

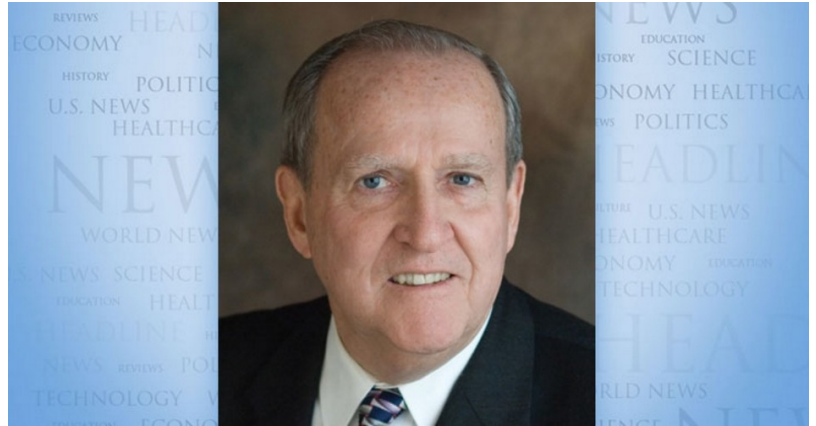


Written by [John F. McManus](#) on October 28, 2019

National Security Adviser: Will O'Brien be an Improvement Over Bolton?

Any U.S. national security adviser holds a very important post. He advises the president about such key matters as using America's military, supporting or rejecting appointments dealing with foreign policy, backing or steering clear of foreign leaders, and more.

When John Bolton won the job, hard-line advocates of keeping our nation out of an array of foreign problems started worrying. John Bolton has long been the epitome of a war-happy diplomat, a neoconservative to the core. Concern that he would have our nation involved in warfare somewhere grew dramatically. But President Trump finally got rid of him, even supplying a sound reason for the termination.



Claiming Bolton had made several "mistakes," Mr. Trump specifically mentioned one where his now former key adviser "talked about the Libyan model for Kim Jong Un." Maybe Bolton didn't know that former Libyan leader Moammar Ghadafi had given up his country's weapons, stepped away from the leadership post of his nation, and soon ended up dead during a struggle within Libya. If he didn't know about this deadly development, he certainly should have known what happened, and that the U.S. had a hand in the uprising that led to Ghadafi's demise.

Those in the know insist that the Bolton statement quickly made its way to North Korea and resulted in a serious setback for the Trump plans to continue peaceful negotiations with Kim Jong Un. The North Korean leader doesn't want similar action taken against him. Bolton is also suspected of interfering with President Trump's hope to meet with Taliban leaders in Afghanistan.

So Bolton is out after almost 18 months on the job, and Robert O'Brien has been chosen to succeed him. No Senate confirmation is required for this post. The new national security adviser is a Los Angeles attorney who previously served in the UN Security Council before holding a post in the George W. Bush administration where he reported to Condoleezza Rice. He later labored under Hillary Rodham Clinton during the Obama administration.

Earlier this year, when American rapper A\$AP Rocky was arrested and held in Sweden after a fight with some locals, O'Brien acted as our nation's special envoy for hostage affairs and won his release. Over past years, he has served as an adviser to presidential aspirant Mitt Romney, Texas Senator Ted Cruz, and Wisconsin Governor Scott Walker.

Unlike Bolton, Robert O'Brien has a reputation as a quiet team player. But his lack of experience in dealing with foreign policy matters will have to be quickly overcome. Like Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, he may have been selected by Donald Trump because of a willingness to go along supinely



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with whatever the President wants.

The nation's new national security adviser can be expected to be a Trump loyalist, but he is also another neoconservative who supports using or threatening to use America's military power in questionable arenas.

America's sixth president, John Quincy Adams, suggested that our nation follow a foreign policy quite different from what has been U.S. practice for many years. He stated: "America ... goes not abroad in search of monsters to destroy. She is the well-wisher to the freedom and independence of all."

We wish Robert O'Brien well in his new assignment. And we suggest he follow — and urge President Trump to likewise follow — the kind of thinking expressed almost 200 years ago by President John Quincy Adams. America should step away from all matters that don't threaten us. The U.S. military should not be the policeman of the world.

John F. McManus is president emeritus of [The John Birch Society](#).



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