

WHO IS MIKE POMPEO?



by Jack in the Antipodes

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It seems like an odd thing to be talking about the US Secretary of State at a time like this, but Mike Pompeo is in some ways the most interesting person left in Donald Trump's inner circle. So I want to give some background and then put into some context a couple of things he's said recently that should have raised more interest than they did.

First up, Wikipedia says that he was born on 30 December 1963 to parents Wayne Pompeo and Dorothy (nee Mercer). It doesn't say what his parents did for a living but their family tree shows up nothing remarkable to my untrained eye, other than a great-great-grandmother on his mother's side who was a **Bechtel**, and a great-grandfather on his mother's side who was called **Ulysses Grant Mercer**. As Ulysses was born in 1868, three years after the end of the Civil War, I'd guess that it was a tribute to General Grant, who would have had the celebrity status in those days that we attribute to movie stars in the present. **Miles: no, more likely they were related. That is what we have always found. And Bechtel links us to the Bechtel Corporation, the largest construction company in the US, which built the nuclear plants including Three Mile Island. It was founded by Warren Abraham Bechtel, Jewish, who on his maternal side was also a Bentz and an Alspach. Also a Greenawalt and a Moyer on this father's side. The current head of Bechtel, Riley Bechtel, also sits on the board of JPMorganChase, the Trilateral Commission, and the National Petroleum Council.**

Pompeo's ancestors on his father's side seem to be exclusively Italian and according to Wikipedia his paternal great-grandparents parents migrated separately from a small commune in the Abruzzo region, although they're not included in the Geneanet family tree.

Rather than take up space here describing his unremarkable origins you can go to Geneanet and see it for yourself at either of the two links below. If anyone sees anything that rings a bell you can let Miles know.

[https://gw.geneanet.org/tdowling?](https://gw.geneanet.org/tdowling?lang=en&pz=timothy+michael&nz=dowling&m=A&p=michael+richard&n=pompeo&siblings=on¬es=on&t=T&v=6&image=on&marriage=on&full=on)

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<https://gw.geneanet.org/tdowling?lang=en&n=pompeo&oc=0&p=michael+richard>

[**Added November 12:** See Pompeo's page at Geneanet, curated by our man Tim Dowling. That alone is a huge red flag. Then you get another with his maternal grandmother, Grace Mae

DOUGLASS. Douglases were the kingmakers of Scotland, related to the royal Stewarts. Grace Mae married a Mercer. Mercers of the peerage are related to the Stewarts, as well as the Murrays, Grays, Elphinstones, etc. Pompeo is also a Taylor and a **Bennett**. The Bennetts lead us back to the **Masons**. We also link to the surnames Willis, Thatcher, **Armstrong** and Maris. Pompeo is a close cousin of Garner Ted Armstrong. I remind you that we saw these Mercers in my paper on Thomas [Jefferson \(part 2\)](#), where we found Tallyrand was a Mercer, linking him to the Stanleys, Earls of Derby.

Also see the family photo posted at [Find a Grave](#), listing a man named Bob Zimmerman. That's Bob Dylan's real name.]

[Added November 15: a reader just drew my attention to the fact that other sites contradict Tim Dowling at Geneanet on Pompeo's paternal line. [According the obituary posted at Fairhaven Memorial Party and Mortuary](#), Pompeo's grandfather was not Harry Pompeo, but Salvatore Pompeo. His grandmother was not Fay Brandolino, but Gladys Mozell Cullender, daughter of **Joseph Smith Cullender** and [Parolee Catherine Ivey](#). I would assume "Parolee" is not a name, it is a designation, meaning she had been in jail. We have to switch from Ancestry to Findagrave for more information. There we find her name was Catherina Ivey, daughter of a Boyd, granddaughter of a Hale and a **Bacon**. The Bacons go back to an Isaac Bacon of Berks Co, PA, whose mother was a Neuman from Germany. These Bacons were related to the Bacons of CT, who hale *directly* back to Sir John Bacon of Suffolk, great-grandfather of Sir Francis Bacon.

The surname Cullender links us to witch trials, but not Salem. The Cullenders didn't come to MA until the 1800s. They were involved in the Bury St. Edmunds witch trials of Suffolk, England, in 1662. The Cullenders were not poor peasants, they were the owners of one of the largest cotton companies in England: Lees, Millington and Cullender of Manchester. Joseph Smith Cullender is related to Comptons, Burrs, Davidsons, Phillips, Greens, and Batemans. This indicates he was Jewish, so we may have some link there to the Mormon Joseph Smith. That Joseph Smith was a **Mack and a Gates**, so you see why Dowling may be scrubbing that line in Pompeo's genealogy at Geneanet.

The surname Cullender was originally Callender, linking us back to the Livingstons, Earls of Callendar. This also links us again to the Grahams, Forbes, Hays, Drummonds, Stuarts, etc. The 4th Earl of Callendar was kicked out the peerage and the country in 1715 after the Uprising, losing his lands to the Hamiltons. So one line of the Livingstons changed their name to Callender and came to America, the spelling later becoming Cullender. This is proved by their continued links to the Boyds, as we just saw. The Boyds, Earls of Kilmarnock (below), were attainted at the same time as the Livingstons, and came to America with them.]



Pompeo graduated from Los Amigos High School in Fountain Valley, Orange County, California. That rings the first bell of the day. I'm not from that part of the world but Wikipedia describes Fountain Valley as upper-middle class. As of 2000 the median household income was more than \$90,000 and the black population was only 1.11 percent of the total. It's considered a classic commuter town.

Pompeo's father died this year and according to his obituary he worked for Standard Pressed Steel (SPS) for close to 50 years, as an inside salesman and production control manager. Whatever he did for a living it was enough for them to live in a prosperous commuter town in the heart of some of the wealthiest parts of California and therefore the country. It was solidly Republican and socially conservative, just the sort of place to stir certain ambitions.

After high school graduation Pompeo went to West Point and graduated there at the top of his class. Again, I'm not from around there but I think I'm right in saying that even the entrance exams to West Point are intensely competitive, and to come out on top after four gruelling years of study and military training suggests someone who is not only very smart but also very driven.

Just by comparison, George Armstrong Custer came last in his class (at the time the title given to the biggest loser was 'the Goat'). But Custer was from the families so he knew he was going to get ahead regardless, so why stress out over getting good grades. Another who came last in his class was George Pickett of Pickett's Charge fame at the Battle of Gettysburg. In fact there six Goats at Gettysburg, three on each side.

Other famous people who went to West Point and failed to cover themselves in glory were Edgar Allan Poe (kicked out after six months for not showing up to assembly) and James McNeill Whistler (for failing chemistry by identifying silicon as a gas). Whistler became an artist, so not much to see there. Another who came top of the class and went on to some sort of fame was Douglas MacArthur, while Robert E. Lee came second in his year.

So Pompeo, who had majored in engineering management, was assigned as an armour officer with the Seventh Cavalry in West Germany. He left the army in 1991 with the rank of captain, which is hardly a stellar military career, but the US wasn't invading anyone around that time so chances of some real action wouldn't have come until the first Iraq War that kicked off when Iraq invaded Kuwait in August 1990, and ended in February 1991. Not really a war, more like a legally sanctioned massacre.

In 1994 he graduated with a Juris Doctor degree from Harvard Law School. Pompeo served as one of the 78 editors of the *Harvard Journal of Law & Public Policy* and on the 81-member board of editors of the *Harvard Law Review*. Again, a man driven to achieve and also to make connections for the future. On graduation he went to work at Williams and Connolly in Washington DC. For those who don't already know, this is not just any law firm. It was founded by Edward Bennett Williams, who is probably worth an in-depth look in his own right, and in 2019 it was ranked the most selective law firm in the United States. Often, lawyers from the firm will complete clerkships with federal judges prior to joining the firm. In 2015, the firm raised starting salaries to \$200,000 for first-year associates, the highest base salary in the country.

So they could take their pick and Mike Pompeo, again, just marched in there. According to Wikipedia: *Williams & Connolly partner Robert Barnett has represented Barack Obama, Bill Clinton, George W. Bush, James Patterson, Hillary Rodham Clinton, Michelle Obama, Laura Bush, Bob Woodward, Sarah Palin, Dick Cheney, Alan Greenspan, Katharine Graham, Ben Bernanke, Paul Ryan, Tim Russert, Barbra Streisand, Jack Welch, Khaled Hosseini, Bill Walton, Mitch McConnell, Jake Tapper, and many others.*

High-profile cases include the successful defence of US President Clinton's impeachment, representation of Enron's law firm Vinson & Elkins, representation of the motion picture studios in the Kazaa/Grokster file-trading litigation, defence of the Vioxx cases, and counsel for the plaintiff states in the United States v. Microsoft antitrust remedy trial. The firm represented Colonel Oliver North during the Iran-Contra Affair and John Hinckley, the would-be assassin of Ronald Reagan.

The firm's corporate clients include Google, Disney, Samsung, Intel, Bank of America, The Carlyle Group, Medtronic, Genentech, Eli Lilly, and 21st Century Fox. Just briefly on Edward Williams though, Wikipedia makes a point of mentioning that he was friends with Ben Bradlee and Robert Maheu (otherwise known as IBM for Iron Bob Maheu), Howard Hughes' close associate and intelligence handler for many years.

He was also treasurer of the Democrat National Committee from 1974-77 and when he died in 1988 from colon cancer his funeral, according to Wikipedia, 'was attended by most of Washington's power elite, including then-Vice President George H. W. Bush'. As the saying goes, the bigger the arsehole the bigger the funeral.

I hope I'm not missing anything here. I'm avoiding pointing out the red flags because I assume by now that Miles' readers have educated themselves sufficiently by reading his other papers not to need them. I'm just adding a few bits and pieces to provide context for what has been, by any measure, a stellar career for Mike Pompeo in a variety of fields.

However, the law didn't seem to hold sufficient fascination for him, even at such a prestigious and lucrative place as Williams and Connolly so after four years in Washington he quit his job in 1998 and moved to Wichita, Kansas. Again, I'm not from around there, but I do know that Wichita is an aircraft production hub for both civilian and military types, as well as being home to McConnell Air Force Base, which is a very big deal all on its own. So more red flags, if any are needed.

With no experience in the aviation industry Pompeo and three West Point friends, Brian Bulatao, Ulrich Brechbuhl, and Michael Stradinger, moved to Wichita and 'acquired three aircraft-part manufacturers there (Aero Machine, Precision Profiling, B&B Machine) and in St Louis (Advance Tool & Die), renaming the entity Thayer Aerospace after West Point superintendent Sylvanus Thayer'. And here is where it starts to get really interesting.

Venture funding for the private organization included a nearly 20 percent investment from **Koch Industries** as well as Dallas-based Cardinal Investment, and **Bain & Company** (Brechbuhl worked for Bain at the time). Brechbuhl and Stradinger left the company shortly after it was founded, but Pompeo and Bulatao continued. Remember all those names because we'll see two of them again.

In 2006, he sold his interest in the company, which by then had been renamed Nex-Tech Aerospace, to Highland Capital Management, which had clients including Lockheed Martin, Gulfstream Aerospace, Cessna Aircraft, Boeing, Spirit AeroSystems and Raytheon Aircraft. Pompeo then became president of Sentry International, an oilfield equipment manufacturer that was also a partner of Koch Industries.

So there was Pompeo, trading his Washington job to move to the geographic heart of the country and get deeply involved in high tech, aviation, and the oil business, and became a front man (what else could you call it?) for the Koch brothers, who are a cottage industry for internet spooks all of their own. You can read the profiles of Charles and David Koch in Wikipedia but they won't really tell you anything of real interest. People with an individual public wealth of more than \$50 billion don't even have to ask people to write good things about them. David Koch died in 2019 and I'm sure he had an enormous funeral with many nice things said about him.

Just so you know who Pompeo was mixing with: *Koch Industries, Inc is an American multinational corporation based in Wichita, Kansas. Its subsidiaries are involved in the manufacturing, refining, and distribution of petroleum, chemicals, energy, fiber, intermediates and polymers, minerals, pulp and paper, fertilisers, chemical technology equipment, ranching, finance, commodities trading, and investing. Koch owns Infor, Invista, Georgia-Pacific, Molex, Flint Hills Resources, Koch Pipeline, Koch Fertiliser, Koch Minerals, Matador Cattle Company, i360, and Guardian Industries.*

The firm employs 120,000 people in 60 countries, with about half of its business in the United States. The company is the largest non-Canadian landowner in the Athabasca oil sands. With annual revenues of \$110 billion by 2014, the company is the second largest privately held company in the United States after Cargill.

Pompeo represented Kansas's 4th congressional district from 2011 until his January 2017 appointment to **director of the Central Intelligence Agency**. Again there is no mention of what motivated him to go

into politics any more than there is of what made him drop the law firm and move to Wichita. It must have seemed like a good idea at the time, especially the significant drop in income.

Wikipedia says: *In the 2010 election, Pompeo won the Republican primary for Kansas's 4th District congressional seat with 39 percent of the vote, defeating state senator Jean Schodorf (who received 24 percent) and two other candidates. Late in the primary, Schodorf began to surge in the polls, prompting two outside groups – Common Sense Issues and Americans for Prosperity – to spend tens of thousands of dollars in the campaign's final days to attack Schodorf and support Pompeo.*

Americans for Prosperity (AFP), founded in 2004, is a libertarian-conservative political advocacy group in the United States funded by David Koch and Charles Koch. As the Koch brothers' primary political advocacy group, it is one of the most influential American conservative organisations. So says Wikipedia. Which means when Pompeo looked like losing the primary the Koch brothers bailed him out. He must owe them big time.

In the general election, Pompeo defeated Democratic nominee Raj Goyle, a member of the Kansas House of Representatives. Pompeo received 59 percent of the vote (117,171 votes) to 36 percent for Goyle (71,866). During Pompeo's campaign, its affiliated Twitter account praised as a "good read" a news article that called Goyle, his Indian-American opponent, a "turban topper" who "could be a Muslim, a Hindu, a Buddhist, etc who knows". Pompeo later apologised to Goyle for the tweet.

Pompeo received \$80,000 in donations during the campaign from Koch Industries and its employees. In the 2012 election, Pompeo defeated Democratic nominee Robert Tillman by a margin of 62–32 percent. Koch Industries gave Pompeo's campaign \$110,000. So let me sum this up for you. Pompeo went from Washington to Wichita to be front man for the Koch brothers in the aviation industry, and when the time came they bankrolled his election to the US Congress, thereby buying themselves someone who would be the perfect insider. Yep, that's about it.

Naturally he got himself appointed to the committees that would interest the Koch brothers: all related to intelligence, energy and commerce. From there it was only natural that someone with Pompeo's smarts, his ambition and his right-wing views, would be tapped to head the CIA. His whole resume reads like a man either grooming himself or, more likely, being groomed for a role in public life. I doubt we've even seen a glimpse of the likely place he's heading towards.

Pompeo was appointed as director the CIA in February 2017 and then as Secretary of State in April 2018. I'm not going into any of his 'achievements' in either of those posts because there is plenty on the public record, but I will add this for those who don't know some of the more arcane facts about the role of Secretary of State.

For instance, did you know that 'under federal law, the resignation of a president or of a vice president is only valid if declared in writing, in an instrument delivered to the office of the secretary of state'? As the highest-ranking member of the cabinet, the secretary of state is the third-highest official of the executive branch of the federal government of the United States, after the president and vice president, and is fourth in line to succeed the presidency, coming after the vice president, the speaker of the House of Representatives, and the president pro tempore of the Senate.

So Pompeo is not only one of the people closest to President Trump, but he would be a key player in any resolution of the on-going election boondoggle if it came to that. And just so you know that Pompeo isn't only relying on the Koch brothers or their descendants to give him guidance, he said in 2015 in a talk at a church, that 'politics is a never-ending struggle ... until the Rapture'. And to another group in 2014 he said that 'Jesus Christ as our saviour is truly the only solution for our world'.

Okay, and now to the point at hand. I don't know if readers have seen or heard this, but in the early days of the pandemic scam Pompeo and Trump were giving a press conference with the 'Coronavirus Task Force' and Pompeo said something really odd. Answering a journalist's question and in reference to the Chinese government, he said: "We're in a live exercise here." To which Trump said, loud enough to be heard: "Should have let us know." Twice. Make of that what you will.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CsKJgmdUtqQ>

Then, only a day or so ago, he was giving a press conference and he was asked if the State Department was preparing to engage with the Biden transition team and he replied that there would be

a smooth transition to a second Trump administration. Later he said it was only a joke but it's not the sort of thing that the third most powerful figure in the administration would normally make in the hyper-tense atmosphere of an unresolved election. He's not paid to channel Rodney Dangerfield.

I don't know if he was just winding them up, because to someone with any intelligence the Washington press corps must look like a pack of donkeys even on a good day, but even so, was he letting slip something that is already in play. Wheels within wheels. And remember, he was Director of the CIA.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yTfAu1XgaOs>

Going back to the people who he started out with in the aviation business in Wichita: when Pompeo was appointed as director of the CIA he made his close friend Brian Bulatao the COO, and then when he moved to State he had Trump appoint Bulatao as Under-Secretary for Management, the third highest position in the department. Pompeo also appointed Ulrich Brechbuhl as the Counsellor of the State Department in May 2018.

Effectively that puts those three West Point graduates and close friends at the three key posts at State. You could even say that the Pentagon is now running US foreign policy, but then you could make an argument that it always has. Certainly it would put Koch Industries in a very interesting position if they wanted to know whether any change in US foreign policy was going to affect their interests.

I'd always thought of Pompeo as a bit of a buffoon, rather like his boss, with his excess weight and nasal way of talking without really saying anything. I've since revised my opinion. I think he's a very shrewd operator who knows exactly what he's doing, who to be friends with among the rich and powerful, and who to keep close to him when he needs someone to cover his back, which is effectively what his two chums from West Point are in their present jobs to do.

I'm sure that readers can come to their own conclusions about a lot of other things about Pompeo and his seemingly irresistible rise to positions of power, his wealthy and powerful friends, and his quirky sense of humour. This is just a very brief summary because time is short and there are many interesting things to watch as they happen in real time.