

In the Name of God, the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful



Council on American-Islamic Relations
453 New Jersey Ave. S.E.
Washington, D.C. 20003
Tele 202-488-8787 Fax 202-488-0833
E-mail: info@cair.com URL www.cair.com

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Senator James Mountain Inhofe
Chairman
U.S. Senate Committee on Armed Services
2 Constitution Avenue, NE Room 228
Washington, DC

Senator John Francis Reed
Ranking Member
U.S. Senate Committee on Armed Services
2 Constitution Avenue, NE Room 228
Washington, DC

RE: Urging Members of the U.S. Senate Committee on Armed Services to Vote “NO” on the Nomination of anti-Muslim conspiracy theorist Ret. Army Brigadier General Anthony J. Tata

Dear Chairman Inhofe and Ranking Member Reed:

On behalf of the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), the nation’s largest Muslim civil rights and advocacy organization, I write to urge members of the U.S. Senate Committee on Armed Services to oppose and vote “NO” on the nomination of anti-Muslim conspiracy theorist Retired Army Brigadier General Anthony J. Tata to the position of undersecretary of defense for policy.

Tata’s long history of espousing Islamophobic and anti-Muslim views, in addition to his promotion on social media of bizarre and unhinged political conspiracy theories targeting members of the Obama administration, makes him totally unfit to serve as the Pentagon’s policy chief.

On social media^{1,2}, in a series of since deleted tweets Tata has called former President Barack Obama a "terrorist leader," sharing an article that claimed Obama was “seditious” and a “manchurian candidate” working on behalf of foreign powers, and referred to Islam as "the most oppressive violent religion I know of."

¹ Connor O’Brien, “Democrats oppose Pentagon policy nominee who called Obama a 'terrorist leader'” Politico. June 15, 2020. Website: <https://www.politico.com/news/2020/06/15/jack-reed-opposes-trump-pentagon-policy-nominee-319816>

² Andrew Kaczynski, Em Steck and Nathan McDermott, “Democrats on key Senate committee oppose top Pentagon pick as more inflammatory tweets emerge,” CNN. June 15, 2020. Website: <https://www.cnn.com/2020/06/15/politics/tata-pentagon-nominee-kfile/index.html>

In May 2018, Tata also promoted on Twitter a conspiracy theory of his own claiming that former CIA Director John Brennan used a coded tweet to order the assassination of Trump.³

In his 2019 novel “Double Crossfire,”⁴ Tata promotes the right-wing, white supremacist, and anti-Muslim conspiracy theory that Muslims in Europe engage in sex crimes that are covered up by the media and politicians. In that book, Tata writes:

“Islamic ‘grooming’” is “a rite of passage for young Muslim men in Great Britain” in which “young men were gang-raping British women as part of their transition to manhood.”

“The rising tide of Islam in Europe had seeped into the historically secular governments, and their collective media now forbade any speech against Islamic crimes.”

CAIR notes, these far-right conspiracy theories are used as a recruiting tool by white supremacist groups in the U.K and Europe.

In 2018, following a terrorist attack in Strasbourg, France, Tata told *FOX News*, “there is intent to harm Western society by Islam” and “it’s a truism that has to be built into policy so we can strengthen our borders.”⁵

During that same interview, Tata claimed Muslim immigration has disrupted European society: “this immigration policy of France and all of Europe with all the [Muslim] refugees that they have allowed in, millions that they allowed in have disrupted societies all throughout Europe and it’s not a good thing and they got to get control of it.”

Moreover, CAIR is concerned over news that President Trump has already ordered the Department of Defense to hire disgraced anti-Muslim conspiracy theorists and fired National Security Council aide Richard Higgins as chief of staff to the undersecretary of defense for policy – in anticipation of serving under Tata.

Higgins previously served under Trump’s discredited National Security Advisor Michael Flynn – an anti-Muslim bigot in his own right who previously compared Islam to a “cancer,” stated that fear of Muslims is “rational” and was convicted of lying to the FBI during Special Counsel Robert Mueller’s investigation into Russian election interference.

Following Flynn stepping down then National Security Advisor H.R. McMaster fired Higgins for writing a widely discredited xenophobic conspiracy-theory infused memo titled “POTUS &

³ Em Steck, Andrew Kaczynski, Nathan McDermott and Zachary Cohen, “KFile: Top Pentagon nominee pushed conspiracy theories that former CIA director tried to overthrow Trump and even have him assassinated,” CNN. June 23, 2020. Website: <https://www.cnn.com/2020/06/23/politics/kfile-tata-conspiracy-theory/index.html>

⁴Anthony J. Tata, “Double Crossfire,” October 2019. Kensington Books. Website: <https://play.google.com/store/books/details?id=BzSGDwAAQBAJ&gl=us>

⁵ Fox News, “Tata: There is intent to harm western society by Islam,” December 12, 2018. Website: <https://video.foxnews.com/v/5978527151001#sp=show-clips>

Political Warfare.” The memo stated that “cultural Marxism” and a cabal of “‘deep state’ actors, globalists, bankers, Islamists, and establishment Republicans,” using “attack narratives” were trying to subvert the Trump administration’s agenda. The memo included mention of CAIR working along with the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) and Black Lives Matter, as well as the United Nations.

With the White House pushing one disgraced anti-Muslim conspiracy theorist — Richard Higgins — to serve Anthony Tata — the discredited Islamophobic conspiracy theorist it has nominated — CAIR believes that the Senate Armed Services Committee’s number one priority should be preventing the Pentagon from being run by bigots.

I will close this letter by reiterating CAIR’s call on members of the Senate Committee on Armed Services Committee to vote “NO” and reject anti-Muslim conspiracy theorist Tata’s nomination to the number three job in the Defense Department.

A vote in support of Tata’s nomination would be a clear endorsement of his anti-Muslim views and discredited conspiracy theories. A vote against Tata’s nomination would be a clear sign that hate has no place in the U.S. government.

We look forward to Thursday’s nomination hearing.

Sincerely,

Robert S. McCaw
CAIR Director of Government Affairs Department