



Written by [Michael Tennant](#) on April 1, 2011

## The Bush-Obama-Neocon Doctrine

Bill Kristol, son of the late neoconservative godfather Irving Kristol and editor of the *Weekly Standard*, [declared](#) that Obama is “a born-again neocon” during a March 30 appearance on the Fox News Channel’s *Red Eye w/Greg Gutfeld*. Kristol’s remark came in the context of a discussion of Obama’s consultation with Kristol and other influential columnists prior to his March 28 address to the nation about his military intervention in Libya. Gutfeld quizzed Kristol about the President’s asking him for “help” with his speech. Kristol denied that Obama had sought his help. Instead, Kristol said,



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He came to me to make sure I was supporting his sound policies. Of course, since his sound policies are now more like the policies people like me have been advocating for quite a while, I’m happy to support them, you know. He’s a born-again neocon.

In case anyone missed the significance of Kristol’s comment, Gutfeld made it clear: “We’ve got the drones. We’ve got military tribunals. We’ve got Gitmo. We’re bombing Libya. People who voted for Obama got four more years of Bush.”

Kristol agreed, adding: “What’s the joke — they told me if I voted for McCain, we’d be going to war in a third Muslim country.... I voted for McCain and we’re doing it.”

Of course, to Kristol, calling someone a neocon is a compliment. Indeed, Kristol [praised](#) Obama’s speech on the *Weekly Standard* blog, saying the President “had rejoined — or joined — the historical American foreign policy mainstream.” The speech was “reassuring,” Kristol explained, saying, “The president was unapologetic, freedom-agenda-embracing, and didn’t shrink from defending the use of force or from appealing to American values and interests.” In other words, it was a neocon speech, cloaking the use of violence in the language of liberty and treating the U.S. military as the President’s personal mercenaries to reshape the globe rather than as defenders of the territorial United States.

This is not the first time Kristol and other neocons have lauded Obama’s foreign policy. After Obama made a speech in 2009 announcing he was sending more troops to Afghanistan — that is, he was replicating Bush’s Iraq “surge” in another location — Michael Goldfarb, a *Weekly Standard* writer, asked Kristol for his reaction to the speech. “He said he would have framed a few things differently,” Goldfarb [related](#), “but his basic response was: ‘All hail Obama!’”

Similarly, when the President last August [claimed](#) that “the American combat mission in Iraq has ended” while asserting that “our commitment to Iraq’s future is not” ending, *New York Post* resident neocon John Podhoretz applauded Obama for his “rather *neoconservative* speech, in the sense that neoconservatism has argued for aggressive American involvement in the world both for the world’s sake and for the sake of extending American freedoms in order to enhance and preserve American



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security.” [Emphasis in original.]

Sheldon Richman, writing in *Freedom Daily*, reminded readers of just exactly what neocon policies have wrought:

Just to be clear, the neocons were among the key architects of the war against Iraq in 1991, followed by the embargo that killed half a million children. That war and embargo set the stage for the 9/11 attacks, which were then used to justify the invasion and occupation of Iraq (an ambition long predating 9/11) and the invasion and occupation of Afghanistan, American’s [sic] longest military engagement — all of which have killed more than a million people, wreaked political havoc, and made life in those countries (and elsewhere) miserable. Let’s not forget the drone assassination and special ops programs being run in a dozen Muslim countries. The neocon achievement also has helped drive the American people deep into debt.

Nice crowd Obama is hanging with these days. And that’s no exaggeration. Frederick Kagan, one of the top neocon brains and a signatory of the Project of the New American Century imperial manifesto, now works for Gen. David Petraeus.

Barack Obama, the candidate of “change we can believe in,” turned out to be the President of “more of the same.” Lest there remain any doubt about this, one need only turn to establishment news organ *Time* magazine. There Mark Halperin, [explaining](#) “why Obama’s Libya address was strong,” states quite bluntly: “George W. Bush could have delivered every sentence.”

Photo of Moammar Gadhafi: AP Images

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