

October 28, 2008

Dr. Frank-Walter Steinmeier
Minister of Foreign Relations
Werderscher Markt 1
11013 Berlin
Germany
Delivered via fax: 49-3018-17-3402

Dear Mr. Foreign Minister,

As citizens of the United States we are deeply concerned that official members of your diplomatic corps are interfering with domestic political situations in our country. It has come to our attention that the German Consul General in San Francisco, Mr. Rolf Schuette, in his official capacity has advocated against a highly contentious issue of same-sex marriage that is set to be decided by California voters in November (Proposition 8).

Please know that we are not writing to comment on the personal life of Mr. Schuette. We are writing to complain that a member of the German Foreign Service is interfering in a domestic matter of the United States that will be decided by American citizens. His actions violate the role of a diplomat and abuses the courtesies extended to members of a foreign government. He has actively engaged in American domestic political disputes and brings disrepute to your country by his insensitive misuse of his role as a guest and a representative of the German government in our country.

Here are the particulars of his actions.

Mr. Schuette gave a keynote address at the 2008 Pink Triangle Ceremony, which has been published on the San Francisco German Consulate General's website, titled "Remarks by German Consul General Rolf Schuette at the Pink Triangle Ceremony on Twin Peaks, San Francisco, Saturday, June 28, 2008". He boasted that he invited a member of the German government to America to speak on same-sex marriage - the subject of Proposition 8 - to special interest groups working against the measure. He stated, "Today, Germany and California, Berlin and San Francisco have so much in common when it comes to LGBT issues and gay marriage that I have invited the German Federal Minister of Justice, Ms. Brigitte Zypries, to come here to this city to discuss them with representatives of the LGBT community and other interested parties. I cordially invite you to attend an event with the Minister at the LGBT Center in the evening of Monday, August 25."

http://www.germany.info/Vertretung/usa/en/03_Consulates/San_Francisco/02/Pink_Triangle_PDF_DL,property=Daten.pdf

Mr. Schuette made remarks at an August 25, 2008, event at the "San Francisco LGBT Center" which was "co-organized by the German Consulate General" where Mr. Schuette said, "... But to our great dismay, the world does not consist only of gay-friendly cities. The policies and laws that determine the lives of gay and lesbian couples are not made in San Francisco and Berlin or by liberal and open minded politicians like Mayor Gavin Newsom and Minister Brigitte Zypries alone. Full equality for gay and lesbian couples has not been achieved, not in Germany and not in the U.S. And in both countries, there are forces which even would like to roll back what has been achieved. ..." You may read the the Consul General's remarks on the Consul General's website:

http://www.germany.info/Vertretung/usa/en/03_Consulates/San_Francisco/02/Zypries_Speech_DL,property=Daten.pdf.

We are also dismayed that German Minister of Justice Brigitte Zypries gave a lecture at that same meeting entitled "Gay Marriage in Germany and California." Is she also campaigning in the United States on domestic political considerations?

We discovered the following report on the website of the German Consulate General in San Francisco [the report is in rather garbled English and we reprint it here as it was found]:

*"The Minister focus to same-sex marriage
the Germany's Minister of Justice, Ms. Brigitte Zypries visited San Francisco on 25th of august 2008 to focus on the subject of "same-sex marriage". Initially the minister gave a warm welcome to representatives of the local justice, of several human rights organisations and of further organisations with relations to Germany or to the issue "same-sex marriage". On this occasion the minister was presented with a certificate of recognition by a representative of the Californian parliament to honour her services towards the State of California and the subject "same-sex marriage". In the afternoon minister Zypries visited the city hall to inform herself about the effects and the impact of the latest decision of the Supreme Court of California concerning the legitimacy of "same-sex marriage". At the LGBT Community Centre of San Francisco the Minister gave a lecture on „Gay Marriage in Germany and California“. Following her speech the Minister and other leaders of human rights organizations answered questions by the interested young audience."*

<http://www.germany.info/relaunch/info/missions/consulates/sanfrancisco/sanfrancisco.html> (accessed September 21, 2008, removed since)

Finally, we discovered that on the website of the San Francisco Consul General there are nine speeches of Mr. Schuette from 2008, two of which concern same-sex marriage. It is rather shocking that out of seven speeches published, two are about a domestic political concern that Americans will be voting on. Here are the two speeches:

http://www.germany.info/Vertretung/usa/en/03_Consulates/San_Francisco/02/Speeches_Schuette_2008_S.html.

We close by saying that the issue of same-sex marriage is highly controversial in the United States and particularly in California. We believe the aggressive interference by an official of the German Foreign Ministry is scandalous. We ask you to put a stop to Mr. Schuette's campaigning for same-sex marriage in California and we ask for an apology from your government. This is an issue that the American people will decide on our own.

We are copying this letter to the US Secretary of State and to the Assistant to the President for National Security asking for their intervention in this matter of national sovereignty.

Yours sincerely

*Organizational names used for identification purposes only

Austin Ruse, President
Catholic Family & Human Rights Institute

Wendy Wright, President
Concerned Women for America

Tony Perkins, President
Family Research Council

Glen Lavy, Senior Vice President
Alliance Defense Fund

Donald E. Wildmon, Founder and Chairman
American Family Association

Diane Gramley, President
American Family Association of Pennsylvania

Gary Bauer, President
American Values

Dr. John F. Ankerberg, President
Ankerberg Theological Research Institute

Jim Backlin, Vice President for Legislative Affairs
Christian Coalition of America

Karen Testerman, Executive Director
Cornerstone Policy Research

Robert H. Knight, Director
Culture and Media Institute

Chris Clark, Pastor
East Clairemont Baptist Church, San Diego CA

David Fowler, President
Family Action of Tennessee, Inc.

Bryan Fischer, Executive Director
Idaho Values Alliance

David E. Smith, Executive Director
Illinois Family Institute

Ron Shuping, Executive VP of Programming
The Inspiration Networks

Kent Ostrander, President
The Family Foundation (Kentucky)

Colin A. Hanna, President
Let Freedom Ring

Gene Mills, President
Louisiana Family Forum

Michael S. Heath, Executive Director
Maine Family Policy Council

Kris Mineau, President
Massachusetts Family Institute

L. Brent Bozell III, President and Founder
Media Research Center

Dean Nelson, Executive Director
Network of Politically Active Christians

Len Deo, Founder & President
New Jersey Family Policy Council

Bill Brooks, President
North Carolina Family Policy Council

Robert Peters, Esq.

Steven W. Mosher, President
Population Research Institute

Dr. Jim Garlow, Sr. Pastor
Skyline Church, San Diego, CA

C. Preston Noell III, President
Tradition, Family, Property, Inc.

Carol Soelberg, President
United Families International

Julaine K. Appling, CEO
Wisconsin Family Council

Steve Cable
Center for American Cultural Renewal / Vermont Renewal

Jason J. McGuire, Legislative Director
New Yorkers for Constitutional Freedoms, Ltd.

Tom Shields, Chairman
Coalition for Marriage and Family