

Is Trump Mentally Unstable?

By [Rod Dreher](#)

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Region: [USA](#)

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I'm serious. He blew up at the Congressional Democratic leadership today. Here's what Rep. Steny Hoyer had to say about it:

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House Majority Leader Steny Hoyer on White House meeting: "I have served with 6 presidents. I have been in many, many, many meetings like this. Never have I seen a president treat so disrespectfully a co-equal branch of the government of the United States" <https://t.co/ShUq3a5hJl pic.twitter.com/ErnyDHjpKu>

— CNN (@CNN) [October 16, 2019](#)

[According to the NYT:](#)

During the meeting, according to Ms. Pelosi, Mr. Trump berated her as "a third-grade politician" and suggesting that she would be happy if communists gained influence in the Middle East. Ms. Pelosi told reporters on the White House driveway afterward that the president seemed "very shaken up" and was having "a meltdown."

Mr. Trump also dismissed his own former defense secretary, Jim Mattis, who resigned last year when the president first tried to withdraw troops from Syria. When Senator Chuck Schumer of New York, the Democratic leader, began to cite Mr. Mattis, a retired Marine general, the president interjected, calling him "the world's most overrated general," according to a Democrat briefed on the meeting.

"You know why?" Mr. Trump said. "He wasn't tough enough. I captured ISIS. Mattis said it would take two years. I captured them in one month."

And this:

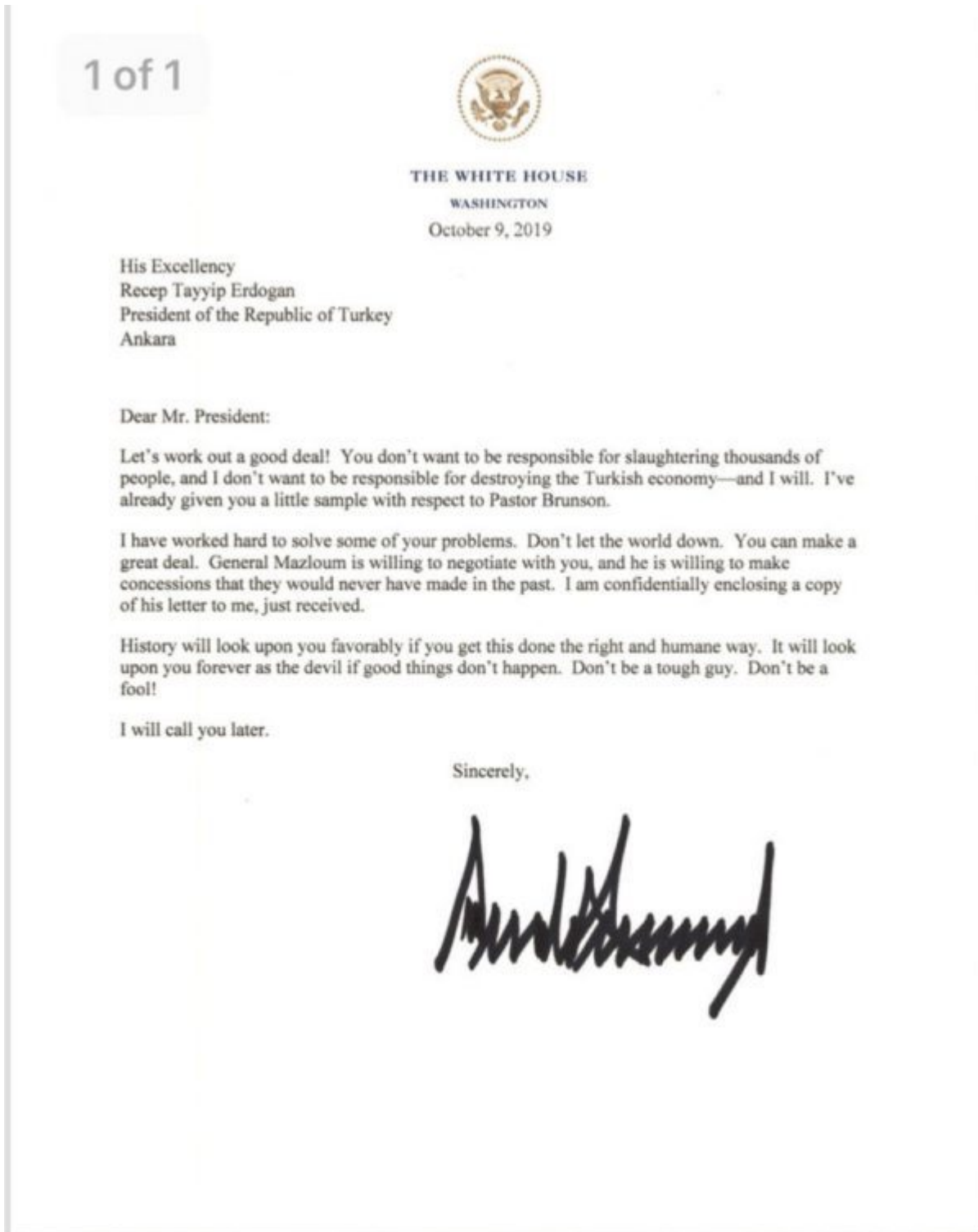
At one point Schumer said, "Is your plan to rely on the Syrians and the Turks?"

Trump: "Our plan is to keep the American people safe"

Pelosi: "That's not a plan. That's a goal."

— Jennifer Bendery (@jbendery) [October 16, 2019](#)

Well, she's right. This man is nuts. [My colleague Daniel Larison wrote a short time ago about Trump's scary-bonkers formal letter to Turkey's Erdogan.](#) You've got to read this thing to believe it. It's not a hoax — the White House has confirmed that this is what POTUS sent to another world leader:



Who talks like that in real life? Who threatens another world leader like a TV mafioso? "Don't be a tough guy. Don't be a fool!" Who responds well to being addressed so

condescendingly? Trump reportedly distributed copies of this letter to Congressional leaders today in an attempt to show them how tough he is. In fact, he demonstrated that he is a boob. Worse:

This Trump letter to Erdogan is the most damaging correspondence that could've been leaked ahead of VP Pence's visit to Ankara tomorrow. Now, Erdogan has no option but to delay ceasefire in Syria less he be humiliated in front of his nation as weak and bowing to America's threat
<https://t.co/WnrUThDBTt>

— Soner Cagaptay (@SonerCagaptay) [October 16, 2019](#)

At what point does President Trump's monumental foreign policy idiocy become a national security threat? Not only was he stupid to write and send such a letter, but he undermined his own emissary to Ankara by releasing it today.

[In related news:](#)

A former top White House foreign policy adviser told House impeachment investigators this week that she viewed Gordon D. Sondland, the United States ambassador to the European Union, as a potential national security risk because he was so unprepared for his job, according to two people familiar with her private testimony.

The adviser, Fiona Hill, did not accuse Mr. Sondland of acting maliciously or intentionally putting the country at risk. But she described Mr. Sondland, a hotelier and Trump donor-turned-ambassador, as metaphorically driving in an unfamiliar place with no guardrails and no GPS, according to the people, who were not authorized to publicly discuss a deposition that took place behind closed doors.

Ms. Hill, the former senior director for European and Russian affairs at the White House, also said that she raised her concerns with intelligence officials inside the White House, one of the people said.

Mr. Sondland's lawyer declined to comment.

In her testimony, Ms. Hill described her fears that Mr. Sondland represented a counterintelligence risk because his actions made him vulnerable to foreign governments who could exploit his inexperience. She said Mr. Sondland extensively used a personal cellphone for official diplomatic business and repeatedly told foreign officials they were welcome to come to the White House whenever they liked.

Ms. Hill said that his invitations, which were highly unusual and not communicated to others at the White House, prompted one instance in which Romanian officials arrived at the White House without appointments, citing Mr. Sondland.

Ms. Hill also testified that Mr. Sondland held himself out to foreign officials as someone who could deliver meetings at the White House while also providing the cellphone numbers of American officials to foreigners, the people said. Those actions created additional counterintelligence risks, she said.

Another incompetent boob — and a senior US diplomat appointed by Donald Trump.

At some point, Congressional Republicans are going to have to consider whether or not impeachment and removal is in the best national security interests of the United States. You can bluster about the Deep State all you want, but what we know to be true about the president's behavior in this Turkey matter is profoundly troubling, not only about his competence as Commander in Chief, but about his own mental stability.

Think about it: if China, North Korea, or Iran were to choose this moment to test America, who among us would have confidence in Trump's response? What if you were a senior US general or admiral? How much security would you have in the soundness of the orders coming from this White House?

As much as I fear and loathe some of the political positions of the Democrats, after today, we have cause to worry that the president is not mentally capable of doing his job. Whether or not you like the leadership of the opposition party, you have to be able to work with them to govern the country. And you have to be able to communicate to world leaders who have large and powerful armies in a way that does not unduly antagonize them via insults and empty threats. Trump lacks these skills. To put it mildly.

UPDATE: The Speaker of the House calmly asked the nation to pray for the president's (mental) health:

PELOSI on Trump: "I think now we have to pray for his health. Because this was a very serious meltdown on the part of the president."
pic.twitter.com/ckhNSeDmrG

— Aaron Rupar (@atrupar) [October 16, 2019](#)

UPDATE.2: [Yeah, he's draining the swamp, all right...](#)

Gordon Sondland, the U.S. ambassador to the European Union and a central figure in the House impeachment inquiry of President Trump, is overseeing a nearly \$1 million renovation of his government-provided residence, paid for with taxpayer money, that current and former officials have criticized as extravagant and unnecessary.

The work on the ambassador's home on the outskirts of Brussels includes more than \$400,000 in kitchen renovations, nearly \$30,000 for a new sound system and \$95,000 for an outdoor "living pod" with a pergola and electric heating, LED lighting strips and a remote-control system, government procurement records show.

The State Department also has allocated more than \$100,000 for an "alternate" residence for Sondland for September and October, while work is performed.

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