

Neocons declare war on China

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When Donald Trump secured the Republican Presidential nomination in 2016, many neoconservatives who had taken an “anyone but Trump” position were iced out of a role in the future Trump Administration. But a small number of the most rabid neocons who avoided the anti-Trump label have been cultivating the 45th President. John Bolton, now the President’s national security advisor, was the most prominent of the neocons deployed to court Trump, but he was not alone.

According to sources familiar with Trump’s preferences, the President pays close attention to the opinions of Frank Gaffney, founder of the Centre for Security Policy (CSP) and a long-established rabid anti-Islam propagandist.

Gaffney’s CSP has received large contributions from Robert Mercer, the hedge-fund billionaire and funder of the white-supremacist alt-right movement. The John Bolton Super PAC, which is Bolton’s political fundraising project, and his Foundation for American Security and Freedom also received millions of dollars from Mercer. For years, Mercer was the biggest funder of alt-right platform Breitbart News and its co-founder Steve Bannon, who became Trump’s initial chief strategist at the White House. (A leader of alt-right ethno-nationalist activity on both sides of the Atlantic, Bannon was fired from the White House after six months, in the aftermath of the August 2017 “Unite the Right” rally by racist activists near the University of Virginia campus in Charlottesville, which led to riots in which a woman was killed.)

Mercer was part-owner of Cambridge Analytica, the London-headquartered data-mining company that stole the personal data of millions of Americans and sold it to right-wing Republican candidates. Bannon was vice president of Cambridge Analytica.

Now this tightly knit network of neocons has declared war on China.

On 25 March, Gaffney chaired a conference in Washington to launch the Committee on the Present Danger: China (CPDC). The event drew a collection of anti-China extremists, who delivered tirades against President Xi Jinping, the Belt and Road Initiative, the People’s Liberation Army, and the Communist Party of China. Among the speakers who gave some small degree of credentials to the otherwise crankish crew were:

- Former Clinton Administration CIA Director James Woolsey;
- Congressman Chris Smith, a New Jersey Republican (represented by a staff member), who has introduced three bills in the current Congress to impose sanctions on China over alleged human rights abuses;
- Gen. William “Jerry” Boykin, retired Army Special Forces officer and ex-under secretary of defence for intelligence.

Boykin has a well-earned reputation as a war-hawk. He was censured by the Pentagon in 2003 for equating Islam with Satan during a video-recorded speech before a Christian fundamentalist group in Oregon. He was investigated by the Department of Defence (DoD) inspector general



The front page of the new committee’s website. Inset, Frank Gaffney at the launch. Photo: Screenshots



and found to be in violation of three regulations: he had failed to state that his remarks were personal and did not reflect the views of the Bush Administration or the DoD; he had not disclosed payments from the group for his travel; and he had not obtained DoD permission to deliver the speech.

Although not present at the roll-out, Bannon was listed as a founder of the CPDC. Another founder, Fred Fleitz, retired in January 2019 as Bolton’s chief of staff at the National Security Council—to take over as president of the Centre for Security Policy, replacing Gaffney.

Cold War throwback

The choice of the name Committee on the Present Danger: China is telling. Various versions of the CPD have been a gathering point for hard-line Cold Warriors, ever since the founding of the first one in the 1950s to mobilise public support for all-out confrontation with the Soviet Union. President Dwight Eisenhower, wary of the group, effectively shut it down by appointing several of its leading members to powerless posts in his Administration.

In 1976 some supporters of the Presidential candidacy of Ronald Reagan revived the CPD. Its second iteration had a broader base, and did influence the 1980 election. CPD members who joined the Reagan Administration included CIA Director William Casey, United Nations Ambassador Jeane Kirkpatrick, National Security Advisor Richard Allen, Secretary of State George Shultz, Secretary of the Navy John Lehman, and Assistant Secretary of Defence Richard Perle.

In 2004, a third Committee on the Present Danger was launched in the name of promoting a global war on terrorism. Gaffney and Woolsey were members. The group never got off the ground, and had negligible impact in its four years of existence.

The 25 March CPDC launch featured wild propaganda. Woolsey asserted that China was on the verge of launching electro-magnetic pulse weapons over the United States through satellites, to permanently disable all electronics. Speaker Mark Helprin warned that Xi Jinping was a new

Mao Zedong, armed with “nightmare technologies” for the purpose of securing global hegemony. Lianchao Han of the Hudson Institute described the Communist Party of China as an organised-crime entity and “cult of evil”, set to take over the world for its party/state form of totalitarianism by 2049, the hundredth anniversary of the Chinese Revolution. Gen. Boykin spoke of Chinese intelligence agents penetrating every university in the USA and all US intelligence agencies. Sasha Gong, former head of Voice of America’s Mandarin-language service, declared that the United States is defenceless against a Chinese social media campaign to capture the hearts and minds of Americans.

Former State Department official Robert Charles claimed that China was responsible for the opioid epidemic in the

United States, through 600 Chinese government-run labs producing fentanyl destined for the American market.

By its own account, the CPDC has two goals: to influence Trump to adopt a radically anti-China confrontation policy, and to shape American public opinion against China.

The CPDC’s over-the-top rhetoric is likely to backfire. Americans are not interested in a showdown with a country whose economic ties to the United States are vast. The idea that every Chinese student at an American university is a secret spy is paranoia on steroids. And the notion of China looking to take over the world, using EMP weapons to shut down the United States, is the stuff of science-fiction movies and action comic books.



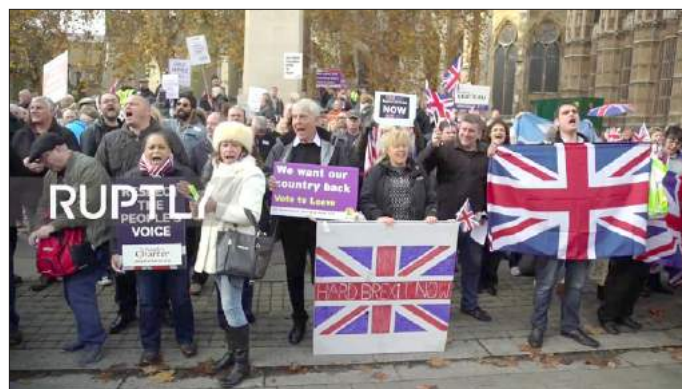
Brexit shambles sees Brits trapped in their own prison

By Richard Bardon

The fiasco surrounding Britain’s attempt to divorce itself from the European Union is blowback from its own work over decades to destroy the concepts of democracy and national sovereignty, in mainland Europe and around the world. As the Citizens Electoral Council proved comprehensively in its May 2016 pamphlet *The British Empire’s European Union: A monstrosity created by the City of London and Wall Street*, the EU and its forerunners were and are a City of London project to subjugate the nations of Europe to its parasitic financial system. Indeed, the City does not even try to hide that it still runs the EU to this day; as CEC National Secretary Craig Isherwood noted in that pamphlet’s introduction, “The British domination of the EU as a virtual puppet state is hardly a secret. Veteran *Telegraph* reporter and intelligence community figure Ambrose Evans-Pritchard, who was based in Brussels in 1999-2004, observed in his 10 March 2016 column, ‘The eye-opener of my five years at the coal face in Brussels was to discover the pivotal role played by the UK in the EU machinery. The *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* even ran a front-page story calling Brussels a “branch office of Whitehall”, with British officials strutting the streets like an occupying force.’”

Whatever divisions there may be within the broader British “Establishment” over the country’s EU membership, it has always been clear that the City was never going to sit idly by and watch the people’s democratic choice to leave put into effect—at all if it could help it, and certainly not in a way that crimps its power over its mainland vassals. Calls for a second referendum, which the City and its minions hope will give a veneer of democracy to the undoing of the “Leave” victory in June 2016, are nothing new. No territory of any economic or strategic significance has ever been allowed to escape the adamant chains forged in London to bind Europe to itself like Prometheus to a rock, while the City tears at its innards. Only tiny Greenland has ever slipped its shackles, when in 1982 its people voted themselves out of the European Economic Community (EEC), a decade before the creation of the EU as such. And even so, Greenland remains obliged by treaty to “cooperate” politically with the EU as an autonomous external territory (euphemism for “colony”) of EU member Denmark.

No other national referendum that rejected the EU or its mandates has been allowed to stand. In 1992 Denmark voted against the Treaty of Maastricht, which



Brexiters rally in London. Photo: YouTube

transformed the EEC into the modern EU by creating both the euro currency and that austerity-mongering monster, the European Central Bank. Denmark did at least win certain concessions, including the right to retain its own currency (the only EU member besides Britain to do so), before it approved the treaty in a second vote the following year. Ireland received only hollow promises in exchange for overturning referenda that rejected the Treaty of Nice (to allow the EU to expand into Eastern Europe) in 2001 and the Treaty of Lisbon (to expand the European Parliament’s power to override member states’ laws and policies) in 2008. On both occasions the results were reversed by a second referendum the following year, in the wake of concerted scare campaigns by the mass media and major political parties. And when French and Dutch national referenda rejected the European Constitution—an even more draconian update of the Maastricht Treaty—in 2005, they were flatly ignored. At the October 2007 Lisbon summit, EU leaders agreed simply to rename the constitution the “European Reform Treaty”, and signed it that December. France ratified the Lisbon Treaty in February 2008, after Parliament had amended the French Constitution to allow ratification without a referendum.

Britain, of course, has no constitution to amend, merely a set of conventions, traditions and Common Law—so called because it applies only to “commoners”—each and all of which may be overridden by Royal Prerogative. Meanwhile, the real power resides not in Parliament, but in the Crown and Privy Council on one hand and the City of London on the other—as it has, with but little change, for a thousand years. Brexit or not, no number of deals or referenda will solve Britain’s (or Europe’s) problems until that twin infestation of parasites is purged.