Trump names Stephen Miller as White House chief of staff

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Three days after the devastating defeat of the Republican Party in the US midterm elections, President Donald Trump doubled down on anti-immigrant bigotry by removing his chief of staff, Susie Wiles, and replacing her with Stephen Miller, who has spearheaded the administration's violent campaign against immigrant workers.

The appointment was a particular slap in the face to millions of Hispanic voters who turned sharply against the Trump administration, particularly in Texas, where Democrats swept every statewide office, electing a US senator for the first time since 1988 and ousting three-term governor Greg Abbott, a key Trump ally.

There were 50-point swings against the Republicans among young Hispanic men, particularly in the counties along the Rio Grande, and the election of the first Hispanic governors of Texas and California, the two most populous American states. Trump was urged by Republican congressional leaders to tone down his campaign targeting immigrants. Instead, he did the opposite.

Miller is Trump's longest-serving policy aide, having the main responsibility for anti-immigrant efforts in the first Trump term, when he advocated for the family-separation policy that imprisoned immigrant children, thousands of whom permanently lost contact with their parents. In the second term, he has pushed for punitive measures like deporting immigrants to third countries where they don't know the language or have any family, as well as advocating repressive measures directed against the American population more broadly, such as deploying ICE agents to airports and National Guard troops to Washington DC, Memphis and other cities.

His most notorious statement—out of many crude lies—came after the murder of Renee Good and Alex Pretti in Minneapolis by federal agents, last January. He smeared Pretti as an "assassin" because he was lawfully carrying a licensed weapon when federal agents threw him to the ground and executed him at point-blank range.

Miller has long been Trump's main speechwriter, making him responsible for some of the most demented and reactionary diatribes in US political history. He drafted Trump's "American carnage" speech, delivered at his first inauguration in 2017.

His personal arrogance and vitriolic insults also dovetail with those of his "commander in chief." In an appearance on Fox News during the summer he called the Democrats a "party of freaks, weirdos, losers and crazies," who "hate" Americans and are "unworthy of power." He warned that if the Democrats won the midterm election, "everything you know and love in this world falls apart. You have chaos, corruption, decay, violence, poverty."

But Miller is also a student of neo-Nazi politics, clearly influenced by his reading of Hitler and other fascists, despite his Jewish upbringing— his ancestors fled the czarist pogroms.. He has justified the immigration crackdown in terms taken from the fascist "Great Replacement Theory," which posits a conspiracy financed by Jewish billionaires to replace the white population of the United States with immigrants from the "Third World."

"If you bring those societies into our country and then give them unlimited free welfare, what do we think's going to happen?" he said on Fox News last year. "We need a moratorium on immigration from third world countries until we can heal ourselves as a nation."

He has also publicly embraced an unlimited American expansionism, particularly in the Western Hemisphere, that makes Hitler's *lebensraum* seem only

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minimally ambitious, defending Trump's threats to seize Greenland, incorporate Canada as the 51st state and overthrow the government of Venezuela—or any other country—and seize its resources.

The Democratic Party has won 256 seats in the House of Representatives, compared to only 161 for the Republicans, with 18 still undecided. It has captured at least seven Republican Senate seats, giving it a 54-44 margin, with narrow leads in both Alaska and Mississippi, which have grown as counting continues.

Under those conditions, the selection of Miller is a declaration by Trump of complete indifference to the wishes of the American people, expressed in the midterm vote, for an end to the war in Iran and the war against immigrants, and a reduction in the spiraling cost-of-living.

The Democrats, having benefited electorally from the mass hostility to the Trump administration, welcomed the opportunity to posture as opponents of Miller. Representative Hakeem Jeffries, likely the next Speaker of the House, issued a statement saying, "Stephen Miller is a dangerous xenophobe and reckless extremist who has American blood on his hands… His presence in government should be eradicated like a malignant tumor."

Senator Chuck Schumer, the future Majority Leader, said that Trump had "learned nothing" from the election. "Stephen Miller is the architect of the most barbaric, inhumane policies of this administration," he said. "Trump couldn't have made a worse choice. Our Democratic majorities will fight him every step of the way."

The truth is that the congressional Democratic leadership regrets the selection of Miller because it cuts across their plans for bipartisan collaboration with the Trump administration, particularly if it can reach agreement with the White House on escalating US military intervention in the US-NATO war against Russia in Ukraine.

This is the main concern of the Democratic leadership, one that was kept under wraps throughout the election campaign, when they made demagogic appeals on affordability although neither they or the Republicans will lift a finger to halt the steady erosion of working class living standards while Wall Street billionaires amass ever greater wealth.

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