

February 1, 2018 – THE FBI OF MUELLER & COMEY

Today's focus is on problems at the senior levels of the FBI. The agency has 35,000 employees and a nine billion dollar budget. Robert Mueller was director from 2001 to 2013. James Comey followed until dismissed in 2017. So, we can call it the Mueller/Comey FBI Because they put in place, or maintained, the senior agents at headquarters. With so many employees, it is doubtful these men had a large effect on the foot soldiers of the agency; the women and men who do the real nitty gritty work and probably are dismayed at the revelations of the conduct of senior staff. We know that Bob Mueller was so taken with Peter Strzok and Lisa Page that he took them with him when he was appointed to lead the investigation of Trump and his minions concerning Russian interference in our election. Of the 16 lawyers Mueller took with him, nine made donations to democrats. The other seven gave no political donations

Then when the Strzok/Page indiscretions were uncovered, he quietly removed them from the investigation but allowed them to resume their careers at the FBI. When the story broke, and only then, did Mueller fess up to what he had done with the FBI miscreants. These are not the actions of an honest broker.

We open with Victor Davis Hanson who claims Hillary's sure victory explains a lot of the conduct of the FBI senior staffers.

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Another, more helpful, exegesis, however, is to understand that if we'd seen a Hillary Clinton victory in November 2016, which was supposed to be a sure thing, there would now be no scandals at all.

That is, the current players probably broke laws and committed ethical violations not just because they were assured there would be no consequences but also because they thought they'd be rewarded for their laxity. ...

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Former attorney general Loretta Lynch, in unethical fashion, met on an out-of-the-way Phoenix tarmac with Bill Clinton, in a likely effort to find the most efficacious ways to communicate that the ongoing email scandal and investigation would not harm Hillary Clinton's candidacy. When caught, thanks to local-news reporters who happened to be at the airport, Lynch sort of, kind of recused herself. But, in fact, at some point she had ordered James Comey not to use the word "investigation" in his periodic press announcements about the FBI investigation.

How could Lynch in the middle of an election have been so silly as to allow even the appearance of impropriety? Answer: There would have been no impropriety had Hillary won — an assumption reflected in the Page-Strzok text trove when Page texted, about Lynch, "She knows no charges will be brought." In fact, after a Clinton victory, Lynch's obsequiousness in devising such a clandestine meeting with Bill Clinton may well have been rewarded: Clinton allies leaked to the New York Times that Clinton was considering keeping Lynch on as the attorney general.

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Again, the answer was clear. McCabe assumed that Clinton would easily win the election. Far from being a scandal, McCabe's not "loaded for bear" oversight of the investigation, in the world of beltway maneuvering, would have been a good argument for a promotion in the new Clinton administration. Most elite bureaucrats understood the Clinton way of doing business, in which loyalty, not legality, is what earned career advancement. ...

... A final paradox: Why did so many federal officials and officeholders act so unethically and likely illegally when they were convinced of a Clinton landslide? Why the overkill?

The answer to that paradox lies in human nature and can be explored through the hubris and nemesis of Greek tragedy — or the 1972 petty burgling of a Watergate complex apartment when Richard Nixon really was on his way to a landslide victory.

Needlessly weaponizing the Obama FBI and the DOJ was akin to Hillary Clinton's insanely campaigning in the last days of the 2016 campaign in red-state Arizona, the supposed "cherry atop a pleasing electoral map."

In short, such hubris was not just what Peter Strzok in August 2016 termed an "insurance policy" against an unlikely Trump victory. Instead, the Clinton and Obama officials believed that it was within the administrative state's grasp and their perceived political interest not just to beat but to destroy and humiliate Donald Trump — and by extension all the distasteful deplorables and irredeemables he supposedly had galvanized.

Roger Simon on what do we do about the FBI?

Suppose what many are now suspecting is completely true -- that the FBI, or parts of it, exonerated Hillary Clinton and her cohorts with a mock investigation, attempted to swing our presidential election against Donald Trump and then continued to undermine the new administration after they had won with illegitimate claims of Russian collusion orchestrated by sleazy political lowlifes?

While this is not quite Stalinist -- no one was tortured in Lubyanka or sent to the Gulag for life -- it's not all that distant. It's tantamount to an internal coup d'état that is still ongoing. And just as in many coups throughout history, many of the participants are convinced they are doing the right thing, that they are on the side of justice, even though they are bending it, especially because they are bending it. The ends justify the means, as the old homicidal slogan goes.

Peter Strzok and Lisa Page -- that low-rent Hero and Leander of the Beltway -- certainly believed that. You know that from the contents of their compulsive text messages even though five key months are suddenly "missing." The inside of the FBI, particularly at the higher reaches, seems to have been filled with a band of smug, self-righteous ideologues who would do anything, erase or rephrase anything, to get their way. And then lie about it. Either that or quote scripture. Or form "secret societies."

Or just cover up, as Robert Mueller did when Strzok and Page were caught, literally and ideologically, with their pants down. He simply shipped them off Soviet-style to FBI Siberia, not saying a word to the public, hoping no one would notice, hoping it would be ignored that those "secret societies" and "insurance policies" they referred to smack of exactly the kind of behavior that would open one to RICO charges in a normal FBI investigation. This coverup only came out by accident months later. ...

... One way of reading all this is that, despite the obvious political biases of these officials, the FBI acted impartially when it came to investigating Trump, did everything on the up and up when it came to wiretapping his campaign, and suffered an innocent technical problem that erased exchanges between two key officials.

Another way of reading this is that corrupt FBI officials used the immense power at their disposal to illegally eavesdrop on private citizens, fuel a costly and bogus investigation into Trump — while giving Hillary Clinton a free pass on her own scandals — and then tried to keep these machinations under wraps.

We are not conspiracy-mongers here. And we, like everyone in the country, want to be able to trust that our federal law enforcement officials aren't serving as political pawns.

But the facts keep pointing to the latter interpretation.

The editors at Investor's Business Daily weigh in.

First there is the memo circulating among lawmakers on Capitol Hill regarding how the FBI went about obtaining its warrants to wiretap Trump campaign officials during the campaign.

The speculation is that the memo — drafted by the House Intelligence Committee — will confirm what many already suspect, that the FBI used a phony "dossier" — which was nothing more than a factually challenged compilation of gossip and innuendo secretly financed by the Democratic Party and Hillary Clinton's campaign — to get those warrants.

To hear from House Republicans who've seen it, the memo is explosive. ...

Mollie Hemingway reports how the FBI can create a negative Trump administration story while offering another pretense. This one is by Andrew McCabe, deputy director of the agency. Seems a story broke that claimed Trump officials had many contacts with Russian officials. McCabe called Reince Priebus asking to see him.

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could say publicly what he had just told him. McCabe said he'd have to check, according to the book.

McCabe reportedly called back and said he couldn't do anything about it. Then-FBI director James Comey reportedly called later and also said he couldn't do anything, but did offer to brief the Senate Intelligence Committee on the matter later that week, suggesting they'd spill the beans publicly. You'll never guess what happened next, according to the book:

Now, a week later, CNN was airing a breaking news story naming Priebus. According to 'multiple U.S. officials,' the network said, 'the FBI rejected a White House request to publicly knock down media reports about communications between Donald Trump's associates and Russians known to U.S. intelligence.'

Priebus was stunned by the implication that he was pressuring law enforcement. Had he been set up? Why was the FBI leaking this information when one of its top officials had initiated the conversation? ...

National Review

[Hillary's 'Sure' Victory Explains Most Everything](#)

Stretching or breaking the law on her behalf would have been rewarded by a President Clinton

by Victor Davis Hanson

What exactly were top officials in the FBI and DOJ doing during the election of 2016?

The Page-Strzok text exchanges might offer a few answers. Or, as Lisa Page warned her paramour as early as February 2016, at the beginning of the campaign and well before the respective party nominees were even selected:

One more thing: she [Hillary Clinton] might be our next president. The last thing you need us going in there loaded for bear. You think she's going to remember or care that it was more DOJ than FBI?

The traditional way of looking at the developing scandals at the FBI and among holdover Obama appointees in the DOJ is that the bizarre atmospherics from candidate and President Trump have simply polarized everyone in Washington, and no one quite knows what is going on.

Another, more helpful, exegesis, however, is to understand that if we'd seen a Hillary Clinton victory in November 2016, which was supposed to be a sure thing, there would now be *no* scandals at all.

That is, the current players probably broke laws and committed ethical violations not just because they were assured there would be no consequences but also because *they thought they'd be rewarded for their laxity.*

On the eve of the election, the *New York Times* tracked various pollsters' models that had assured readers that Trump's odds of winning were respectively 15 percent, 8 percent, 2 percent, and less than 1 percent. Liberals howled heresy at fellow progressive poll guru Nate Silver shortly before the vote for daring to suggest that Trump had a 29 percent chance of winning the Electoral College.

Hillary Clinton herself was not worried about even the appearance of scandal caused by transmitting classified documents over a private home-brewed server, or enabling her husband to shake down foreign donations to their shared foundation, or destroying some 30,000 emails. Evidently, she instead reasoned that she was within months of becoming President Hillary Clinton and therefore, in her Clintonesque view of the presidency, exempt from all further criminal exposure. Would a President Clinton have allowed the FBI to reopen their strangely aborted Uranium One investigation; would the FBI have asked her whether she communicated over an unsecure server with the former president of the United States?

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How could Lynch in the middle of an election have been so silly as to allow even the appearance of impropriety? Answer: There would have been no impropriety had Hillary won — an assumption reflected in the Page-Strzok text trove when Page texted, about Lynch, "She knows no charges will be brought." In fact, after a Clinton victory, Lynch's obsequiousness in devising such a clandestine meeting with Bill Clinton may well have been rewarded: Clinton allies leaked to the *New York Times* that Clinton was considering keeping Lynch on as the attorney general.

How could former deputy director of the FBI Andrew McCabe assume an oversight role in the FBI probe of the Clinton email scandal when just months earlier his spouse had run for state office in Virginia and had received a huge \$450,000 cash donation from Common Good VA, the political-action committee of long-time Clinton-intimate Terry McAuliffe?

Again, the answer was clear. McCabe assumed that Clinton would easily win the election. Far from being a scandal, McCabe's not "loaded for bear" oversight of the investigation, in the world of beltway maneuvering, would have been a good argument for a promotion in the new Clinton administration. Most elite bureaucrats understood the Clinton way of doing business, in which loyalty, not legality, is what earned career advancement.

Some have wondered why the recently demoted deputy DOJ official Bruce Ohr (who met with the architects of the Fusion GPS file after the election) would have been so stupid as to allow his spouse to work for Fusion — a de facto Clinton-funded purveyor of what turned out to be Russian fantasies, fibs, and obscenities?

Again, those are absolutely the wrong questions. Rather, why wouldn't a successful member of the Obama administrative aparat make the necessary ethical adjustments to further his career in another two-term progressive regnum? In other words, Ohr rightly assumed that empowering the Clinton-funded dossier would pay career dividends for such a power couple once Hillary was elected. Or, in desperation, the dossier would at least derail Trump after her defeat. Like other members of his byzantine caste, Ohr did everything right except bet on the wrong horse.

What about the recently reassigned FBI lawyer Lisa Page and FBI top investigator Peter Strzok? Their reported 50,000-plus text messages (do the math per hour at work, and it is hard to believe that either had to time to do much of anything else) are providing a Procopian court history of the entire Fusion-Mueller investigation miasma.

So why did Strzok and Page believe that they could conduct without disclosure a romantic affair on FBI-government-owned cellphones? Why would they have been emboldened enough to cite a meeting with Deputy Director Andrew McCabe, in which they apparently discussed the dire consequences of an improbable Trump victory?

I want to believe the path you threw out for consideration in Andy's [probably Andrew McCabe, then deputy director of the FBI] office that there's no way Trump gets elected — but I'm afraid we can't take that risk. It's like an insurance policy in the unlikely event you die before you're 40.

And why would the two believe that they could so candidly express their contempt for a presidential candidate supposedly then under a secret FBI investigation?

Once more, those are the wrong interrogatories. If we consider the mentality of government elite careerists, we see that the election-cycle machinations and later indiscretions of Strzok and Page were not liabilities at all. They were good investments. They signaled their loyalty to the incoming administration and that they were worthy of commendation and reward.

Hillary Clinton's sure victory certainly also explains the likely warping of the FISA courts by FBI careerists seeking to use a suspect dossier to surveil Trump associates — and the apparent requests by Samantha Power, Susan Rice, and others to read surveilled transcripts of Trump associates, unmask names, and leak them to pet reporters. Again, all these insiders were playing the careerist odds. What we view as reprehensible behavior, they at the time considered wise investments that would earn rewards with an ascendant President Hillary Clinton.

Did Cheryl Mills, Huma Abedin, or Debbie Wasserman Shultz worry about their fabrications, unethical behavior, and various conspiratorial efforts to ensure that Hillary Clinton would be exempt from criminal liability in her email shenanigans, and that she would win the Democratic nomination and general election? Not when their equally unethical and conspiratorial boss would appreciate her subordinate soul mates. For a deep-state careerist without ethical bearings, one of the advantages of a Clinton sure-thing presidency would be that the Clintons are known to reward loyalty more highly than morality.

Then we arrive at the tragic farce of former FBI director James Comey. It is now easy to deplore Comey's unethical and unprofessional behavior: In all likelihood, he wrote an exoneration of Hillary Clinton before he even interviewed her and her top aides; then he lied about just that sequence while he was under oath and virtue-signaling before Congress; he feigned concern about Clinton's felonious behavior but used linguistic gymnastics in his report to ensure his condemnation would be merely rhetorical and without legal consequences.

Had Hillary won, as she was supposed to, Comey would probably have been mildly chastised for his herky-jerky press conferences, but ultimately praised for making sure the email scandal didn't derail her. Comey's later implosion, recall, occurred only after the improbable election of Donald Trump, as he desperately reversed course a fourth time and tried to ingratiate himself with Trump while hedging his bets by winking and nodding at the ongoing, unraveling fantasy of the Steele dossier.

And Barack Obama? We now know that he himself used an alias to communicate at least 20 times with Hillary on her private, non-secure gmail account. But Obama lied on national TV, saying he learned of Hillary's illegal server only when the rest of the nation did, by reading the news. Would he have dared to lie so publicly if he'd assumed that Trump's presidency was imminent? Would he ever have allowed his subordinates to use the dossier to obtain FISA warrants and pass around and unmask the resulting surveillance transcripts if he'd seen Trump as the likely winner and a potentially angered president with powers to reinvestigate all these illegal acts?

We sometimes forget that Barack Obama, not candidate Hillary Clinton, was president when the FBI conducted the lax investigation of the email scandal, when Loretta Lynch outsourced her prosecutorial prerogatives to James Comey, when the FBI trafficked with the Clinton-funded Fusion GPS dossier, when various DOJ and FBI lawyers requested FISA-approved surveillance largely on the basis of a fraudulent document, and when administration officials unmasked and leaked the names of American citizens.

Had Hillary Clinton polled ten points behind Donald Trump in early 2016, we'd have none of these scandals — not because those involved were moral actors (none were), but because Hillary would have been considered yesterday's damaged goods and not worth any extra-legal exposure taken on her behalf.

Similarly, if the clear front-runner Hillary Clinton had won the election, we'd now have no scandals. Again, the reason is not that she and her careerist enablers did not engage in scandalous behavior, but that such foul play would have been recalibrated as rewardable fealty and absorbed into the folds of the progressive deep state.

The only mystery in these sordid scandals is how a president Hillary Clinton would have rewarded her various appendages. In short, how would a President Clinton have calibrated the many rewards for any-means-necessary help? Would Lynch's tarmac idea have trumped Comey's phony investigation? Would Glen Simpson now be White House press secretary, James Comey Clinton's CIA director; would Andrew McCabe be Comey's replacement at the FBI?

In reductionist terms, every single scandal that has so far surfaced at the FBI and DOJ share a common catalyst. What now appears clearly unethical and probably illegal would have passed as normal in a likely 16-year Obama-Clinton progressive continuum.

A final paradox: Why did so many federal officials and officeholders act so unethically and likely illegally when they were convinced of a Clinton landslide? Why the overkill?

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Pajamas Media

What Do We Do About the FBI?

by Roger L. Simon

Suppose what many are now suspecting is completely true -- that the FBI, or parts of it, exonerated Hillary Clinton and her cohorts with a mock investigation, attempted to swing our presidential election against Donald Trump and then continued to undermine the new administration after they had won with illegitimate claims of Russian collusion orchestrated by sleazy political lowlifes?

While this is not quite Stalinist -- no one was tortured in Lubyanka or sent to the Gulag for life -- it's not all that distant. It's tantamount to an internal *coup d'état* that is still ongoing. And just as in many coups throughout history, many of the participants are convinced they are doing the right thing, that they are on the side of justice, even though they are bending it, *especially* because they are bending it. The ends justify the means, as the old homicidal slogan goes.

Peter Strzok and Lisa Page -- that low-rent Hero and Leander of the Beltway -- certainly believed that. You know that from the contents of their compulsive text messages even though five key months are suddenly "missing." The inside of the FBI, particularly at the higher reaches, seems to have been filled with a band of smug, self-righteous ideologues who would do anything, erase or rephrase anything, to get their way. And then lie about it. Either that or quote scripture. Or form "secret societies."

Or just cover up, as Robert Mueller did when Strzok and Page were caught, literally and ideologically, with their pants down. He simply shipped them off Soviet-style to FBI Siberia, not saying a word to the public, hoping no one would notice, hoping it would be ignored that those "secret societies" and "insurance policies" they referred to smack of exactly the kind of behavior that would open one to RICO charges in a normal FBI investigation. This coverup only came out by accident months later. (As Marc Antony might have put it, "And Robert is an honorable man." He might add now: "And Loretta is an honorable woman.")

Put another way, should "lying to the FBI" be a crime, when the FBI itself lies?

That's not a zen koan. That's reality.

So if -- and it's not that big an if anymore -- this story out of a spy novel (the density of Le Carré coupled with the outlandishness of Fleming) is indeed the truth, what do we do about it? The answer is not easy. At minimum it would necessitate a massive over-hauling, possibly even a dismantling, of the FBI and the Department of Justice. But how would we do that? That too will not be simple.

Critics of the FBI often acknowledge, seemingly paying obeisance, that there are many good people at the heart of the organization. Can we assume that to be accurate? Undoubtedly there are a significant number, but how do we determine who is who in an organization so adept at, and wedded to, stonewalling? Moreover, we *can* assume that the perpetrators at the top will be backed up and supported -- some of the time anyway -- by leaders of other investigative and

intelligence branches, notably the CIA and the NSA, that have been similarly infiltrated over the years.

A second special counsel has been suggested, but we need considerably more than that. We need a through investigation via a full-on commission of the FBI and the DOJ themselves and, unfortunately, the intelligence agencies as well that could -- and most likely would -- take years. So many issues are at play here it's mind-boggling. How do we deal with the dishonesty of our officials and bureaucrats when those same people are the keepers of our secrets and the enforcers of our laws (both of which are related)? When is transparency necessary? When is secrecy justified? Who will watch the watchers? Are the congressional oversight committees enough? Do they have sufficient power?

The questions are indeed endless and the solutions will necessitate more than just firing or indicting the most recent miscreants. Deep structural problems have allowed this to happen. They must be corrected. Nothing should be sacrosanct. We face a complex future as technology advances inexorably and the capabilities of these organizations increase exponentially. We have to know -- in advance and to the extent we can -- how to prevent totalitarianism from within.

Mueller and current director Christopher Wray may not fully realize it -- longtime denizens of D.C. and its culture that they are -- but a significant portion of the American public outside Washington no longer believes in the fairness of our justice system and those people, with cause, are getting more skeptical by the day. There's no telling where this will end. Attempts to salvage the Trump-Russia investigation with charges of obstruction when no collusion occurred in the first place will only exacerbate the situation and drive a further wedge into a broken society.

This alienation has a powerful emotional affect on all us that often we cannot even see, although we sense it. For homework, everyone should watch, if they haven't, what may be the most insightful film of recent decades, the German-made movie about the Stasi, *The Lives of Others*.

In sum, as Peter Strzok himself texted, "there's no big there there" for the Trump collusion investigation. Unfortunately, and sadly for America, there *is* a big there there for corruption in the FBI -- and he's part of it.

Investors Business Daily - Editorial

The FBI Is Looking Guilty As Hell In Russia Probe

Scandal: As Special Counsel Robert Mueller's vast and fruitless investigation into supposed ties between the Trump campaign and the Russian government drags on, it's the FBI itself that appears to have been engaged in nefarious activities.

First there is the memo circulating among lawmakers on Capitol Hill regarding how the FBI went about obtaining its warrants to wiretap Trump campaign officials during the campaign.

The speculation is that the memo — drafted by the House Intelligence Committee — will confirm what many already suspect, that the FBI used a phony "dossier" — which was nothing more than a factually challenged compilation of gossip and innuendo secretly financed by the Democratic Party and Hillary Clinton's campaign — to get those warrants.

To hear from House Republicans who've seen it, the memo is explosive.

"I can tell you I read it twice just to make sure I read it properly, and it was deeply disturbing," Ohio's Dave Joyce said. Mark Meadows, chair of the House Freedom Caucus, called the memo "troubling" and "shocking," adding that "part of me wishes that I didn't read it because I don't want to believe that those kinds of things could be happening in this country that I call home and love so much."

Dave Joyce said "heads absolutely should roll," and Matt Gatetz predicted that "people will go to jail" based on what's in the memo.

Democrats — and the press — are dismissing it as a political ploy to undermine Mueller's investigation and that the document is rife with errors and shouldn't be released.

We won't know who to believe until the memo is released.

It's certainly possible that Republicans are overselling the findings in that memo — in which case they have made a huge political blunder — but if that were true, then why are Democrats opposing its release?

If it's as bad as Republicans say, what the Intelligence Committee findings mean is that the FBI used unsubstantiated politically motivated opposition research paid for by one campaign as a pretext to spy on members of another campaign.

As Glenn Greenwald of the Intercept rightly explains, "One of the gravest and most damaging abuses of state power is to misuse surveillance authorities for political purposes." (Which makes the mainstream media's utter disinterest in this story so bewildering.)

No Hidden Agenda: Get News From A Pro-Free Market, Pro-Growth Perspective
Meanwhile, the FBI claims that five months' worth of text messages sent between virulently anti-Trump FBI officials working on the Trump-Russia probe have somehow gone missing.

In a previously released batch of exchanges, FBI agent Peter Strzok and FBI lawyer Lisa Page called Trump an "utter idiot," said that Hillary Clinton "just has to win," and talked about a mysterious "insurance policy" they had in case Trump won the election.

The two had been involved in the FBI's Trump-Russia investigation, and until these exchanges were uncovered, had served on Mueller's team.

A new batch of texts deepens the intrigue, with one mentioning a "secret society" after Trump's victory in November, and another suggesting that the FBI needed to quickly close the books on the Clinton email investigation once Trump secured the nomination.

Then there's the text where Strzok says he was conflicted about joining Mueller's team because the Russia investigation was, in his own estimation, much ado about nothing. "You and I both know the odds are nothing," he texted. "If I thought it was likely, I'd be there no question. I hesitate in part because of my gut sense and concern that there's no big there there."

But here's where things really get interesting. It turns out that the FBI can't find any of the texts the two sent each other from December 14, 2016, to May 17, 2017, which was the day Mueller was named Special Counsel. The FBI says it was due to a technical glitch. We shall see.

One way of reading all this is that, despite the obvious political biases of these officials, the FBI acted impartially when it came to investigating Trump, did everything on the up and up when it came to wiretapping his campaign, and suffered an innocent technical problem that erased exchanges between two key officials.

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The Federalist

[New Book: McCabe Initiated White House Meeting That Led To Leak](#)

This story gives a glimpse into how the original Russia narrative may have been spread around to overly compliant journalists and other members of the 'resistance.'

by Mollie Hemingway

The FBI's top brass initiated conversations with a White House official that were quickly leaked to CNN, according to a new book.

Deputy FBI Director Andrew McCabe asked to speak privately with White House chief of staff Reince Priebus following a February 2017 intelligence briefing. The scene is described in "[Media Madness](#)," Howard Kurtz's new book on the press and its relationship with the Trump administration. McCabe said he asked for the meeting to tell Priebus that "everything" in a *New York Times* [story](#) authored by Michael S. Schmidt, Mark Mazzetti, and Matt Apuzzo was "bullshit."

The story was yet another one of those anonymous "bombshells" you've heard so much about during the Trump era. It was headlined "Trump Campaign Aides Had Repeated Contacts With Russian Intelligence" and was sourced to not one, not two, not three, but four "current and former American officials." It was just like every other similar story Americans have read or seen in the past year — no indication that the three reporters had verified, much less seen, the underlying evidence, but lots of threatening language insinuating treasonous collusion between the Trump campaign and Russia, all sourced to high-ranking but anonymous officials.

CNN's Pamela Brown, Jim Sciutto, and Evan Perez reported a very similar story, also sourced to anonymous officials. Sciutto is a [former Obama administration appointee](#) who is close to Obama administration officials. Perez has [extensive ties to Fusion GPS](#), the Democrat-funded firm that created the Russia narrative.

McCabe claimed to want Priebus to know the FBI's perspective that this story was not true. Priebus pointed to the televisions that were going non-stop on the story. He asked if the FBI

could say publicly what he had just told him. McCabe said he'd have to check, according to the book.

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Now, a week later, CNN was airing a breaking news story naming Priebus. According to 'multiple U.S. officials,' the network said, 'the FBI rejected a White House request to publicly knock down media reports about communications between Donald Trump's associates and Russians known to U.S. intelligence.'

Priebus was stunned by the implication that he was pressuring law enforcement. Had he been set up? Why was the FBI leaking this information when one of its top officials had initiated the conversation?

CNN's story was authored by Sciotto, Perez, Shimon Prokupecz, Manu Raju, and Brown. Raju is the reporter who later messed up a massive Russia-collusion story by not verifying underlying details in any serious way. He has not explained how he got the story wrong or done anything to regain credibility lost by running a blatantly false story.

The story is sourced to a "U.S. law enforcement official" who seems to know an awful lot about McCabe (e.g. "A law enforcement official says McCabe didn't discuss aspects of the case but wouldn't say exactly what McCabe told Priebus.") The story suggesting obstruction is explosive:

The direct communications between the White House and the FBI were unusual because of decade-old restrictions on such contacts. Such a request from the White House is a violation of procedures that limit communications with the FBI on pending investigations...

The Trump administration's efforts to press Comey run contrary to Justice Department procedure memos issued in 2007 and 2009 that limit direct communications on pending investigations between the White House and the FBI...

The effort to refute the CNN and New York Times stories came as increasing numbers of congressional members were voicing concern about Russia's efforts to influence individuals with ties to Trump.

This story dropped just days after the earlier story alleging nefarious contacts between the Trump campaign and Russia. It was part of a long campaign to suggest that President Trump was a traitor who colluded with Russia to steal an election. That was, in fact, the major theme of media coverage throughout 2017.

In June, Comey testified that the original story was "not true," though *The New York Times* said their original sources inside the bureau checked out. There seems to be a disparity between what FBI officials tell reporters under the cloak of anonymity and what they admit under oath or to those who are more knowledgeable of the matters at hand. Opponents of President Trump, be they the media, Democratic activists, or Never Trump Republicans, are moving on from Russia conspiracies to claims of obstruction of justice.

This story gives a glimpse into how that original Russia narrative may have been spread around to overly compliant journalists and other members of the "resistance." It was the hysteria

surrounding this and other stories that led the White House to be frustrated with a law enforcement agency and chief playing games. As Comey admitted under oath, he did tell President Trump three times that Trump was not under investigation. These private statements to Trump occurred while Comey publicly insinuated the opposite. This story above fits the same pattern.

Partisan operatives in or close to the FBI communicated snippets of information with reporters who didn't demand proof or substantiation, then FBI officials denied to White House officials who knew the facts that they were seeding that information, then officials suggested that White House operatives were obstructing justice by asking for the truth to out. At a time when people are looking for patterns, this is a pattern of improper behavior that deserves focus from the media.





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