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## The Republican *Götterdämmerung*

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11/8/2014



The Republicans, who will soon control both houses of Congress, will seek to push the world to the brink of war. The neo-conservative war hawks who will soon take over Senate committees on foreign policy, defense, and intelligence will push for maximum confrontation with nations the neo-cons see as immortal enemies of America. In their eyes, a final showdown is nigh -- a *Götterdämmerung* -- arising from a certain rise in tensions between the United States and those who oppose its imperial policies. The world is about to become a very dangerous place.

The darling of the neo-cons, Arizona Senator John McCain, can be expected to assume the chairmanship of the Senate Armed Services Committee. Working with right-wing Tennessee Senator Bob Corker, who will become chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, McCain will do his best to pressure the lame duck Obama administration to provide advanced weapons to Ukraine's fascist- and Zionist-led government and increasing support to Islamic

State-allied groups in ousting the Bashar al-Assad government in Syria by berating administration officials during incessant public hearings and passing resolutions in the Senate that will be tied to important budgetary legislation.

The chairman of the Senate Defense Appropriations subcommittee will be Thad Cochran of Mississippi. Although Cochran received African-American Democratic support in his close primary race with a «Tea Party» challenger, he will quickly forget how progressives bailed him out from an all-but-certain defeat. Cochran adheres to all the neo-con policy points on keeping the Guantanamo Bay gulag open and in maximal U.S. support for Israel over Iran and Syria and for Ukraine over Russia.

Cuba will be in for as much criticism under Corker and his chairman of the Western Hemisphere Subcommittee Florida Senator Marco Rubio. Rubio and the outgoing Senate Foreign Relations Committee Chairman Robert Menendez are both the sons of right-wing Cuban immigrants to the United States. The vocal Cuban minority in the United States, like the Jewish minority, have ensured that congressional committees that involve their pet causes, namely Cuba and Israel, respectively, are chaired by members of their own ethnic groups. As chairman of the oversight subcommittee on U.S.-Cuba policy, Rubio will be just as, if not more, hostile to Cuba's government. Although Menendez was a Democrat, he was a fierce opponent of the Obama administration's low-level talks with Cuba's government. Menendez even accused Cuba of being behind a report, first published on a Republican website, which stated Menendez consorted with prostitutes in the Dominican Republic. In fact, the Cuban government does not have to make up anything about Menendez's lack of ethics. Menendez hails from one of the most corrupt counties – Hudson County – in one of the most corrupt states in the United States -- New Jersey.

The defeat of former Florida Governor Charlie Crist by incumbent Republican Rick Scott will embolden the anti-Cuba lobby. Crist, unlike Scott and Rubio, favored opening up trade and communications links between Florida and Cuba.

Control of the Senate Foreign Relations Subcommittee on Near East and South and Central Asian Affairs may go to Senator Jim Risch from the extremely conservative state of Idaho. His political campaign coffers can be expected to swell with out-of-state money from Jewish contributors from New York City, Los Angeles, and south Florida. There will be intense jockeying for this chairmanship considering the Jewish donor money that goes along with it.

North Carolina Senator Richard Burr, a puppet of the U.S. intelligence community, will become chairman of the Intelligence Committee. Behind closed doors in classified hearings, Burr and his fellow Republicans will pressure the Central Intelligence Agency to increase clandestine actions targeting the governments of Venezuela, Cuba, Nicaragua, Ecuador, Bolivia, Brazil, China, Russia, Iran, Yemen, Zimbabwe, and any other government that has challenged Washington's imperial desires. It can be expected that Corker and his committee will call for more punitive sanctions against Russia and countries like Hungary and possibly even Austria, which support it. The Intelligence Committee will also conveniently forget that the CIA spied on it with human and cyber agents in violation of the Constitution. The National Security Agency and its allied FIVE EYES signals intelligence agencies around the world will breathe easier after one of its harshest critics, Democratic Senator Mark Udall of Colorado, went down to defeat.

Perhaps already anticipating pressure from McCain and other pro-Israeli Republican neo-cons, Joint Chiefs of Staff Chairman General Martin Dempsey, only days after the Republican electoral victory, told the Carnegie Council for Ethics in International Affairs that he thought that «Israel went to extraordinary lengths to limit collateral damage and civilian casualties» in Gaza. Dempsey's opinion was in marked contrast to previous statements in which he said the U.S. must not fight Assad in Syria while also battling the Islamic State. McCain has called Dempsey's public affairs spokesman at the Pentagon, Rear Admiral John Kirby, an «idiot.» The former prisoner-of-war in Vietnam, who allegedly gave his North Vietnamese captors six months of future U.S. naval bombardment schedules, has been a vocal critic of Dempsey and his boss, Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel.

Although Hagel supported McCain's run for the presidency in 2000 and was his friend, the two Vietnam War veterans have had a bitter falling out. Dempsey's recent comments about Israel's attack on Gaza is obviously intended to ingratiate himself with McCain and his partner, South Carolina's Senator Lindsey Graham, who is slated to become chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Subcommittee on State and Foreign Operations. Graham will be sure to place procedural roadblocks on any of Obama's ambassadorial nominations that do not pass muster with the neo-con policy laundries in Washington. These policy «boiler shops» include the American Enterprise Institute, the Washington Institute for Near East Policy, the Heritage Foundation, the Hudson Institute, the Jewish Institute for National Security Affairs, and the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC).

The first volleys in the upcoming skirmishes by congressional Republicans to push for U.S. military action in the Middle East came after it was revealed that President Obama sent a letter to Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei in October urging U.S.-Iranian cooperation in battling the forces of the Islamic State. The Obama policy was immediately condemned by congressional Republicans after details of the letter were leaked by an administration source to the neo-con propaganda daily, The Wall Street Journal. While in Tehran in late September, this reporter urged Iranian officials close to Khamenei to respond favorably to White House entreaties over jointly combating the Islamic State. However, any rapprochement between Washington and Tehran is anathema to the Israelis and their neo-con supporters in the United States, as well as to the Saudis, Turks, and Qataris, who, like Israel, support the Islamic State financially, militarily, or logistically.

Americans have voted to install a war party in control of the legislative branch of their government. They will have war unless the generally anti-neocon Senator Rand Paul of Kentucky can prevail on Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell to reign in the neocons. Paul came to McConnell's assistance during his primary challenge by a Tea Party candidate and McConnell owes Paul a huge political debt. However, as Paul ratchets up his 2016 presidential campaign, there is every likelihood that the junior senator from Kentucky will start to waddle and quack like a «neocon-lite» duck.