



One Hundred Eleventh Congress  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Committee on Homeland Security  
Washington, DC 20515

December 10, 2009

Ms. Desiree Rogers  
Special Assistant to the President and  
White House Social Secretary  
The White House  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Ms. Rogers:

I was deeply disappointed to learn through a White House press conference that you had declined the invitation by the Committee on Homeland Security to appear at the Committee's hearing on December 3, 2009. While the Committee did not approve the issuance of a subpoena for you at its business meeting yesterday, it continues to be my intent, and the intent of many other Members of the Committee, to learn how two allegedly unauthorized individuals gained access to the White House during the State Dinner held in the honor of Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh on November 24, 2009.

Clearly, it creates an unjustifiable risk to bring the President face to face with individuals who have not been properly vetted. For the Committee to understand fully how this breach in security occurred at the White House, it is essential for the Committee to take testimony from the White House official who is responsible for the creation and vetting of the guest list. From interviews with officials of previous administrations, it seems clear that the usual protocol of past administrations, extending back for decades, was to have White House staff working in conjunction with the Secret Service to ensure that no one could enter the venue, even if properly screened, without an invitation.

Since you have declined the Committee's invitation to testify, and in light of the security implications for the White House and the President of the United States related to this matter, pursuant to House Rule X(3)(g) and Rule XI of the Rules of the House of Representatives, I request that you please respond in writing to the following questions as soon as possible, but no later than December 23, 2009:

1. What are your official duties as Social Secretary during a State Dinner?
2. Were any internal White House protocols or procedures modified or disregarded for the evening of the State Dinner?

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3. What role does the White House staff have in ensuring that only invited guests may gain access to the White House?
4. Were there any factors, considerations, or priorities deriving from White House policy that interfered with, countermanded, or in any way conflicted with security considerations?
5. Were Mr. and Mrs. Salahi included on any of the White House access lists or guest lists for any events scheduled on or about November 24, 2009, including the Arrival Ceremony planned for earlier that day?
6. After the initial reports of the Salahis attending the State Dinner, the White House issued a statement indicating that no one from the White House Social Office or Office of Legislative Affairs was present at the entrance. Why was the usual practice of prior administrations not followed for the State Dinner held on November 24, 2009?
7. The Director of the Secret Service testified that a meeting occurred between White House staff and Secret Service representatives during which an agreement was reached not to assign White House staff at the checkpoints. Please provide the time and place of the meeting and the names of the White House staff, as well as Secret Service personnel, who were present at that meeting.
8. If there were a problem with a guest who claimed that he or she had been invited but did not appear on the list provided to the Secret Service, was it the policy of your office that staff would come down from the East Wing to the outer perimeter to resolve the issue?
9. Did anyone from the staff of the White House Social Office or other White House staff communicate to the Secret Service that the lines of guests waiting to be admitted were too long, were moving too slowly, or were exposed to inclement weather?
10. Are you aware of a phone call from Michael Salahi to the White House Social Office, or any other White House office, prior to the State Dinner to inquire about the proper dress code for the event?
11. On the night of the State Dinner, did Tareq or Michael Salahi make any statements to White House staff prior to bypassing an external checkpoint, during the screening process from the external checkpoint to the East Wing, or at any time while they were present in the White House? If so, could you please provide the Committee with the content of those conversations?

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12. Did White House staff take any actions after being alerted by a correspondent from the *Washington Post* that Mr. and Mrs. Salahi were not on the guest list? If not, why not?
13. Was anyone from the White House Social Office contacted by the Bravo network to secure an invitation to the State Dinner or the Arrival Ceremony for the Salahis?
14. Has any staff member from the White House Social Office or other White House office ever submitted a request to the Worker and Visitor Entry System (WAVES) to provide the Salahis with access to the White House? If so, when and for what circumstance?
15. Has your office altered its policies or procedures to prevent similar incidents from happening in the future? If yes, in what ways?

Thank you for your time and personal attention to this time-sensitive request for security-related information.

Sincerely,



PETER T. KING  
Ranking Member

cc: Chairman Bennie G. Thompson  
Committee on Homeland Security

Mr. Robert Bauer  
White House Counsel