GlobalResearch
Center for Research on Globalization

Buying of the President 2016 Barack Obama's Ambassador Legacy: Plum Postings for Big Donors

By Dave Levinthal
Global Research, January 07, 2017
The Center for Public Integrity 4 January 2016
Region: USA

Will Donald Trump similarly reward his political patrons?

President-elect Donald Trump has begun nominating the people whom he wants to represent U.S. interests abroad.

But even Trump, who despite his "drain the swamp" mantra has been rewarding major campaign donors with prime positions in his cabinet, will find it difficult to match President Barack Obama's legacy of sending top political patrons to the world's poshest capital cities, according to a Center for Public Integrity analysis. (The practice has been embraced by Democratic and Republican presidents alike for generations.)

During his second term, Obama named 31 campaign "bundlers" — supporters who raised at least $50,000 to fund his presidential campaigns — as ambassadors. Obama tapped nearly all of these bundlers to serve in Western European nations or other highly developed and stable countries such as Canada and New Zealand.

Another 39 of Obama's second-term ambassador nominees are political appointees who either gave his campaign money or are known political allies. They, too, largely enjoyed postings to wealthy and peaceful nations — Ireland, Denmark and Australia, for example — or high-profile countries such as China and India.

Career diplomats, meanwhile, largely represent the United States in less developed (and sometimes, more violent) nations, from El Salvador and Haiti in North America to Somalia in Africa to Afghanistan and Pakistan in Asia.

Obama voluntarily identified his biggest campaign bundlers, making it possible to determine whether he was offering them ambassadorships. Trump, however, took what federal law allowed him during his presidential campaign — the ability to keep all his campaign bundlers secret, save for those who are federally registered lobbyists.

Here's a final, interactive look at Obama's ambassador-bundlers and other political patrons. Leaked documents indicate the fundraising totals below are likely conservative estimates:

Michael Beckel and Carrie Levine contributed to this report

The original source of this article is The Center for Public Integrity
Copyright © Dave Levinthal, The Center for Public Integrity, 2017

Comment on Global Research Articles on our Facebook page

Become a Member of Global Research

Articles by: Dave Levinthal

Disclaimer: The contents of this article are of sole responsibility of the author(s). The Centre for Research on Globalization will not be responsible for any inaccurate or incorrect statement in this article. The Centre of Research on Globalization grants permission to cross-post Global Research articles on community internet sites as long the source and copyright are acknowledged together with a hyperlink to the original Global Research article. For publication of Global Research articles in print or other forms including commercial internet sites, contact: publications@globalresearch.ca

www.globalresearch.ca contains copyrighted material the use of which has not always been specifically authorized by the copyright owner. We are making such material available to our readers under the provisions of "fair use" in an effort to advance a better understanding of political, economic and social issues. The material on this site is distributed without profit to those who have expressed a prior interest in receiving it for research and educational purposes. If you wish to use copyrighted material for purposes other than "fair use" you must request permission from the copyright owner.

For media inquiries: publications@globalresearch.ca