

# Sanders supporter Tulsi Gabbard holds meeting with Donald Trump

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22 November 2016

Tulsi Gabbard, congresswoman from Hawaii and an early Democratic Party backer of Vermont Senator Bernie Sanders, met with Trump on Monday to discuss a possible position in the new administration. The meeting underscores the connection between Sanders' economic nationalism, the defense of US imperialism and Trump's political agenda.

Gabbard, an Iraq War veteran, combines opposition to the US war for regime change in Syria with protectionism, support for anti-immigrant measures, defense of the gun lobby and full-throated support for the "war on terror." She resigned from the Democratic National Committee to campaign for Sanders in the Democratic primary elections. A favorite of pro-Sanders pseudo-left organizations, she was a featured speaker at the "People's Summit" held last June in Chicago.

According to a report in *The Hill*, the meeting was set up by Trump's chief strategist Stephen Bannon, the former head of Breitbart News, champion of economic nationalist measures and favorite of the so-called "alt-right."

"He reached out to her, not vice versa," a source close to Bannon told *The Hill*. Another individual quoted by *The Hill* said that Bannon "loves her. She would fit perfectly too [inside the Trump administration]. She gets the foreign policy stuff, the Islamic terrorism stuff."

Last week, 169 House Democrats signed a letter denouncing Trump's appointment of Bannon. Gabbard was not among the signers. In a statement following her meeting with Trump, Gabbard said they discussed "our fight against terrorist groups like Al Qaeda and ISIS, as well as other foreign policy challenges we face." She defended her visit with the Trump transition team as an opportunity to argue against US escalation in Syria.

A commentary by Democratic Party operative Brent Budowsky, also published Monday by *The Hill*, enthusiastically argues for an alliance between "progressives" and Trump on the basis of Trump's talk of a \$1 trillion plan to repair the country's infrastructure and create jobs.

Titled "Trump, Bannon, Sanders and Schumer could make deal of the century," the article states: "One of the most fascinating and powerful opportunities for a cross-cutting alliance between Democrats and Trump is the rebuilding of America and our decaying infrastructure... And within Trump circles, one of the most fierce advocates of a massive jobs program is Steve Bannon!"

Despite the populist rhetoric, this entire project is based on a lie. Trump's infrastructure plan is a huge boondoggle for investors and corporations. None of the funding will come from the government. Instead, the government will grant massive tax incentives for private investors to provide seed money for various projects, which they will own once they are completed.

The scheme is geared to the further hiving off of public assets to private interests, which will reap revenues from user fees and other regressive charges. Whatever jobs are created will be low-wage, and the resulting explosion of government debt will be paid for through cuts in social spending and attacks on federal workers, including mass layoffs, an end to automatic wage increases, and pension cuts.



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