

Editor's note: this transcript was created from the broadcast quality audio recording program featuring Colonel Lawrence Wilkerson, and produced by Maria Gilardin for her weekly radio program, [Time Of Useful Consciousness](#). Colonel Wilkerson spoke on March 18, 2016 at the conference held at the National Press Club in Washington, DC titled, [Israel's Influence: Good or Bad for America?](#). This transcript combines Maria's Introduction and Colonel Wilkerson's presentation. Thanks to the Institute for Research: Middle Eastern Policy (IRmep), and the American Educational Trust (AET), publisher of the *Washington Report on Middle East Affairs* for the [Wilkerson recording](#) and [rush transcript](#) and to Maria Gilardin for her continuity.

Source: < <https://ratical.org/ratville/IsraelInfluenceOnUSFP.html> >

# Israel's Influence: Good or Bad for America?

by Colonel Lawrence Wilkerson

Speaking at [Israel's Influence: Good or Bad for America?](#)

National Press Club, Washington, DC



18 March 2016

TUC aka *Time of Useful Consciousness* is an aeronautical term. The time between the onset of oxygen deficiency and the loss of consciousness, the brief moments in which a pilot may save the plane.

Broadcast quality mp3 file of the 30 minute program comprising this transcript is here:

<<http://tucradio.org/audio/ColonelLawrenceWilkerson.mp3>>

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## **Introduction**

by Maria Gilardin

Against the background of an increasingly more urgent debate over the sources of conflict in the Middle East, the growth of ISIS, the refugee crisis, and the role of the US armed interventions in Iraq, Libya, and Syria; this question takes on great importance: Who is setting Middle East policy in the US? Who decides whether to go to war and who receives weapons and financial aid and who gets bombed?

These and other topics were addressed at the National Press Club in Washington, DC, on March 18, 2016 at the conference on ["Israel's Influence: Good or Bad for America?"](#) And you will hear from one of their speakers in a moment: Retired Colonel Lawrence Wilkerson is the highest ranking US foreign policy whistle blower to date. He was Secretary of State Colin Powell's Chief of Staff from 2002 to 2005 during the fateful time of the US war on Iraq.

As early as 2007 Wilkerson stated in a Dutch documentary that AIPAC, the American Israel Public Affairs

Committee, was highly influential in the Bush Administration's decision to go to war in Iraq.[1]

AIPAC is a lobbying group that advocates pro-Israel policy to the Congress and Executive Branch of the United States. It has been called "the most important organization affecting America's relationship with Israel," and one of the most powerful lobbying groups in the U.S.

Unlike lobbies for all other foreign countries, it is not required to register with the Justice Department as a foreign agent (having turned back efforts of the Kennedy administration to get its predecessor, the American Zionist Council, to do so in 1963.)[2]

When Lawrence Wilkerson spoke in March 2016, the annual AIPAC conference was just two days away.

After hearing from Vice-President Joe Biden on its opening night, those watching CSPAN the following day would be treated to an extraordinary feature in the US presidential races when all candidates for President, with the exception of Bernie Sanders, appeared as special guests at the AIPAC conference.

All of them – regardless of party affiliation, pledged their loyalty, and promised money and whatever weapons Israel might require to maintain its qualitative military edge over all the other countries in the region, and they promised to come to its defense should it be attacked. While both Donald Trump and Ted Cruz said that they would tear up the deal negotiated with Iran (to reduce its nuclear enrichment program) among their first acts in office, Hillary Clinton, stressed that she would "impose real consequences [on Iran] for even the smallest violations of this agreement."

The important question of Israel's role in setting US foreign policy is rarely covered by the media – and if it is mentioned it is invariably overwhelmed by the enormous deficit of education among the general public.

An Opinion poll by Google Consumer Survey in March 2016 found that in the US alone, among Canada, Mexico and Great Britain, a majority of respondents believe that the Palestinians are occupying Israeli land rather than that it is Israel that is occupying Palestinian land.[3] A historic fact that the rest of the world and the World Court agree on.

This would explain why the majority of U.S. adults tend to see Israelis as victims and Palestinians as perpetrators. One may suspect that they are unaware of the United Nations Security Council use of the term 'territories occupied' following the 1967 Six-Day War.

To fill that void in understanding the Institute for Research: Middle Eastern Policy (IRmep),[4] and the American Educational Trust (AET), publisher of the *Washington Report on Middle East Affairs*[5] have held annual conferences at the National Press Club in Washington DC since 2014.[6]

The 2016 conference: "[Israel's Influence: Good or Bad for America?](#)" was held on Friday, March 18.

Colonel Lawrence Wilkerson spoke on "Israel's Influence on US Foreign Policy." Whistle-blowers in this time and age are rare enough, and to become one is increasingly risky. But coming from the military such as Wilkerson, who was Colin Powell's Chief of Staff from 2002 to 2005, is doubly significant.

His testimony offers a glimpse into the secret and expensive world of the military machine that absorbs the majority of taxes, causes untold harm, but nevertheless is past scrutiny. In addition Wilkerson's testimony also shows disagreements behind the scenes that could become so significant if they were not kept shrouded in secrecy – at least until it is too late.

Wilkerson is working on a book about the first George W. Bush administration. He currently is [Distinguished Adjunct Professor of Government and Public Policy](#) at the [College of William and Mary](#) in Williamsburg, Virginia.

Here is Colonel Lawrence Wilkerson, recorded in March 2016. He's addressing Israel's influence on U.S. foreign policy.



## Israeli Influence on U.S. Foreign Policy

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Moderator Dale Sprusansky: Our first speaker will be Colonel Lawrence Wilkerson. He's probably best known for serving as Secretary of State Colin Powell's chief of staff from 2002 to 2005. Before that, he served as associate director of the State Department's Policy Planning staff under Ambassador [Richard Haass](#). Before his time with the State Department, he had 31 years of service in the U.S. Army. During that time, he was a faculty member at the [U.S. Naval War College](#) and deputy director of the [U.S. Marine Corps War College](#) in Quantico, and he retired in 1997 as a colonel. He's currently working on a book about the George W. Bush administration, which he worked in, and he's also a [Distinguished Adjunct Professor of Government and Public Policy](#) at the College of William & Mary in Williamsburg.

Thank you, and thank you all for coming out today. Since I'm limited in time, I want to get started right away.

Ever since 1948, Israel has been a foreign and security policy problem. That Israel was a problem—a rather large one as a matter of fact, in '47 and '48 even—was most recently pointed out to me by one of my truly brilliant students. In fact, in a decade of teaching at both the George Washington University Honors Program and William & Mary, and six years at two of the nation's war colleges, I've rarely had better papers than the one he submitted. At the end of our semester on Fateful Decision-Making—now, Fateful Decision-Making is what I teach in this seminar—and as the ancient Greek said, it's when old men send young men, and now women, to die for state purposes—and something we often forget—to kill others for state purposes.

He shall go unnamed, this student paper writer, but not unheralded by me, at least. I will say, too, that he had the additional characteristic, if you will, of being a Jewish American, which recalls to mind for me immediately a most unnerving moment as I had just begun my new career in 2001 as an erstwhile diplomat. I'd just entered the inner sanctum of a man who would prove to be very powerful at State over the next four years. He had only recently discovered that I had chosen to work for Richard Haass, in his capacity as State's director of policy planning, rather than staying directly under my old mentor, the new Secretary of State Colin Powell. "Why," he asked, "did you elect to work for that self-loathing Jew?" Recovering from mild shock, I looked him straight in the eye and replied, "I'll forget I heard that." I turned and evacuated his inner sanctum while he harrumphed to my rear.

I recall this little anecdote because it reveals what many use as a riposting device against any Jewish

American who, through critical thinking, questions from time to time the policies of the modern state of Israel and the U.S. relationship with that state. Its complement, of course, for gentiles like me is anti-Semite. I have no doubt were someone such as Alan Dershowitz, from whom I have heard, for example, to read my student's paper, the response "self-loathing Jew" would not be far from his lips.

In 1948, I would submit, there was no explicit such challenge for Jewish Americans or for any other American for that matter. The ingrained and highly partisan nature of the U.S.-Israel relationship and the neoconservative adoption of it in particular—Jim [Lobe], my hat off to you, [he'll talk more about that](#)[7]—had not yet come about. What my student rehearsed in the opening to his paper were the profound objections of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, of the iconic hero of World War II—after all, Harry Truman in a moment of apoplexy had essentially said, 'He won the war, he won the war'; he couldn't think of anything more to say about this man George Marshall, who was now Secretary of State—and others [who had] objected to what Harry Truman was about to do with regard to the State of Israel.

My student summed these objections that the Joint Chiefs had penned as the vehement Arab opposition to a Jewish state, the threats such opposition presented to the key oil imports from neighboring Arab countries, and then my student quoted the Joint Chiefs verbatim: "The decision to partition Palestine, if the decision were supported by the United States, would prejudice United States strategic interests in the Near and Middle East to the point that United States influence in the area would be"—and here come the words—"curtailed to that which could be maintained by military force." [8] Is that prescience, or is that prescience?

Harry Truman, on the other hand, as my student pointed out, summed up the case for, if you will, thusly. "I'm sorry, gentlemen," the president said, "but I have to answer to hundreds of thousands who are anxious for the success of Zionism. I do not have hundreds of thousands of Arabs among my constituents."

Marshall, in a tale that's not apocryphal, when Truman did decide that he was going to essentially recognize the state that had stood up, Israel, threatened not to vote for the president if he did. Coming from a man like Marshall, who as a military professional never voted in his life, this was almost stunning for Truman to hear. Of course, he went ahead, and so we began our relationship.

There were to be sure more counterarguments than the president's re-election, as my student also pointed out in this excellent paper: the horrors of Holocaust, the plight of hundreds of thousands of Jewish refugees, and the need to make up for the wrongs committed against the Jewish people, all spoke for recognition by Truman. My student continued, also in the [Balfour Declaration of 1917](#), the British had promised the Jewish people a homeland in Palestine.[9] And in the eyes of many Americans after World War II, it was up to the U.S. to give that home to them, and Harry S. Truman did just that.

Today, we can look back on a line of post-World War II presidents who tried to deal with the challenges and more that the Joint Chiefs of Staff had so presciently laid out. And to be honest, and as many of you in this audience probably are well aware, the Joint Chiefs were not breaking new ground. Ever since World War I and Louis Brandeis' influence on Woodrow Wilson[10] and his foremost adviser, Edward House, the U.S. State Department's position on the potential for a Jewish state in Palestine had been quite clear. It opposed the Zionist movement because it was a minority group interfering in United States foreign affairs.

Again, talk about prescience and there we have it—prescience *par excellence*.

Even so, could State at that time have envisioned the power of AIPAC today, particularly after Bill Clinton decided in 1995, as I recall, to make presidential appearances there *de rigueur*? I love that French phrase. I looked it up in Merriam Webster to see what English definitions were given to it. The second one was this: “necessary if you want to be popular.” Oh, Bill, the things you did for popularity’s sake.

But despite these heavily adverse conditions, most U.S. presidents managed a rather precarious balance. Whether as in the beginning, it was Eisenhower in ’56, as we’ve heard before, telling the Israelis, British, and French to get their invading military forces out of the Suez Canal area. Or it was Ronald Reagan in mid-to late 1980s, selling AWACS aircraft to the Saudis. Or George H.W. Bush insisting on real and serious work on the Middle East peace process following the first Gulf war in 1991, in which the U.S. had gained quite a bit of new leverage applicable to that process of survival and potential success. And you all know probably, too, there are some critics who’ve written quite eloquently in my view that George H.W. Bush lost the election in ’92 because of his vehement opposition to Israeli settlements. And then came George W. Bush, Dick Cheney and a presidency captured by the neoconservatives of which I was a part.

In a flash, Israel became publicly a strategic ally. Its Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, in every Arab eye dripping blood all over the Oval Office carpet, blood from Israel’s invasion and occupation of Lebanon in 1982 and ’83. I might add, an invasion we had to haul their asses out of, and ultimately at the cost of the greatest single-day casualty of Marines since Tarawa in World War II. This man, Ariel Sharon, became, in President Bush’s own words, “a man of peace.”

And all the fears of the 1948 Joint Chiefs of Staff loomed so largely in the rearview mirror of history that some of us in the U.S. government sucked in our collective breaths and found it hard to exhale thereafter. But, of course, we did, and ever since people just like us have been trying—clearly to little avail, with some brilliant exceptions, of which the Iran nuclear agreement is the most exceptional and recent—to restore that precarious balance maintained since World War II by all of the presidents.

And so, today, where are we in this relationship so fraught with danger—and, as has been pointed out, danger to both parties, to Israel and the United States? Today, how does U.S. policy toward Israel impact our overall foreign and security policy in adverse or positive ways?

To start, we have the unguarded words of General David Petraeus to illuminate our inquiries, before he was himself subjected to the ritual of head-bashing that accompany such remarks. In a hearing before the Senate Armed Services Committee in March of 2010, Petraeus said quite straightforwardly that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict foments anti-American sentiment in the region due to a perception of U.S. favoritism toward Israel, and it makes military operations that much more difficult.<sup>[11]</sup> These remarks came amidst a U.S.-Israeli dispute over housing units, 1,600 of them, in Jerusalem—illegal under international law, in defiance of U.N. Security Council resolutions, and destabilizing to the max. I can tell you that in the military councils, of which I’ve been part over three decades plus, this sentiment was often voiced, and at times in far more dramatic terms.

When my old mentor and boss, Colin Powell, and I used to talk about the issues here, we rarely if ever

complimented Israel on its additions to U.S. security posture in the region. Quite the opposite, as a matter of fact. Although today I suspect he would deny such conversations, and frankly I wouldn't blame him. It would prove my point.

But there is more. There is concrete evidence of Israel's detracting from U.S. security and of being a strategic liability rather than an asset. Where is, after all, U.S. hard power in southwest Asia, in Africa, and the Persian Gulf today? First, it ain't in Israel. Nor could it be unless the world was at war and all bets were off. And I'll come to that scenario in a minute.

Under any other conceivable scenario, the U.S. will never land meaningful military forces on the unsinkable Middle East aircraft carrier of Israel. That's a phrase used by some of my neoconservative colleagues. Every instance of the use of force by the U.S. in the region to date has proven that reality beyond the shadow of a doubt.

So where, exactly, is the hard power? It's in Qatar, it's in Bahrain, it's in Saudi Arabia, it's in Kuwait, Oman, Egypt, Djibouti and a host of other lesser places. The [largest U.S. Air Force complex on earth](#), for example, by some measures, is in Qatar. The most powerful fleet headquarters in the U.S. arsenal, [The Fifth \[Fleet\], is in Bahrain](#). The land-based aircraft carrier, if there is one, is Kuwait, not Israel, as both Gulf wars have proven. As a matter of fact, my comment during the first Gulf war, when we landed over half a million U.S. soldiers and all the supplies that went with them, was, "My God, another Marine, another soldier, we'll sink Kuwait."

In fact, in all my years in the military and beyond, I've never heard a serious suggestion of using Israel to help defend U.S. interests in the region. Instead, what I have heard many times is advice and decision-making to stay totally away from such use.

Moreover, each one of those genuine hard-power interests that I just enumerated is threatened, as General Petraeus pointed out indirectly, by the U.S. unbalanced role as Israel's lawyer and unquestioning great power supporter. In fact, examining the single strategic scenario in which use of Israel might be a viable option is so grim as to be self-defeating in conception as well as execution. God forbid.

Imagine, if you will, a general war in southwest Asia, with Turks fighting Russians, allied with Greeks; Iranians and Hezbollah, fighting Saudi proxies; Iraqis plunged into sectarian warfare, while the Kurds try desperately to survive; ISIS spread from Kabul through Aleppo, to Tripoli, and perhaps beyond; and the U.S. deciding to do more than provide special operating forces and air power. Imagine, in other words, the beginnings of a region-wide and then possibly global conflict.

Imagine, too, the only ally the U.S. will have in this is Israel. An Israel about to be overwhelmed itself, in all likelihood. People will be choosing sides. Jordan and Egypt will choose sides, as will 350 million to 400 million others. So, the U.S. lands major military forces on the unsinkable aircraft carrier Israel. This is, of course, after we mobilize fully, conscript at a minimum two million men and women, spend a year training them, and then enter the fray. Inconceivable? I hope so.

Another major and overwhelming negative influence that I saw up close and personal, besides these hard

power facts, was every time Rich Armitage, the Deputy Secretary of State at the time, took us to the budget drill. It's been highlighted here earlier. But I want to highlight it for you in even more graphic terms. We would go into the room with all the assistant secretaries, undersecretaries, office heads, directors and so forth, assembled to battle the budget. And mind you, it's really kind of an anemic battle, because the Defense Department was getting around \$600 billion and we were getting around \$30 billion. Donald Rumsfeld said he lost more money in a year than we got. He was right.

But we would go in there, and we would look at the money for U.S. foreign affairs. Yes, U.S. foreign affairs. We would take out immediately \$3-plus billion for Israel and \$3-plus billion for Egypt to bribe them to keep the peace treaty with Israel, and then we would look at the rest. We'd then factor out international military education and training, and those other things that are just more or less fixed, and we'd say, wow, we've got less than a billion dollars left for the entire foreign policy of the United States of America. Now do you understand a little bit why diplomacy is not really an instrument we reach for very often?

And I'm not refrain[ing] either from pointing out possibly more insidious factors that demonstrate to me rather conclusively that Israel is an untenable ally, or that when Israel—you've got Israeli arms merchants often selling arms to our most likely enemies, UAVs to Russia here lately, when UAVs were a problem for Russia—they're no longer a problem—or that when Israel breaks U.S. law and does things that we don't do anything but *démarche* them from.

These are other aspects of a relationship that I've been very close to that have been disturbing, but mostly have enlightened me as to what it means to have this ally.

Now, let me conclude with the recognition of reality. First, President Obama, as I earlier intimated, with the [JCPOA \[Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action\]](#) has regained a little ground, but at considerable cost—not least of which is an even more robust military-to-military relationship, intelligence relationship and, as has been highlighted here, an increase in funding maybe to \$5 billion. If Israel went away tomorrow, if all the previous military-diplomatic advice had been followed and if we'd not assisted Perfidious Albion in setting up an experiment that would result in ethnic cleansing[12] akin to our own Indian Wars[13] in the heart of Palestine—even if we had not then managed to unbalance majorly our own approach to the precarious dance required to manage such a concoction, even if all had gone swimmingly since 1948 with regard to Israel, the region in question, southwest Asia—the Middle East, call it what you will—would still be a boiling cauldron of instability, chaos, and wreckage.

In short, were there no state of Israel at all, the region would still be in a mess. Or settle the Israeli-Palestinian challenge tomorrow with a decent two-state solution that worked and the same would adhere. The region would remain in turmoil. But the United States would not be painted with the broad brush of favoritism and prejudiced policy that it is every day, 24/7, impacting its security and foreign policy.

Now, it must be acknowledged as well that part of this reality of a volatile region is our fault, too, because we have coddled, supported, funded, advised and used tyrant after tyrant to fulfill our wishes. Whether it was the Shah of Iran for 26 years,[14] the king in Riyadh, the emir in Qatar or whomever. How many dictators have we accommodated, or worse?

The region's calamities have many causes—a majority religion that has seen no reformation to haul it kicking and screaming into modernity, tyrants who have sucked its people's blood dry, [and,] as I said, the distinct lack of entrepreneurial talent or desire nourished by dependency on black gold—interestingly, one of the most entrepreneurial people in the region are the Palestinians—a surfeit of strategic water ways and the adjacent land masses begging to be contested, tribal instincts of the very worse sort, not to mention the legacy of English missteps, misdemeanors, crimes, artificial border drawings and double dealings that all by themselves would damn any people to purgatory at best, and to hell at worse.

But that is no reason for the United States of America to so tie its foreign and security policy to a tiny enclave in the midst of chaos that, when the enclave goes, the master might be sucked into the morass that results, and for no positive purpose of power whatsoever.

Does the unbiased policy of the U.S. toward this enclave jeopardize U.S. national security interest? You bet it does—big time. All we should ask, all I'm asking, all I asked for four years in the State Department, is that the American people be told the unvarnished truth and then decide if they're willing to do it. Do they want their foreign and security policy based on sound principles of power management, or do they want it based on passions, ideology and unbridled favoritism? Now, I'm not quite certain what their answer is going to be. But I'm dead certain we need to give them the essential facts and then ask the question.

Thank you.

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That was Colonel Lawrence Wilkerson, recorded on March 18, 2016. He spoke at the conference: [Israel's Influence: Good or Bad for America?](#)

Wilkerson was Secretary of State Colin Powell's Chief of Staff during the fateful time of the US war on Iraq. He is the highest ranking US foreign policy whistle blower to date.

He is currently Distinguished Visiting Professor of Government and Public Policy at the College of William and Mary in Williamsburg, Virginia.

The conference where he spoke was organized by the [Institute for Research: Middle Eastern Policy](#), and the [American Educational Trust](#). They are the publisher of the [Washington Report on Middle East Affairs](#).

CNN recorded the conference and you can find access to the link via the web site of the Institute for Research: Middle Eastern Policy [www.irmep.org](http://www.irmep.org).

You can hear this program again for free on TUC Radio's website, [www.tucradio.org](http://www.tucradio.org). Look at the [Newest Programs](#) or the [Podcast Page](#). While you're there you can subscribe to weekly, free podcasts. Downloads are free, and we appreciate any size donation to keep TUC Radio on the air. Our e-mail address is tuc at tucradio dot org.

TUC aka *Time of Useful Consciousness* is an aeronautical term. It's the time between the beginning of oxygen deficiency and the loss of consciousness. Time for useful projects to rescue the planet and the plane.

My name is Maria Gilardin. Thank you for listening. a call.



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## References

1. The Dutch documentary film, produced by [VPRO Tegenlicht Backlight](#) is "[The Israel Lobby. Portrait of a Great Taboo: the Power of the Israel Lobby in the United States.](#)" The segment with Lawrence Wilkerson describing how the American Israel Public Affairs Committee, was highly influential in the Bush Administration's decision to go to war in Iraq [begins at 37:40](#):

Dick Cheney and his minions have brought—and [Richard Perle](#) is one of his minions and [Doug Feith](#) is one of his minions—have brought the art of lying to a new scale, a new level. Was oil the number one influence on President Bush and Vice President Cheney? Or was WMD? Or was spreading democracy? Don't believe it for a moment. They didn't even think about spreading democracy when they started this war. They transmogrified the mission into starting—or democracy, simply to appease the American people and give them some reason to support the war.

You have to decide where were these factors? And, inevitably, the Jewish Lobby in America, AIPAC in particular—the focus lobby—has got to be there. You're being naïve if you don't put that factor up there as an influence on national security decision-making. Particularly with the Bush Administration, the AIPAC lobby is very influential through Vice President Cheney, *very* influential—and through people like [Elliot Abrams](#), [Paul Wolfowitz](#) and a host of others within the government. [↔]

2. For a detail-rich exposition on how AIPAC has successfully avoided adhering to the federal law requiring it to register with the US Justice Department, see/listen/read the video/audio/transcript of Grant Smith's 2014 talk at [The National Summit To Reassess The U.S.-Israel "Special Relationship"](#) conference on [A brief history of unprosecuted Israeli foreign agent, smuggling and espionage cases](#). Grant Smith is the Director of the [Institute for Research Middle Eastern Policy](#) (IRmep) and author of [America's Defense Line: The Justice Department's Battle to Register the Israel Lobby as Agents of a Foreign Government](#) (Washington, D.C: IRmep, 2008) and [Foreign Agents: AIPAC from the 1963 Fulbright Hearings to the 2005 Espionage Scandal](#) (Washington, DC: IRmep, 2007).

See Also: [DOJ orders the AZC to Register as a Foreign Agent](#), "Attached hereto is the entire file relating to the American Zionist Council and our efforts to obtain its registration under the terms of the Foreign Agents Registration Act..." covering the period from August 1962 through November 1967. [↔]

3. See the March 9 Survey results for respondents in [Canada](#), [Mexico](#), the [United Kingdom](#), and [United States](#), when asked the questions: Which of the following do you believe to be true? Israelis occupy Palestinian land? Palestinians occupy Israeli land? Other? [↔]

4. The [Institute for Research Middle Eastern Policy](#) (IRmep) is a Washington-based nonprofit organization [that studies US-Middle East policy formulation](#). Founded in 2002, the Institute became an independent private non-profit tax-exempt organization in 2003.

IRmep's [Center for Policy & Law Enforcement](#) files Freedom of Information Act lawsuits to create warranted transparency and reveal the functions of government. It also examines how balanced and vigorous law enforcement can improve trade, economic development and America's international standing.

IRmep's [Israel Lobby Archive](#) documents and exposes little known initiatives, providing citizen access to behind-the-scenes activities of one of the most harmful forces driving policy formulation in the US political process.

Annual [conferences](#) educate thousands of Americans about factors that continue to produce tragic failures in regional policymaking. [↔]

5. The [American Educational Trust](#) (AET) is a non-profit foundation incorporated in Washington, DC in 1982 by retired U.S. Foreign Service officers to [provide the American public with balanced and accurate information concerning U.S. relations with Middle Eastern states](#). AET perceives a dearth in knowledge about the Middle East, Arabs, and Muslims, in the U.S., and pursues an educational mission of "Interpreting the Middle East for North Americans; Interpreting North America for the Middle East."

AET's Foreign Policy Committee has included former U.S. ambassadors, government officials, and members of Congress, including the late Democratic Senator J. William Fulbright and Republican Senator Charles Percy, both former chairmen of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. Members of AET's Board of Directors and advisory committees receive no fees for their services.

AET does not take partisan domestic political positions. In general, AET supports Middle East solutions which it judges to be consistent with the charter of the United Nations, international law, the Geneva Conventions, and traditional American support for human rights, self-determination, and fair play. [↔]

6. AET and IRmep have [organized and convened three conferences](#) at the National Press Club in Washinton, DC, listed most recent first:

1. [Israel's Influence: Good or Bad for America?](#)

March 18, 2016

Expert panelists and keynote speakers analyzed the enormous impact Israel's influence has on Congress, establishment media, academia and other major institutions.

Experts explored the costs and benefits in terms of foreign aid and covert intelligence, foreign policy, America's regional and global standing, and unbiased news reporting.



2. [The Israel Lobby: Is It Good for the US? Is It Good for Israel?](#)

April 10, 2015

This unprecedented gathering focused on the Israel lobby in America. How big is it? How fast has it grown? How interconnected are the organizations and individuals? How much revenue does it raise and where does the money go? What are the common objectives of the lobby? What laws apply to lobbying to benefit a foreign government and are they vigorously enforced? Do coordinated campaign contributions cause American policymakers to act more on behalf of Israel than the United States? What fallacies underlie the assertions that U.S. and Israeli interests are the same? What are the Israel lobby's public and private, short-and-medium-term policy objectives? And what can Americans who do not believe pro-Israel slogans, activities and policy objectives do?



3. [National Summit to Reassess the U.S.-Israel "Special Relationship"](#)

March 7, 2014

U.S. financial, military, and diplomatic support for Israel has grown significantly and steadily throughout the past 60 years and now dwarfs annual American foreign assistance to all other nations.

Research indicates the U.S.-Israel "special relationship" is a major factor in foreign hostility towards Americans. Some experts suggest that Israel has been central to U.S. wars in the Middle East. However, the huge public backlash against Israel lobby-generated momentum for U.S. attacks on Syria and Iran indicates that Americans are concerned about the direction of U.S. foreign policy, how it is made, and those trying to make it. This historic summit will provide an in-depth, multifaceted inquiry into this critical subject matter.

Panelists will include former military and diplomatic personnel, intelligence officers, scholars, economists, researchers and a variety of other subject-matter experts and authors often shut out of key discussions in public forums and news media outlets. Members of the public will be allowed to ask the key questions and network with other attendees. [↔]



7. Jim Lobe followed Lawrence Wilkerson in this panel. He spoke on the subject of: [American Neoconservatives: A History and Overview](#) [↔]

8. See Phillip Weiss, "[Damned as anti-Semite, Geo Marshall predicted that Israel would become US tarbaby](#)", *Mondoweiss*, Apr 2, 2010, quoting Mark Perry ("[Petraeus wasn't the first](#)," *Foreign Policy* Apr 2, 2010):

In the period between the end of World War Two and Marshall's meeting with Truman [May 12, 1948], the Joint Chiefs of Staff had issued no less than sixteen (by my count) papers on the Palestine issue. The most important of these was issued on March 31, 1948 and entitled "Force Requirements for Palestine." In that paper, the JCS predicted that "the Zionist strategy will seek to involve [the United States] in a continuously widening and deepening series of operations intended to secure maximum Jewish objectives." The JCS

speculated that these objectives included: initial Jewish sovereignty over a portion of Palestine, acceptance by the great powers of the right to unlimited immigration, the extension of Jewish sovereignty over all of Palestine and the expansion of “Eretz Israel” into Transjordan and into portions of Lebanon and Syria. This was not the only time the JCS expressed this worry. In late 1947, the JCS had written that “A decision to partition Palestine, if the decision were supported by the United States, would prejudice United States strategic interests in the Near and Middle East” to the point that “United States influence in the area would be curtailed to that which could be maintained by military force.” That is to say, the concern of the Joint Chiefs of Staff was not with the security of Israel—but with the security of American lives. [↔]

9. “[Britain Issues the Balfour Declaration](#),” by Donald Neff, *Washington Report on Middle East Affairs*, October/November 1995 pgs. 81-82.

See Also: Book Review by Cheryl Rubenberg of *The Balfour Declaration: The Origins of the Arab-Israeli Conflict*, by Jonathan Schneer (Random House, 2010);

and: [Alison Weir discusses secret author of Balfour Declaration](#), in which Weir (president of the [Council for the National Interest](#) and executive director of [If Americans Knew](#)) explains how,

In terms of the British responsibility especially regarding the Balfour Declaration, there's a very, very important back story to this that is probably one of the most covered up aspects of this very covered up issue. This came out in [the] article [[“The Secret of Leopold Amery”](#)] by Professor William Rubenstein, a very well regarded Jewish British historian: a Fellow of the Royal Historical Society and former president of the Jewish Historical Society of England. Rubenstein wrote that the true author of the Balfour Declaration was not Mr. Balfour. It was actually a man name Leopold Amery who was in fact a Zionist and a British man of Jewish background. [↔]

10. See excerpts of Chapter Three, “Louis Brandeis, Zionism, and the ‘Parushim’” in Alison Weir’s *Against Our Better Judgment: The hidden history of how the United States was used to create Israel* (Charleston, NC: CreateSpace, 2014). Read about / find places to buy the book [at Goodreads](#) and please [do not patronize amazon](#). [↔]
11. See “[When former CIA chief David Petraeus enraged the Israel lobby](#),” by Ali Abunimah, *Lobby Watch*, [ElectronicIntifada.net](#), Nov 10, 2012. [↔]
12. See Ilan Pappé’s *The Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine* (Oxford: Oneworld, 2006). [↔]
13. See “[The History of the United States is a History of Settler Colonialism Driven by Genocide and Land Theft](#) containing excerpts from Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz’s, *An Indigenous Peoples’ History of the United States* (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 2014). [↔]
14. See [Mohammad Reza Pahlavi Biography – Shah of Iran, 1941-1979](#) presented within [The Mossadegh Project](#). [↔]

<https://ratical.org/ratville/IsraeliInfluenceOnUSFP.html>