



## Battle brews over Trump's foreign policy

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A battle is brewing between the GOP foreign policy establishment and outsiders over who will sit on President-elect Donald Trump's national security team.

The fight pits hawks and neoconservatives who served in the former Bush administrations against those on the GOP foreign policy edges.

These libertarians, isolationists and realists see an opportunity to pull back America's commitments around the world, spend less money on foreign aid and "nation-building," curtail expensive military campaigns and troop deployments and intervene militarily only to protect American interests.

The establishment camp, many of whom disavowed Trump during the campaign, are pushing hardest for Stephen Hadley, who served as national security adviser under George W. Bush.

Another Bush ally, former Ambassador to the United Nations John Bolton, also falls into this camp. His name has been floated as a possible secretary of State.

Other establishment candidates floated include Senate Foreign Relations Committee Chairman Bob Corker (R-Tenn.), outgoing Sen. Kelly Ayotte (R-N.H.), rising star Sen. Tom Cotton (R-Ark.) and senior fellow at conservative think-tank American Enterprise Institute and former Sen. Jim Talent (R-Mo.).

These figures all generally believe that the United States needs to take an active role in the world from the Middle East to East Asia to deter enemies and reassure allies.

The outsider group sees things differently.

They want to revamp American foreign policy in a different direction from the last two administrations.

The second camp is also more in line with Trump's views questioning the value of NATO, a position that horrified many in the establishment camp.

“How many people sleep better knowing that the Baltics are part of NATO? They don't make us safer, in fact, quite the opposite. We need to think really hard about these commitments,” said William Ruger, vice president of research and policy at the Charles Koch Institute.

Bolton has come under criticism from Sen. Rand Paul (R-Ky.), who was a skeptic of Bush's foreign policy.

Paul on Tuesday blasted Bolton in an op-ed in Rare as “a longtime member of the failed Washington elite that Trump vowed to oppose.”

Others have defended Bolton.

Eliot Cohen, a former Bush State Department senior adviser, tweeted late Tuesday that Bolton “would be a capable Secretary of State — experienced & tough.”

Cohen is perhaps the most visible foreign policy establishment type who has been critical of Trump's transition.

He said this week that he had been asked by a friend in Trump's orbit to submit names of people in the establishment who might want to serve. Cohen told his friend that those skeptical of Trump would want to know who was leading his administration on foreign policy.

When the friend, according to Cohen, grew critical of those questions, Cohen wrote a biting op-ed in The Washington Post advising people to not work for Trump, at least for the time being.

“At the very least, they should wait to see who gets the top jobs. Until then, let the Trump team fill the deputy assistant secretary and assistant secretary jobs with civil servants, retired military officers and diplomats, or the large supply of loyal or obsequious second-raters who will be eager to serve,” he wrote.

Some took Cohen's op-ed as good news, believing it signified a radical turn by Trump from a foreign party establishment that should be ignored.

“The first encouraging news I've heard in days. If a leader of #NeverTrump is saying this, that means the establishment hasn't won. Yet,” said Christopher Preble of the CATO Institute.

Sen. Lindsey Graham (R-S.C.), a top foreign policy hawk in the Senate, issued an endorsement of Bolton on Thursday, saying: “He understands who our friends and enemies are. We see the world in very similar ways.”

He also slammed Paul's criticism of Bolton.

“You could put the number of Republicans who will follow Rand Paul's advice on national security in a very small car. Rand is my friend but he's a libertarian and an outlier in the party on these issues.”

Senate Armed Services Committee Chairman John McCain (R-Ariz.), perhaps the Republican Party's leading hawk in Congress, has not said who he'd like to see in Trump's cabinet, but laid

down a marker on Tuesday by warning the future Trump administration against trying to seek an improved relationship with adversary Russia.

“When America has been at its greatest, it is when we have stood on the side those fighting tyranny. That is where we must stand again,” he warned.

But military historian and Retired Army Col. Andrew Bacevich said there needs to be a rethink of American foreign policy. He said the U.S. must consider whether Saudi Arabia and Pakistan qualify as U.S. allies, and the growing divergence between the U.S. and Israel.

“The establishment doesn't want to touch questions like these with a 10-foot pole,” he said at a conference on Tuesday hosted by The American Conservative, the Charles Koch Institute and the George Washington University Department of Political Science.

With some Trump advisers, it's not clear which camp they fall into. One example is retired Army Lt. Gen. Michael Flynn, former head of the Defense Intelligence Agency, who may become Trump's national security adviser.

Flynn is a “curious case,” said Daniel Larison, senior editor at The American Conservative. The retired Army general has said he wants to work with Russia, but also expressed contrary views in his book "Field of Fight."

According to Larison, Flynn writes of an “enemy alliance” against the U.S. that includes Russia, North Korea, China, Iran, Syria, Cuba, Bolivia, Venezuela, Nicaragua, al-Qaeda, Hezbollah and the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria.

It's also not crystal clear which camp Giuliani falls into. The former mayor is known as a fierce critic of Islamic extremism but has scant foreign policy experience.

Most say what is likely is change.

“Change is coming to American grand strategy whether we like it or not,” said Christopher Layne, Robert M. Gates Chair in National Security at Texas A&M University.

“I think we are overdue for American retrenchment. Americans are beginning to suffer from hegemony fatigue,” he said.