
FRANCE'S MARINE LE PEN SEEN IN TRUMP TOWER

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France's far-right presidential candidate Marine Le Pen has been seen visiting Trump Tower in New York.

She declined to say whether she was there to see President-elect Donald Trump but the Trump team said there would be "no meetings".

Ms Le Pen is currently one of the top candidates for the first round of voting in April, opinion polls suggest.

The National Front leader has called Mr Trump's election "an additional stone in the building of a new world".

What makes Marine Le Pen far right?

Ms Le Pen was seen with three men in the cafe. Agence France-Presse identified one as her partner, Louis Aliot, the National Front's (FN) vice-president.

Media captionLe Pen praises the Trump victory, speaking to the BBC's Andrew Marr

Ms Le Pen also declined to answer when asked whether her visit was personal or professional.

But when asked if she would speak to pool journalists later, one of her associates said "OK".

Trump team spokesperson Hope Hicks told reporters: "She is not meeting with anyone from our team."

Sean Spicer, who will be Mr Trump's press secretary, re-tweeted a post by CNN's Noah Gray that Ms Le Pen would not be meeting Mr Trump or anyone from the transition team, adding "Trump Tower is open to the Public".

Ms Le Pen's campaign manager had earlier said she would not be meeting Mr Trump on her visit to New York.

Ms Le Pen has herself referred to her trip as "private".

Unconfirmed reports suggest the man to Ms Le Pen's right in the photo is Guido "George" Lombardi.

He lives in Trump Tower, has links to a number of right-wing European parties and says he is an

adviser to the Trump team, according to Politico.

Reuters said the fourth man was Ms Le Pen's international affairs adviser, Ludovic De Danne.

Anti-immigration

Marine Le Pen is the daughter of ex-FN leader Jean-Marie Le Pen, a convicted racist. She has denounced her father's comments and has sought to distance herself from such toxic issues as Holocaust denial.

She retains a hard line on immigration and has linked it to militant Islamism.

Ms Le Pen opposes the European Union, open borders and globalisation.

She also says jobs, welfare, housing, schools, or any area of public provision should go to French nationals before they go to "foreigners".

She is likely to fight former Prime Minister Francois Fillon and Socialist Prime Minister Manuel Valls for victory in the first round of voting in the presidential election. It is then expected to go to a run-off.

Kaynak/Source: