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# Zionist Militants Surround Obama

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People in the US and abroad are hoping that President Obama will end America's illegal wars, halt America's support for Israel's massacre of Lebanese and Palestinians, and punish, instead of reward, the shyster banksters whose fraudulent financial instruments have destroyed economies and imposed massive sufferings on people all over the world. If Obama's appointments are an indication, all of these hopeful people are going to be disappointed.

James Petras examines Obama's foreign policy appointments and finds the largest collection of Zionist militarists outside of Israel.

Petras concludes that Obama's "diplomatic" team has Iran in its sights, and hostility that meshes with Israel's own intent. Not realizing that a member of the press had been mistakenly invited to a selected audience, the Israeli ambassador to Australia said that Israel's attack on Gaza was a dress rehearsal for a major attack on Iran. Benjamin Netanyahu, the expected winner of Israel's March elections, has again declared that Israel will not permit Iran to have a nuclear energy program as it would provide the basis for developing nuclear weapons.

It makes no sense for Israel to baldly state its intention to attack Iran if Israel does not mean it. What if the Iranians believe the Israelis and decide to strike first with their long-range missiles?

Obama's economic appointments are just as discouraging. Obama chose as his treasury secretary Timothy Geithner, the man who helped Bush's treasury secretary, Hank Paulson, engineer the \$700 billion dollar rip-off of the U.S. taxpayer, money that was gifted to the crooked banksters who destroyed Americans' pensions, jobs and health care coverage.

These banksters, and the negligent federal regulators who enabled them,

should be put in prison, not handed hundreds of billions of dollars.

Instead, Obama has appointed one of the chief orchestrators of the rip-off to the helm of the Treasury. Obama's National Economic Council is just as depressing. Clinton's Treasury Secretary, Larry Summers, is its head. Summers recently declared that he had no inkling that a financial crisis was about to hit. Why did Obama put a person without a clue in charge?

Summers's colleagues are just as bad. Obama has appointed Diana Farrell, lead author of a phony study that claimed offshoring of American jobs is a win-win game for Americans, as deputy director of the National Economic Council. Farrell is affiliated with McKinsey & Company, a firm that helps American corporations offshore their operations.

In his book, *Outsourcing America*, economist Ron Hira tore Farrell's McKinsey report to shreds. Why not appoint Ron Hira and Nouriel Roubini, who predicted the crisis, to the National Economic Council?

With Israel's most fervent American allies whispering in one ear and banksters and offshoring propagandists whispering in the other, how can President Obama fulfill any of the hopes that people have?

The discouraging fact is that even when faced with crisis in the economy and in foreign policy, the American political system is incapable of producing any leadership. Here we are in the worst economic crisis in a lifetime, perhaps in our history, and on the brink of war in Pakistan and Iran while escalating the war in Afghanistan, and all we get is a government made up of the very people who have brought us to these crises.

Just as the Bushites could not admit the failure of their man, the Obamacons will not be able to admit the failure of their man.

The era of American leadership has passed. America's shyster financial system has brought economic crisis to the world. America's wars of aggression are seen as serving no purpose except the enrichment of the military industries associated with Dick Cheney. The world is looking elsewhere for leadership.

Vladimir Putin made a play for this role at Davos, where his speech at the opening ceremony was the most intelligent speech of the event.

Putin reminded the World Economic Forum that "just a year ago, American delegates speaking from this rostrum emphasized the U.S. economy's fundamental stability and its cloudless prospects. Today, investment banks, the pride of Wall Street, have virtually ceased to exist. In just 12 months, they have posted losses exceeding the profits they made in the last 25 years."

Putin made his case that the existing financial system based on the U.S.

dollar and American financial hegemony has failed. Putin said that a secure world requires cooperation that requires trust. He made it clear that the Americans have proven that they cannot be trusted.

Nationally syndicated columnist, Paul Craig Roberts, Ph.D., a former editor at The Wall Street Journal, is the author of several books. He has been associated with the Hoover Institution, and the Institute for Political Economy and from 1981 to 1982 served as assistant secretary of the treasury for economic policy.

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