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**Nationalism & Its Discontents: A Deep Rumination On The Meaning Of Trump**

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Submitted by [Tyler Durden](http://www.zerohedge.com/users/tyler-durden) on 01/26/2016 22:40 -0500

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[*Submitted by Justin Raimondo via AntiWar.com,*](http://original.antiwar.com/justin/2016/01/24/nationalism-and-its-discontents-the-meaning-of-trump/)

**At the end of the cold war, a cadre of neoconservative intellectuals surveyed the debris of the fallen Soviet colossus and boldly proclaimed “**[**the end of history**](http://www.wesjones.com/eoh.htm)**.” The West, said Francis Fukuyama, writing in *The National Interest*, had won not only the cold war but also the war of ideas –   for all time.**We were inevitably embarked on a pathway to a “universal homogenous state,” and although the pageant of History (always capitalized!) would continue to “unfold” along a rather bumpy road, in the end it would prove to be a highway to US hegemony over the entire earth. In a symposium commenting on Fukuyama’s thesis, the ever-practical Charles Krauthammer nevertheless insisted that it would be necessary for the United States to hurry History along by force of arms. In a subsequent polemic in *Foreign Affairs*, he argued that we ought to take advantage of “[the unipolar moment](https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/1991-02-01/unipolar-moment)” to “integrate” the US, Japan, and Europe into a “super-sovereign” global empire united by a “new universalism” – which, he averred, “is not as outrageous as it sounds.”

**Blinded by hubris, enthralled by the possibilities of unlimited power, the neocons – and their liberal internationalist doppelgangers on the other side of the political spectrum – didn’t see the nationalist backlash coming.**

That rebuke was prefigured by a stinging rebuttal from the pen of Patrick J. Buchanan in the pages of *The National Interest*, who wrote that Krauthammer’s vision was “un-American,” pure and simple. In Buchanan’s view, this militarized universalism was nothing less than treason. Invoking the Founders, he wrote that this globalist fantasy failed “the fundamental test of any foreign policy: Americans will not die for it.” A nation’s purpose, he added, cannot be ascertained “by consulting ideologies, but by reviewing its history, by searching the hearts of its people.”**So what, if not the “**[**benevolent global hegemony**](https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/1996-07-01/toward-neo-reaganite-foreign-policy)**” dreamt of by the neocons, would and should Americans fight for?**Buchanan’s answer was to quote these stanzas from [Lord Macaulay](http://www.bartleby.com/360/7/158.html):

*“And how can man die better  
That facing fearful odds,  
For the ashes of his fathers,  
And the temples of his gods?”*

**Buchanan’s answer to Krauthammer’s globalism was a foreign policy of “enlightened nationalism”: “total withdrawal of US troops from Europe,” and a rejection of the idea – nowhere authorized in the Constitution – that the President and/or Congress has the power to sacrifice its sons on the altar of some crazed crusade for “global democracy.”** Prophesizing the declaration of President George W. Bush [some fifteen years later](http://www.theamericanconservative.com/articles/radical-son/) that we would seek to “end evil” in the world, Buchanan raised the banner of non-interventionism in the pre-9/11 world: that is, in a country that was primed to hear his message.

He took that message to the Republican party, and the country, in three campaigns for the White House, all the while**warning that the “unipolar world” dreamed of by Krauthammer and his fellow neocons was a dangerous fantasy**, and that [the rising tide](http://original.antiwar.com/justin/2014/05/18/the-return-of-nationalism/) of nationalism, from Beijing to Biloxi, would make short work of it. A multi-polar world was on the horizon, and the best we could hope for was to adapt to the new reality by tending to our own garden, which had – after a long global struggle with the (alleged) Soviet threat – by this time become choked with weeds and in need of emergency care.

The same nationalist tides that were sweeping the post-cold war world in Europe and Asia were roiling the waters in America, but they took on a different shape and coloration in the wake of the 9/11 attacks. Whereas Buchananism was inward-looking, anti-interventionist, and anti-globalist, the [ultra-nationalism](http://archive.lewrockwell.com/rockwell/red-state-fascism.html) utilized by the neocons to mobilize the American people behind a crusade to transform the Middle East was and is aggressive, militaristic, and explicitly hegemonist – a bid to create the “unipolar world” of Krauthammer’s Napoleonic imagination.

This interrupted and in effect reversed the natural tendency to return to normalcy after the decades-long cold war struggle, and at a huge price in blood and treasure. And yet eventually the pendulum swung back again, as exhaustion – both emotional and financial – set in. America elected a President who vowed to end the wars, and deal with our festering home front crisis: that promise, however was not kept, and Barack Obama will leave office with the US once again in the middle of at least three wars, and with a hand in several others on their periphery. **Yet the nationalist impulse – which is, in part, an “isolationist” impulse – is stronger than ever, laying just beneath the surface of the American political landscape, waiting for someone to pick up its banner.**

**That someone turned out to be Donald Trump.**

**I have many disagreements with Trump, but unlike his many enemies on the left and especially on the right I understand that his nationalism contains elements that are  useful, instructive, and even admirable.**Unlike Buchanan, he is certainly no intellectual, but then again the last intellectual to inhabit the White House – Woodrow Wilson – was an unambiguous disaster for the cause of peace and liberty, and so I don’t hold that against The Donald. There is surely a demagogic element to his astonishing rise, which his opponents – particularly those on the right – make much of. The [recent jeremiad](http://www.nationalreview.com/article/430126/donald-trump-conservatives-oppose-nomination) against him launched by the neocons over *at National Review*was filled with comparisons to Mussolini, Juan Peron, Hitler (of course!), and even [Andrew Dice Clay](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B1qkt3nkZYE), this latter barb a direct appeal to the smug snobbery that characterizes our urban elites. “He’s “vulgar,” he’s “rude,” etc. etc., and those were some of the gentler ways they characterized him personally.

**Yet demagoguery didn’t bother them when it was deployed by George W. Bush as he marched us off to a disastrous war**– a war [Trump opposed](http://dailycaller.com/2015/08/31/donald-trump-wanted-last-republican-president-impeached-for-foreign-policy-lies/), and continues to denounce today – and implied that his critics were in league with America’s enemies. “You’re either with us or you’re with the terrorists” – [remember that one](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cpPABLW6F_A)? Do you [recall](http://www.nationalreview.com/article/391772/unpatriotic-conservatives-david-frum) how Bush’s partisans over at *National Review* tried to tar conservative and libertarian opponents of the Iraq war – including this writer – as having “turned their backs on their country”? Demagoguery in the service of mass murder is fine with them: it’s only when their own methods are [turned against them](https://mises.org/library/defense-demagogues)that the War Party starts to get religion.

**Yes, Trump rose to prominence initially on the strength of his anti-immigration and protectionist stance** – views he holds in common with his predecessor, Buchanan – but this doesn’t account for the hysterical opposition to his candidacy coming from the neoconservatives. *National Review* has been a veritable fount of anti-Muslim propaganda, with the writings of [Andrew McCarthy](http://www.rightwingwatch.org/content/andrew-mccarthy-defends-trump-says-islam-not-religion), [Mark Steyn](http://www.nationalreview.com/article/299725/spirit-geert-wilders-mark-steyn), [Kevin Williamson](http://www.nationalreview.com/article/411956/slander-blowback-kevin-d-williamson), and a host of others all polemicizing against the idea that terrorism is primarily due to US actions abroad and holding that the roots of Bin Ladenism lie in the nature of Islam per se. Given the logic of their longstanding position, how can they object to Trump’s proposal to temporarily ban Muslim immigration? Yet there they were, breaking [Godwin’s Law](http://knowyourmeme.com/memes/godwins-law) and claiming that we’d be facing an American Kristallnacht if Trump gets in the White House. What chutzpah!

**No, the real motive behind the neoconservative holy war against Trump is rooted in his foreign policy positions, which the neocons rightly view as a direct threat to their internationalist project.** Chris Matthews is on to their game: please watch his confrontation with a neocon journalist below.

Discussing the special [we-hate-Trump issue](http://www.nationalreview.com/article/430126/donald-trump-conservatives-oppose-nomination) of *National Review*, Matthews cornered poor *NR* writer Eliana Johnson, who was reduced to stuttering incoherence as he hammered her on what he rightly perceived as the overarching point of unity in “that crowd” on the Trump question: “that’s why they don’t like Trump, because he’s the only guy on the right wing who said [the Iraq war was] a stupid war.” When Johnson denied this, he demanded to know who among the long list of anti-Trump “intellectuals” wasn’t a war-hawk. “Can you answer me?” he persisted. “Who is not a hawk in that group?”

 She couldn’t come up with one (although she might have stopped him by mentioning David Boaz, of the Cato Institute).

Boaz’s brief polemic, by the way, didn’t mention foreign policy: he confined his critique to references to Mussolini, George Wallace, and other comparisons seemingly ripped from the pages of Salon.com. Yet other contributors made no secret of the source of their animus. Neocon Mona Charen was appalled by Trump’s suggestion that “we let Russia fight ISIS.” **Trump is “oblivious” to the “global jihad,” fumed Andrew McCarthy, angered by Trump’s vow to “stay out of the [Syrian] fray (leaving it in Vladimir Putin’s nefarious hands).”** Bill Kristol was one of the signers, a man whose key role in ginning up the Iraq war is well-known to my readers.

[A recent piece](http://www.politico.com/magazine/story/2016/01/donald-trump-foreign-policy-213546#ixzz3yBuNmXkY) in *Politico* was more explicit about the danger Trump poses to the internationalist-interventionist consensus that reigns supreme in the Washington Beltway:

*“One of the most common misconceptions about Donald Trump is that he is opportunistic and makes up his views as he goes along. But a careful reading of some of Trump’s statements over three decades shows that he has a remarkably coherent and consistent worldview, one that is unlikely to change much if he’s elected president. It is also a worldview that makes a great leap backward in history, embracing antiquated notions of power that haven’t been prevalent since prior to World War II.*

*“It is easy to poke fun at many of Trump’s foreign-policy notions – the promises to “take” Iraq’s oil, to extract a kind of imperial ‘tribute’ from U.S. military allies like South Korea, his eagerness to emulate the Great Wall of China along the border with Mexico, and his embrace of old-style strongmen like Vladimir Putin. But many of these views would have found favor in pre-World War II – and even, in some cases, 19th century – America.*

*”In sum, Trump believes that America gets a raw deal from the liberal international order it helped to create and has led since World War II. He has three key arguments that he returns to time and again over the past 30 years. He is deeply unhappy with America’s military alliances and feels the United States is overcommitted around the world. He feels that America is disadvantaged by the global economy. And he is sympathetic to authoritarian strongmen. Trump seeks nothing less than ending the U.S.-led liberal order and freeing America from its international commitments.”*

All this is heresy in the circles in which the author – Thomas Wright, director of the Project on International Order and Strategy at The Brookings Institution – travels. Brookings is in hock to the Gulf emirate of Qatar [to the tune of $14.8 million](http://www.nytimes.com/2014/09/07/us/politics/foreign-powers-buy-influence-at-think-tanks.html?_r=0), according to the *New York Times*. **This accounts for Wright’s discomfort with The Donald’s view of America’s expensive and often tragic commitments to defending other nations “that would be wiped off the face of the earth if not for us,” as the former real estate mogul puts it.**

Wright’s characterization of Trump’s attitude toward Putin as an “embrace” is a typical ploy by the War Party, which always portrays a non-belligerent stance as a love affair: what Trump actually said, however, is that “I could get along with Putin” – a definite no-no in Washington, where the new cold war is raging on both sides of the aisle. Contrast this with the position taken by most of the other GOP candidates, such as Christie, Rubio, and Bush, who proudly proclaim they’d confront Russian planes in the skies over Syria, risking World War III.

Examining Trump’s foreign policy pronouncements over the years – the GOP frontrunner wonders why we are stationing 28,000 troops in South Korea, complains that we’re defending Japan while they slap tariffs on our products, and says we have no business stationing tens of thousands of soldiers in Europe, which can damn well take care of itself – Wright trots out the hate figures interventionists love to excoriate. Trump is like [Robert A. Taft](http://www.antiwar.com/stromberg/s071399.html), who didn’t want us to join NATO: he’s like [Charles Lindbergh](http://www.charleslindbergh.com/americanfirst/), a leader of the anti-interventionist [America First Committee](http://www.antiwar.com/justin/j082302.html), a particular hate-figure of the interventionist-neocon foreign policy Establishment. And, of course, Trump is an “isolationist,” because he’s sick of coddling our shiftless “allies” while they rip us off and laugh at us behind our back, all the while huddling under the protective wingspan of the American eagle.

**All of this is no doubt reassuring to Wright’s Qatari paymasters, who have a lot to lose if Trump should win the White House and present them with a bill for services rendered.** But in reading Wright’s list of Trumpist foreign policy heresies, one can’t help but think that the average American would agree with each and every one of The Donald’s complaints about the profligate paternalism involved in maintaining this precious “international order” Wright would have us enforce for free. He maintains that “those alliances also work to America’s benefit by providing it with prepositioned forces and regional stability. It would actually cost more to station troops in the United States and have to deploy them overseas in a crisis.” But his rationale is a classic example of circular reasoning: he assumes it is our sacred duty to intervene everywhere. A “crisis,” for him, is the possibility that the Emir of Qatar will lose his throne, or that the Saudis will one day be confronted with the consequences of their inveterate barbarism. Ordinary Americans – i.e. Trump supporters – would consider that turn of events a comeuppance waiting to happen.

**“Tax these wealthy nations,” says Trump, “not America” – a prospect that no doubt horrifies Wright and his foreign sponsors, but delights Americans to no end. Which is precisely why Trumpian nationalism has such resonance this election season.**

**In Wright’s view, Trump is not only unduly rude to our alleged “friends,” he is far too friendly to our alleged enemies, i.e. Russia and China.** Wright admits, parenthetically, that these two pose no threat to the American homeland, but rather to “the US-led order,” i.e. the albatross of our global empire, where – as the [Old Right](https://mises.org/library/foreign-policy-old-right-0) writer [Garet Garrett](http://original.antiwar.com/justin/2004/08/18/rise-of-empire/) put it – “everything goes out and nothing comes in.”

**As is routine for our war propagandists, Wright accuses Trump of having a soft spot for authoritarian leaders.** Since Trump doesn’t want to threaten Putin and the Chinese with regime-change, this must mean he admires – and even wants to emulate – their domestic policies. It’s an absurd position to take, and, not coincidentally, the very same illogic that led to the Iraq war. “He’s killing his own people,” went the refrain about Saddam Hussein – and if you didn’t favor regime-change in Iraq, that must mean you approved of Saddam’s dictatorship. We can see where that line “reasoning” led, but Wright and his fellow policy wonks haven’t learned that lesson even if the American people have.

Wright gleefully cites Putin’s comments on Trump:

*“He says he wants to move on to a new, more substantial relationship, a deeper relationship with Russia, how can we not welcome that? Of course we welcome that.”*

This horrifies Wright, but what is wrong with getting along with the leader of the Russian state – a person who has at his command thousands of nuclear weapons and has often expressed wonderment at Washington’s rebuke of every attempt at rapprochement? With the threat of [a new arms race looming large](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/joe-cirincione/arms-race-us-russia-nuclear_b_8557526.html) and a new cold war on the horizon, the biggest danger to international peace is our deteriorating relations with Russia. Trump realizes this: Wright, not so much. And**the American people are behind Trump in this: asked by pollsters if we should get involved in a dispute with Russia over Ukraine, the overwhelming answer was a**[**resounding “No!”**](http://www.politico.com/story/2014/07/politico-poll-ukraine-middle-east-109155)

“It’s not hard to imagine these two men sitting down to cut a deal,” says Wright, but surely cutting a deal to reduce the nuclear arsenals of both nations and resume cooperation in tracking down “loose nukes” floating around the former Soviet Union is a good thing. Except it isn’t a good thing as far as our new Cold Warriors are concerned. Wright derides Putin and Trump for holding an “antiquated” view of world politics, but what could be more antiquated than launching another cold war with Russia – a quarter century after the fall of the Soviet Union?

**As for China, Wright is at his wit’s end because Trump seems unconcerned with “its attempts to blunt US power projection capabilities or its repression at home.”**And yet “power projection” is just another word for military aggression, which is bound to provoke a response from the highly nationalistic Chinese. Are we supposed to go to war over the Spratly Islands and a collection of [artificial atolls](http://www.reuters.com/article/us-southchinasea-china-airstrip-idUSKCN0PC00Q20150702) in the South China Sea – thousands of miles away from American shores? Seriously? Wright pretends to be concerned about China’s repressive domestic policies, but threatening behavior on our part will only empower the sclerotic leaders of the Chinese Communist Party and strengthen their position domestically. **Wright fails to understand the power of rising nationalism abroad, just as he disdains its manifestations here in America.**

It’s almost funny how Wright portrays the threat to his treasured “US-led order”:

*“There will be massive uncertainty around America’s commitments. Would Trump defend the Baltics? Would he defend the Senkaku Islands? Or Saudi Arabia? Some nations will give in to China, Russia and Iran. Others, like Japan, will push back, perhaps by acquiring nuclear weapons. Trump may well see such uncertainty as a positive. Putting everything in play would give him great leverage. But by undoing the work of Truman and his secretary of state, Dean Acheson, it would be the end of the American era.”*

The idea that Putin is raring to gobble up the Baltics is one of the cold warriors’ talking points, but it is absurd on its face: does he really think Putin is dumb enough to replicate the US invasion of Iraq in a European setting? Don’t make me laugh. [Crimea wanted union with Russia](http://www.forbes.com/sites/kenrapoza/2015/03/20/one-year-after-russia-annexed-crimea-locals-prefer-moscow-to-kiev/#31e8505c5951), and that’s what the Crimeans got: given [the way Ukraine is being governed](http://blogs.reuters.com/great-debate/2015/12/30/corruption-in-ukraine-is-so-bad-a-nigerian-prince-would-be-embarrassed-2/), who can blame them? But it is sheer fiction to imagine that Putin wants to recreate the Warsaw Pact: he is playing defense to NATO’s [game of offense](http://www.moonofalabama.org/2014/03/george-f-kennans-prediction-on-nato-expansion-was-right.html).

**As for the** [**Senkaku Islands**](http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-pacific-11341139) **– what in the name of all that’s holy is the US interest in defending these useless atolls?**Are we supposed to go to war with China over these five uninhabited specks – which are [also claimed by Taiwan](http://www.dw.com/en/taiwan-wants-a-say-in-senkaku-talks/a-16684170), our ally? Let’s take a national poll over that burning question: I can guarantee you the answer in advance.

“To understand Trump, in the end, we have to go back to Taft and Lindbergh,” avers Wright, and in this he is absolutely correct. It’s a pity some of my libertarian friends fail to see this, but they are blinded by cultural factors and held captive by political correctness: immigration matters more to them than foreign policy. **What they don’t understand is that the question of war and peace is the central issue of modern times. They fail to appreciate the foreign policy paradigm shift represented by Trump’s political success.** However, Wright *does* understand it, along with his neoconservative comrades over at *National Review* and the *Weekly Standard*.

For Wright, Trump is Taft and Lindbergh all rolled up into one:

*“The difference is that, unlike Trump, Taft was not outside the mainstream of his time. Many people believed America was safe and that it did not matter who ran Europe. Also, unlike Trump, Taft was boring and struggled to break through the noise in several nomination battles. The more bombastic and controversial figure was Lindbergh, the man who became a household name as the first person to fly across the Atlantic. Lindbergh led a national movement that was divisive, xenophobic and sympathetic to Nazi Germany.”*

Of course, the America First antiwar movement, which opposed US entry into the European war, reflected the overwhelming majority sentiment of the American people, who opposed intervention before Pearl Harbor. So what Wright is saying is that most Americans in the year 1940 were “sympathetic to Nazi Germany.” This was the line of the Communist Party at the time, which – along with the Party’s liberal-left fellow-travelers – was eager to see us get into the war in order to save Stalin’s bacon. That this nonsense is now gospel among the foreign policy mavens who inhabit the corridors of power in Washington should tell us everything we need to know about what’s wrong in the Imperial City.

**What scares Wright – and the Establishment of both parties – is that Trump is changing what it means to be “mainstream.”** When Lindsey Graham, who wants to invade Syria, Iraq, Iran, and Ukraine – for a start – gets less than 1 percent in the polls, and Trump gets 40 percent, the War Party panics. As well they should. I for one take enormous pleasure in imbibing the naked fear Wright and his fellow warmongering wonks exude as the triumph of Trump approaches. Here is Wright, shaking in his boots:

*“The Republican primary of 2016 is shaping up to be the most important party primary since 1940. Lindbergh did not run, of course. But Taft was in with a strong chance. Only the fact that the field was badly divided created an unexpected opening for Wendell Willkie, an internationalist, to emerge as the nominee at the convention. Some of Roosevelt’s advisers were so relieved at Willkie’s nomination that they advised their boss he no longer had to run for an unprecedented – and controversial – third term.”*

Ah, but this time there will be no Wilkie – [imposed by the Eastern Establishment](http://www.eagleforum.org/column/1995/nov95/col11-16.html) after Taft’s delegates were disqualified by party bosses – to save the internationalists from the fate they so richly deserve. And that’s what has Wright in a panic:

*“The reason we must revisit 1940 is that Republicans have struggled to find a new north star after Iraq. Except for Rand Paul – whose own brand of libertarian isolationism, unlike Trump’s, didn’t sit well with voters – the establishment candidates were not sure whether they still supported Bush 43’s strategy or opposed it. Most tried to muddle through with a critique of President Barack Obama. Marco Rubio stuck to the ambitious Bush 43 approach but found a declining market. Some, like Ted Cruz, tried to deal with the shift in sentiment by cozying up to pro-American dictators and abandoning support for democracy promotion. Cruz even used the isolationist term America First to describe his foreign policy. But Cruz seems to have thought little and said even less about America’s global role outside the Middle East. Ironically for someone with the reputation of being exceptionally smart, he lacks Trump’s detail and substance.”*

Poor Wright! The combined poll numbers of the two top candidates for the GOP presidential nomination – one of whom is hated by the neocons, and the other who has [openly attacked](http://www.nationalreview.com/article/428452/ted-cruz-foreign-policy-gop-leaders-suspicious) the neocons – equal *over half* of Republican primary voters. **And the most consistently “isolationist” of the top two is the frontrunner, with his poll numbers rising with every effort to dislodge him**. You’ll pardon me if I indulge the temptation to chortle in print: I haven’t had this much fun since Buchanan [toppled King George off his pedestal](http://buchanan.org/blog/1996-victory-speech-manchester-nh-183) in New Hampshire and declared war on the “New World Order.”

“It is in this vacuum that the long-dormant Taftian foreign policy has made an unexpected comeback in the hands of Trump,” says Wright, in despair. ***“What happens next is anybody’s guess.”***

What’s an internationalist to do when the rising tide of American nationalism washes over his foreign-subsidized sandcastle? Cry? Write long articles for *Politico*? Perhaps both.

**I have to say, however, that Trump is hardly the consistent “isolationist” Wright portrays in his piece. He is flighty, and therefore unpredictable.** Although his views on trade limn (somewhat) those of the late [Chalmers Johnson](https://books.google.com/books?id=MrV7dCG5S0YC&lpg=PP1&dq=chalmer%20johnson%20trade%20empire&pg=PA25#v=onepage&q=chalmer%20johnson%20trade%20), who saw the American empire as a tradeoff between Washington and its overseas clients – we would lift trade barriers if they allowed us to station troops on their soil – Trump lacks Johnson’s intellectual solidity, to say the least. Slapping tariffs on Chinese goods would start a trade war that would be disastrous for us, and the world. In short, I don’t give one iota of political support to Trump because he is simply not to be trusted. If he overcomes the odds and does win the White House, “what happens next is anybody’s guess,” as Wright puts it.

**Yet Trump’s personal shortcomings are beside the point.** The lesson to be taken from this episode is *the centrality of foreign policy* in the political life of our country. ***The doggedness with which the internationalists are attacking Trump, the nature of their criticisms, and the viciousness of their tactics is an indication of how hard it will be to dislodge them – just as Trump’s popularity shows how eager Americans are to hear someone tell them that we don’t have to continue being the policeman of the world, and that we’re paying through the nose for something that doesn’t benefit us in the least (although it does benefit outfits like the Brookings Institution, which takes in millions from its foreign sponsors).*** No matter how inconsistent and even obnoxious Trump may be – and his crazy plan to deport millions of undocumented immigrants is certainly a noxious fantasy that will never happen no matter who is elected – it would be a mistake to dismiss him as a random anomaly, or as a “fascist” demagogue as some of the more [brainless](https://tucker.liberty.me/trumpism-the-ideology/) libertarians have done.

**The meaning of Trumpism is that Americans want to rid themselves of the burden of empire**: Wright is right about that. Trump’s rise augurs a seismic shift in the foreign policy debate in this country, marking the end of the interventionist consensus that dominates both parties. And it certainly means the final defeat and humiliation of the neoconservatives, who are busy spewing vitriol at him and his “plebeian” supporters. **And that alone is worth whatever price we have to pay for the triumph of Trump.** For the neocons are the very core of the War Party: their demise as a politically effective force inside the GOP is an event that every person who wants a more peaceful world has been longing for and should celebrate.

When the Republican-controlled Congress in the Clinton era threatened to pull the funding from Bill Clinton’s war in the former Yugoslavia, Bill Kristol threatened to walk out of the GOP. Today, as Trump appears to be the likely Republican presidential nominee, Kristol is [threatening to start his own party](http://www.msnbc.com/rachel-maddow-show/gops-kristol-semi-serious-talk-about-third-party-initiative). Which strikes me as a brilliant ploy: ***let him run Lindsey Graham as the candidate of the aptly-named War Party – and when America’s foremost warmonger does worse than he did in the primaries, let the chickenhawk-in-chief contemplate the majesty of cosmic justice.***

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