



# Foreign Policy, Inc.: Privatizing America's National Interest

*Lawrence Davidson*

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## **Foreign Policy, Inc.: Privatizing America's National Interest** Lawrence Davidson

Most Americans assume that U.S. foreign policy is determined by democratically elected leaders who define and protect the common good of the citizens and the nation they represent. Increasingly, this conventional wisdom falls short of explaining the real climate in Washington. Well organized private-interest groups are capitalizing on Americans' ignorance of world politics to advance their own agendas. Supported by vast economic resources and powerful lobbyists, these groups thwart the constitutional checks and balances designed to protect the U.S. political system, effectively bullying or buying our national leaders. Lawrence Davidson traces the history, evolution, and growing influence of these private organizations from the nation's founding to the present, and he illuminates their profoundly disturbing impact on the direction of U.S. foreign policy. *Foreign Policy, Inc.: Privatizing America's National Interest* demonstrates how economic interest groups once drove America's westward expansion and designed the nation's overseas imperial policies. Using the contemporary Cuba and Israel lobbies as examples, Davidson then describes the emergence of political lobbies in the twentieth century and shows how diverse groups with competing ethnic and religious agendas began to organize and shape American priorities abroad. Despite the troubling influence of these specialized lobbies, many Americans remain indifferent to the hijacking of American foreign policy. Americans' focus on local events and their lack of interest in international affairs renders them susceptible to media manipulation and prevents them from holding elected officials accountable for their ties to lobbies. Such mass indifference magnifies the power of these wealthy special interest groups and permits them to create and implement American foreign policy. The result is that the global authority of the United States is weakened, its integrity as an international leader is compromised, and its citizens are endangered. Debilitated by two wars, a tarnished global reputation, and a plummeting economy, Americans, Davidson insists, can no longer afford to ignore the realities of world politics. On its current path, he predicts, America will cease to be a commonwealth of individuals but instead will become an amoral assembly of competing interest groups whose policies and priorities place the welfare of the nation and its citizens in peril.

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