



## Romney Clones Bush Foreign Policy

June 27, 2012 by **Bob Livingston**

If you loved George W. Bush's foreign policy, then Mitt Romney is your man. If this fact wasn't evident before last weekend, it should now be crystal clear.

During a **weekend retreat** costing donors \$50,000 to \$100,000 each for admission, former Bush foreign policy officials — mostly members of the Bilderberg subgroup the Council on Foreign Relations, a sack full of (self-proclaimed) neocons and a couple of hundred banksters — gathered to fete Romney and pontificate about American empire.

Former Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and Bush's former brain Karl Rove gave speeches highlighting what a Romney foreign policy would look like. Attendees included former Secretary of State (under George H.W. Bush) James Baker III, Senators John McCain and John Thune, Representatives Eric Cantor and Paul Ryan, Governors Bobby Jindal (La.) and Bob McDonnell (Va.), former Governors Jeb Bush (Fla.) and Tim Pawlenty (Minn.); former Bush staffers Mary Matalin and Michael Chertoff, and "chickenhawk" cheerleader Bill Kristol (a CFR member).

As [\*The Nation\*](#) noted May 2:

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." On some key issues, like Iran, Romney and his team are to the right of Bush. Romney's embrace of the neoconservative cause—even if done cynically to woo the right—could turn into a policy nightmare if he becomes president.

Romney has called for increasing military funding. He has said he believes he can attack Iran — or anyone else — without first getting Congressional authorization. (Where have we heard that before?) According to a foreign policy white paper from the Romney campaign released last October, Romney has pledged to increase the number of warships the Navy builds per year from nine to 15 (five more than the service requested in its 2012 budget), boost the size of the military by 100,000 troops, place a missile defense system in Europe and station two aircraft carriers near Iran.

And Romney's team is rife with Bush's Iraq war chaff. It includes, according to *The Nation*:

Robert Joseph, the National Security Council official who inserted the infamous "sixteen words" in Bush's 2003 State of the Union message claiming that Iraq had tried to buy enriched uranium from Niger; Dan Senor, former spokesman for the hapless Coalition Provisional Authority under Paul Bremer in Iraq; and Eric Edelman, a top official at the Pentagon under Bush. "I can't name a single Romney foreign policy adviser who believes the Iraq War was a mistake," says Cato's Preble. "Two-thirds of the American people do believe the Iraq War was a mistake. So he has willingly chosen to align himself with that one-third of the population right out of the gate."

The United States currently spends more on its military than the next 10 biggest military spenders combined — about 40 percent all money shelled out for military spending globally, according the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute. But for Romney and his CFR/neocon cabal, that's not enough.