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## WHY EU NEEDS A US 'FOREIGN AGENTS REGISTRATION ACT' POST-QATARGATE

- 11.01.2023

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EU Observer (10 January 2023)

By TOBY VOGEL

The recent bribery scandal shaking the European Union has drawn attention to democracy's soft underbelly. Far from simply being a reflection of individual greed and venality (the accused deny all allegations), it underscores that the basic infrastructure of liberal democracy in the EU is incomplete. In order to fix it, the EU should look to a surprising model — the United States.

In the US, anyone acting on behalf of a foreign government is obliged not simply to disclose that fact but also its specifics □ fees, services provided, officials approached for that purpose, employees working on the account, and so on.

As a result, we know that Qatar has been paying Mercury Public Affairs, LLC, \$30,000 per month [ □□□□□□ ] for "research, advice, and engagement with relevant nongovernmental policy and academic institutions," or that it is paying the same monthly amount to BGR Government Affairs, LLC, to "facilitate communications with relevant officials and decision makers and the media in the US, specifically in the state of Texas." Another company is on a similar retainer with regards to Florida.

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