



# The Bush-Cheney Foreign Policy Reunion Yearbook

Bringing the Old Gang Back to the White House Would Squander American Power and Make the United States Less Secure... Again

July 2012

The same Republicans who did so much damage to the nation's power and standing in the world during the George W. Bush administration are advising, fundraising for, and serving as surrogates to Gov. Mitt Romney's presidential campaign.

None other than former Vice President Dick Cheney himself recently said:

*When I think about the kind of individual I want in the Oval Office in that moment of crisis, who has to make those key decisions, some of them life-and-death decisions, some of them decisions as commander-in-chief, who has the responsibility for sending some of our young men and women into harm's way, that man is Mitt Romney.*

You can bet that Gov. Romney, who has no foreign policy experience, will rely heavily on the advisors with whom he chooses to surround himself. And with so little clarity to Gov. Romney's foreign policy stances so far, we are forced to evaluate the words of his advisors for an understanding of how Romney's foreign policy would take the nation down the same path the Bush-Cheney team did the first time around.

It is important we understand the players advising this potential commander-in-chief and how extreme their positions would be.

Dick Cheney



**Key positions:** He served as vice president from 2001 to 2009 under George W. Bush. Previously, Cheney served as secretary of defense, White House chief of staff, and in the U.S. House of Representatives.

**How he is helping Gov. Romney:** Fundraising and advice on foreign policy “decision-making.”

*Where he and Gov. Romney agree:*

**Threatening Iran with force before it’s necessary**

- Cheney: “I was probably a bigger advocate of military action than any of my colleagues.” Cheney said, “I thought that negotiations could not possibly succeed unless the Iranians really believed we were prepared to use military force. And to date, of course, they are still proceeding with their nuclear program and the matter has not yet been resolved.” [*The Wall Street Journal*, 8/30/09]
- Gov. Romney: “Most important, I will buttress my diplomacy with a military option that will persuade the ayatollahs to abandon their nuclear ambitions. Only when they understand that at the end of that road lies not nuclear weapons but ruin will there be a real chance for a peaceful resolution.” [*The Washington Post*, 3/5/12]

**A new Cold War with Russia**

- Cheney: “No legitimate interest is served when oil and gas become tools of intimidation or blackmail, either by supply manipulation or attempts to monopolize transportation. ... and no one can justify actions that undermine the territorial integrity of a neighbor, or interfere with democratic movements.” [*CBS*, 2/11/09]
- Gov. Romney: “[T]his is, without question, our number one geopolitical foe. They fight every cause for the world’s worst actors. The idea that he [Obama] has some more flexibility in mind for Russia is very, very troubling, indeed.” [*CNN*, 3/26/12]

## John Bolton



**Key positions:** He is a senior fellow at the American Enterprise Institute. Prior to this position, he was the undersecretary of state for arms control and international security in the State Department. In 2005 he became the U.S. permanent representative to the United Nations under President George W. Bush. His area of expertise is arms control and national security. [[AEI](#)]

**How he is helping Romney:** Advisor and surrogate in campaign appearances.

*Where he and Gov. Romney agree:*

### **Wrong on Libya**

- Bolton: “By demanding Moammar Gadhafi’s ouster while restricting U.S. military force to the more limited objective of protecting civilians, Barack Obama has set himself up for massive strategic failure.” [[The Boston Herald, 04/21/2011](#)]
- Gov. Romney, quoting Bolton: “Obama has set himself up for ‘massive strategic failure’ by demanding Qaddafi’s ouster ‘while restricting military force to the limited objective of protecting civilians.’ Military action cannot be under-deliberated and ad hoc. The president owes it to the American people and Congress to immediately explain his new Libya mission and its strategic rationale.” [[National Review Online, 4/21/11](#)]

### **A new Cold War with Russia**

- Bolton: “We have no need for further arms control treaties with Russia, especially ones that reduce our nuclear and delivery capabilities to Moscow’s economically forced low levels. ... Obama’s policy artificially inflates Russian influence and, depending on the final agreement, will likely reduce our nuclear and strategic delivery capabilities dangerously and unnecessarily.” [[Weekly Standard, 2/8/10](#)]
- Gov. Romney: “[T]he president’s New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (New-START) with Russia could be his worst foreign policy mistake yet. The treaty as submitted to the Senate should not be ratified.” [[The Washington Post, 7/6/10](#)]



**Key positions:** He is the Robert E. Osgood Professor of Strategic Studies at the Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies at the Johns Hopkins University. Previously, Cohen was a counselor to Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice during President George W. Bush's second term. [[SAIS-JHU](#)]

**How he is helping Gov. Romney:** Special advisor on the foreign policy and national security advisory team of Gov. Romney's advisory council. He also wrote the foreword to Gov. Romney's foreign policy white paper.

*Where he and Gov. Romney agree:*

#### **Threatening Iran with force before it's necessary**

- Cohen: "It is, therefore, in the American interest to break with past policy and actively seek the overthrow of the Islamic Republic. Not by invasion, which this administration would not contemplate and could not execute, but through every instrument of U.S. power, soft more than hard." [[The Wall Street Journal, 9/27/09](#)]
- Gov. Romney: "Only if Iran understands that the United States is utterly determined when we say that their nuclear-weapons program is unacceptable is there a possibility that they will give up their nuclear aspirations peacefully." [[Foreign policy white paper, 10/7/11](#)]

#### **Wrong on Libya**

- Cohen: "But with regard to Libya it [the Obama administration] has made mistakes that could haunt this country for years to come. ... The moment has passed. ... The administration is teaching dictators, and the populations they oppress, that you can get away with large-scale mayhem if you avoid YouTube." [[The Wall Street Journal, 3/12/11](#)]
- Gov. Romney: "Obama has set himself up for 'massive strategic failure' by demanding Qaddafi's ouster 'while restricting military force to the limited objective of protecting civilians.'" [[National Review Online, 4/21/11](#)]

## Meghan O'sullivan



**Key positions:** O'Sullivan is the Jeane Kirkpatrick professor of the practice of international affairs at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University. She served as special assistant to President George W. Bush and was the deputy national security advisor for Iraq and Afghanistan. [[Belfer Center](#)]

**How she is helping Gov. Romney:** Special advisor on the foreign policy and national security advisory team of Gov. Romney's advisory council

*Where she and Gov. Romney agree:*

### **Wrong on Iraq redeployment**

- O'Sullivan: “[T]he withdrawal of all U.S. troops from Iraq well before the nascent political institutions had gelled. (Yes, that decision is widely viewed as having been made by the Iraqis themselves, but there is little question that the Barack Obama administration could have done much more to change their minds had it wanted to.)” [[Belfer Center, 12/20/11](#)]
- Gov. Romney: “President Obama’s astonishing failure to secure an orderly transition in Iraq has unnecessarily put at risk the victories that were won through the blood and sacrifice of thousands of American men and women.” [[Statement, 10/21/11](#)]

## Cofer Black



**Key positions:** A former top CIA and State Department official. Black went on to serve as Blackwater’s vice chairman. [[The Daily Beast, 04/12/2012](#)]

**How he is helping Gov. Romney:** Special advisor on the foreign policy and national security advisory team of Gov. Romney’s advisory council

*Where he and Gov. Romney agree:*

### **Effectiveness of torture**

- Black: “The purpose is to defend innocent men, women, and children from being harmed by people whose mission it is to kill the most innocent amongst us. Enhanced interrogation techniques, when used selectively under the appropriate authority, have been key contributors to intelligence. It has allowed us to interrupt terrorist operations, catch terrorists, and to protect these people.” [[CBS, 05/13/12](#)]
- Gov. Romney: “I am not [going to say whether or not waterboarding is torture]. I’m not going to specify the specific means of what is and what is not torture so that the people that we capture will know what things we’re able to do and what things we’re not able to do.” [[GOP debate, 11/28/07](#)]



**Key positions:** He is currently a professor at Missouri State University's Department of Defense and Strategic Studies and is affiliated with the National Institute for Public Policy. During the George W. Bush administration, he was a special assistant to the president and the senior director for proliferation strategy, counterproliferation, and homeland defense in the National Security Council. [[Missouri State University](#)]

**How he is helping Gov. Romney:** Special advisor on the foreign policy and national security advisory team of Gov. Romney's advisory council

*Where he and Romney agree:*

**Threatening Iran with force before it's necessary**

- Joseph: "The irony is that the most effective way to improve the prospects for a peaceful diplomatic settlement would be to make it clear to Tehran that force is a credible option." [[National Review Online, 6/25/12](#)]
- Gov. Romney: "Most important, I will buttress my diplomacy with a military option that will persuade the ayatollahs to abandon their nuclear ambitions. Only when they understand that at the end of that road lies not nuclear weapons but ruin will there be a real chance for a peaceful resolution." [[The Washington Post, 3/5/2012](#)]

**Opposing new arms control agreements**

- Joseph: "For the U.S., unlike all other nuclear states, there can be no new weapons, no new missions, no new design, only refurbishment and reuse of existing components. Congress must determine whether, hedged with so many restrictions, the nuclear weapons we possess can be both safe and sure and whether under these circumstances the necessary human capital can be recruited and kept in place." [[National Review Online, 5/10/10](#)]
- Gov. Romney: "[T]he president's New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (New-START) with Russia could be his worst foreign policy mistake yet. The treaty as submitted to the Senate should not be ratified." [[The Washington Post, 7/6/10](#)]

## Gen. Michael Hayden



**Key positions:** He is a retired U.S. Air Force general who was CIA director during President George W. Bush's second term. Before that Gen. Hayden was the director of the National Security Agency and the principal deputy director of National Intelligence. [[U.S. Air Force](#)]

**How he is helping Gov. Romney:** Special advisor on the foreign policy and national security advisory team of Gov. Romney's advisory council

*Where he and Gov. Romney agree:*

### **Effectiveness of torture**

- Gen. Hayden: "Information derived from enhanced interrogation techniques helped lead us to bin Laden." [[The Wall Street Journal, 6/2/11](#)]
- Gov. Romney: "I am not [going to say whether or not waterboarding is torture]. I'm not going to specify the specific means of what is and what is not torture so that the people that we capture will know what things we're able to do and what things we're not able to do." [[GOP debate, 11/28/07](#)]



## Robert Kagan



**Key positions:** Author and senior fellow at the Brookings Institution. His ideas and advice were influential during the George W. Bush administration.

**How he is helping Gov. Romney:** Special advisor on the foreign policy and national security advisory team of Gov. Romney's advisory council

*Where he and Gov. Romney agree:*

### **Wrong on Iraq redeployment**

- Kagan: “As for setbacks, topping the list is Obama’s failure to work out an agreement with Iraq to maintain a U.S. troop presence beyond the end of 2011. This has been a disaster and may prove to be one of the gravest errors of Obama’s first term. ... this was as unnecessary as it was unwise.” [[Foreign Policy, 1/23/12](#)]
- Gov. Romney: “President Obama’s astonishing failure to secure an orderly transition in Iraq has unnecessarily put at risk the victories that were won through the blood and sacrifice of thousands of American men and women.” [[Statement, 10/21/11](#)]

### **Want to spend money the nation doesn’t have**

- Kagan: “The decision to allow deep cuts in defense spending -- rather than addressing entitlements -- is equally irresponsible. ... if not reversed, the deep cuts looming in defense will go a long way to undermining the U.S. position in the world. They will even undercut the Obama administration’s efforts to make the United States a more reliable player in Asia, despite its unconvincing protestations to the contrary.” [[Foreign Policy, 1/23/12](#)]
- Gov. Romney: “[I] will begin by reversing Obama-era defense cuts ... with the goal of setting core defense spending — meaning funds devoted to the fundamental military components of personnel, operations and maintenance, procurement, and research and development — at a floor of 4 percent of GDP.” [[mittromney.com](#)]

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## Conclusion

The United States knows too well the damage a poorly led, advised, and designed Bush-Cheney foreign policy can do to our nation’s power. Just look at the first decade of the 21st century. The Obama administration, on the other hand, has purposefully strengthened the nation’s security and standing. American voters can choose to continue to increase the nation’s strength, leverage, and options or return to the policies these advisors are advocating that drained the nation’s military, economic, and diplomatic power.