



Written by [Bob Adelman](#) on December 6, 2016

Anti-gun Petraeus Forces Trump to Expand List of Sec'y of State Candidates

Overlooked by many journalists studying the background of General David Petraeus (shown) — on Donald Trump's "short list" for secretary of state — is Petraeus' impassioned anti-gun position, evidenced by [his support](#) of the new Veterans Coalition for Common Sense sponsored by notorious anti-gun advocates Mark Kelly and his wife, Gabby Giffords.



Kelly and Giffords founded Americans for Responsible Solutions in January 2013 following an assassination attempt on her in 2011. In announcing the formation of the new anti-gun group in June, Kelly said: "Gabby and I are grateful to all of these incredible veterans and leaders who are using their voice to call for commonsense change that makes our communities safer."

One of those "incredible veterans" is General David Petraeus. As secretary of state he would have enormous influence over whether to continue the Obama administration's support for the UN Arms Trade Treaty. In addition he would have jurisdiction over the international trade regulations called ITAR (International Traffic in Arms Regulations). The first would mandate international gun registration and allow comprehensive gun bans, while the second would outlaw private gunsmithing activities.

Following an interview with retired Army General David Petraeus on November 28, President-elect Donald Trump tweeted: "Just met with General Petraeus — was very impressed!" Petraeus returned the compliment:

I was with him for about an hour. He basically walked us around the world. Showed a great grasp of a variety of challenges that are out there and some of the opportunities as well.

[It was a] very good conversation and we'll see where it goes from here.

Afterward a transition team member said, off the record, that Trump was "inclined" to pick Petraeus.

That generated a flurry of activity as journalists looked into the general's background. They mostly focused on his extra-marital affair with his mistress that forced him to retire as head of the CIA under a cloud in 2012.

Petraeus was sleeping with Pamela Broadwell, who was also working on his biography. He gave her eight notebooks that he kept while he was commander of coalition forces in Afghanistan, containing everything from his daily schedule to classified information about the identities of officers serving under cover, war strategies, intelligence capabilities, private conversations with diplomats, notes taken during National Security Council meetings, and private meetings with President Obama.



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So serious was the breach that the FBI and the Justice Department recommended bringing felony charges against the general. FBI Director James Comey said at the time:

So you have obstruction of justice, you have intentional misconduct and a vast quantity of [classified] information. He admitted he knew that was the wrong thing to do. That is a perfect illustration of the kind of cases that get prosecuted.

But Petraeus negotiated his way through a plea bargain to admit guilt only to misdemeanor charges that cost him \$100,000 in fines and two years on probation, but no jail time.

If Trump nominates Petraeus for secretary of state, both issues are certain to come up during Senate confirmation hearings. If he escapes those hearings with the Senate's consent, then he would be *the first Cabinet-level individual to be serving probation during the early part of his term.*

The combination of betrayal of state secrets and a virulent anti-gun ideology is now forcing the Trump transition team to broaden its list of candidates for the position. Said team leader Kellyanne Conway on Sunday: "There's not a definite list of candidates [for secretary of state]. [There are] more than four. Who know how many finalists there will be?"

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