

Bolton's Past Advocacy for Israel at US Expense Heralds Dangerous New Era in Geopolitics

Notorious war hawk John Bolton – who has long been vying for a position in Trump's administration – has been especially eager to work with a president with minimal foreign policy knowledge or experience, allowing him maximum effect in achieving his policy goals.

By [Whitney Webb](#)

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*This article is Part I of a series exploring the past of soon-to-be National Security Adviser **John Bolton** and what his recent appointment will mean for U.S. foreign policy, with a focus on the Middle East, Latin America, and the Koreas. Part I explores Bolton's history of putting the interests of the Israeli government ahead of those of the U.S., as well as what his appointment means for Israel's current preparations for a "three front" war and American involvement in that war.*

Last Thursday, President Trump [announced](#) that former UN ambassador John Bolton, once called the "[most dangerous man](#)" in the entire George W. Bush administration, would replace **H.R. McMaster** as national security adviser, making him the man in charge of what the President sees and hears regarding issues of national security. Bolton will officially take over McMaster's post on April 9.

The appointment was not surprising. Indeed, earlier this month, [MintPress reported](#) that McMaster was soon to be replaced – largely at the behest of billionaire Republican donor and [militant Zionist Sheldon Adelson](#) – and that Bolton was a top contender for that position, largely due to Bolton's reputation as a "stalwart friend of Israel" and his frequent calls for military action against Iran, Israel's regional arch-rival.

Yet, Bolton's appointment – placed in the greater context of recent changes to Trump's cabinet – is a harrowing portent for those opposed to more U.S. regime-change wars. [Mike Pompeo](#), another proponent of war with Iran, is set to take over the State Department; and [Gina Haspel](#) – whose nickname "Bloody Gina" speaks to her history of overseeing torture and depreciating human life – is slated to take over for Pompeo as head of the CIA. Bolton completes the triumvirate and his ultra-hawkishness speaks to the President's posturing for war against not *one* but *several* countries – with hopes of building a unipolar world with the United States as its sole leader, a [perverse distortion](#) of his isolationist campaign promise "America First."

Though he is just one of the war hawks now roosting in the Trump administration, Bolton is arguably more dangerous than all the rest due to his bellicose rhetoric, [unilateral decision-making](#), and his "[kiss up, kick down](#)" style of interaction with superiors and colleagues, allowing him to be remarkably effective in getting his way. Not only that, but Bolton – who has [long been vying](#) for a position in the Trump administration – has been [admittedly](#)

[eager](#) to work with a president with minimal foreign policy knowledge or experience — obviously true in Trump’s case — as it would allow him to have maximum effect in achieving his policy goals. Bolton has already exercised great influence over the president, reportedly adding statements to Trump’s speech at the United Nations [without the knowledge](#) of Trump’s staff.

Thus, Bolton is set to have a disproportionately influential role in the Trump administration, making it essential to examine what his appointment will likely mean for U.S. government policy, particularly regarding geopolitical “hotspots” such as the Middle East and the Koreas.

Freelancing for Israel

Though the domestic reaction to Bolton’s appointment was rather mixed, top ministers of the right-wing Israeli government [lavished praise](#) upon the soon-to-be National Security Adviser, calling him “one of the most outstanding” allies to Israel in U.S. politics, and a “true friend” to the Jewish state who brings “great experience and original thinking” to “the most sympathetic administration toward Israel of all time.”

[#TBT](#) to Monday when I was in Israel to receive the "Guardian of Zion" award from [@BarllanU](#)'s Ingeborg Rennert Center for Jerusalem Studies. pic.twitter.com/9uWowxEdt5

— John Bolton (@AmbJohnBolton) [June 1, 2017](#)

Indeed, Bolton’s ties to Israel are as deep as they are long-standing — so deep that some have posited that his commitment to extreme Zionism has led him to betray the national interest of his own country on more than one occasion.

For instance, **Danny Gillerman**, the former Israeli ambassador to the UN, recently noted that Bolton, when serving in the Bush administration, was prone to “[direct fire on his own forces](#),” — i.e., the U.S. government — in order to advance the goals of the Israeli government. Gillerman, speaking on the Israeli radio program *Galei Tzahal* this past Sunday, [stated](#):

[W]hen the State Department — then headed by Condoleezza Rice, who wasn’t so friendly to Israel even though the Bush Administration was very friendly — was about to either make a decision, or not abstain, or not veto, or to advance something that was against us [Israel], Bolton would call me, and he would say ‘Danny, you’ve got to call the prime minister right now, in order for him to phone the president to stop this.’”

In addition, Bolton garnered a reputation — as well as the ire of State Department officials at the time — for violating State Department protocol by acting unilaterally in matters of diplomacy to negotiate privately in Israel. [The New York Times reported](#) in 2005 that Bolton traveled to Israel without the required State Department clearance in 2003 and 2004 in a direct effort to undermine then-**Secretary of State Colin Powell**. As journalist [Gareth Porter](#) [noted](#):

[A]t the very moment that Powell was saying administration policy was not to

attack Iran, Bolton was working with the Israelis to lay the groundwork for just such a war.”

Bolton’s numerous private and unannounced visits to Israel entailed meetings with officials of Mossad, Israel’s intelligence service, [including Meir Dagan](#), then Mossad’s director.

Despite his flagrant violations of government rules, Bolton [remained](#) the main liaison between the U.S. and Israeli governments under Bush.

Bolton has pressured Israeli officials to attack Iran even when calling for such an attack was not the U.S. government’s position. According to **Shaul Mofaz**, former Israeli defense minister, Bolton “tried to convince me that Israel needs to attack Iran,” which Mofaz [recently asserted](#) was not “a smart move – not on the part of the Americans today or anyone else until the threat is real.”

Billionaire Adelson gets his way



Sheldon Adelson with PM Benjamin Netanyahu

Bolton’s commitment to the Israeli state has manifested in other ways. For instance, he has remained a [constant critic](#) of Palestine’s right to self-determination, calling an independent Palestinian state [a plot](#) “of Israel’s opponents to weaken and encircle the Jewish state.” Bolton [has called](#) for the Gaza strip and the West Bank to be given to Egypt and Jordan, respectively. This approach, nicknamed the “Three State solution,” would eliminate any hopes for Palestinian sovereignty by giving Palestinian territories to two U.S.-allied countries that enjoy cordial relations with Israel, making this solution preferable for Israel hard-liners that wish to see an end to the Palestinian Authority and Hamas.

Bolton has also praised President Trump’s recent decision to recognize Jerusalem as Israel’s capital, and relocate the U.S. embassy in Israel accordingly – a policy change [allegedly orchestrated by](#) pro-Israel Republican mega-donor Sheldon Adelson — as an “injection of reality.” In addition, he [has strongly promoted](#) the construction of illegal settlements on Palestinian land, stating recently that Israelis “ought to be able to build houses wherever they want to, including all of the lands of Judea and Samaria [Palestine’s West Bank].”

John Bolton says “Well, I know my strong view is that Jews ought to be able to build houses wherever they want to, including all of the lands of Judea and Samaria.” pic.twitter.com/fnF6eE10Bw

— Bruce Baird (@drbairdonline) [March 24, 2018](#)

Given his embrace of extremist Zionism, it is no surprise that Bolton has found himself replacing H.R. McMaster, whose ouster [was orchestrated by](#) billionaire Republican donor Sheldon Adelson. Bolton has long been promoted by Adelson, as the latter [personally intervened](#) to keep Bolton in contact with the Trump throughout his presidency and [had lobbied](#) soon after Trump's election to have Bolton appointed to his cabinet. Like the embassy move to Jerusalem, Adelson has again gotten his wish.

Adelson's push to have Bolton installed comes at a crucial time, as Israel is currently preparing for war on "three fronts" — Palestine, Lebanon, and Syria – and is [actively lobbying](#) for American aid and involvement in launching that war. With Bolton in the Trump administration, along with numerous other staunch Israel allies in key government positions, Israel will likely get that aid in addition to American troops [fighting alongside them](#), even if Israel is the aggressor in the imminent conflict.

The timing of Bolton's appointment as National Security Adviser is also noteworthy, as it comes little over [a month before](#) the U.S. embassy is set to move to Jerusalem, when tensions between Israel, Palestine and its neighbors will be at [their highest](#) and when a war is [most likely to break out](#). Bolton is set to ensure strong U.S. support for any Israeli military action that takes place during this time, even though Israel is explicitly [planning to target civilians and civilian infrastructure](#).

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