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'Government Sachs' reunites when Mnuchin dines with his Goldman pals



Stephen Mnuchin and his then-fiancee, Louise Linton, arrive on Capitol Hill in Washington for the presidential inauguration of Donald Trump in 2017. (Saul Loeb / Associated Press)

By MAX ABELSON AND SRIDHAR NATARAJAN | BLOOMBERG

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Picture this: Treasury Secretary Steven T. Mnuchin at a dinner table in New York, surrounded by Henry Paulson, Jon Corzine and Gary Cohn, along with David Solomon. It's not a Bernie Sanders nightmare — just the Goldman Sachs alumni dinner.

Goldman Sachs Group Inc. and governments worldwide have a long history of swapping senior leaders, earning the bank the nickname “Government Sachs.” But the firm often takes pains not to look too chummy with its friends in high places.

That's why some Goldman veterans said they were surprised last month when Mnuchin, who has led the Trump administration's efforts to reshape financial regulation, attended the firm's annual dinner for retired partners in New York's Hudson Yards. While sitting in public office, especially in positions that allow them to oversee Wall Street, former executives have tended to avoid the soiree.

Mnuchin requested clearance to attend the dinner and received it, according to a spokesman for the Treasury Department, who said he was there in a personal capacity. A Goldman Sachs spokesman declined to comment.

The Goldman alumni dinner is less a college reunion and more a way to maintain ties between executives who've moved on to some of the most powerful spots in banking, private equity, hedge funds and government.

Mnuchin, who left the firm in 2002, was one of the dinner guests who've helped shape American policy in the 21st century. Paulson was Treasury secretary at the depths of the financial crisis, Corzine was a U.S. senator and governor of New Jersey, and Cohn was the first director of President Trump's National Economic Council. They were joined by Solomon, the bank's chief executive, and Lloyd Blankfein, his predecessor.

Sanders and Elizabeth Warren, both senators, are among the Democratic presidential candidates who have criticized the bank. Trump recruited the firm's veterans for his administration even after one of his 2016 campaign ads showed Blankfein's face as the candidate's voice warned about a corrupt global power machine.

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by Max Abelson and Sridhar Natarajan