

Conflicts of interest in the Syria debate

An analysis of the defense industry ties of experts and think tanks who commented on military intervention

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About the Public Accountability Initiative

The Public Accountability Initiative (PAI) is a non-profit, non-partisan research and educational organization focused on corporate and government accountability. In addition to publishing research on critical public accountability issues, PAI maintains LittleSis.org, an involuntary facebook of powerful people and tool for power research that was used to compile data for this report. PAI's work is funded by a variety of non-profit sources (all funding sources are listed at <http://public-accountability.org/about/funding>).

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Introduction

During the public debate around the question of whether to attack Syria, Stephen Hadley, former national security adviser to George W. Bush, made a series of high-profile media appearances. Hadley argued strenuously for military intervention in appearances on CNN, MSNBC, Fox News, and Bloomberg TV, and authored a *Washington Post* op-ed headlined "To stop Iran, Obama must enforce red lines with Assad."

In each case, Hadley's audience was not informed that he serves as a director of Raytheon, the weapons manufacturer that makes the Tomahawk cruise missiles that were widely cited as a weapon of choice in a potential strike against Syria. Hadley earns \$128,500 in annual cash compensation from the company and chairs its public affairs committee. He also owns 11,477 shares of Raytheon stock, which traded at all-time highs during the Syria debate (\$77.65 on August 23, making Hadley's share's worth \$891,189). Despite this financial stake, Hadley was presented to his audience as an experienced, independent national security expert.

Though Hadley's undisclosed conflict is particularly egregious, it is not unique. The following report documents the industry ties of Hadley, 21 other media commentators, and seven think tanks that participated in the media debate around Syria. Like Hadley, these individuals and organizations have strong ties to defense contractors and other defense- and foreign policy-focused firms with a vested interest in the Syria debate, but they were presented to their audiences with a veneer of expertise and independence, as former military officials, retired diplomats, and independent think tanks.

The report offers a new look at an issue raised by David Barstow's 2008 Pulitzer Prize-winning *New York Times* series on the role military analysts played in promoting the Bush Administration's narrative on Iraq. In addition to exposing coordination with the Pentagon, Barstow found that many cable news analysts had industry ties that were not disclosed on air.

If the recent debate around Syria is any guide, media outlets have done very little to address the gaps in disclosure and abuses of the public trust that Barstow exposed. Some analysts have stayed the same, others are new, and the issues and range of opinion are different. But the media continues to present former military and government officials as venerated experts without informing the public of their industry ties – the personal financial interests that may be shaping their opinions of what is in the national interest.

This report details these ties, in addition to documenting the industry backing of think tanks that played a prominent role in the Syria debate. It reveals the extent to which the public discourse around Syria was corrupted by the pervasive influence of the defense industry, to the point where many of the so-called experts appearing on American television screens were actually representatives of companies that profit from heightened US military activity abroad. The threat of war with Syria may or may not have passed, but the threat that these conflicts of interest pose to our public discourse – and our democracy – is still very real.

Key Findings

The media debate surrounding the question of whether to launch a military attack on Syria in August and September of 2013 was dominated by defense industry-backed experts and think tanks. These individuals and organizations are linked to dozens of defense and intelligence contractors, defense-focused investment firms, and diplomatic consulting firms with strong defense ties, yet these business ties were rarely disclosed on air or in print. This report brings transparency to these largely undocumented and undisclosed connections.

For more on the methodology used to identify commentators, think tanks, and industry ties, please see the “Methodology” section below.

Commentators

- **22 commentators.** The report identifies 22 commentators who weighed in during the Syria debate in large media outlets, and who have current industry ties that may pose conflicts of interest. The commentators are linked to large defense and intelligence contractors like Raytheon, smaller defense and intelligence contractors like TASC, defense-focused investment firms like SCP Partners, and commercial diplomacy firms like the Cohen Group.
- **111 appearances, 13 attempts at disclosure.** These commentators made 111 appearances – as op-ed authors, quoted experts, or news show guests – in major media outlets such as CNN, MSNBC, Fox News, Bloomberg, and the Washington Post. Despite the commentators’ apparent financial and professional stakes in military action, major media outlets typically failed to disclose these relationships, noting them, often incompletely, in only 13 of the 111 appearances (see table below for media outlet breakdown).
- **Varying types of conflicts of interest.** In some cases, commentators have undisclosed industry ties that pose significant and direct conflicts of interest. In other cases, the undisclosed ties were less direct, but still suggest that the commentator has a financial interest in continuing heightened levels of US military action abroad. A number of consultants are included because their business relationships are foreign policy-focused and likely involve work for defense clients, though most do not disclose client lists. One consulting relationship highlighted in the report is with the Department of Defense – not an industry connection, but a significant conflict of interest.
- **Largely supportive of military action.** The commentators profiled have largely expressed support for military action in Syria, and many have framed the decision as an issue of national security. However, the opinions they expressed were not uniformly

supportive of military action. Several commentators identified, such as Robert Scales, opposed military intervention outright.

The following is a selection of commentators, profiled at greater length below, who have multiple undisclosed ties to the defense industry and have expressed strong support for military intervention in Syria in multiple appearances:

- **Jack Keane** has strongly supported striking Syria on PBS, the BBC, and Fox News. Though Keane is currently a director of **General Dynamics**, one of the world's largest military services companies, and a venture partner of **SCP Partners**, a defense-focused investment firm, only his military and think tank affiliations were identified in all sixteen appearances.
- **General Anthony Zinni** has expressed support for military action in Syria during three appearances on CNN and one on CBS This Morning, and has been quoted in the Washington Post. Though a director with major defense contractor **BAE Systems** and an advisor to defense-focused private equity firm **DC Capital Partners**, only Zinni's military experience was considered relevant by the media outlets interviewing him all five times.
- **Stephen Hadley** has voiced strong support for a strike on Syria in appearances on Bloomberg TV, Fox News, and CNN, as well as in a *Washington Post* op-ed. Though he has a financial stake in a Syria strike as a current **Raytheon** board member, and is also a principal at consulting firm **RiceHadleyGates**, he was identified all four times only as a former National Security Advisor to George W. Bush.
- **Frances Townsend** has appeared on CNN's *Anderson Cooper 360* six times strongly favoring action in Syria. Though Townsend holds positions in two investment firms with defense company holdings, **MacAndrews & Forbes** and **Monument Capital Group**, and serves as an advisor to defense contractor **Decision Sciences**, only her roles as a CNN national security analyst and member of the CIA and DHS advisory committees were revealed in all six appearances.

Think Tanks

- **Seven think tanks.** The report profiles seven prominent think tanks with significant industry ties that weighed in on intervention in Syria. These think tanks were cited 144 times in major US publications from August 7th, 2013 to September 6th, 2013. The Brookings Institution, Center for Strategic and International Studies, and The Institute for the Study of War were the most cited think tanks from our dataset.

- Experts with **The Brookings Institution** were cited in 31 articles on Syria in our dataset, more than any other think tank. Brookings is an influential think tank that is presented in the media as an independent authority, yet it receives millions in funding from the defense industry, including \$1 - 2.5 million from **Booz Allen Hamilton** and \$50,000 - \$100,000 from **Boeing, General Dynamics, Lockheed Martin, Northrop Grumman,** and **Palantir Technologies**. Brookings Executive Education's Advisory Council Chair, Ronald Sanders, is a Vice President and Senior Fellow at **Booz Allen Hamilton**.
- The **Center for Strategic and International Studies** was cited in 30 articles on Syria. CSIS has ample individual connections to the defense industry through its advisors and trustees, including CSIS Senior Advisor Margaret Sidney Ashworth, Corporate Vice President for Government Relations at **Northrop Grumman**, and CSIS Advisor Thomas Culligan, Senior Vice President of Business Development at **Raytheon**. CSIS President and CEO John Hamre is a director for defense contractor **SAIC**.
- Analysts representing **The Institute for the Study of War** were cited in 22 articles on Syria in our dataset. One such article by former ISW Senior Research Analyst Elizabeth O'Bagy was cited by Secretary John Kerry and Senator John McCain during congressional hearings in their effort to justify intervention.¹ ISW's Corporate Council represents a who's who of the defense industry and includes **Raytheon, SAIC, Palantir, General Dynamics, CACI, Northrop Grumman, DynCorp,** and **L-3 Communications**.

The report also includes profiles on the Council on Foreign Relations, the American Enterprise Institute, the Atlantic Council, and the Center for American Progress. Each profile includes a selection of commentary from analysts associated with the think tank and a selection of defense industry ties. These ties are both organizational (corporate sponsorships and donations) and individual (ties through their directors, advisors, trustees, fellows, and analysts).

Methodology

Commentators were identified in articles, videos and transcripts gathered from Factiva and Google News searches, for the period August 20, 2013 to September 18, 2013. Research on the commentators' backgrounds was then conducted, drawing on data from SEC EDGAR, news archive searches, online biographies, and other sources. Commentators with current industry ties were selected for inclusion in the report. Each piece was reviewed for relevance and only those directly related to discussions around Syria were counted toward the total. Potentially conflicted commentators were included in our dataset regardless of their support or opposition to military intervention. Where possible, videos of appearances were reviewed to determine whether industry affiliations were noted on-screen in a way that would not appear in transcripts.

The think tanks were identified through a review of articles appearing in major US publications for a slightly different period, from August 7th, 2013 to September 6th, 2013, and included the keyword “Syria” in the headline and/or lede paragraph. Searches were conducted using the Factiva database. Each article was reviewed for relevance to the Syria intervention debates. Only articles directly related to discussions around Syria were counted toward the total. Research was then conducted on the think tanks’ industry ties through reviews of annual reports, news articles, SEC data, and sources such as Right Web (<http://rightweb.irc-online.org/>), a database which includes extensive information on some of the think tanks profiled in the report.

In each case, data was reviewed and compiled on LittleSis.org (the opposite of Big Brother), PAI’s investigative research platform. The data in this report is available on LittleSis.org. At times, citations link to LittleSis.org profiles; additional, original sources for information about these individuals and organizations can be found on these pages.

Commentators and think tanks were included if they had significant current ties to the following types of firms:

- Defense and intelligence contractors.
- Investment firms with a significant defense or intelligence focus.
- Consulting firms with a significant focus on defense, intelligence, or commercial diplomacy.

Some consulting firms identified in the report function as shadow diplomatic firms, working for foreign governments and corporate clients seeking overseas business. These firms, such as the Albright Stonebridge Group, usually do not disclose their clients, so it can be difficult to discern their defense industry ties. In the absence of disclosure, this report includes these firms, and notes their defense ties where possible. Regardless of whether they have defense clients, principals at these firms likely have business relationships that complicate their public personas as expert foreign policy commentators.

Industry ties of commentators profiled

Commentator	Identified as	Industry ties
Stephen Hadley	former National Security Advisor	Raytheon, RiceHadleyGates, APCO Worldwide
James Cartwright	former Vice Chair of the Joint Chiefs of Staff	Raytheon, TASC, Accenture, Enlightenment Capital
Frances Townsend	CNN national security analyst and member of CIA and DHS advisory committees	MacAndrews & Forbes, Monument Capital Group, Decision Sciences
General Anthony Zinni	former Commander in Chief of US Central Command	BAE Systems, DC Capital Partners
Jeremy Bash	former Chief of Staff to DoD and CIA	Beacon Global Strategies
Nicholas Burns	former Under Secretary of State	Cohen Group, Entegris
William S. Cohen	former Secretary of Defense	Cohen Group
Wesley Clark	former Supreme Allied Commander of NATO	Wesley K. Clark & Associates, MFG.com
Roger Cressey	former National Security Council staff	Booz Allen Hamilton
Charles Duelfer	former chief US weapons inspector	Omnis
Adam Ereli	former State Department deputy spokesperson and ambassador to Bahrain	Mercury LLC
Michele Flournoy	former Under Secretary of Defense	Boston Consulting Group
Michael Hayden	former CIA Director	Chertoff Group, Alion Science and Technology, Next Century Corporation
Colin Kahl	former deputy assistant Secretary of Defense for the Middle East	consultant to the Defense Department with TS-SCI clearance
Brian Katulis	Senior Fellow at Center for American Progress	Albright Stonebridge Group
Jack Keane	former Vice Chief of Staff of the US Army	General Dynamics, SCP Partners
Patrick Murphy	Iraq veteran and former US Representative from Pennsylvania	Fox Rothschild LLP
Madeline Albright	former Secretary of State	Albright Stonebridge Group
James "Spider" Marks	former Commander of the US Army Intelligence Center	Stony Lonesome Group, Willowdale Services
Chuck Nash	Fox News military analyst and retired US Navy Captain	Applied Visual Sciences, Emerging Technologies International Inc.
John Negroponte	former Director of National Intelligence	McLarty Associates, Aamina, Oxford Analytica, Intelligence and National Security Alliance
Robert Scales	Fox News military analyst and former Commandant of the US Army War College	Colgen

Companies tied to Syria commentators and think tanks

Major defense and intelligence contractors	Investment firms with defense focus or major defense holdings
BAE Systems	
Boeing	Aamina
Booz Allen Hamilton	DC Capital Partners
CACI International	Enlightenment Capital
EADS	MacAndrews & Forbes
General Atomics	Monument Capital Group
General Dynamics	SCP Partners
L-3 Communications	Stony Lonesome Group
Lockheed Martin	
Northrop Grumman	
Raytheon	
SAIC	

Commercial diplomatic firms/consultants	Smaller defense contractors
Albright Stonebridge	Alion Science and Technology
Accenture	Applied Visual Sciences
APCO Worldwide	Decision Sciences
Beacon Global Strategies	Entegris
Boston Consulting Group	Next Century Corporation
Chertoff Group	Palantir Technologies
Cohen Group	TASC
Colgen	
Fox Rothschild	
McLarty Associates	
Mercury LLC	
Omnis	
RiceHadleyGates LLC	
Wesley K Clark & Associates	
Willowdale Services	

Breakdown of commentator appearances by media outlet

Major news outlets	Appearances/mentions by profiled commentators	Attempts to disclose industry ties
CNN	37	7
NBC (MSNBC/CNBC/NBC Nightly News)	16	5
Fox News	23	0
Bloomberg	5	0

Note: This excludes some outlets with limited appearances mentioned in the report.

I. Commentators

Each profile below highlights how the commentator was identified by the media, typically a previous position in government or the military. It then identifies their undisclosed ties to the defense industry, typically current positions as executives, board members or advisors with defense and intelligence contractors and defense-focused investment and consulting firms. Many of them also hold positions with the think tanks investigated in this report, which are identified where possible. If a news outlet attempted to disclose a commentators' industry ties in any way, the profile includes a section titled "Disclosure" that describes that attempt.

Stephen Hadley

Identified as: Former national security adviser to George W. Bush

Undisclosed industry ties: Hadley has served on the board of defense contractor **Raytheon** since 2009. Raytheon manufactures the Tomahawk cruise missiles that were potentially to be used in airstrikes against Syria. He also sits on the Special Activities committee of Raytheon's board, the stated purpose of which is "provide oversight of the Company's business activities which involve matters that have been classified for purposes of national security by an agency or instrumentality of the government customer ('Classified Business')." Members of the committee must obtain "applicable security clearances."² Hadley also chairs the company's Public Affairs Committee, which reviews "political, social and legal trends and issues that may have an impact on the business operations, financial performance or public image of the Company."³ Hadley owns 11,477 shares of Raytheon stock, worth close to \$900,000, and earned \$128,500 in cash compensation from the company last year.⁴

Hadley is a principal at **RiceHadleyGates LLC**, an international strategic consulting firm. The firm advises companies on their international strategies, including foreign policy and national security matters. One example of its work highlighted on its website: "Providing information and analysis to help a client manage the changes to its business brought about by the Arab Awakening."⁵ He is also an advisor, focused on Policy Research & Analysis, to the consulting firm **APCO Worldwide** and director and member of the Executive Committee of the **Atlantic Council** (see below).⁶

Media commentary: Hadley has been a vocal and highly visible supporter of war with Syria. He published an opinion piece for the *Washington Post* headlined "To stop Iran, Obama must enforce red lines with Syria." He has also done interviews with Bloomberg TV, MSNBC, and CNN, conveying a similar message.⁷ House Majority Leader Eric Cantor invited Hadley to brief staffers on Syria, according to the *National Journal*.⁸ National Security Advisor Susan Rice tweeted Hadley's remarks in support of the strike, according to the *Wall Street Journal*.⁹ From Bloomberg Television's *Political Capital with Al Hunt* (9/6/2013):

HUNT: How would it be read in Tehran if we don't strike?

HADLEY: I think that's one of the biggest problems. And that's why, if I were - and when I talk to Republicans, I say if you are concerned about Iran and the threat of a nuclear-armed Iran, you better be voting in favor of this resolution, because having - the president having set down a red line for chemical weapons use in Syria, if he does not enforce it, the - the red line, if you will, that we've put down with Iran on its nuclear program doesn't look credible. We've said that Iran needs to give up its nuclear program, and if it does not do so, all options are on the table, including the military option. If we don't enforce the red line in Syria, that threat looks empty. And if that threat looks empty, I think there's very little chance that we can get Iran to be willing to negotiate away its nuclear weapons program.¹⁰

Disclosure: CNN's John Berman noted that Hadley is "with the consulting firm RiceHadleyGates", but failed to disclose his position with Raytheon. None of Hadley's ties to the defense industry were noted in his other three appearances.

James Cartwright

Identified as: Retired General and former Vice Chair of the Joint Chiefs of Staff

Undisclosed industry ties: Cartwright has served on the board of **Raytheon** since January 2012. He served on the Public Affairs Committee and the Special Activities committees (described above, under Stephen Hadley) until recently. Cartwright owns 5,374 shares of stock and earned \$124,000 in cash compensation from Raytheon last year.¹¹

Cartwright has a number of other defense industry affiliations, as well. He is currently an advisor to defense and intelligence contractor **TASC**, consulting firm **Accenture**, and **Enlightenment Capital**, a private equity firm with defense investments. He is also a director of the **Atlantic Council** (see below).¹²

Cartwright is currently the target of a federal investigation into leaks regarding the Stuxnet virus.¹³

Media commentary: Cartwright appeared on ABC's *This Week* Syria experts panel on September 1, 2013, the same day John Kerry made appearances on all of the Sunday shows. Cartwright echoed concerns that a limited strike would not be an effective deterrent, but agreed with host George Stephanopoulos that the United States needed to strike Syria to maintain credibility and send a message to Iran:

STEPHANOPOULOS: And General Cartwright, so much of this idea of hitting back at Assad, in part because of those horrific pictures, but also the word credibility comes back into play. All of the military, all the entire region, also looking at Iran and wondering the kind of message it sends to Iran if we do not, if we do not strike in the wake of an attack like this.

CARTWRIGHT: I think it's critical here and that's probably one of the audiences we have to pay close attention to.¹⁴

Frances Townsend

Identified as: CNN national security analyst; member of the CIA and DHS advisory committees

Undisclosed industry ties: Townsend, former assistant for homeland security to George W. Bush, is a senior vice president at **MacAndrews & Forbes**, an investment firm. MacAndrews & Forbes owns **AM General**, which manufactures military vehicles. Townsend also serves as an operating advisor to **Monument Capital Group**, an investment firm with a global security and defense sector investment focus, and on the advisory board of **Decision Sciences**, a cargo screening company with defense contracts.

Townsend was the chair of the **Intelligence and National Security Alliance**, a private intelligence contractor association, until 2012.¹⁵

Media commentary: As CNN's national security analyst, Townsend has made multiple appearances on CNN's *Anderson Cooper 360* to discuss Syria.¹⁶ Townsend has stated that she sees action as "inevitable," but has also questioned the effectiveness of a limited air strike on most appearances, instead promoting a "full comprehensive strategy" without limits set by Congress. She has expressed on multiple occasions her concern that a limited strike will threaten US national security. From CNN's *Anderson Cooper 360* (8/28/2013):

TOWNSEND: When we have used these standoff assaults before, like after the East Africa bombing, it has a short-term effect, but not a long-term strategic effect. And that's what you really want to do. You don't want to just deter the Syrians. You want to deter Hezbollah, al Qaeda, Iran from using these kind of weapons as well.¹⁷

From CNN's *Anderson Cooper 360* (9/3/2013):

TOWNSEND: That's right, so you worry about the release of what chemical weapons they have, the use of Hezbollah, you know, asymmetric attacks not only inside Syria but are in the region and around the world against Western targets.¹⁸

She has also commented on the quality of the intelligence on Syria, calling it a “pretty compelling narrative” and questioned the trustworthiness of Russia’s plan to deal with Syria’s chemical weapons.

General Anthony Zinni

Identified as: Retired U.S. Marine Corps General and Commander-in-Chief of U.S. Central Command

Undisclosed industry ties: Zinni is an outside director at **BAE Systems**, which was the third largest military services company in the world in 2011²⁰ and received \$6.1 billion in federal contracts in 2012.²¹ He was previously chairman of the board and acting CEO between 2009 and 2012. He is a member of the Advisory Board of **DC Capital Partners**, a private equity firm investing in defense contractors. According to its website, “DC Capital’s investment strategy emphasizes certain sectors that it believes offer the most compelling growth opportunities for investment, including but not limited to: Intelligence, Homeland Security, Information Technology, and Operations and Maintenance.”²²

Zinni is also a Distinguished Senior Advisor at the **Center for Strategic and International Studies** (see below).²³

Media commentary: Zinni has made multiple appearances on CNN and was quoted in the *Washington Post*. He has expressed support for the strike, but questioned the likelihood of it being a “one-and-done.”²⁴ He has also appeared on CBS’s *This Morning* with a similar message:

ZINNI: Well, we have to do something because the President laid a red line down. This is an unacceptable act. And-- and so I think we're committed, or look, we can-- he'll continue to test us. I think we need to think in terms of a longer campaign, not that this shot might be just one act and then finished²⁵

In his most recent appearance, on CNN’s *State of the Union with Candy Crowley*, Zinni expressed concern that Iran might see U.S. indecision on Syria as a “potential opportunity to exploit:”

CROWLEY: Is that the signal, you think, that Iran has gotten from the U.S. over the past couple of weeks?

ZINNI: I think it's probably been confusing for them. They probably see an opportunity here. I think prior to this they would have been convinced that we intended to act if they crossed the red line there.

Knowing the Iranians, they see everything as a potential opportunity to exploit. And I'm sure they are calculating much how they could take advantage of this and maybe push the edge of the envelope.²⁶

Jeremy Bash

Identified as: Former Chief of Staff to the Defense Department and CIA under Leon Panetta

Industry ties: Bash is co-founder and managing director of **Beacon Global Strategies**. According to its website, Beacon is a “strategic advisory firm specializing in matters of International Policy, Foreign Affairs, National Defense, Cyber, Intelligence, and Homeland Security,” though its clients are not disclosed.²⁷ *Defense News* notes the firm is “built on providing advice to companies, primarily defense contractors, focused on international defense business as well as cyber, although their first client was Bash’s former boss, Panetta.”²⁸

Media commentary: Bash has made multiple appearances on CNN and MSNBC to discuss Syria. He has expressed strong confidence in U.S. intelligence on Syria. He has expressed support for the strike, including his “hope” that Congress will vote to approve it, and commented on its effectiveness in the interest of national security as a deterrent to other governments, citing Iran in particular.²⁹ From MSNBC’s *Hardball with Chris Matthews* (8/30/2013):

MATTHEWS: Jeremy Bash, your thoughts on that. Let’s see -- keep the focus here on deterrence. We have a military capability. Can we, should we use it in this way to signal our potential future enemies, Don’t go nuclear because we’re not going to let this bum go chemical?

BASH: Well, Chris, it’s good to be with you. I’ve probably sat through several hundred intelligence briefings over the last eight years on Capitol Hill, at the CIA, and at the Defense Department. Not one has been as nearly definitive as this one and not one has been nearly as horrifying as this. This really ranks up there as one of the most convincing and compelling intelligence cases for using military action in this way. And in terms of your question about deterrence and talking about Iran, let me point out two things. In 2003, Iran suspended its nuclear program. We know that definitively. Why did they do that? In part because that was the same year we invaded Iraq. We were in both countries around Iran, and they feared our military. Now, that wasn’t the objective of the Iraq war, but it was one of the intended -- that was one of the consequences.³⁰

Disclosure: CNN’s Jake Tapper noted that Bash founded Beacon Global Strategies and called it “a consulting firm.” CNN and MSNBC failed to disclose the connection in Bash’s five other appearances.

Nicholas Burns

Identified as: Former Under Secretary of State; professor at Kennedy School of Government, former U.S. ambassador to NATO

Undisclosed industry ties: Burns is a Senior Counselor to the **Cohen Group**, a global consulting firm with Aerospace & Defense and Homeland Security among its practice groups. The Cohen Group has previously been registered as a lobbyist to the U.S. government on behalf of defense contractors Lockheed Martin, General Dynamics, United Technologies and others. James Loy, senior counselor to the Cohen Group, and Joseph Ralston, Cohen Group vice chairman, are both directors at Lockheed Martin.

Burns is also a director for **Entegris**, which is “the leading manufacturer of graphite and silicon carbide materials and products for use in Aerospace applications,” according to their website.³¹ He serves on the board of the **Atlantic Council** (see below).³²

Media commentary: Burns has made appearances on CNN and Fox News in addition to penning op-ed columns for the *Boston Globe*. He has expressed strong support for a strike on Syria and suggested that inaction may threaten national security.³³

From one of Burns’s *Boston Globe* op-ed pieces (9/7/2013):

From a foreign policy perspective, the decision isn’t even close — the United States must act by attacking President Bashar Assad’s air force, artillery, and command and control assets within Syria. The goal is to intimidate him, degrade his military capacity, and deter him from ever using these weapons again. There are risks, to be sure, in any use of force. But this will not be another Iraq — the United States will not put ground troops into Syria. And the risks are even greater if we do nothing.³⁴

From CNN’s *State of the Union with Candy Crowley* (9/1/2013):

BORGER: And Nick Burns, let me ask you, what are the implications of this kind of delay for our allies in the region, or in Syria, for that matter?

BURNS: Well, Gloria, there are some risks here. Risk one is that Assad will misread this, not understand what the president is trying to do as David has described in terms of domestic affairs and believes that we're a paper tiger. And that will embolden him. The second risk is that Iran, Hezbollah and Russia, the coalition supporting Assad, will also feel that they have got license to continue what they're doing. So the president needs to counteract those.³⁵

William S. Cohen

Identified as: Former Secretary of Defense during the Clinton Administration; former Republican Senator and Congressman from Maine; served as a Director of the Council on Foreign Relations

Industry ties: Cohen is Chair and CEO of the **Cohen Group**, a global consulting firm with Aerospace & Defense and Homeland Security among its practice groups, both led by Cohen. The firm's website asserts Cohen's particular credentials in those areas. The Cohen Group has previously been registered as a lobbyist to the federal government on behalf of defense contractors Lockheed Martin, General Dynamics, United Technologies and others. James Loy, senior counselor to the Cohen Group, and Joseph Ralston, Cohen Group vice chairman, are both directors for **Lockheed Martin**. Cohen is also a trustee at the **Center for Strategic and International Studies**.³⁶

Media commentary: Cohen has made multiple appearances on CNN, MSNBC, CNBC, and Bloomberg TV to discuss Syria in recent weeks. He has expressed confidence in the US intelligence on Syria, but advised consulting with the UN and Congress and determining more clear objectives before taking action.³⁷ From *CNN Newsroom* (9/11/2013):

COHEN: Nonetheless, the president is where he is right now and if he is forced to take action because the Russians are stalling and Assad is not complying, then he should use the Desert Fox operation that President Clinton initiated against Saddam Hussein with a four-day campaign that did real damage to Saddam's capabilities. And I think that's what the president has in mind.³⁸

Disclosure: MSNBC's Andrea Mitchell and CNBC noted the Cohen Group affiliation, but did not identify it as a defense consulting firm. The affiliation was not disclosed in Cohen's other four appearances on CNN, Bloomberg TV and MSNBC.

Wesley Clark

Identified as: Retired General; former Supreme Allied Commander of NATO; senior fellow at the Burkle Center for International Relations at UCLA

Undisclosed industry ties: Clark founded a consulting firm **Wesley K Clark & Associates** in 2004, which, according to its website, "uses his expertise, relationships, and extensive international reputation and experience in the fields of energy, alternative energy, corporate and national security, logistics, aerospace and defense, and investment banking."³⁹ He currently serves as CEO of the firm. Clients are not disclosed on its website.

Clark sits on the boards of many companies, most of them focused on the energy sector, and serves as an energy sector advisor to the Blackstone Group. He serves on the board of **MFG.com**, a sourcing company, which landed a Department of Defense contract shortly before he joined its board.⁴⁰ He is also a director of the **Atlantic Council** (see below).⁴¹

Media commentary: Clark has made appearances on CNN and NPR and penned an op-ed for Zocalo Public Square that was published in *USA Today*. He has expressed condemnation of Syria's use of chemical weapons and support for Obama's response on moral grounds.⁴² From Clark's op-ed in *USA Today* (8/29/2013):

But President Obama has rightly drawn a line at the use of chemical weapons. Some weapons are simply too inhuman to be used. And, as many of us learned during 1990s, in the words of President Clinton, "Where we can make a difference, we must act."⁴³

From CNN's *Erin Burnett OutFront* (9/4/2013):

CLARK: Because I think if the United States is going to lead, this is the time to lead, and what the president is doing is leading. Everyone signed this chemical warfare convention. It outlaws the use of chemical weapons. It's actually been in law since 1925. And this is a chance for the United States and the world community to show that we meant the piece of paper when we signed it. And that's what this is about, U.S. leadership. It is not about the strike. This is about bringing the United States and the world together to make a statement. This is not going to be permitted in the 21st Century.⁴⁴

Roger Cressey

Identified as: former National Security Council staff/White House counterterrorism official; NBC News counterterrorism consultant

Undisclosed industry ties: Cressey was until recently a senior vice president with **Booz Allen Hamilton**, "supporting the firm's cybersecurity business and international government clients," according to its website.⁴⁵ His profile is no longer available on the Booz Allen Hamilton website, but was as of September 21, 2013. He is currently listed as a partner with Arlington-based risk and crisis management firm, Liberty Group Ventures LLC.⁴⁶

Media commentary: Cressey has appeared on MSNBC and was quoted in NBC News commenting on the nature of Syrian rebels and whether regime change may be a consequence of the US strike.⁴⁷

From NBC News (9/9/2013):

President Barack Obama and other U.S. officials have said that any U.S. reprisal for Assad's alleged use of chemical weapons against his people would be limited and not aimed at regime change. But Cressey, the NBC News consultant, and other experts say that attacks – likely to be in the form of cruise-missile strikes on Syrian command-and-control facilities -- could have that effect, coming at a time when the rebels have been gaining ground, even making headway in Alawite strongholds like Latakia. "You don't have to advertise regime change," said Cressey, "but you can strike a series of targets that are critical to the regime's survival, that ultimately will help the rebels."⁴⁸

Charles Duelfer

Identified as: former chief U.S. weapons inspector (in Iraq during the administration of George W Bush); led the CIA's Iraq Survey Group; author of *Hide and Seek: The Search for Truth in Iraq*

Undisclosed industry ties: Duelfer is chairman and special advisor to the CEO of **Omnis**, a consulting firm with a national security and intelligence focus. Omnis was part of team of contractors assembled by SAIC that in December 2007 won a 5-year contract worth up to \$1 billion with the Defense Intelligence Agency.⁴⁹ Other clients are not disclosed on its website. According to Duelfer's bio on the firm's website, he is also currently "consulting on a range of intelligence and security management topics."⁵⁰

Media commentary: Duelfer has made multiple appearances on *PBS NewsHour* and NPR to discuss Syria, as well as being quoted in *The Nation* and *The Guardian*. He has commented on the quality of intelligence in Syria and the plan to find and destroy their supply of chemical weapons.⁵¹

From *PBS NewsHour* (September 16, 2013):

IFILL: You mentioned Iraq. How does this compare to Syria, another place where the leader came out and said I'm going to give up my weapons and then someone had to enforce that?

DUELFER: Well, I think implicitly or explicitly, the threat of force is there. Certainly, Bashar al-Assad will have noticed that the president gave a speech basically saying he was going to conduct a military strike. In the book of Obama, I think he is guilty, but he suspended the sentence. So whether or not the Security Council agrees to the use of force, the United States will.⁵²

Adam Ereli

Identified as: Former State Department deputy spokesperson; former ambassador to Bahrain; former State Department diplomat to Syria

Industry ties: Ereli recently joined public relations firm **Mercury LLC** as vice chairman and co-leads its international affairs team. Defense and homeland security are both listed among his focus industries on the firm's website.⁵³

Media commentary: Ereli made an appearance on Fox News, shortly after the chemical attacks were discovered, repeatedly calling for an attack on Syria: "If it is demonstrated that chemical weapons were used, then force is not an option, it's a necessity." He reiterated his point on Twitter with a link to the interview: "The question is not whether the US should respond with force to the use of WMD in Syria, but how much force to use."⁵⁴

Ereli has also made appearances in international press, including an interview on France 24 and quotes in the *Telegraph*, *Voice of America*, and the United Arab Emirates' *Khaleej Times* and *The National*, all calling for an attack on Syria and suggesting inaction could threaten national security. He made another appearance on Fox News as well with a similar message.⁵⁵

From *The National* (9/8/2013):

"First of all, Obama made it clear that he wants to act. He doesn't want Bashar [Al Assad, the Syrian president] and the Syrian regime to use chemical weapons with nothing done about it, but he also wants America to be united in this action," Mr Ereli said. "That's why he asked Congress to vote on it although he does not constitutionally need that. Will he get it? I hope so because if he doesn't it will be a disaster for the United States, a disaster for Syria and a disaster for the whole region."⁵⁶

Disclosure: Of all the media outlets that interviewed Ereli, only *The National* noted that he is "now a diplomatic consultant." It is unclear if Ereli was already under contract with Mercury when he made appearances on Fox and other quotes in the international press.

Michèle Flournoy

Identified as: Former Undersecretary of Defense

Industry ties: Flournoy has been a senior advisor at the **Boston Consulting Group** since mid-2012 in the firm's worldwide public sector practice, to "provide advice on driving change in the government arena to BCG teams and the government they are supporting around the world."⁵⁷ According to Wikileaks State Department cables, past Boston Consulting Group clients have

included the government of the United Arab Emirates and Kazakhstan.⁵⁸ The firm has also opened a major office in Dubai, which plays a “strategic role in serving clients throughout the fast-growing Gulf and MENA (Middle East North Africa) regions.”⁵⁹

Flournoy is also a cofounder and president of the **Center for a New American Security**, a director at the **Atlantic Council** and a senior associate at the **Center for Strategic and International Studies** (see below).⁶⁰

Media commentary: Flournoy appeared on MSNBC expressing support for a strike on Syria:

FLOURNOY: Look, I think there are very important stakes involved here: first, the issue of upholding the international norm against the use of chemical weapons; second, U.S. credibility and leadership in the world and third, knowing that the rest of the world is watching. What messages does Iran take from either action or inaction? So I do think that limited, focused strikes, focused on deterring further use of chemical weapons, degrading Assad’s ability to carry out such attacks, that those are something we need to support and we need to do. But I also think we need to better explain to the American people and to Congress the stakes involved and the risks of not acting, what that would mean.⁶¹

Disclosure: MSNBC’s Andrea Mitchell noted Flournoy’s position at the Boston Consulting Group, but did not indicate the nature of its business.

Michael Hayden

Identified as: Retired General; former CIA director

Industry ties: Hayden is a principal at the **Chertoff Group**, a global security consulting firm founded by former Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff. Hayden’s focus areas include “technological intelligence and counterintelligence (communications and data networks),” “global political and terrorist risk analysis,” and “the structure and strategy of the American intelligence community,” according to the firm’s website.⁶² Hayden serves on the board of **Alion Science and Technology** and the advisory board of **Next Century Corporation**, both defense contractors. He is also a director at the **Atlantic Council** (see below).

Media commentary: Hayden has made multiple appearances on CNN to discuss Syria. He has expressed support for striking Syria and suggested the attack cannot be “one and done.” He has also commented on the quality of intelligence on Syria.⁶³

From CNN’s *Piers Morgan Live* (8/29/2013):

HAYDEN: No, I think the United States would act unilaterally because President Obama made this commitment for the United States and frankly for himself personally about a year ago. And I just can't conceive that he would back down from a very serious course of action in which these actions of President Assad have serious consequences.⁶⁴

Disclosure: Hayden's affiliation with the Chertoff Group, described as a "risk management/security consulting firm," was noted on most appearances. CNN's Anderson Cooper and Wolf Blitzer also noted that Hayden "serves on the board of several defense firms." CNN's Piers Morgan incorrectly identified Hayden as a National Security Advisor to President George W. Bush, but did not note his affiliations with Chertoff or any defense contractors.

Colin Kahl

Identified as: Former deputy assistant secretary of Defense for the Middle East; former Obama administration Pentagon official

Undisclosed industry ties: Kahl does not appear to have current ties to defense contractors, but he is currently a consultant to the **Office of the Secretary of Defense** with TS-SCI clearance, according to his CV.⁶⁵ He is a senior fellow at the **Center for a New American Security**.

Media commentary: Kahl was quoted in *Politico*, the *Wall Street Journal* and *Bloomberg* about Syria. He has expressed support for the strike on Syria, but concern about potential consequences that would make disengagement difficult, similar to Iraq.⁶⁶

From the *Wall Street Journal* (8/31/2013):

Colin Kahl, a former Obama administration Pentagon official, said the president's expected military action was an appropriate demonstration of U.S. credibility. "One of the things I heard most often when I was in the administration is that superpowers don't bluff," he said. "That's why the administration has been very cautious across a whole host of issues not to issue a lot of red lines."⁶⁷

Brian Katulis

Identified as: Senior fellow/national security specialist at the **Center for American Progress** (see below)

Undisclosed industry ties: Katulis is a senior advisor at the **Albright Stonebridge Group**, a global strategy firm. According to his bio on its website, Katulis “assists clients with issues related to the Middle East and South Asia. He has consulted numerous U.S. government agencies, private corporations, and non-governmental organizations on projects in more than two dozen countries, including Iraq, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Yemen, Egypt, and Colombia.”⁶⁸ Albright Stonebridge does not disclose its clients.

Media commentary: Katulis has appeared on MSNBC’s *Politics Nation* with Al Sharpton and Bloomberg TV, published a piece on Syria in the *New York Daily News*, and has been quoted in the *Christian Science Monitor*, *Bloomberg* and the *LA Times*. On MSNBC, Katulis said that Obama and Kerry had done a “very good job” making the case for airstrikes, though raised doubts about the efficacy of a limited strike.⁶⁹ He has also commented on the role of international “silent partners,” countries who may not support the strike militarily, but in other ways.⁷⁰

Jack M Keane

Identified as: Retired Army General; vice chief of staff of the Army from 1999 to 2003; Board Chairman for the **Institute for the Study of War** (see below); Fox News military analyst. He has also been described as “an influential advocate for the surge of troops in Iraq” and “serving in an advisory role in the U.S. occupation of Iraq.”

Undisclosed industry ties: Keane has been a director with major defense contractor **General Dynamics** since 2004.⁷¹ General Dynamics was the fourth largest military services company in the world in 2011⁷² and received \$15 billion in federal contracts in 2012, making it the fourth largest federal contractor.⁷³ Keane is a venture partner with **SCP Partners**, a private equity firm targeting defense and security investments.⁷⁴

Media commentary: Keane has appeared on *PBS News Hour*, BBC Radio 4, NPR-affiliated Utah Public Radio, and Fox News on thirteen occasions as a military analyst. In every appearance he has expressed strong support for striking Syria. He has expressed some of the earliest support for military action in Syria, following initial reports of the chemical attacks, and emphasized the importance of “degrading” the Syrian military.⁷⁵ Most recently, Keane has been a strong critic of the deal with Russia on Fox, calling the focus on chemical weapons disarmament “a lost opportunity to achieve the kind of strategic balance we need to buffer the Iranians.”⁷⁶

From *PBS NewsHour* (9/2/2013):

BROWN: General Keane, I want to ask you because I understand you talked to Senators McCain and Graham after their meeting with the president. Do they have a sense of some kind of plan on the table for what could be done militarily?

KEANE: Yes, I think they came away from that meeting a little bit more optimistic than they had thought they would be. I believe they were encouraged by the fact that I think the plan is a little bit more robust and that degrades significantly Assad's delivery systems, to include airpower.⁷⁷

Patrick Murphy

Identified as: Iraq veteran, former US Representative from Pennsylvania

Undisclosed industry ties: Patrick Murphy is a partner at the law firm **Fox Rothschild LLP**. According to a *Philadelphia Business Journal* article, another partner in the firm indicated that Murphy's service in the military and the House Armed Services Committee "will be a big help in the firm's recently expanded Washington office, where the firm's clients largely revolve around the defense industry." Silow also noted that Murphy "would become involved in some government relations work."⁷⁸

Media commentary: Murphy has made multiple appearances on MSNBC to discuss Syria. He has expressed concern about the effectiveness of a limited strike and has advocated exploring diplomatic options before using the military.⁷⁹

Madeleine Albright

Identified as: Former Secretary of State during the Clinton Administration

Industry ties: Albright chairs of the **Albright Stonebridge Group**, an international consulting firm, as well as **Albright Capital Management**, an emerging markets investment firm. As noted above, Albright Stonebridge does not disclose its clients, though its business, described as "commercial diplomacy," likely gives rise to significant conflicts of interest and likely involves work with defense contractors. One of the consulting firm's clients, Marsh Inc. CEO Brian Storms, said "To be blunt, the access that Madeleine Albright gives Marsh through her global contacts is unprecedented."⁸⁰ Albright is also a director of the **Council on Foreign Relations** and the **Center for a New American Security**, as well as an honorary director for the **Atlantic Council** (see below)⁸¹

Media commentary: Albright issued a statement urging Congress to vote in favor of striking Syria that was quoted in the *Washington Post*:

The "risks of complacency and inaction far outweigh those of the limited, but purposeful, response now contemplated," Albright said in a statement. "The dangers of this world will only deepen if aggressors believe that global norms have no meaning and that gross violations can be carried out with impunity."⁸²

Most recently, she has appeared on CBS's *Face the Nation* and CNN commenting on a possible deal with Russia.⁸³

Disclosure: Albright's affiliation with Albright Stonebridge was noted by CNN on the screen during her appearance, but not verbally, and the firm's business was not described for viewers. The *Washington Post* indicated that Albright's statement was "released by her consulting company," but failed to name it.⁸⁴ CBS failed to mention any of her ties.

James A "Spider" Marks

Identified as: Retired Army Major General; former commander of the U.S. Army intelligence center; CNN military analyst

Undisclosed industry ties: Marks serves as a venture partner and advisory board member at the **Stony Lonesome Group**, an investment firm with a defense and national security focus.⁸⁵ He is also a co-founder of **Willowdale Services**, a consulting firm that lists "global strategic risk management," "defense operations," and "intelligence support operations" among its areas of expertise, and "geographic and operational risk assessments" among its service offerings.⁸⁶

Media commentary: Marks is a military analyst on CNN and has made ten appearances to discuss Syria. He has expressed support for striking Syria and commented on a range of military options, suggesting that regime change and use of ground forces should be on the table. He has also commented on the plan to find and destroy chemical weapons in Syria.⁸⁷

From CNN Newsroom (8/27/2013):

COSTELLO: OK so last question for you the President is set to get this document that will present evidence that the Syrian government has used chemical weapons on its own people. How long after that do you think a decision will be made?

MARKS: Well I would hope a decision has already been made and that all that is necessary now is confirmation and at least alerting the American public that this is an inevitability. It literally could be a New York minute. Make the decision and then launch the first cruise missiles immediately. There should be no effort on the part of Assad -- we've demonstrated, or at least Assad has demonstrated an inability to be reasonable in terms of what he is doing, so our expectations should be that he's not going to alter his behavior. We need to be prepared to strike immediately.⁸⁸

Chuck Nash

Identified as: Retired US Navy Captain; Fox News military analyst.

Undisclosed industry ties: Nash serves as an independent director of **Applied Visual Sciences**, a contraband detection company seeking Defense and Homeland Security contracts. Since 2000, he has also run **Emerging Technologies International Inc. (ETII)**, a defense consultancy. It is unclear if ETII is active.⁸⁹

Media commentary: Nash has made multiple appearances on Fox News to discuss Syria. He has criticized the effectiveness of a limited strike, instead supporting a larger strategic military plan to “change the events on the ground.”⁹⁰

From Fox News *America’s Newsroom* (9/3/2013):

MARTHA: What do you think should be done? Do you think Congress should vote to approve this strike?

NASH: It depends on what this strike really entails. If this strike is nothing more than poking our nose in there and not changing the game then, no. Because if you take a shot at somebody, you should expect them to take a shot back at you. Therefore, this ought to be part of an overall plan that achieves certain strategic political ends, and if it doesn’t, if all it is is “doing something” then, no, I don’t support that at all. But if it’s to change the events on the ground and we have a plan on what we want that outcome to look like then, yes, I can say support it because the President has already gotten far out in front of the whole process with his rhetoric, and now the United States and our reputation abroad is really swinging in the balance.⁹¹

Disclosure: Nash’s Fox News bio indicates his affiliation with Emerging Technologies,⁹² but neither that nor his affiliation with Applied Visual Sciences are noted during his appearances.

John D Negroponte

Identified as: Former Director of National Intelligence (during the Bush administration); former Ambassador to Iraq and the UN; former Deputy Secretary of State

Undisclosed industry ties: Negroponte is vice chairman of **McLarty Associates**, a global strategic consulting firm that lists defense among its sectors of focus. He is also an advisor to **Aamina**, a global investment company with private investing “currently focused on ventures in the Middle East and North Africa,”⁹³ and **Oxford Analytica**, a global analysis and advisory firm.

Negroponete became Chairman of the **Intelligence and National Security Alliance**, a private intelligence contractor association, in 2012.⁹⁴

Media commentary: In late August, Negroponete was quoted in *Politico* with concerns about striking Syria without accurate intelligence and an international coalition, given his experiences with Iraq. He praised Obama for trying to get more buy-in at home and abroad on CNN's State of the Union.⁹⁵ During his appearance on Fox News' *On the Record with Greta Van Susteren* the following week, Negroponete expressed support for the strike as a way to deter Assad and discussed possible regime change:

NEGROPONETE: Well, the truth is, this is a situation fraught with uncertainty and fraught with terrible choices, choices between different shades of bad and worse.

And I don't think we know what's going to happen, but I think one of the things that is forcing our hand and sort of giving impetus to our thinking is the fact that Mr. Bashar al Assad's behavior has become even more reprehensible. And in a way, you might argue that this use of chemical weapons has been kind of a straw that broke the camel's back⁹⁶

Robert Scales

Identified as: retired Army major general, former commandant of the U.S. Army War College.

Undisclosed industry ties: Scales is the founder and CEO of **Colgen**, a defense consulting firm. Many major defense contractors, including Boeing, Booz Allen Hamilton, General Dynamics, Lockheed Martin, Northrop Grumman, Raytheon and SAIC, and branches of the U.S. military are listed among its clients.⁹⁷

Media commentary: Scales wrote an op-ed in the *Washington Post* calling the Syria strike “a war the Pentagon doesn't want.”⁹⁸ He has also made multiple appearances on Fox News opposing the Syria strike and expressing concern that it might lead to a larger conflict.⁹⁹

Disclosure: Scales' Fox News bio online notes his affiliation with Colgen, but it is not noted during his appearances.

II. Think Tanks

Brookings Institution

Industry Ties: Brookings is an influential research and policy think tank that works in many major policy areas, including defense and foreign policy. In its most recent annual report Brookings's corporate donors include some prominent names in the defense industry.¹⁰⁰ The bulleted points below give the donation level and each defense industry contractor that gave at that level.

- \$1 - 2.5 million: **Booz Allen Hamilton**
- \$500 thousand - 1 million: **Qualcomm Inc**
- \$50 - 100 thousand: **Boeing, General Dynamics, Lockheed Martin, Northrop Grumman, Palantir Technologies**

In addition to organizational funding, Brookings has several industry-connected individuals in its ranks. David Rubenstein, co-founder and co-CEO at the Carlyle Group, the majority shareholder of **Booz Allen Hamilton** and the company responsible for taking the firm public in 2010, is co-chair of Brookings' board of trustees. He also made a personal contribution at the \$1-2.5 million level, according to the 2012 annual report.¹⁰¹ Another Brookings trustee, Ken Duberstein, is a director for **Boeing**, the second largest defense contractor in the United States.¹⁰²¹⁰³

Brookings employs **Booz Allen Hamilton** vice president and senior fellow, Ronald Sanders as adjunct faculty.¹⁰⁴ Sanders also chairs Brookings' Executive Education's Advisory Council, most recently heading up a Brookings event entitled "Enterprise Leadership: The Essential Framework for Today's Government Leaders," which featured Booz Allen senior vice president Admiral Thad Allen as keynote speaker.¹⁰⁵¹⁰⁶

Syria commentary: The Brookings Institution's commentary on intervention in Syria was cited in 31 articles. Though largely logistical and focused on analysis of the President's response and effects of Congressional involvement, some analysts weighed in on intervention specifically, advocating missile strikes and offering public relations pointers.

Michael O'Hanlon, national security analyst at Brookings, urged a comparison between the hypothetical Syria intervention and President Clinton's punitive missile strikes against Iraq on NPR, saying that the operation would be "small scale" and "over as soon as it's begun":

Michael O'Hanlon, a national security analyst at The Brookings Institution, said that for all the contrasts with the 2003 Iraq invasion, the more apt comparison in Syria is with missile strikes ordered against Iraq by President Bill Clinton,

including strikes in 1998 to punish Saddam for not complying with U.N. chemical weapons inspections.

"I'm surprised this administration doesn't make that analogy," O'Hanlon said. "This operation is going to be limited. It's going to be small scale or medium scale and it's going to be over as soon as it's begun practically. We're going to hear about the beginning, middle and end of it all in one Pentagon briefing, more or less."¹⁰⁷

Ken Pollack, senior fellow in the Saban Center for Middle East Policy, Brookings Institution, drew a comparison between intervention in Syria and the (positively viewed) US intervention in Kosovo in the late 1990s, also on NPR, implying that opposition to intervention is largely due to bad public relations:

One path may be persuading NATO to get involved or even lead any military action. That helped the Clinton administration cast a frame of legitimacy on the Kosovo war in the late 1990s even though the Security Council, with Russia firmly opposed, never sanctioned the bombing campaign against Belgrade, said Ken Pollack, an expert on Middle Eastern political-military affairs at the Brookings Institute.

"Very famously, the Kosovo war was not legal," Pollack said. "Yet ... you don't have people running around screaming that the Kosovo war was illegal. That is because the US did a good job of building a case for it."¹⁰⁸

Center for Strategic and International Studies

Industry Ties: The Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) is an established foreign policy think tank with a long roster of corporate executives and government officials serving as trustees¹⁰⁹ and counselors.¹¹⁰ CSIS has more defense industry connected advisors than most think tanks, including at its highest level of leadership: its president and CEO, John J Hamre, serves as a director for defense contractor **SAIC**.¹¹¹

- CSIS trustee James McNerney is president, CEO, and chairman of the board at **Boeing**.¹¹²
- CSIS senior advisor Margaret Sidney Ashworth is the corporate vice president for government relations at **Northrop Grumman** and former **Raytheon** lobbyist.¹¹³
- CSIS Advisory Board member Thomas Culligan is senior vice president at **Raytheon**.¹¹⁴
- CSIS Advisory Board member Gregory Dahlberg is senior vice president of Washington operations at **Lockheed Martin**.¹¹⁵

- CSIS Advisory Board member Timothy Keating is senior vice president of public policy at **Boeing**.¹¹⁶
- CSIS Roundtable member Gregory Gallopoulos is senior vice president, general counsel and secretary at **General Dynamics**.¹¹⁷
- CSIS trustee Ray L Hunt is a former **Halliburton** director.¹¹⁸
- Trustee James L Jones is a former director of **General Dynamics** and **Boeing**.¹¹⁹

Syria Commentary: CSIS' experts were cited in 30 articles on intervention in Syria, often advocating for greater military action than the target strikes being considered by Secretary Kerry.

Anthony Cordesman, Arleigh A. Burke Chair in Strategy for CSIS and a former national security assistant to Senator John McCain said limited strikes would be “pointless”:

Others said that Mr. Obama needs to go beyond cruise-missile strikes. "Simply taking reprisal action to say 'We mean it' does not strike me as significant meaningful action," said Anthony Cordesman, a longtime military analyst at the Center for Strategic and International Studies. "It's a pointless punitive military exercise."¹²⁰

In another article Cordesman said that the planned strikes would cause “lasting” damage to Assad:

Defense analyst Anthony Cordesman of the Center for Strategic and International Studies think tank said if successful, hitting fixed targets would eliminate key assets to Assad that "can't easily be replaced, like command and control facilities, major headquarters."

"These are lasting targets," Cordesman said.¹²¹

In yet another article Cordesman said that the limited strikes would send a message of weakness and hypothetically incentivize similar regimes to use nuclear weapons:

“If anything, the message of a narrowly focused US strike could be just the opposite of what the US intends,” says Anthony Cordesman, a defense analyst at the Center for Strategic and International Studies.

“To the world’s worst regimes, the unintended message of limited strikes that leave their governments intact may be that that if you are going to use such weapons, use them decisively enough to make any international action worth the cost," he adds. "Worse, such actions may lead regimes to question the utility of using weapons with limited value in deterring international intervention,

like chemical weapons. Instead, they may be incentivized to go nuclear, go cyber, or support violent non-state actors.”¹²²

Institute for the Study of War

Industry ties: The Institute for War Studies’ close connection to defense contractors is well documented. ISW Founder and President Kimberly Kagan was criticized in a December, 2012 *Washington Post* article for “pro bono” advisory services she and her husband provided to General Petraeus.¹²³ The article noted that Kagan’s proximity to the general “provided an incentive for defense contractors to contribute” to her think tank and “during Petraeus’s tenure in Kabul, she sent out a letter soliciting contributions so the organization could continue its military work.” Most telling of how the deep ties between ISW and the defense industry are bolstered is the following anecdote from the *Washington Post*, describing their 2011 dinner honoring Petraeus:

At the August 2011 dinner honoring Petraeus, Kagan thanked executives from two defense contractors who sit on her institute’s corporate council, DynCorp International and CACI International. The event was sponsored by General Dynamics. All three firms have business interests in the Afghan war.

Kagan told the audience that their funding allowed her to assist Petraeus. “The ability to have a 15-month deployment essentially in the service of those who needed some help — and the ability to go at a moment’s notice — that’s something you all have sponsored,” she said.

She called her work for him “an extraordinary and special occasion.”

After accepting the award, Petraeus heaped praise on the institute.

“Thanks to all of you for supporting an organization that General Keane very accurately described as filling a niche — a very, very important one,” he said. “It’s now a deployable organization. We’re going to start issuing them combat service stripes.”

ISW’s Corporate Council is a “who’s who” of the defense industry and includes **Raytheon, SAIC, Palantir, General Dynamics, CACI, Northrop Grumman, DynCorp, and L-3 Communications.**¹²⁴ Raytheon, of course, is the manufacturer of the Tomahawk cruise missile, widely understood as the weapon of choice for the proposed strike and the featured armament in Harmer’s ISW study.

Syria commentary: The Institute for the Study of War was cited in 22 articles on intervention. The message from analysts from the ISW focused on quelling the notion that the opposition forces, which stood to gain from a US intervention, are extremists and argued in favor of immediate strikes over waiting for Congress.

Christopher Harmer, a senior naval analyst with the Middle East Security Project at the Institute for the Study of War, released a widely circulated study on the use of Tomahawk missiles for a “surgical” strike against Assad. The study was touted by Sen. John McCain as proof that limited strikes were a viable intervention strategy. From *Foreign Policy*:

In July, Harmer authored a widely-circulated study showing how the U.S. could degrade key Syrian military installations on the cheap with virtually no risk to U.S. personnel. "It could be done quickly, easily, with no risk whatsoever to American personnel, and a relatively minor cost," said Harmer. One of the study's proposals was cruise missile strikes from what are known as TLAMs (Tomahawk land attack missiles) fired from naval vessels in the Mediterranean.¹²⁵

In addition to advocating for intervention, Harmer was critical of any delay in the strikes. From *Bloomberg*:

While a delay doesn't present “insurmountable difficulty” for the U.S., Assad will benefit from time to prepare for an attack, said Christopher Harmer, an analyst with the Washington-based Institute for the Study of War who follows the Syrian military.

The decision to wait for a vote in Congress lets Assad disperse his forces and equipment and allows Syria's ally, Russia, to reposition some of its Black Sea fleet into the Mediterranean, Harmer said. It also provides Assad a “considerable psychological advantage within Syria,” he said.

“It strains credibility to assert that the effect of delaying action is positive for the U.S. and negative for the Assad regime,” Harmer said in an e-mail.¹²⁶

Prior to her dismissal from ISW for lying about holding a Ph.D. from Georgetown University, Elizabeth O'Bagy, who also worked for the Syrian Emergency Task Force, was quoted in several articles supporting intervention and arguing that opposition forces were not linked to extremists groups as feared. Her articles were influential enough to be quoted by Secretary Kerry. From *Reuters*:

Kerry cited an article by Elizabeth O'Bagy, an analyst with the Institute for the Study of War think tank, in which she wrote that Islamic extremist factions are not "spearheading the fight against the Syrian government," but rather that the struggle is being led by "moderate opposition forces."¹²⁷

Council on Foreign Relations

Industry Ties: The Council on Foreign Relations claims over 4,700 members and boasts many celebrity and high profile members among those ranks including Brian Williams, Fareed Zakaria, Angelina Jolie, Chuck Hagel, and Erin Burnett.¹²⁸ Its prominence lends it a gravitas that obscures substantial conflicts of interest.

CFR has a robust corporate membership¹²⁹ program that includes many of the top companies in the defense industry including **Booz Allen Hamilton, DynCorp, Lockheed Martin, Boeing, Northrop Grumman, Raytheon, Palantir**. Each company paid between \$30,000 and \$100,000 for varying levels of access to CFR's experts and directors.

CFR's board members include many individuals with defense industry ties, such as R. Nicholas Burns (profiled above), Ann Fudge, a director of General Electric, and Donna J. Hrinak, an executive at Boeing. The vice chairman of CFR's board of directors is David Rubenstein, co-founder and co-CEO of top Booz Allen shareholder the **Carlyle Group**.

Individual memberships are similarly stocked with defense industry insiders. CFR members Thad Allen and Tom Moorman are **Booz Allen Hamilton** executives, while members Robert Millard and John P White are Directors at **L-3 Communications**. CFR member Norman Augustine was the chairman and CEO of **Lockheed Martin**.

Syria commentary: CFR's analysts and experts were cited in 19 articles on intervention in Syria. Much of CFR's pro-intervention commentary came from CFR President Richard Haass¹³⁰ who advocated directly arming the Syrian opposition in addition to the proposed limited strikes:

Richard Haass, president of the Council on Foreign Relations, said providing "significant" arms to the rebels would be the best way to help shape the battlefield and influence the outcome in Syria.

"I think the strikes are in a narrow way successful by simply occurring," Haass said. "It shows that you cannot use these weapons and get off scot-free," said Haass. "If the Syrians continue to slaughter — as I believe they probably would — their fellow citizens as the civil war continues, then the United States has other means rather than direct military participation to counter that. And that's where I have been arguing, will continue to argue, for serious arming of the opposition."¹³¹

In an op-ed in the *Washington Post*, CFR senior fellow for Middle East and Africa studies Robert Danin called for a military commitment that would "send a message to Assad":

But if the Obama administration wants to send a message to Assad that he accurately understands, the United States must provide not only a credible response to his recent use of chemical weapons but also make him believe that response is part of a larger strategy to compel him to stop slaughtering his own people — by any means. Such an approach would require a U.S. commitment to doing more than limited strikes against facilities related to chemical weapons. But it is the only message Assad will understand.¹³²

American Enterprise Institute

Industry ties: The American Enterprise Institute does not disclose its corporate donor base but its trustees and fellows have significant ties to the defense industry.

- Trustee Daniel D’Aniello is co-founder and Chairman of the **Carlyle Group**, the majority shareholder of **Booz Allen Hamilton**.¹³³
- Trustee John Faraci sits on the board of directors of **United Technologies Corporation**, an aerospace and aviation manufacturing company.¹³⁴
- Trustee Dick Cheney is the former Vice President of the United States, former CEO of **Halliburton**, and a famed Washington, DC hawk.¹³⁵
- Senior Fellow Thomas Donnelly was the director of strategic communications and initiatives for **Lockheed Martin**.¹³⁶
- Fred Kagan, director of the Critical Threats Project¹³⁷, is the husband of ISW director Kim Kagan. Both were criticized in the *Washington Post* for “pro bono” senior advisory work to General Petraeus.¹³⁸

Syria commentary: Individuals associated with the American Enterprise Institute were cited in 15 articles on intervention in Syria.

In a *Wall Street Journal* op-ed former Senators Lieberman and Kyl, co-chairmen of the American Enterprise Institute's American Internationalism Project, derided inaction in Syria as detrimental to national security, a betrayal of US allies in the region, and an ominous “green-light” for Iran and Putin:

But none of this should blind us from a larger truth: Regardless of how we got here, failure to authorize military force against Assad now will have far-reaching and profoundly harmful consequences for American national security.

This is no longer just about the conflict in Syria or even the Middle East. It is about American credibility. Are we a country that our friends can trust and our enemies fear? Or are we perceived as a divided and dysfunctional superpower in retreat, whose words and warnings are no longer meaningful?¹³⁹

This doomsday scenario of “green-lighting” the hypothetical ambitions of Iran and North Korea was echoed by AEI scholar Michael Rubin in comments to the *Associated Press*:

"President Obama issued those words - red line - a little more than a year ago," said Rubin. "If you draw a line in the sand and you allow your opponent to cross, then that's not an issue of confidence only in Syria, but that's something the North Koreans will be watching, the Iranians will be watching and potentially other rogues around the globes will be watching. So the whole idea of a symbolic strike is to say 'you can't cross the line.'"¹⁴⁰

Atlantic Council

Industry ties: Supporters of the Atlantic Council are grouped into sponsor circles of increasing access depending on the financial commitment to the organization. Donors giving less than \$25,000 are designated as “Other Supporters”:

- Global Leaders Circle (\$100,000+): **SAIC, EADS, Lockheed Martin**
- Chairman’s Circle (\$50,000+): **Raytheon**
- President’s Circle (\$25,000+): **Boeing**
- Other Supporters: **General Dynamics, Northrop**¹⁴¹

In addition to direct support from defense industry contractors, the Atlantic Council maintains its own stable of connected directors and advisors:

- Former National Security Advisor Stephen J Hadley, profiled above, is a director for the Atlantic Council and a director at **Raytheon**.¹⁴²
- Director James Cartwright, also profiled above, is also a director for **Raytheon** and an advisor for **TASC**.¹⁴³
- Advisor Robert J Stevens is the former CEO and currently serving as chairman of **Lockheed Martin**.¹⁴⁴
- Advisor General John Jumper was the CEO and Chairman of **SAIC** until September 27, 2013, when the company split off its national security, health, and engineering businesses as a new public company called **Leidos**. Jumper now serves as the CEO and Chairman of Leidos.¹⁴⁵¹⁴⁶
- Director Thomas M Culligan is senior vice president for **Raytheon**.¹⁴⁷
- Director Admiral Edmund Giambastiani Jr serves as a director for **Boeing**.¹⁴⁸
- Atlantic Council Chairman James L Jones was formerly a director for **Boeing** and **General Dynamics**.¹⁴⁹

Syria commentary: Analysts with the Atlantic Council were cited in 14 articles on intervention in Syria.

Frederic C Hof, a senior fellow with the Atlantic Council's Rafik Hariri Center for the Middle East, wrote that limited, symbolic strikes were worse than doing nothing and mused on the image of American weakness portrayed in such an intervention scenario in an interview with the *Christian Science Monitor*:

On the other hand, if the attack is limited in scope and duration, it could send entirely the wrong signal to the Assad regime.

“The more limited and symbolic it is the more disastrous it would be for the US and its partners... It would be worse than doing nothing,” says Frederic C. Hof, a senior fellow at the Atlantic Council's Rafik Hariri Center for the Middle East who previously served as the Obama administration’s liaison with the Syrian opposition.

“It would only confirm Assad's view that it is safe to walk up to the president of the United States and slap him in the face, as appears to have been the case in this most recent incident,” he adds, in reference to last week’s chemical attack, believed to be the deadliest single poison gas attack in quarter of a century.¹⁵⁰

Center for American Progress

Industry ties: Although considered dovish by defense policy standards, the Center for American Progress’ business alliance and analysts have ties to large defense contractors.

CAP’s business alliance was revealed in a *Nation* article that exposed its undisclosed corporate donors. Among these donors were two of the biggest names in the defense industry, **Lockheed Martin** and **Boeing**.¹⁵¹

These ties extend into their roster of experts. CAP’s senior vice president for national security and international policy, Rudy de Leon, was senior vice president of **Boeing**; CAP senior fellow Scott Lilly was a lobbyist for **Lockheed Martin**. Several principals at the **Albright Stonebridge Group**, a commercial diplomacy firm, have ties to CAP, including Madeleine Albright and Carol Browner, both board members, and Brian Katulis and Richard Verma, both senior fellows with a national security focus. Former **Raytheon** and **SAIC** director John Deutch is a CAP trustee.

Syria commentary: The Center for American Progress was the least cited of the think tanks profiled, appearing in 13 articles on intervention in Syria.

Larry Korb, a former Pentagon official and a senior fellow at the Center for American Progress, said that intervention would be a foregone conclusion if not for the looming shadow of Iraq. From *AFP*:

“It’s the elephant in the room,” said Larry Korb, a former Pentagon official and a senior fellow at the Center for American Progress. “Had we not had the Iraq war, there would be no real question here,” he said, suggesting that proposed strikes on Syria would have been “approved overwhelmingly” by Congress.¹⁵²

In addition to providing their own commentary, the Center for American Progress provided a platform for UN Ambassador Samantha Power to promote military strikes as the sole available strategy to avoid green-lighting future atrocities. From the *New York Times*:

Warning that President Bashar al-Assad of Syria has barely put a dent in his chemical weapons stockpile, President Obama’s new envoy to the United Nations said on Friday that a failure to intervene in Syria would “give a green light to outrages that will threaten our security and haunt our conscience” for decades to come.

“We have exhausted the alternatives,” Ms. Power said. “For more than a year, we have pursued countless policy tools short of military force to try to dissuade Assad.”¹⁵³

The “green-lighting” narrative was echoed by other commentators and think tanks including conservative think tank American Enterprise Institute.

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