

May 09, 2018

Dear Senator:

We write as former ambassadors of the United States to register our serious concern over Gina Haspel's nomination to be Director of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA).

As career and non-career senior diplomats, we experienced no higher honor than to have represented the American people and their interests and values to foreign governments abroad. We did so while recognizing that foreign audiences—governments and their citizens, friends and foes—rightly look to the senior-most representatives of our government to embody what our nation holds dear. It is for this reason that we cannot support Ms. Haspel's nomination, given credible information in the public domain.

There remains much we do not know about the specific roles and responsibilities Ms. Haspel held in relation to the CIA's rendition, detention, and interrogation program generally, and the use of so-called "enhanced interrogation" specifically. Mindful of this, we support calls made by various members of Congress for the CIA to declassify additional information regarding her relationship to the program, commensurate with the need to protect legitimate intelligence sources and methods, so that the American people have a meaningful and accurate understanding of the role that Ms. Haspel played.

What we do know, based on credible, and as yet uncontested reporting, leaves us of the view that she should be disqualified from holding cabinet rank. This includes that, in 2002, she oversaw a secret detention facility in Thailand in which at least one detainee was repeatedly subjected to waterboarding, and that she later strongly advocated for and helped implement a decision to destroy video tapes of torture sessions, including ones she oversaw.

We have no reason to question Ms. Haspel's credentials as both a leader and an experienced intelligence professional. Yet she is also emblematic of choices made by certain American officials in the wake of the attacks of September 11, 2001 that dispensed with our ideals and international commitments to the ultimate detriment of our national security.

America's power in the world is defined in part by the strength of our military, the size of our economy, the prestige of our universities, and the quality of our entrepreneurs. But our influence, and thus our security, is also advanced by the principles and values set forth in our Declaration of Independence, Constitution, and laws and treaties, as well as our adherence to the rule of law, to democratic norms and institutions, and to our willingness to stand up for men and women living under repression.

We have little doubt what lesson governments that rely on torture and other forms of mistreatment to maintain their grip on power will draw from Ms. Haspel's confirmation. Whether or not she uses the opportunity of her confirmation hearing to reject torture—which we hope she will do—the point will remain that her record of involvement in torture was judged worthy of and compatible with holding the CIA's highest office. The message inherent in this decision will be understood by authoritarian leaders around the world. They will welcome it, as it

will allow them to proclaim, however cynically, that their behavior is no different from ours. Her confirmation will thus undercut the work of countless diplomats, military service members, and intelligence professionals who continue to engage with their foreign counterparts on why the United States believes that torture and other forms of abuse are not only morally wrong, but strategically shortsighted and legally impermissible. In an era in which the rule of law is under considerable strain around the world, this is a cost we can ill afford.

For all these reasons, we urge you to scrutinize Ms. Haspel's record with the utmost care. If that record demonstrates that Ms. Haspel played a role in torture or other forms of detainee abuse, or the destruction of evidence relating to such activities, we urge you to reject her nomination.

Sincerely,

Thomas Pickering

Career Ambassador, Former Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs and former Ambassador to Russia, India, the United Nations, Israel, El Salvador, Nigeria, and Jordan

James R. Jones

Former Ambassador to Mexico and former Member of the U.S. House of Representatives

Daniel Baer

Former Ambassador to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE)

Rob Barber

Former Ambassador to Iceland

Leslie Bassett

Former Ambassador to Paraguay

Donald S. Beyer, Jr.

Former Ambassador to Switzerland and the Principality of Liechtenstein; Member of the U.S. House of Representatives

Jack R. Binns

Former Ambassador to Honduras

Clyde Bishop

Former Ambassador to the Republic of the Marshall Islands

James K. Bishop

Former Ambassador to Niger, Liberia, and Somalia

Robert. O. Blake, Jr.

Former Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asian Affairs and former Ambassador to Indonesia and Sri Lanka and Maldives

Barbara Bodine

Former Ambassador to Yemen

Avis Bohlen

Former Assistant Secretary of State for Arms Control and former Ambassador to Bulgaria

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Former Ambassador to the Federated States of Micronesia, Kenya, and Ethiopia

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Sue K. Brown

Former Ambassador to Montenegro

Edward Brynn

Former Ambassador to Burkina Faso and Ghana

John Campbell

Former Ambassador to Nigeria and Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Human Resources

Carey Cavanaugh

Former Ambassador and Special Negotiator for Eurasian Conflicts

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Former Ambassador to Kenya

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Shaun Donnelly

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Former Ambassador to Oman

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Former Ambassador to Slovenia

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Former Ambassador to Algeria and Syria

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James I. Gadsden

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Former Ambassador to Denmark

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Former Ambassador to Bolivia and Paraguay

Michael Guest

Former Ambassador to Romania

Keith Harper

Former Ambassador and Permanent Representative to the United Nations Human Rights Council

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Former Ambassador to Laos and Assistant US Trade Representative

Samuel D. Heins

Former Ambassador to the Kingdom of Norway

Carla A. Hills

Former Secretary of Housing and Urban Development and former U.S. Trade Representative with title of ambassador

Heather Hodges

Former Ambassador to Moldova and Ecuador

Henry Allen Holmes

Former Ambassador to Portugal

Thomas C. Hubbard

Former Ambassador to the Republic of Korea and the Republic of the Philippines

Arthur H. Hughes

Former Ambassador to Yemen and Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Near East Affairs

Edmund Hull

Former Ambassador to Yemen

Robert E. Hunter

Former Ambassador to NATO

Bonnie Jenkins

Former Coordinator for Threat Reduction Programs with title of ambassador

Dennis Jett

Former Ambassador to Peru and Mozambique

Linda Jewell

Former Ambassador to Ecuador

L. Craig Johnstone

Former Ambassador to Algeria

Deborah K. Jones

Former Ambassador to Kuwait and Libya

Richard H. Jones

Former Ambassador to Lebanon, Israel, Kuwait, and Kazakhstan

Ian Kelly

Former Ambassador to the OSCE and Georgia

David T. Killion

Former Ambassador to UNESCO

Jimmy Kolker

Former Ambassador to Uganda and Burkina Faso

John Kornblum

Former Ambassador to the Federal Republic of Germany

Mark P. Lagon

Former Ambassador-at-Large to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons

Suzan LeVine

Former Ambassador to the Swiss Confederation and the Principality of Liechtenstein

Carmen Lomellin

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Princeton N. Lyman

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Former Ambassador to Pakistan and
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Richard Miles

Former Ambassador to Georgia, Bulgaria,
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Day Mount

Former Ambassador to Iceland

Thomas Niles

Former Ambassador to Canada, the
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Robert M. Orr

Former Ambassador to the Asian
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Ted Osius

Former Ambassador to Vietnam

Maurice S. Parker

Former Ambassador to Swaziland

June Carter Perry

Former Ambassador to Lesotho and Sierra
Leone

Robert C. Perry

Former Ambassador to the Central African
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Former Ambassador to Vietnam and Former
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Former Ambassador to Yemen and the United Arab Emirates

David Saperstein

Former Ambassador at Large for International Religious Freedom

Teresita Schaffer

Former Ambassador to Sri Lanka and Maldives

David Scheffer

Former Ambassador-at-Large for War Crimes Issues

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Ronald I. Spiers

Former Ambassador to Pakistan, Turkey, and the Bahamas

Sylvia Stanfield

Former Ambassador to Brunei Darussalam

Kathleen Stephens

Former Ambassador to the Republic of Korea

Strobe Talbott

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Former Ambassador to Paraguay

Patrick N. Theros

Former Ambassador to Qatar

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Ambassador to Singapore

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