

The New York Times laments the exit of Nikki Haley

By Patrick Martin
11 October 2018

The sudden resignation of US Ambassador to the United Nations Nikki Haley may prove to be a signal of a deeper crisis within the Trump administration. Or it may be related solely to Haley's plans for her future political career, or to concerns as crass as the desire to make a great deal of money while she can still cash in on her high political and diplomatic profile—and perhaps before any connection to the Trump administration comes to be regarded as politically and socially disqualifying.

Several such explanations were floated in the American media after Haley's appearance at the White House Tuesday, where Trump announced her departure, while fawning over her performance at the United Nations, and received her equally gushing praise, as well as a pledge that she would support him for reelection in 2020. (Haley, then governor of South Carolina, described Trump in 2016 as “everything a governor doesn't want in a president,” and backed Senator Marco Rubio's campaign for the Republican presidential nomination.)

This was accompanied by her extraordinary flattery of Trump's daughter Ivanka and his son-in-law Jared Kushner. “Jared is such a hidden genius that no one understands,” Haley said as Trump looked on. “And Ivanka has been just a great friend, and they do a lot of things behind the scenes that I wish more people knew about, because we're a better country because they're in this administration.”

The timing of the announcement raised eyebrows in Washington circles, since it came a month before the US midterm election, the traditional time for administration shake-ups, while Haley said she would stay in office through the end of the year, leaving sometime in January 2019. There was speculation that Haley wished to avoid association with officials whom

Trump is expected to fire after the election, including Attorney General Jeff Sessions.

There were also suggestions that Haley was dissatisfied with being relegated to a lower-profile role in the second year of the Trump administration. During 2017, Haley occupied an unusually prominent diplomatic position, given the low-key postures of Secretary of State Rex Tillerson and National Security Advisor H. R. McMaster. In 2018, however, she has been displaced and downgraded by their successors, Mike Pompeo and John Bolton.

It is not possible to sort through these considerations, nor particularly worthwhile. Haley was a political mouthpiece for American imperialism at the United Nations, and will be replaced by someone equally reactionary, espousing policies determined elsewhere, in the military-intelligence apparatus, the White House, and the top circles of the financial aristocracy.

But Haley's departure did have one significant consequence. It brought forth a heartfelt tribute from the editorial page of the *New York Times*, the leading newspaper of the Democratic Party wing of the US political establishment, and therefore the leading media voice of the official “opposition” to the Trump administration.

“Nikki Haley Will Be Missed,” read the headline on the editorial published in the October 10 edition of the *Times*. The editorial declared, “she appears to be that rarest of Trump appointees: one who can exit the administration with her dignity largely intact,” adding that “a replacement in her mold may be the best to hope for from Mr. Trump.”

The *Times* editorial could not point to any opposition from Haley to the right-wing foreign policy of the Trump administration: cutting off all aid to the Palestinian people; effectively banning the entry of

refugees from the wars and civil wars fueled by US intervention; the build-up towards war with Iran, in alliance with Israel and the savage Saudi monarchy; the threats of nuclear war against North Korea; and the instigation of trade warfare against China and other economic rivals.

Within the framework of the UN, the US has withdrawn from both UNESCO and the UN Human Rights Commission, as well as withdrawing its signature from the UN-backed Paris accord on climate change, all actions advocated and defended by Haley.

Both the editorial and an accompanying news article on Haley's resignation pointed to only one significant foreign policy difference between Haley and Trump: her adoption of a more visceral anti-Russian stance. This began with her first major speech to the UN when she denounced the Russian occupation of Crimea—the Russian-populated peninsula which voted to secede from Ukraine and rejoin Russia in 2014—and declared that US sanctions on Russia would continue until Crimea was “returned” to Ukraine.

The editors of the *Times* will “miss” Haley because her performance as an anti-Russian scourge at the UN was aligned with their own full-throated espousal of the anti-Russian campaign launched by sections of the military-intelligence apparatus against Trump. Bogus allegations that Russian support, via hacking and Facebook ads, gave Trump his victory in the presidential election have been employed to push the administration towards a more aggressive policy in relation to intervention in the Syrian civil war, in Ukraine, and more generally against Russia.

The praise by the *Times* for Haley only underscores that there is nothing progressive or democratic in the opposition to Trump within the US ruling elite. The rival factions are fighting out certain policy differences, but within the framework of the assertion of the global interests of American imperialism, both against its foreign rivals, and against the working class at home.

A genuine movement against the foreign policy of American imperialism will only come from outside of and in opposition to all factions of the ruling elite, through the independent political mobilization of the working class.

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