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## The Economic-Corporate Oligarchy of the World

By Steven MacMillan

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*Today's world is ruled by a myriad of multinational corporations and financial institutions that belong to a network of private round table organisations that stretch across the planet. There exists an international ruling elite that has been building an economic-corporate empire for over a century, which oppresses any dissent to their agenda.*

A recent study conducted by Northwestern and Princeton University on America's political system supports the thesis that political systems are not directed by the people of the country, but rather by a network of "economic elites" and "business interests". The study concluded that the US political system is an oligarchy, where the "wishes of corporations and business and professional associations" are the driving forces behind policy decisions within the government.

"The central point that emerges from our research is that economic elites and organised groups representing business interests have substantial independent impacts on US government policy, while mass-based interest groups and average citizens have little or no independent influence" (Gilens and Page, 2014, p.3).

This study illustrates the influence that trans-national corporations along with international financiers can have on a population if they are given the conditions to flourish. The Council on Foreign Relations (CFR) epitomises the economic-corporate governance that exists in most countries of the world today, with democratic political systems often corrupted by lobbying

groups and special interests. A self titled “independent, nonpartisan membership organisation, think tank and publisher”, the CFR is a private organisation which holds the real power in American politics. It has a membership which is made up from the top echelons of the political, academic, media, corporate, and banking fields. Hilary Clinton revealed the nature of her (along with the US State Department’s) relationship with the CFR when she addressed the council at their newly opened outpost in Washington D.C in 2009:

“I have been often to the mother ship in New York City, but it’s good to have an outpost of the Council right here down the street from the State Department. We get a lot of advice from the Council, so this will mean I won’t have as far to go to be told what we should be doing and how we should think about the future.”

A look at the corporate membership of the council reveals the level of power vested in such a small amount of hands, with approximately 200 of the most influential corporate players on the planet members of the council, including: Exxon Mobil Corporation, Goldman Sachs Group Inc, BP plc, Barclays, Google Inc, Lockheed Martin, Deutsche Bank AG, Shell Oil Company and Soros Fund Management.

The CFR is part of a shadowy network of private organisations that stretches across the globe to influence policy of most nation states. Professor Carroll Quigley was an insider at the CFR and knew “of the operations of this network because” he “studied it for twenty years and was permitted for two years, in the early 1960’s, to examine its papers and secret records” (Quigley, 1966, p. 950). He wrote two books about the activities of the network, the first titled *Tragedy and Hope: A History of the World in our Time* published in 1966, and the second was *The Anglo-American Establishment* published in 1981.

The father of the CFR is the British based Royal Institute of International Affairs (RIIA) which is headquartered at Chatham House in St James’s Square, London. Growing out of the Cecil Rhodes Secret Society and the Lord Alfred Milner Group, the RIIA was formed in 1919 by Lionel Curtis and fellow members of the Milner Group:

“In 1919 they founded the Royal Institute of International Affairs (Chatham House) for which the chief financial supporters were Sir Abe Bailey and the Astor family (owners of *The Times*). Similar Institutes of International Affairs were established in the chief British dominions and in the United States (where it was known as the Council on Foreign Relations) in the period 1919-1927” (Quigley, 1966, p. 132).

These organisations are composed of inner circles and outer circles, with the larger institutes serving as a front organisation for the inner circle who direct the group. This has been the case since RIIA was established as a front organisation for the Milner Group in 1919:

“The Milner Group controls the Institute. Once that is established, the picture changes. The influence of Chatham House appears in its true perspective, not as the influence of an autonomous body but as merely one of the many instruments in the arsenal of another power” (Quigley, P.197, 1981).

Lord Alfred Milner and Cecil Rhodes both shared an ethos that British expansionism would lay the foundation for a world system that was to come in the future:

“The goals which Rhodes and Milner sought and the methods by which they hoped to achieve them were so similar by 1902 that the two are almost indistinguishable. Both sought to unite the world, and above all the English-speaking world, in a federal structure around Britain. Both felt that this goal could best be achieved by a secret band of men united to one another by devotion to the common cause and by personal loyalty to one another. Both felt that this band should pursue its goal by secret political and economic influence behind the scenes and by the control of journalistic, educational, and propaganda agencies” (Quigley, 1981, P.49).

Quigley was honest at admitting the dangers of a small oligarchical group having such a concentration of power vested in it:

“No country that values its safety should allow what the Milner Group accomplished in Britain – that is, that a small number of men should be able to wield such power in administration and politics, should be given almost complete control over the publication of the documents relating to their actions, should be able to exercise such influence over the avenues of information that create public opinion, and should be able to monopolise so completely the writing and teaching of the history of their own period” (Quigley, 1981, p. 197).

Today, Chatham House is one of the world’s pre-eminent organisations on world affairs, which conducts its activities under a veil of secrecy. Very little mainstream media spotlight is put on the organisation which has been at the centre of British policy for close to a century – perhaps due to the fact that the BBC, Thomas Reuters, Bloomberg, the Telegraph Media Group, the Daily Mail and General Trust plc, the Guardian and the Economist are all corporate members of the RIIA. Raytheon, the Ministry of Defence, the British Army, the Foreign & Commonwealth Office UK, BAE Systems plc, Chevron, the Royal Bank of Scotland, HSBC Holdings plc, the Scottish Government and the European Commission, are just a handful of organisations that also belong to the Institute.

Chatham House is one of the most influential organisations relating to western imperial policy, with the creation of an Anglo-American-European world empire the core objective of the institute. The Director of Chatham House has recently been announced as the chair of a new North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) policy group, which will advise and recommend future NATO policy. The Director Dr Robin Niblett revealed the intimate relationship between the RIIA and NATO since its formation in a speech about the new initiative last month, stating: “Chatham House has been involved in debates around the role of NATO since its inception”. The European branch of this organisation (the European Council on Foreign Relations (ECFR)) has also had a strong affiliation with NATO, as 3 of the former Secretary Generals are individual members of the council: including the previous leader Jaap De Hoop Scheffer (Jan 2004 – Aug 2009), along with George Robertson (Oct 1999 – Dec 2003) and Javier Solana (Dec 1995 – Oct 1999).

A further example of the network of economic and corporate elites is the annual Bilderberg conference that took place in Copenhagen between the 29th May and 1st June,

where a percentage of the world's elite meet to discuss geopolitical, social and economic affairs. Founded in 1954 by Prince Bernard of the Netherlands, the group is a mix of corporate and banking giants meeting with military heavyweights, media moguls, politicians and royalty from North America and Europe. This year's meeting was an especially high level affair with the Managing Director of the IMF Christine Lagarde, the Secretary General of NATO Anders Fogh Rasmussen, the former head of the National Security Agency (NSA) Keith Alexander, the Executive chairman of Google Inc Eric Schmidt, the Chancellor of the Exchequer George Osborne and H.M the Queen of Spain, all amongst this year's participants.

Back in 2009, the Belgian Minister of State and former chairman of the Bilderberg Group Étienne Davignon revealed that the group 'helped create the Euro in 1990's', demonstrating the power of the group in making major decisions regarding Europe's economic affairs. The President of the European Central Bank (ECB) Mario Draghi has also attended the conference in 2009 when he was Governor of the Bank of Italy, two years before taking office at the ECB.

The elite will remain in control as long as people allow themselves to be Balkanised by the media and the political establishment along the lines of race, class and status, whilst the true enemy to a free world continues to roll on unabated.