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Republicans Campaign on Peace and Govern by War

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Mitt Romney's sudden transformation from a warmonger to a peacenik in the waning days of the Presidential campaign should come as no surprise. It's straight out of the Republican playbook. From Richard Nixon to George W. Bush, Republicans have campaigned for peace and then taken America to war.

In 1968, at the height of the Vietnam War, Richard Nixon campaigned on his "secret plan" to end the war. (It's a bit like Mitt Romney secret plan to eliminate enough tax deductions to make up for \$5 trillion in an across the board 20 percent tax cut that overwhelming benefits the wealth and pay for \$2 trillion in increases to the military budget that the Pentagon hasn't asked for. Don't bet the farm on it happening.)

The result after the 1968 elections: Nixon's secret bombing of Cambodia and Laos, American troops remaining in Vietnam for 5 more years. As people said back then, "Nixon lied and thousands died."

Or remember some more recent history. In 2000, George W. Bush campaigned against using the American military for "nation building." In his first debate against Al , Gore Bush argued, "If we don't stop extending our troops all around the world in nation-building missions, then we're going to have a serious problem coming down the road, and I'm going to prevent that."

Barely a year and a half later, Bush invaded Iraq over non-existent weapons of mass destruction engaging over 200,000 American troops in the largest nation building effort since the reconstruction of Europe after World War II. "Bush lied and thousands died."

Now, in the proudest tradition of Richard Nixon and George W. Bush, here comes Mitt Romney posing as a peacenik in the waning days of a Presidential campaign. After running a campaign bashing Barack Obama's foreign policy weakness, he declares in the third Presidential debate, "We want a peaceful planet. We want people to be able to enjoy their lives and know they're going to have a bright and prosperous future and not be at war."

As much as the Romney campaign wants to distance itself from George W.

Bush's failed foreign policy, 70 percent of Romney's foreign policy advisors served in the Bush administration, and most are from the neo-con wing of the Republican Party that led the rush to go to war in Iraq. As Ari Berman [wrote](#):

Romney is loath to mention Bush on the campaign trail, for obvious reasons, but today they sound like ideological soul mates on foreign policy. Listening to Romney, you'd never know that Bush left office bogged down by two unpopular wars that cost America dearly in blood and treasure. Of Romney's forty identified foreign policy advisers, more than 70 percent worked for Bush. Many hail from the neoconservative wing of the party, were enthusiastic backers of the Iraq War and are proponents of a US or Israeli attack on Iran. Christopher Preble, a foreign policy expert at the Cato Institute, says, 'Romney's likely to be in the mold of George W. Bush when it comes to foreign policy if he were elected.'

As the great German poet wrote before World War II,

*When the leaders speak of peace,
The common folk know
That war is coming.
When the leaders curse war.
The mobilization order is already written out.*

If you believe that Mitt Romney is committed to keeping America out of new wars, I've got a bridge I'd like to sell you.