

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

December 9, 2016

The Honorable Beth F. Cobert
Acting Director
U.S. Office of Personnel Management
1900 E Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20415

The Honorable James Comey
Director
Federal Bureau of Investigation
935 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20535

The Honorable James R. Clapper
Director of National Intelligence
Office of the Director of National Intelligence
1500 Tysons McLean Drive
McLean, VA 22102

Dear Acting Director Cobert, Director Comey, Director Clapper:

We write to request that you review the security clearance given to retired Lieutenant General Michael Flynn. Based on public reports, his conduct in positions that require access to national defense information, and his subsequent private practice, appears inconsistent with the professionalism such access requires.

General Flynn reportedly has a record of mishandling classified intelligence and repeatedly violated rules for protecting sensitive information. The *New Yorker* magazine published an article on November 23, 2016, that documented violations handling protected information by General Flynn, who “had technicians secretly install an Internet connection in his Pentagon office, even though it was forbidden.” He is also reported to have knowingly provided highly sensitive compartmented information and code word classified information about the Haqqani terrorist network to Pakistan. Further, he was investigated for leaking highly classified information to several other countries and recently made public comments defending and encouraging such illegal practices.

We are also concerned by General Flynn’s conduct after his military service. On December 10, 2015, General Flynn was paid to attend an event in Moscow celebrating the tenth anniversary of *Russia Today*, a propaganda arm of the Russian government. Although he has not disclosed how much he received in speaking fees or who paid for the travel expenses, he dined with Vladimir Putin, just 18 months after leaving his position leading the Defense Intelligence Agency. As a retired general, he is prohibited from receipt of consulting fees, gifts, travel expenses, honoraria, or any kind of salary from a foreign government without Congressional consent. We request that you investigate General Flynn’s compliance with the requirements of 37 U.S.C. § 908 in this instance, and any other such occurrences, and provide us with all records held by the U.S. Army Human Resources Command of any such approval.

In addition, General Flynn appears to have an unresolved conflict of interest in his ownership of the Flynn Intel Group. His company has previously registered to lobby on behalf of Turkish businessman Kamil Ekim Alptekin and received compensation to persuade U.S. public

opinion in favor of Turkey's President Recep Tayyip Erdogan. General Flynn did this through an opinion piece published in *The Hill* on November 8, 2016. General Flynn's firm also represented an Iraqi paramilitary organization trained by the Turkish government. Subsequently, he indicated that he would separate from his business representing foreign interests by having his son Michael Flynn Jr. remain in control and make a livelihood from such payments.

This ongoing business relationship of Flynn Intel Group, owned by General Flynn and operated by his son, creates the potential for pressure, coercion, and exploitation by foreign agents. In addition, any share of partnership profits he obtains from the Flynn Intel Group that are derived from its representation of a foreign government would appear to be a violation of his obligation as a retired general to abide by the Emoluments Clause of the Constitution.

We trust you to investigate these matters thoroughly, and request that you provide us with the documentation we have requested. Please keep us apprised of any decision regarding this matter.

Sincerely,



RICHARD BLUMENTHAL
United States Senate



JEANNE SHAHEEN
United States Senate