

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNMENT REFORM

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June 7, 2018

General John F. Kelly
Chief of Staff
The White House
1650 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear General Kelly:

I am writing to request documents and information relating to reports that a White House contractor with an outstanding arrest warrant for attempted first-degree murder, who had previously faced assault and domestic violence allegations, was able to maintain a security clearance, was cleared for entry onto the White House complex, and was allowed to work for the National Security Council until he was arrested at a Secret Service checkpoint on Tuesday, June 5, 2018.¹

These reports raise grave questions about how an individual facing charges of attempted murder could have continued working at the White House for nearly three weeks. These reports also raise troubling concerns about how this individual could have been granted a security clearance in the first place given his problematic record involving allegations of serious domestic violence, and about what information he had access to while working at the National Security Council.

On June 5, 2018, National Security Council contractor Martese Edwards was arrested at a White House security checkpoint “as he reported for work at the White House.”² Starting in December 2017, Mr. Edwards reportedly worked for the National Security Council as “an ‘admin guy’ in resources management, which handles room bookings, parking passes and other administrative matters.”³ At the time he was hired, Mr. Edwards had at least two prior

¹ *National Security Council Contractor Arrested at White House Held a Security Clearance*, Daily Beast (June 6, 2018) (online at www.thedailybeast.com/national-security-council-contractor-martese-maurice-edward-was-previously-charged-with-domestic-violence).

² See, e.g., *White House Contractor Arrested on Attempted Murder Warrant*, Associated Press (June 5, 2018) (online at www.usatoday.com/story/news/2018/06/05/reports-white-house-contractor-arrested-attempted-murder-warrant/675724002/).

³ *White House Contractor Arrested at Checkpoint on Attempted Murder Warrant*, CNN (June 6, 2018) (online at www.cnn.com/2018/06/05/politics/white-house-contractor-arrested/index.html).

encounters with the law: an August 2013 charge for domestic violence, in which he was the subject of a temporary restraining order, and an August 2015 charge for second-degree assault.⁴

On May 3, 2018, Mr. Edwards allegedly shot his ex-girlfriend's boyfriend, who remains in critical condition. A warrant for Mr. Edwards's arrest reportedly was issued May 17, 2018.⁵

The Secret Service issued a statement that it was not informed about the outstanding warrant until Monday, June 4:

On June 4, 2018, the U.S. Secret Service was notified by the Criminal Justice Information System (CJIS) that Martese Edwards was the subject of a warrant issued out of Prince Georges County, MD. On June 5, 2018, Edwards was promptly arrested by Secret Service Uniformed Division Officers at a checkpoint outside of the White House complex when he was reporting to work as a contractor.⁶

This is not the first time the White House has faced questions about flaws in vetting officials with a record of serious domestic abuse allegations. For example, on April 13, 2018, the FBI confirmed to our Committee that it provided the White House with five different updates with derogatory information about former White House Staff Secretary Robert Porter—as far back as March 2017.⁷ Yet, the White House chose to ignore this information and continue granting Mr. Porter access to our nation's most highly classified secrets. To date, the White House has refused to provide documents we have requested about the security clearance adjudications of Mr. Porter and other White House officials.

For the reasons set forth above, I request that you produce the following documents by June 21, 2018:

- (1) all documents and communications referring or relating to Martese Edwards' clearance to access the White House complex, including documents he completed as a condition of his work on the White House complex, including but not limited to an SF-86 application, consent forms for criminal and tax checks, and any other supplemental vetting forms;

⁴ *National Security Council Contractor Arrested at White House Held a Security Clearance*, Daily Beast (June 6, 2018) (online at www.thedailybeast.com/national-security-council-contractor-martese-maurice-edward-was-previously-charged-with-domestic-violence).

⁵ *Contractor Arrested at White House Was Accused in MD of Shooting Ex's Boyfriend*, CBS News (June 6, 2018) (online at www.cbsnews.com/news/contractor-arrested-at-white-house-was-accused-in-md-of-shooting-exs-boyfriend/).

⁶ *Secret Service Arrests White House Contractor with Outstanding Attempted Murder Warrant*, CBS News (June 5, 2018) (online at www.cbsnews.com/news/arrest-made-outside-white-house/).

⁷ Letter from Gerald Roberts, Jr., Assistant Director, Security Division, Federal Bureau of Investigation, to Chairman Trey Gowdy and Ranking Member Elijah E. Cummings, House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform (Apr. 13, 2018) (online at <https://democrats-oversight.house.gov/sites/democrats.oversight.house.gov/files/documents/FBI.041318.Response%20to%20Gowdy%20re%20Clearances%20%26%20Porter.pdf>).

- (2) all documents and communications referring or relating to investigations or database searches conducted by the White House or its agents for Martese Edwards' clearance to access the White House complex, including any reports that provided information on an active warrant;
- (3) all documents and communications referring or relating to the information systems, level of classification, databases, documents, and computer networks that Martese Edwards could access in the White House complex, as well as any records reflecting information that Mr. Edwards actually accessed;
- (4) all documents and communications referring or relating to allegations of domestic abuse made against Martese Edwards or any other White House employee or contractor; and
- (5) all documents and communications referring or relating to Martese Edwards' outstanding arrest warrant, including all documents and communications referring or relating to the Criminal Justice Information System.

Thank you for your prompt attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Elijah E. Cummings
Ranking Member

cc: The Honorable Trey Gowdy
Chairman, House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform