

The New Internationalism: Peace and Security Funders Group

By John J. Tierney

Summary: *The Peace and Security Funders Group (PSFG) is a liberal internationalist coalition of U.S. donors who believe the best way to prevent wars, constrain rogue nations, and prevent the spread of nuclear weapons is to let international laws and organizations set the terms of world peace. The umbrella group, whose listed supporters claim to have assets exceeding \$25 billion, aims to entangle the U.S. government in a process of international negotiation to create a new global legal regime. It would likely limit U.S. sovereignty and replace a strong national defense with endless rounds of international rulemaking and consensus-building.*

America has a heritage of dissent on questions of war and peace. Except for World War II, when almost all Americans responded to the attack on Pearl Harbor by supporting the war against Germany and Japan, there has always been a tradition of honorable American anti-war protest and resistance to foreign entanglement. Unfortunately, as I showed in my book *The Politics of Peace: What's Behind the Anti-War Movement?* (published in 2005 by Capital Research Center), during the past half-century many of the leading organizations that claim to be anti-war are actually anti-American. For instance, the major groups protesting the war in Iraq, such as International ANSWER, United for Peace and Justice, Not in Our Name and Code Pink, are led by leftist anti-capitalist ideologues who masquerade as anti-war protesters. Their real quarrels are with the political and economic institutions of this country, which they define as racist, sexist and imperialist.



Joseph Cirincione (left), president of the Ploughshares Fund, appears in a 2009 promotional video with actor and Ploughshares board member Michael Douglas (center) and former Sen. Sam Nunn (D-Georgia). Ploughshares is the parent organization and a major funder of the Peace and Security Funders Group. (video grab from <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VzoZe60NNc4>)

The Obama administration presents a challenge to the anti-war movement. Barack Obama would seem to be a kindred spirit: He has a record as the most liberal member of the U.S. Senate, supported a quick exit from Iraq, and frequently apologizes for much of American history. Yet on its website (March 19, 2009) International ANSWER criticized him for not withdrawing troops from Iraq immediately, arguing, "President Obama's speech simply explained that the strategy for dominating Iraq has changed, but the goals remain the same." Code Pink opposed the recent military funding bill to support U.S. troops in Afghanistan, and the group United for Peace and Justice denounced the Obama administration for using "scare tactics" to

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associate the “rebels in Afghanistan” with the terrorists of Al Qaeda.

Subtle but profound changes are occurring in U.S. foreign policy and the response of anti-war and anti-military protesters and advocates can be expected to change as well. No street protests are planned for now, but advocacy groups are sizing up the foreign policy intentions of the Obama administration. They may oppose the Obama administration in some areas, or they may decide to act as its outside enablers, playing “good-cop, bad cop” to prod and nudge the administration to do what they consider “the right thing.”

Peace and Security Funders Group

The Peace and Security Funders Group (PSFG) is a little known organization created in 1999 to lobby the philanthropic community to support leftist approaches to U.S. national security and foreign policy. Unlike ANSWER and Code Pink, PSFG does not promote grassroots marches and protests. Instead, it arranges and funds high-level insider seminars, briefings and conferences. This helps its credibility with the media and has made it all the more formidable in policymaking circles. Individual participants at PSFG gatherings may be unknown to the general public, but they are well-connected to liberal

members of Congress, to career policymakers in the U.S. State Department and other government agencies, and to new political appointees in the Obama administration. PSFG’s importance is sure to grow.

With an ambitious agenda PSFG receives support from at least 50 foundation philanthropies. They include major liberal foundations with broad policy interests, such as the Ford Foundation, the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation and the Carnegie Corporation of New York, and small foundations with a clearly left-wing philanthropic agenda, such as the Tides Foundation.

While it is an umbrella organization for funders and not a research group, PSFG attracts talent from the academy, think-tanks and government agencies to sustain a large and critical influence network. Its website observes: “In this changing world, the independence and flexibility of private philanthropy takes on added value; funders have greater opportunities than ever to address security problems.” PSFG supports task forces and working groups that focus on a range of issues, including nuclear proliferation, political violence between groups and nations, and questions concerning the environment, human rights and global justice.

The current director is Dr. Katherine Magraw, whose policy background sets PSFG apart from the noisier anti-war groups. Magraw was an aide to the late Sen. Paul Wellstone (D-Minnesota), a former program officer for the W. Alton Jones Foundation, and a special assistant to the Under Secretary of State for International Security Policy in the Clinton administration. She received a Ph.D. in Defense and Arms Control Studies at MIT.

Magraw’s prestige appointments mask the radical left-wing politics of the core constituency that provides PSFG’s financial support. The group’s steering committee members include ice cream tycoon Ben Cohen, benefactor of Ben and Jerry’s Foundation; Conrad Martin, executive director of Stewart Mott Charitable Trust (2007 assets: \$14.7 million); Eric Schwartz, executive director of the Tides Foundation-managed Connect US Fund, itself a donors collaborative that includes the Ford, Rockefeller, Hewlett and Mott foundations, the Atlantic Philanthropies and the George Soros-funded

Open Society Institute; and, most notably, Cora Weiss, president of the Samuel Ruben Foundation, notorious funder of the Center for Constitutional Rights (\$40,000 in 2008) and creator of the Institute for Policy Studies. The PSFG steering committee is co-chaired by Naila Bolus, executive director of the Ploughshares Fund, and Bonnie Jenkins, a Ford Foundation program officer, who is also a U.S. Naval Reserve officer and a former counsel to the 9/11 Commission.

PSFG is not an incorporated nonprofit but is a special project of the Ploughshares Fund, a San Francisco grantmaker (2007 assets: \$39 million, income: \$15 million) that provides it with fiscal and administrative oversight. The Fund focuses on foreign policy and national security grantmaking. In 2007 it made about 100 grants totaling \$4.4 million to nonprofits ranging from the Naderite Public Citizen (\$50,000 to coordinate congressional lobbying to cut funding for nuclear fuel reprocessing) to the Cato Institute (\$50,000 to promote diplomatic solutions to the dispute over Iran’s nuclear program). The president of the Ploughshares Fund is Joseph Cirincione, author of *Bomb Scare: The History and Future of Nuclear Weapons* (2007) and a former senior vice president at the Center for American Progress.

Liberal Internationalism: Anti-Nationalist, Anti-Military and Deeply Flawed

PSFG is not one of the anti-war “protest” groups, although it takes similar positions on many major issues, including opposition to the Iraq War. Rather, it is an advocacy group for wealthy institutional donors who are eager to reform the international system into a disarmed and cooperative global polity. It is at once anti-nationalist and anti-military, and it argues that the causes of war and conflict can be traced to problems in society “such as competition for natural resources, ethnic and religious differences, poverty and social injustice.” Proposing to take the lead in conflict resolution, PSFG seeks out the sociological and psychological causes of conflict, “concepts that apply to tensions within families, neighborhoods, and societies, as well as between countries.”

PSFG’s top priority is to rid the world of nuclear weapons and the policies that support their existence. A subsidiary goal is the elimination or control of conventional

Editor: Matthew Vadum

Publisher: Terrence Scanlon

Foundation Watch

is published by Capital Research Center, a non-partisan education and research organization, classified by the IRS as a 501(c)(3) public charity.

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Organization Trends welcomes letters to the editor.

Reprints are available for \$2.50 prepaid to Capital Research Center.

and biological weapons, and outlawing the manufacture, sale and testing of such devices. PSFG advocates international arms control treaties leading to weapons disarmament. It also wants to create international coalitions to promote this objective as well as to protect the environment and support global human rights and social justice. PSFG wants a drastic decrease in the U.S. defense budget, and it would shift money to international humanitarian relief and economic development. It opposes extending U.S. power around the world and the “militarization” of space. It repudiates the strategic doctrines of unilateral pre-emptive military action favored by the Bush administration.

Unlike the “anti-war” groups International ANSWER, United for Peace and Justice and Code Pink, which are led by extremist anti-capitalist radicals and doctrinaire Marxists, the goals of PSFG are neither necessarily radical nor ideological. Many PSFG policy positions receive support from moderate Republicans, neo-isolationists, libertarians and the center-left of the Democratic Party. In fact, the goal of reducing nuclear weapons was promoted by the Bush administration, which reduced the U.S. arsenal from 6,000 to 2,200 nuclear warheads, the lowest total since the Eisenhower administration.

Still, what might be labeled PSFG’s “liberal internationalism” is a deeply flawed worldview. It subordinates U.S. national interests to a global utopianism. It rejects the necessity of political realism and dismisses American strategic requirements such as the need for covert intelligence, the conduct of political warfare, and the prudent use of force and propaganda. Regrettably, liberal internationalism is deeply rooted within American history and is often identified by the term *Wilsonian*.

Liberal internationalists believe policymakers should seek to achieve *absolute* gains for the collectivity of the world rather than *relative* gains for one’s own country. They downplay or denigrate concepts such as the national interest, *realpolitik* and geopolitics while upholding multiculturalism, globalization and “arms control.” Indeed, the control and eventual elimination of national armaments is at the center of the PSFG agenda. Again, this is neither new nor un-American: Arms control has long been a major compo-

nent in U.S. foreign policy, and for over three decades (1961-1999) an independent agency of the U.S. government was dedicated to its achievement. Yet arms control negotiations played little role in dismantling the Soviet Union despite all the attention paid to it in the last years of the Cold War. Avis Bohlen, a former assistant secretary of state for arms control, recently commented:

Its achievements were very modest; it’s easier to say what it did not achieve than what it did. It did not end or even slow the arms race either quantitatively or qualitatively. Numbers continued to rise. Neither side gave up a single weapon system that it really wanted. It did not reduce defense spending; to the contrary, both SALT I and SALT II were purchased at the price of a significant increase in the U.S. defense budget. (Foreign Policy Research Institute website, May 2009, Vol. 14, No. 7)

What the diplomat George F. Kennan called “the legalistic-moralistic approach to international problems” continually reappears



scientific changes that have raised the world standard of living over the past half-century and start to imagine themselves working to integrate nation-states into a universal and unitary superstate to supervise finance and commerce and secure human rights and justice for all the people of the world.

Clearly, the philanthropists of the Peace and Security Funders Group see a role for themselves in the creation of this new world order. Beginning in the 1990s its member foundations have been funding affiliates and adjuncts to various U.N.-sponsored conferences held throughout the world. These jamborees are attended by government leaders, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and thousands of social activists in places such as Cairo (population growth), Beijing (feminism), Kyoto (global warming), Rio de Janeiro (environment), and New York (gun control). Each succeeding conference is heralded as the start of something transformative as a flurry of consensus resolutions is passed by the assembled delegates to advance a global social agenda. (E.g., see the 1998 CRC monograph *Global Greens: Inside the*



PSFG director Katherine Magraw (left) and Ploughshares Fund executive director Naila Bolus (right)

in the making of U.S. foreign policy, and the results have been disastrous. (*American Diplomacy*, University of Chicago Press, 1984, p. 95) Al Qaeda spent years preparing to execute 9/11, but no one in America saw it coming, including 16 intelligence agencies. Our policymakers were too preoccupied with thinking deep thoughts about globalization, the integration of national economies into a single world market, and multiculturalism, the harmonization of national cultures. It was perhaps inevitable that they would extrapolate from the remarkable technological and

International Environmental Establishment by James Sheehan.)

The Clinton administration, which favored trade pacts over missile defense, promoted this type of foreign policy thinking, and former vice president Al Gore has been an apostle for it with his book, *Earth in the Balance*. Brookings Institution president Strobe Talbott, who was Clinton’s deputy secretary of state, once said “all countries are basically social arrangements ... in fact they are all artificial and temporary. Within the

PSFG Member Groups

1. Agape Foundation
2. Arca Foundation
3. Ben and Jerry's Foundation
4. Berghof Foundation for Conflict Studies
5. CarEth Foundation
6. Carnegie Corporation of New York
7. Charitable Foundation
8. Colombe Foundation
9. Compton Foundation
10. ConnectUS
11. Cypress Fund
12. Educational Foundation of America
13. Flora Family Foundation
14. Ford Foundation
15. German Marshall Fund
16. Harry Frank Guggenheim Foundation
17. William and Flora Hewlett Foundation
18. HKH Foundation
19. Hunt Alternatives Fund
20. Janelia Foundation
21. Kenbe Foundation
22. Milton Lauenstein
23. Lee and Gund Foundation
24. Lippincott Foundation
25. Livingry Foundation
26. Lydia B. Stokes Foundation
27. John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation
28. Mertz Gilmore Foundation
29. David and Katherine Moore Family Foundation
30. Stewart Mott Charitable Trust
31. A.J. Muste Memorial Institute
32. New Cycle Foundation
33. New-Land Foundation
34. Open Society Institute
35. Park Foundation
36. Peace Development Fund
37. Peace, Conflict and Development Program Initiative
38. Planethood Foundation
39. Ploughshares Fund
40. The Prospect Hill Foundation
41. Proteus Fund
42. Public Welfare Foundation
43. Rockefeller Brothers Fund
44. Rockefeller Financial Services
45. Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust
46. Samuel Rubin Foundation
47. Saga Foundation
48. Scherman Foundation
49. Schooner Foundation
50. Secure World Foundation
51. Simons Foundation
52. Alan B. Slifka Foundation
53. The Stanley Foundation
54. Steiner-King Foundation
55. Threshold Foundation
56. Tides Foundation
57. Town Creek Foundation
58. Turner Foundation
59. United Nations Foundation
60. Wellspring Advisors, LLC
61. Working Assets

next hundred years, nationhood as we know it will be obsolete; all states will recognize a single global authority.” (Time magazine, July 29, 1992, p. 70) Even after the 9/11 attacks, both the Democratic and Republican parties continue making platform pledges to advance various global objectives of the sort once associated with socialist ideology: from ending world poverty and disease and advancing labor and environmental standards to securing gender equity and promoting free trade, democratic elections and civil society.

Who's Behind PSFG?

The natural constituencies for liberal internationalism are government and charity officials, intellectuals, political reformers and humanitarian activists who want to universalize their ideas and proposals. However, what's new to the mix is the commitment of private wealth to support advocacy organizations dedicated to this agenda. A philanthropic network has formed

to give like-minded groups the capacity to affect policies once considered the preserve of a tiny elite concerned with U.S. foreign and defense policy. PSFG is not a business; it does not sell a product; it does not earn money. It exists because its supporters want it to exist.

PSFG receives much of its support from its parent foundation, the Ploughshares Fund. In 2006-2007 PSFG director Katherine Magraw received a Ploughshares grant of \$109,575 for her group. Over an eight-year period (2000-2008) Ploughshares transferred about \$600,000 to PSFG, which, in turn, makes annual grants to over 100 local and national peace advocacy nonprofits. Because Ploughshares Fund executive director Naila Bolus is co-chair of PSFG, there is an inseparable link between the philanthropic parent and the grantee offspring. “We focus on tough cases,” Bolus has said. “If it's a conflict area, we'll consider it.” Bolus is a disciple of Helen Caldicott, the anti-nuclear

activist. PF strategy includes start-up funding for entrepreneurs, emergency funds for urgent needs, advocacy programs, grants to influence public opinion, grassroots and international grants.

The parent Ploughshares Fund was created in 1981 by San Francisco philanthropist and activist Sally Lilienthal (1919-2006) to support measures to stop the spread and use of nuclear weapons. Lilienthal was also involved in the creation of the northern California chapter of the NAACP Legal Defense and Education Fund and she served on boards of the ACLU and Amnesty International. To date the Ploughshares Fund has distributed \$60 million to hundreds of groups and individuals around the world, making it the largest U.S. grantmaker to peace and security nonprofits.

Besides the above-mentioned grants to PSFG, Public Citizen, and the Cato Institute, the

Ploughshares Fund has made notable grants to groups opposed to nuclear weapons, the International Campaign to Ban Landmines, Natural Resources Defense Council and the Soviet Academy of Sciences, the Arms Control Advocacy Collaborative (to stop development of nuclear weapons), Search for Common Ground and the United Nations Association (to maintain communications with Iran).

The Fund also supports environmental causes. Since the late 1980s, it has contributed \$728,800 to the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC), \$628,787 to the Council for a Livable World, \$623,047 to Physicians for Social Responsibility, \$617,950 to Union of Concerned Scientists, \$76,000 to the Sierra Club, \$60,000 to Friends of the Earth, \$55,000 to Environmental Defense and smaller sums to groups such as Greenpeace and Rocky Mountain Institute.

Where does the Ploughshares Fund get its money? Besides initial support from Sally Lillenthal, Ploughshares has received contributions from the George Soros-funded Open Society Institute, and grants earmarked for PSFG from the John D. & Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation (\$175,000 since 2001), Carnegie Corp. of New York (\$143,750 since 2000), Ford Foundation (\$75,000 since 2004), and the Rockefeller Brothers Fund (\$70,000 since 2003).

The Samuel Rubin Foundation (2008 assets: \$12 million; income: \$10 million) lists no contributions to PSFG on its most recent IRS form 990. The foundation's benefactor Samuel Rubin (1901-1978) was the anti-capitalist founder of Faberge Perfumes and a major funder of leftist nonprofits. His daughter Cora Weiss has a history of promoting anti-war and anti-American causes that goes back to the Vietnam War era. Weiss encouraged pro-Hanoi efforts to sway POW families to join the anti-war movement in return for their sons' early release. In the 1980s she promoted the Soviet-backed nuclear freeze movement and other unilateral disarmament groups. (See "Funding the War Against the War on Terror," by John Perazzo, *Frontpagemag.com*, Oct. 6, 2006.) Her inclusion on the PSFG steering committee is a disturbing reminder that liberal internationalism can

leave itself open to affiliation with radical left-wing groups opposed to the economic system and political principles that underpin American society.

What Is To Be Done?

The ascendancy of the Obama administration means that to change U.S. foreign and defense policies anti-war activists may no longer have to depend upon activist groups such as International ANSWER, United for Peace and Justice, and Code Pink or on potentially violent street protests and demonstrations. These groups, which are sustained by the Workers World Party and the Revolutionary Communist Party, have been supplanted by the more hopeful organizations of liberal internationalism, which are funded by donor collaboratives such as the Peace and Security Funders Group.

The future of American dissent for the moment rests with a sophisticated and organized network that is backed by major philanthropic foundations. But however well-intended, the new peace network may be even more corrosive to U.S. national security. Moreover, it has the ear of the Obama administration and is encouraged by that greatest oxymoron in the modern vocabulary, the *world community*. Liberal Internationalism is back again, with a vengeance.

Expect calls for sweeping treaties, laws and policies that promise to end political anarchy and create a harmony of interests universally shared. Expect more rhetorical appeals for universal disarmament rather than careful strategic planning to disarm enemies who might harm this country.

In 1910 British writer Norman Angell published *The Great Illusion*, a book that concluded war was unthinkable. Angell believed modern warfare was an unprofitable anachronism and economically futile. It could be eliminated through reason and education once people understood the irrelevance of military power to social prosperity. Wars between modern nations would cease just as wars between Catholics and Protestants had ended. Four years later World War I began.

Angell's progressive agenda for world disarmament has a modern-day counterpart in

today's "peace studies" curriculum popular on college campuses. But the historian Niall Ferguson has observed that periods of apparent progressive unity often produce resounding crashes:

"As the economic parallels with 1914 suggest, today's globalization shows at least some signs of reversibility. The risks increase when one considers the present political situation, which has the same five flaws as the pre-1914 international order: imperial overstretch, great-power rivalry, an unstable alliance system, rogue regimes sponsoring terror, and the rise of a revolutionary terrorist organization hostile to capitalism... In that sense, we seem no better prepared for the worst-case scenario than were the beneficiaries of the last age of globalization, 90 years ago. Like the passengers who boarded the *Lusitania*, all we know is that we may conceivably sink. Still, we sail." (*Foreign Affairs*, December 2005, p. 72)

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Terrence Scanlon
President

PhilanthropyNotes

Radio talk show host **Rush Limbaugh** read aloud on-air from a Capital Research Center report about **AmeriCorps**, whose inspector general **Gerald Walpin** was fired on flimsy grounds. CRC noted that a 1997 congressional report found “apparent cross-over funding between ACORN, a political advocacy group and **ACORN Housing Corp.**,” a nonprofit AmeriCorps grantee. AmeriCorps, which promotes public service, suspended AHC’s funding “after it was learned that AHC and ACORN shared office space and equipment and failed to assure that activities and funds were wholly separate.” ACORN also used AmeriCorps resources for ACORN fundraising, voter registration efforts, and partisan speeches. The Senate nixed legislation from Sen. **David Vitter** (R-Louisiana) to block ACORN from using AmeriCorps funding to promote its own political objectives.

Embezzler **Bernard Madoff**, who swindled clients out of at least \$50 billion, was sentenced to 150 years imprisonment. The record-breaking fraud has forced the closing of the **JEHT** and **Picower** foundations, longtime supporters of leftist groups. Left-wing groups funded by those charities include **ACORN**, **Center for Constitutional Rights**, and **Alliance for Justice**.

Instead of temporarily dipping into its nation-sized endowment, **Harvard University** has decided to lay off 275 workers. Although its endowment has fallen over the last year, it still has at least \$25 billion. Some of the wealthiest universities in America are the biggest tightwads, **Lynne Munson** argued in the April 2008 *Foundation Watch*. While tuition continues to skyrocket, institutional spending from tax-free higher education endowments (including Harvard’s) remains meager. By sitting on donations –which are largely intended to benefit students– for generations, they violate donor intent.

President **Obama** selected Alabama family doctor **Regina Benjamin** as the next surgeon general. Benjamin, who was reportedly the first African-American woman to head a state medical society, was awarded a **MacArthur Foundation** “genius grant” last year.

Rev. **Jesse Lee Peterson**, founder of **BOND** (Brotherhood Organization of a New Destiny), said on the July 3 “G. Gordon Liddy Show” that although he used to believe Congress would never enact a program of “reparations” for the descendants of slaves, he now believes it’s going to happen. “When the House and the Senate apologized for slavery I was saddened by that because I know that white Americans who are living today had nothing to do with past history,” the black preacher said. A reparations program is “evil and it’s going to divide us like nothing else before in history but this apology has opened the door for that.”

Goldman Sachs WATCH

Journalist Matt Taibbi argued in Rolling Stone magazine that Goldman Sachs has “engineered every major market manipulation since the Great Depression.” He writes that “the world’s most powerful investment bank is a great vampire squid wrapped around the face of humanity, relentlessly jamming its blood funnel into anything that smells like money.” Goldman rejected the criticism but Taibbi shot back that the bank “has its alumni pushing its views from the pulpit of the U.S. Treasury, the NYSE, the World Bank, and numerous other important posts; it also has former players fronting major TV shows. They have the ear of the president if they want it.”

On July 13 analyst Meredith Whitney “moved the firm to ‘buy’ from ‘neutral’ and increased her earnings-per-share estimate for the second quarter to \$4.65 versus the Street’s estimate \$3.48 estimate,” the Wall Street Journal reports. The upgrade is based on expectations that “the feeble U.S. economy will be a boon to Goldman as the firm plays a key role in a ‘tsunami of debt issuance’ from governments desperate to backfill growing budget gaps.” The financial crisis has killed off many of the competitors of the company that has rebounded from catastrophic losses last fall. Last month it posted its largest quarterly profit as a public company, a startling \$3.44 billion for the second quarter of 2009, up from a \$1.66 billion profit in the previous quarter.