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United States Senate
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6225

August 31, 2020

The Honorable Mark Meadows
Chief of Staff
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Chief of Staff Meadows:

Last month, the president nominated Retired Colonel Douglas Macgregor to serve as Ambassador to the Republic of Germany. Since this announcement, a catalogue of disturbing statements by Colonel Macgregor expressing xenophobic, racist, and pro-Russian views on Muslims, immigration, Germany, and Ukraine have come to light. These statements make clear that Col. Macgregor is not suited to serve in any position in the United States government, particularly a diplomatic post. It would be a disservice to the nation and U.S. security interests to have Col. Macgregor represent the United States abroad. I therefore call upon the Administration to withdraw this nomination immediately.

Of particular concern are Col. Macgregor's anti-Semitic views.

As David Harris, the CEO of the Jewish advocacy organization AJC, wrote in an August 7 letter to Secretary Mike Pompeo, AJC is "disturbed by Col. Macgregor's remarks on 'neocons' and their supposed 'unconditional support for whatever the Israeli government wants to do.'"¹

Furthermore, Macgregor said in an appearance on the Conservative Commando radio show in 2018 that "There's sort of a sick mentality that says that generations after generations must atone sins of what happened in 13 years of German history and ignore the other 1,500 years of Germany. And Germany played a critical role in central Europe in terms of defending the serving Western civilization. So I think that's, that's the problem."²

Anti-Defamation League (ADL) CEO Jonathan Greenblatt sent me a similar letter on August 11, saying: "The United States should not send an ambassador to Germany with the same views as such antisemitic extremists who downplay Nazi crimes and fight against the contemporary German fundamental commitment to respect human dignity."³

¹ "AJC Urges Administration to Consider Withdrawing Macgregor as Envoy to Germany," AJC, Aug. 7, 2020.

² Col. (Ret.) Douglas Macgregor, Interview, Conservative Commando Radio Show, iHeart Radio, July 24, 2018, <https://www.iheart.com/podcast/53-conservative-commando-27299166/episode/conservative-commandos-72418-29624466/>.

³ Letter from Jonathan Greenblatt, Anti-Defamation League to Ranking Member Robert Menendez, Aug. 11, 2020.

I share the concerns of AJC and the ADL and find it abhorrent that this Administration would associate itself with these views by nominating such an individual.

I am also extremely troubled by public comments made in television interviews by Col. Macgregor in recent years.

In 2014, Macgregor asserted in an interview for the Russian propaganda channel RT that Eastern Ukrainians are “Russians.” In the same interview, he said:

Do you, if you are living in Eastern Ukraine, want to join Russia, which appears to be the popular sentiment? If so, they should be allowed to join Russia. And at the same time, what emerges from this process up in the West and in the North, which is truly Ukrainian in terms of culture, language, history, religion, so forth, they should be allowed to have a sovereign independent Ukrainian state.⁴

Despite President Trump’s affinity for President Putin, these views do not reflect longstanding U.S. policy on Ukraine and would be rejected by a strong majority of United States Senators.

Col. Macgregor has also made a series of comments that are antithetical to U.S. law and our long-standing history as a nation of immigrants. In 2016, he wrote in a now-archived blog post that, “The answer is for the U.S. Government to do its job and take responsibility for controlling the US-Mexican border, sealing the border except at fully monitored, fully policed authorized border crossings, and implementing and publicizing a ‘use of deadly force authorized’ border control policy.”⁵ He continued, “Once it becomes clear that Central Americans AND Mexicans [and other illegals], are NOT going to survive an attempt to enter the US, and will be LUCKY if they are turned back rather than killed in the attempt to violate US sovereign borders, the flow will diminish substantially.”⁶

Further, Col. Macgregor’s past comments about Germany call into question how he could successfully engage with the German government and pursue U.S. interests. In 2018, Col. Macgregor said:

[Germany is] spending money, but they have practically no armed forces, their army, their air force, both are terribly demoralized. I know many, many men who were in those armed forces in Germany, and that’s a function of this extremely bizarre government that seems more concerned about providing free services to

⁴ Em Steck & Andrew Kaczynski, “German ambassador pick disparaged immigrants and refugees, called for martial law at US-Mexico border,” *CNN*, Aug. 4, 2020.

⁵ Douglas A. Macgregor, “America Needs a Southern Border Wall Now: Colonel Macgregor Explains in Detail,” *Future Defense Visions*, June 12, 2016, <http://web.archive.org/web/20170201114017/http://futuredefensevisions.blogspot.com:80/2016/06/america-needs-southern-border-wall-now.html>; Em Steck & Andrew Kaczynski, “German ambassador pick disparaged immigrants and refugees, called for martial law at US-Mexico border,” *CNN*, Aug. 4, 2020.

⁶ Douglas A. Macgregor, “America Needs a Southern Border Wall Now: Colonel Macgregor Explains in Detail,” *Future Defense Visions*, June 12, 2016.

millions of unwanted Muslim invaders, to be blunt, than it does about its own armed forces in the defense of its country.⁷

While the President has made clear on countless occasions his disdain for Germany, the U.S.-German relationship remains among one of the most important in the world. Colonel Macgregor would do irreparable harm in Berlin and to the reputation of the United States. I urge you to immediately withdraw this toxic nomination.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Robert Menendez". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "R" and a stylized "M".

Robert Menendez
Ranking Member

CC: Senator James E. Risch, Chairman, Senate Foreign Relations Committee

⁷ *Id.*; Col. (Ret.) Douglas Macgregor, Interview, Conservative Commando Radio Show, iHeart Radio, July 24, 2018.