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Mockumentary film *Mister America* has world premiere

October 7, 2019



The evening of October 4, mockumentary *Mister America* had its world premiere at Grauman's Egyptian Theatre in Hollywood, California as part of Hulu's Beyond Fest film festival. *Mister America* is a continuation of the elaborate multimedia universe of Tim Heidecker and Gregg Turkington's web series *On Cinema at the Cinema*. Wikinews attended the premiere.

The film follows a fictionalized version of comedian Tim Heidecker who hosts the absurd and shallow *On Cinema* film review Web series with purported film expert Gregg Turkington. When Heidecker narrowly avoids a murder conviction, he sets out to run for District Attorney of San Bernardino County and fails to even be on the ballot.

The premiere was accompanied by a question-and-answer session moderated by Canadian comedian Nathan Fielder, delving into the logistics of shooting with a five-person crew over the course of three days on a shoestring budget. Fans in the audience probed the stars about their comedic backgrounds, including Turkington's alias of insult comedian Neil Hamburger and Heidecker's interest in political comedy.

In addition to the cast of the film,

additional *On Cinema* alumni including Alessandro Serradimigni, Joe Estevez, and Manuel Giusti were in attendance.

The Beyond Fest 2019 continued through October 8 and *Mister America* debuted to a wider audience on October 9.

US President Donald Trump announces troop withdrawal from Syria

October 8, 2019

Late on Sunday, the United States President Donald Trump, in a statement delivered via the press secretary, announced US troops would be leaving Syria. The announcement was made after Trump had a phone conversation with Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan. The statement also said US troops had defeated ISIS and Turkey would be moving into Northern Syria. Turkey would also take over guarding captured ISIS fighters which, the statement said, European nations have refused to repatriate.

The US had been allied with Kurdish groups in fighting ISIS. One of these groups, the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF), opposed the withdrawal and said it was previously given "assurances from the US that it would not allow any Turkish military operations against the region." Kino Gabriel said, "The statement was a surprise and we can say that it is a stab in the back for the SDF."

According to the BBC, the SDF is largely made up of YPG militia which support the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK). The PKK is banned in Turkey. According to a statement released by Erdoğan's office, "neutral-

izing the threat stemming from PKK-YPG terrorist" is an aim of the Turkish military operation. The other primary goal is a safe zone to repatriate Syrian refugees.

According to CNN, Turkey has an estimated two million Syrian refugees, down from a peak of over three-and-a-half million at the height of the Syrian Civil War. The Turkish statement called for the safe zone for refugees to be set up East of the Euphrates River, which is territory controlled by the SDF.

Former US Ambassador to the United Nations Nikki Haley wrote on Twitter, "We must always have the backs of our allies, if we expect them to have our back. The Kurds were instrumental in our successful fight against ISIS in Syria. Leaving them to die is a big mistake."

Brett McGurk, who was Trump's Special Presidential Envoy to the international military intervention against ISIL until December, also criticized the decision via Twitter. "The WH statement tonight on Syria after Trump spoke with Erdoğan demonstrates a complete lack of understanding of anything happening on the ground. The "United States" is not holding any ISIS detainees. They are all being held by the SDF, which Trump just served up to Turkey." McGurk later wrote, "The SDF suffered thousands of casualties in the Raqqa battle. Not a single American life was lost. Trump later expanded the operation down the ERV. He touts these operations in political rallies but without apparent thought as to who did the fighting and dying."

Trump, also on Twitter, defended his decision, "As I have stated strongly before, and just to reiter-

ate, if Turkey does anything that I, in my great and unmatched wisdom, consider to be off limits, I will totally destroy and obliterate the Economy of Turkey (I've done [it] before!). They must, with Europe and others, watch over the captured ISIS fighters and families. The U.S. has done far more than anyone could have ever expected, including the capture of 100% of the ISIS Caliphate. It is time now for others in the region, some of great wealth, to protect their own territory. THE USA IS GREAT!"

Senator Lindsey Graham spoke on

Fox News, "This is going to lead to ISIS' reemergence. Nothing [is] better for ISIS than to create a conflict between the Kurds and Turkey. The Kurds will now align with [Bashir al] Assad because they have nobody to count on because we abandoned them. So this is a big win for Iran and Assad a big win for ISIS."

"ISIS is not defeated [...] The biggest lie being told by the administration [is] that ISIS is defeated. The caliphate's destroyed, but there's thousands of fighters over there. And no, the caliphate would not have

been destroyed without the Kurds, and I applaud the president for getting the Kurds and the Arabs to do most of the fighting. The [US] casualties destroying the caliphate was very low", Graham continued. "[T]his impulsive decision by the president has undone all the gains we've made, thrown the region into further chaos. Iran is licking their chops. And if I'm an ISIS fighter I've got a second lease on life. So to those who think ISIS has been defeated you will soon see."