

An aerial photograph of a coastal city, likely San Diego, showing a large, modern, blue building with a curved facade in the foreground. The building is surrounded by other urban structures, parking lots, and green spaces. In the background, a sandy beach and the ocean are visible under a clear sky.

IS POLICY EXPERTIS

NEOLIBERA  
PRACTICE

Tom Medvetz

Department of Sociology  
UC-San Diego

**NORTHWESTERN  
UNIVERSITY**

May 15, 2013

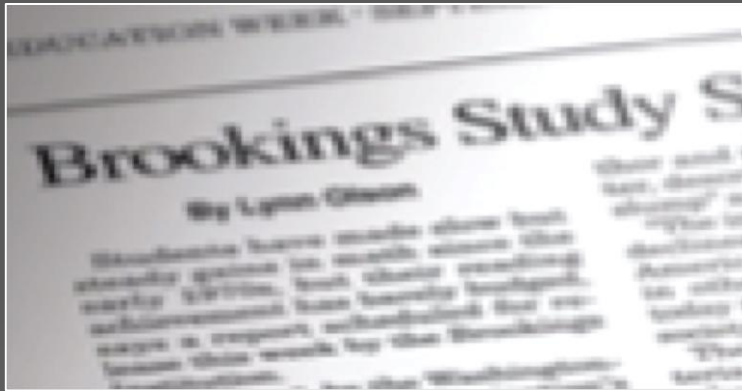
# What do think tanks do?





# What do think tanks

do?



Quotes & sound bites



Congressional testimony



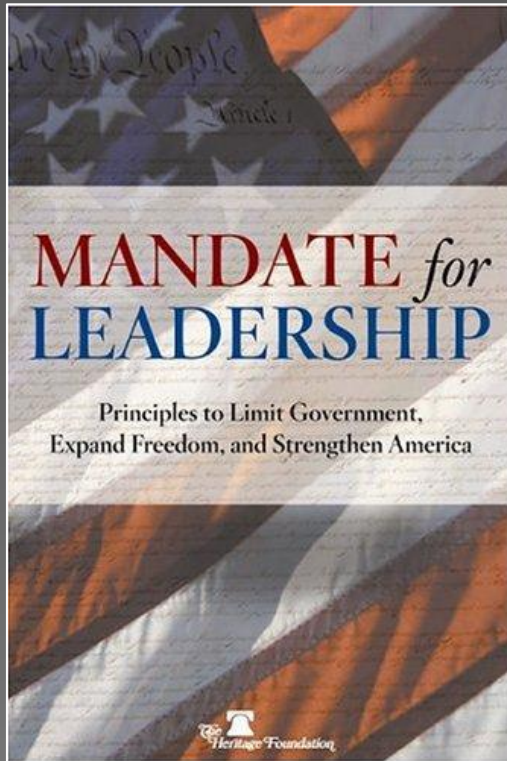
Media punditry



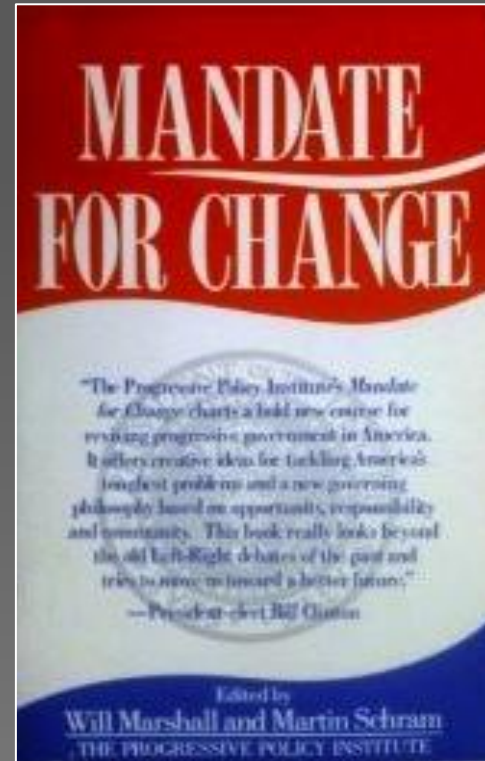
Public forums

"...the desperate daily need for intellectual meat to feed the hearings, the speeches, the unrelenting policy grinder." *Washington Post*, 10/3/83

# What do think tanks do?



1981

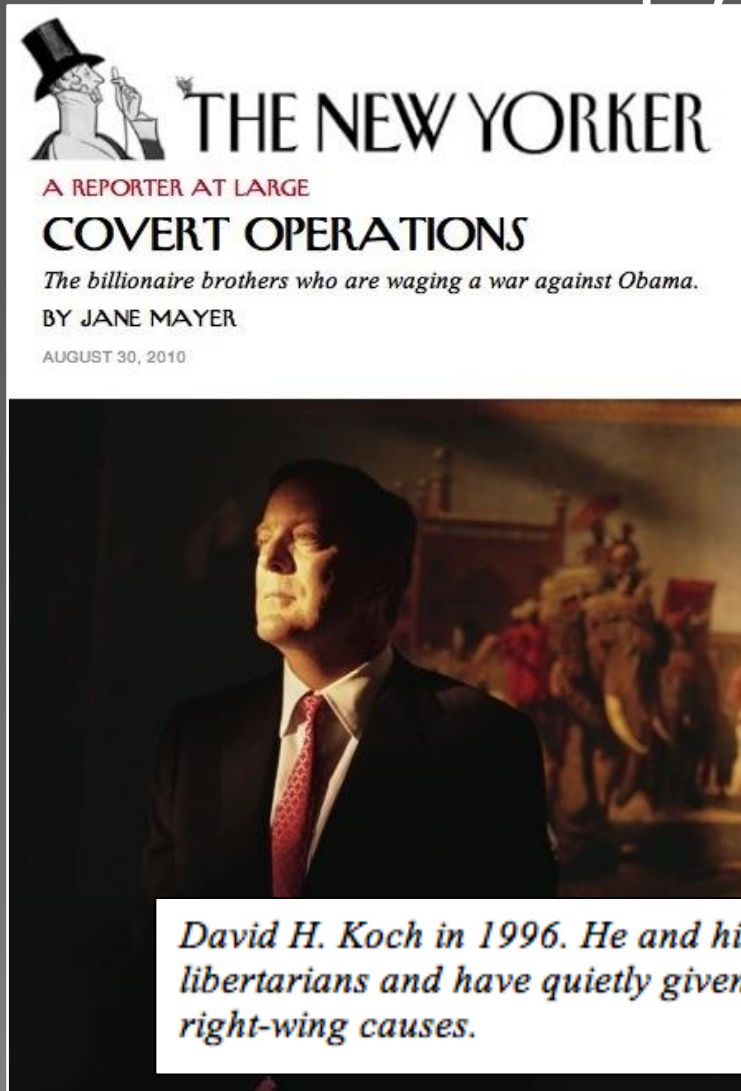


1992



Policy manuals

# What do think tanks



*David H. Koch in 1996. He and his brother Charles are lifelong libertarians and have quietly given more than a hundred million dollars to right-wing causes.*

CATO

The Heritage Foundation

AEI

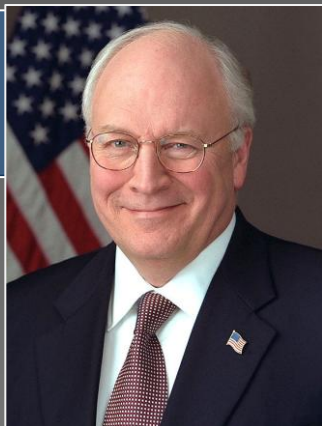
CSIS

HUDSON  
INSTITUTE

“Deep lobbying”



# What do think tanks do?



Dick Cheney  
Vice President



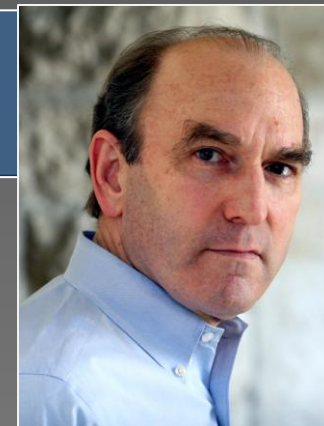
Donald Rumsfeld  
Secretary of Defense



Paul Wolfowitz  
Deputy Sec of Defense



I. Lewis "Scooter" Libby  
Chief of Staff to VP



Elliott Abrams  
Deputy Nat'l Sec Adviser

"Government-in-exile"



BOB SCHIEFFER: Have you had time...to think about what you are going to do after you're president?

GEORGE W. BUSH: ...I would like to leave behind a legacy or a think tank, a place for people to talk about freedom and liberty and the de Tocqueville model.



*Face the Nation. CBS. January 29, 2006*



Est. 1982



Est. 1994



Est. 2009



GEORGE W. BUSH INSTITUTE



ECONOMIC  
GROWTH

EDUCATION  
REFORM

GLOBAL  
HEALTH

HUMAN  
FREEDOM

MILITARY  
SERVICE

WOMEN'S  
INITIATIVE



# “Think tank chic”

COUNCIL *on*  
FOREIGN  
RELATIONS



Angelina Jolie



George Clooney

# Scholarly definitions

Think tanks are. . .

“relatively autonomous organizations engaged in the research and analysis of contemporary issues *independently* of government, political parties, and pressure groups.”

—Diane Stone

“*independent*, non-interest-based, nonprofit political organizations that produce and principally rely on expertise and ideas to obtain support and to influence the policymaking process.”

—Andrew Rich

“non-governmental, not-for-profit research organizations with *substantial organizational autonomy* from government and from societal interests such as firms, interest groups, and political parties.”

—R. Kent Weaver and James McGann

# Scholarly definitions

Think tanks are. . .

“relatively **autonomous** organizations engaged in the research and analysis of contemporary issues ***independently of government, political parties, and pressure groups.***”

—Diane Stone

“***independent, non-interest-based, nonprofit*** political organizations that produce and principally rely on expertise and ideas to obtain support and to influence the policymaking process.”

—Andrew Rich

“**non-governmental, not-for-profit** research organizations with ***substantial organizational autonomy from government and from societal interests*** such as firms, interest groups, and political parties.”

—R. Kent Weaver and James McGann



Chicago Daily  
Tribune  
July 10, 1927

**SOURCES OF PROPAGANDA CASH**

The Tribune has investigated eighty-one organizations which disseminate propaganda or otherwise seek to influence public opinion, legislation, and the administration of government. Of these only nine refused to give information concerning their annual expenditures. The remaining seventy-two expend in the aggregate \$9,591,000 a year on influencing public opinion and government.

**Anti-Saloon League of America:** State and federal organizations aiding enforcement of national prohibition and propagandizing against any modification thereof..... \$2,000,000

international questions..... 1,000,000  
Carnegie Endowment for International Peace: Promotes international..... 530,000

**Carnegie Endowment for International Peace:** Promotes internationalism and propagandizes for the league of nations and world court.... 530,000

**Fellowship Forum:** Weekly organ supported by members of Ku Klux Klan, Masonic orders and other fraternal organizations, and devoted chiefly to anti-Catholic propaganda..... 500,000

Protestant church denominations comprising 147,252 churches and 22,455,594 communicants, designed to unify church work and exert church influence in public affairs..... 330,000  
National Industrial Conference Board: Issues reports on industrial and economic problems to influence the solution thereof..... 300,000  
American Legion: Influences legislation, propagandizes for more adequate national defense, promotes Americanization, combats pacifism and radicalism..... 275,000  
American Fund for Public Service: Created by Charles Garland to finance communist, Socialist, and other radical groups..... 225,000  
League of Nations Nonpartisan Association: Working for entrance of the United States into the league of nations..... 200,000  
National Catholic Welfare Conference: Voices Roman Catholic views on public questions..... 175,000  
Methodist Episcopal Board of Temperance, Prohibition, and Public Morals: Voicing the views of the Methodist Episcopal church on various reforms..... 150,000  
American Federation of Labor: For promotion of legislation and for propaganda supporting labor legislative program..... 150,000  
Lord's Day Alliance: Fights Sunday sports and works for legislation enforcing the observance of the Sabbath as a day of "rest, worship, religious education and the service of God"..... 150,000  
Daughters of the American Revolution: Inculcates patriotism, promotes Americanization and national defense and combats pacifism and radicalism..... 143,000  
National League of Women Voters: Influences legislation, bringing

**NOT LISTED**

- Twentieth Century Fund (1919)
- Hoover Institution (1919)
- Nat'l Bureau of Econ Research (1920)
- Council on Foreign Relations (1921)
- Institute of Politics (1923)
- Institute of Pacific Relations (1925)

**Foreign Policy Association:** Issues literature on international questions designed to promote a liberal American foreign policy..... 120,000

Foreign Policy Association: Issues literature on international questions designed to promote a liberal American foreign policy..... 120,000