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## ***Hiring John Bolton is Trump's Most Dangerous Decision So Far***

Personnel is policy, they say in Washington. The appointment of John Bolton as national security advisor is by far President Trump's most dangerous decision.

When the president considers foreign policy, no one is closer to his ear than his national security advisor. He will discuss questions of war and peace with military generals and members of his cabinet, but when there's a diversity of opinion, the views of a national security advisor can be determinative.

“[Brent Scowcroft](#) defined the role of the National Security Advisor (NSA),” wrote Stephen J. Hadley, former National Security Advisor under George W. Bush. “The only person to hold the job twice [under Ford and George H.W. Bush], Brent established the ‘Scowcroft Model’ for all who followed him in the job: Be an ‘Honest Broker,’ running a fair, transparent, and inclusive process for bringing issues to the president.”

John Bolton is not an honest broker. John Bolton cannot be an honest broker. No human being on earth is less qualified to be Donald Trump's national security advisor.

Given the fact that Donald Trump already leans hard to the right wing of the Republican Party, and that his advisers are drawn from the extreme right as well, and “honest broker” national security advisor would by definition need to provide balance. Ideally it would come from the NSA himself. At minimum he would bring in people with opposing views. Bolton is congenitally incapable of either.

Bolton must be stopped.

His nomination does not require Senate confirmation. But there's nothing preventing members of both parties from traveling to the White House to inform the president that Bolton is a nonstarter. Congress should have nothing to do with this president as long as this dangerous man is whispering sweet bellicose nothings into his ear.

If you haven't been paying much attention, I don't blame you for smelling a whiff of hysteria. How bad could this guy really be?

Bolton was the king of the George W. Bush-era neocons, a man who made Dick Cheney and Paul Wolfowitz look like wimps. As Bush's ambassador to the United Nations, he remarked that it wouldn't necessarily be a bad thing if the institution disappeared or, evoking the 9/11 terrorist attacks, the building housing UN headquarters were to lose a few floors.

These days Bolton is touting "[regime change](#)" against Iran. Evoking the same arguments he used to justify the invasion of Iraq, he paints dark portraits of North Korea selling or giving nuclear weapons to Al Qaeda or some other terrorist organization despite the fact that there is no evidence whatsoever that there are any links for common ideology between the two. Just after Trump — correctly, in my view — announced that he would meet with North Korean leader Kim Jong-Un, Bolton wrote an opinion essay laying out the so-called "legal" argument in favor of a preemptive nuclear strike against North Korea. I'd love to be a fly on the wall when that comes up between American and North Korean officials setting up the summit in May.

Most foreign-policy experts, most ordinary Americans, and most sane people generally agree that the 2003 invasion of Iraq was a military, political, economic, and propaganda disaster for the United States and the world. We were not "welcomed as liberators." The war was sold (in large part by Bolton) based on the lie that the U.S. knew that Iraq had weapons of mass destruction (they didn't have them so we know that "knowledge" was a lie).

Anti-Americanism increased, as did terrorist attacks and the appeal of terrorist organizations that targeted Americans. Thousands of American troops were killed, tens of thousands wounded, and millions of Iraqis died because of the war. Billions of dollars were squandered and oil prices went up, not down as the neocons had hoped and expected, because of the resulting instability. Perhaps most damning of all, the long simmering Sunni-Shia divide widened into a gaping chasm that continues to chew up the Middle East in places like Yemen.

No one was more in favor of that war than John Bolton. For that reason alone, he's unqualified to provide foreign policy advice to anyone more important than a small marsupial. But Bolton is more than just a warmonger — he's a stupid warmonger. Which is why he still can't accept the fact that he screwed up.

"I still think the decision to overthrow Saddam was correct," he told *The Washington Examiner* in 2015. "I think decisions made after that decision were wrong, although I think the worst decision made after that was the 2011 decision to withdraw U.S. and coalition forces. The people who say, 'Oh, things would have been much better if you didn't overthrow Saddam,' miss the point that today's Middle East does not flow totally and unchangeably from the decision to overthrow Saddam alone."

Actually, things really would be better if we hadn't overthrown Saddam.

"I think the Iraqi people would be unique in history if they didn't welcome the overthrow of this dictatorial regime," Bolton bloviated in a breathtakingly embarrassing 2002 interview. "And Iraqi opposition leaders of a variety of positions and views are discussing now what will happen after Saddam Hussein. I expect that the American role actually will be fairly minimal. I think we'll have an important security role. I think concluding the destruction of the weapons of mass destruction themselves will be important."

Wonder if the families of those dead and injured American soldiers think their role was "fairly minimal."

I tell you what, John: you go and find those weapons of mass distraction and we'll let you be national security advisor