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## The Neocon Foreign Policy Walmart

By Daniel McAdams

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One of the most depressing things about watching – even from a distance – the quadrennial race for the White House is seeing what passes for debate on the one area where the president does have some Constitutional authority: foreign policy.

Candidates who have spent little or no time studying or traveling to the rest of the world, and, in the fashion of many Americans in the age of Empire, see the rest of the world as just a series of US colonial outposts, apparently consider foreign policy unworthy of serious consideration.

So little do Republican candidates care about foreign policy that most of them have “outsourced” their foreign policy to a single neocon-dominated foreign policy shop called the “John Hay Initiative.” If you wonder why most Republican candidates sound exactly the same on foreign policy, it’s because they are nearly all getting their advice from the same people.

When nearly all candidates look to someone like Eliot Cohen, a founding member of the Project for a New American Century (PNAC), to provide an off-the-shelf foreign policy, it should be no surprise that the “debate” in the Republican party is only over which country to attack first.

Any candidate who thinks so little about something so important as America’s place in the world should be automatically disqualified.

But the neocons love it! The “experts” who brought us the 2003 Iraq war and the Libya “liberation” are still in the driver’s seat when it comes to foreign policy.

“Jeb!” has John Hay Initiative members Michael Chertoff and Michael Hayden (remember those crooks?) on board as his advisors.

Marco Rubio reportedly draws from Hay Project member Roger Zakheim, the son of GW Bush administration “vulcan,” Dov Zakheim. Zakheim *père*, we remember, joined with his fellow neocons to lie the US into war with Iraq, enriching the military-industrial complex, before absconding to the “private sector” to make his millions from the same military-industrial complex. Zakheim quickly and quietly left his position as the Pentagon’s chief financial officer after a trillion dollars went missing and the Government Accountability Office was critical of his handling of matters.

Scott Walker, a soporific candidate who nevertheless still gives neocons like Bill Kristol the vapors, also shops the neocon Walmart of foreign policy, the John Hay Initiative. It should be no surprise, then, that at his big foreign policy coming out speech at the Citadel military college Friday, he unveiled an “aggressive” foreign policy – crying out “America will not be intimidated. And neither will I” – as he promised more war and vowed that “the retreat is over!”

Is this the retreat he is talking about?

Walker reportedly taps into the McCain Institute’s David Kramer, a John Hay member, for his foreign policy wisdom. Kramer is another PNAC alumni, also putting in time at the CIA-affiliated Freedom House and as director of the Bush State Department’s Office of Policy Planning. This must explain Walker’s obsession with taking out Iran. He vowed to “roll back the theocrats in Tehran,” but in fact unlike the US, Tehran has not invaded another country in hundreds of years. What’s to “roll back?”

If Walker actually paid any attention to the quality of advice he gets from his PNAC/John Hay gang he might call for his money back. Walker’s speech was peppered with macho language about “defeat[ing] the barbarians of ISIS,” while also vowing to destroy the two forces actually fighting ISIS – Syria and Iran! In fact, his vow to use the US military to overthrow the Syrian government would without question result in the greatest ISIS victory to date – control of Syria. One need not sympathize with Assad to recognize that he is literally the only thing keeping the whole of Syria out of the hands of ISIS.

John Hay Initiative “experts” also wrote the foreign policy speeches of candidates Carly Fiorina and Chris Christie. No doubt they were behind Fiorina’s astonishingly ignorant vow to make her first call as president to Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu to “to reassure him that we stand with the state of Israel” and to make her second call to Iran to “to tell him that whatever the deal is that he signed with Obama, there’s a new deal and the new deal is this: Until you submit every facility [where] you have nuclear uranium enrichment to a full set of inspections, we’re going to make it as hard as possible for you to move money around the global financial system.”

Pure PNAC.

These neocons should be in jail, not still deeply ensconced in the Beltway foreign policy halls of power, dining in sumptuous splendor while the rest of America is impoverished by the destructive wars they push. Their lies have cost millions of innocent lives overseas as well. They are a cancer on the country. Any candidate who cares so little about the issues as to accept a “virtual staff” of foreign policy “experts” from those who have gotten every single major foreign policy issue of our time totally and catastrophically wrong has no business holding any elected office.

John Hay? I’d rather shop for a foreign policy expert at Walmart.