangelical Christians](#), although Bush’s support was more widespread than Trump’s, due to the 9/11 attacks in 2001. This time around, however, Donald Trump is not only an [abnormal president](#); he is also a [minority president](#), staunchly supported by only about one third of Americans.

Money is King in U.S. Foreign Policy, Especially Regarding the Middle East

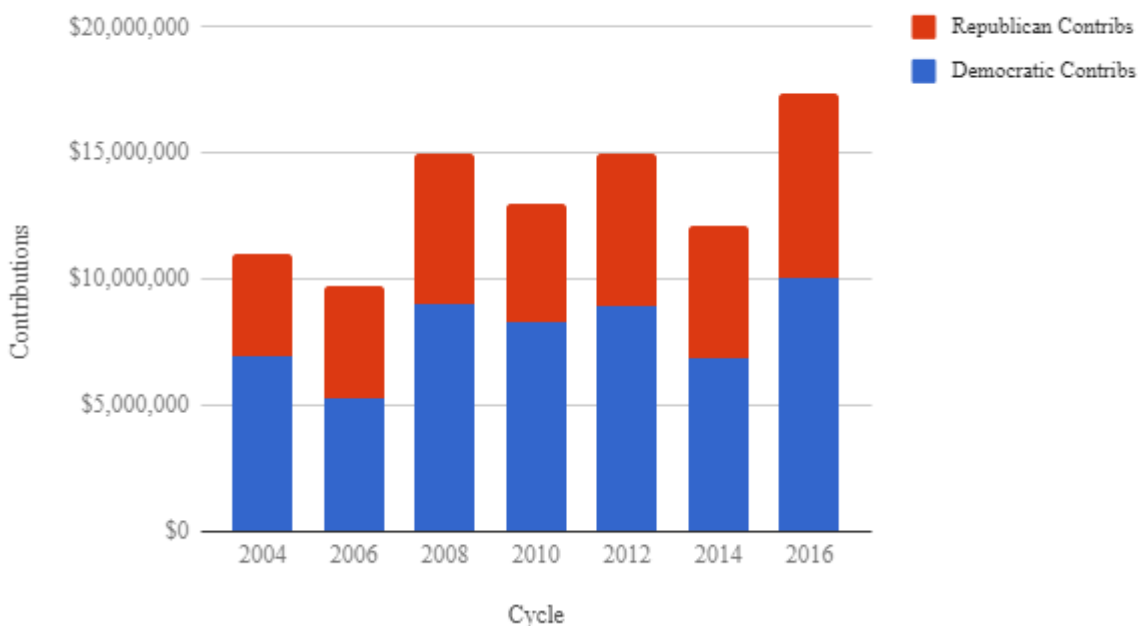
Nowadays, in American politics, money talks and big money talks even louder. In [2010](#), the partisan U.S. Supreme Court made sure that this be the case when it imposed its anti-democratic doctrine of “*Money Is Speech*”, in a 5-4 decision. For instance, in 2016, because of huge campaign contributions from one-issue [super rich donors](#) (mega donors), nearly all GOP primary presidential contenders, Donald Trump in front, ended up promising to move the American embassy from Tel-Aviv to Jerusalem and to ring up Israeli Prime Minister [Benjamin Netanyahu](#) on their first day in the Oval Office, according to a [Newsweek report](#).

So far, Donald Trump has already [paid](#) some of his political debt to his mega donors by announcing his willingness to move the U.S. embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. But even before his inauguration on January 20, 2017, Trump’s entourage was actively [intervening](#) on behalf of a foreign government, the Israeli government, at the United Nations.

Such subservience of American politicians to the wishes of big campaign contributors may [partly explain](#) why the United States has one of the [lowest voter turnouts](#) in its elections among modern world democracies. During the 2016 American Presidential election, for example, less than 56% of voting age citizens bothered to [vote](#), a 20-year low. According to the Pew Research Center, among the 35 highly developed countries of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the United States [ranks 28th](#) in terms of turnout in recent national elections. For example, electoral turnouts in Belgium (87%), Sweden (83%) or Denmark (80%) were much higher.

Because of the overwhelming importance of money in U.S. politics and because rich [pro-Israel lobbies](#) are very active and prominent political [donors](#), American policies in the Middle East have been increasingly skewed in the direction dictated by the Israeli government and its lobbies in the United States. There seems to exist a *de facto* [US-Israel axis](#), which often includes Saudi Arabia, as far as the Middle East is concerned.

Pro-Israel interest group contributions to federal candidates and parties



Indeed, it's impossible to understand what has been going on for decades in that part of the world, with its string of wars, destruction and deaths, without taking into consideration the overwhelming influence of that axis, which goes beyond partisan party lines in Washington D.C. [In a [speech](#) during the Democratic primary in Pennsylvania, in April 2008, when she was a presidential candidate, **Hillary Clinton** declared "*If I'm President, we will attack Iran... We would be able to totally obliterate them!*"]

A Joint U.S.-Israeli Operation Against Iran could now be in the Making

When the U.S. government wishes to undermine a foreign government and create the conditions for a [regime change](#), one should be on the lookout for some [false flag operations](#) by well-funded so called "intelligence or covert organizations", which are specialists in fomenting destabilization in a country, under the [hypocritical](#) cover of defending human rights.

As [General Wesley Clark](#) (1944-) revealed in 2007 (see quote above), Iran is the last country in a long list of countries, whose government the Pentagon had plans to overthrow. The fact that some superficial media fail to inform their readers and listeners about such well-known plans is nothing less than a journalistic scandal.

Such an overall plan would fit perfectly well with the recently announced [American-Israeli "strategic plan"](#) against Iran. It is a curious coincidence that the most important political protests in Iran since 2009 have come about just after a secret agreement was finalized between the U.S and Israel, (with the assistance of Saudi Arabia), to destabilize Iran. Indeed, in their relations with Iran, the United States and Israel seem to be acting as a single political entity.

This could also explain why President Donald Trump, against all logic, is so adamant in insisting that the Iranian government is not in compliance with the [P5+1 nuclear deal](#), even though the U.N. and the five other nations in the deal (China, France, Russia, the U. K. and Germany) all agree that Iran is actually in compliance with the agreement. On January 12, Trump renewed his charges against the Iran Deal, without completely withdrawing his country from the deal, but by adding new [conditions and economic sanctions](#) against Iran, an act that is, in itself, a violation of the deal. The only government that is in violation of the Iran Deal is the Trump administration, not the Iranian government.

About Iran, it can be said that Donald Trump is dutifully following the long established neoconservative script, at the U.S. Pentagon and elsewhere in Washington D.C., to target this country for the same destabilization overall plan, which was implemented successfully against [Iraq](#) in 2003, [Libya](#) in 2011 and [Syria](#) in 2013, without forgetting the coup in [Ukraine](#) in 2014.

It doesn't matter much who sits in the White House or which political party controls the U.S. Congress, at a given time, the same political forces are dominant and the same [neocon-inspired American foreign policy](#) is implemented in the Middle East. The slight difference recently has been that Barack Obama was somewhat less enthusiastic in implementing the policy than George W. Bush or Donald Trump. The results, however, have been the same: governments have been overthrown and people have been killed.

Conclusion

In foreign affairs as in other matters, the Trump administration is going full speed ahead with improvised and dubious policies without fully considering all the consequences ahead. The crises will come later on.

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