

The Comey & Mueller Show

Trump has gotten the better of them.

by Conrad Black



It has been a good week for President Trump. Justice Department inspector general Michael Horowitz provided indisputable evidence that former FBI deputy director Andrew McCabe lied at least four key times and was fired by the attorney general for cause – and that Mr. Trump had nothing to do with it. McCabe and his former boss James Comey have now begun the public reciprocal allegation that they are liars. In this, for once, both are probably telling the truth. As that report, which will be followed by more, was released, it was announced that extensive missile strikes had been conducted by the United States, the United Kingdom, and France on the Syrian chlorine-gas facilities that had been used to kill and intimidate large numbers of Syrian civilians recently. Contrary to accumulated criticism, the president had not tipped his hand over what retaliation would occur, did not panic and respond wildly and excessively (as Russia appeaser

Stephen Cohen had been gloomily forecasting as he predicted a descent to war with Russia), and the allies' action was retroactively supported at the United Nations. It was a precise, limited, professional military operation that incurred no allied casualties. Russian and Syrian claims of many incoming missiles shot down, and of imminent reprisals by Moscow, were exposed as piffle.

Ann Coulter, Laura Ingraham, Tucker Carlson, and other less substantial critics were mistaken to claim that Trump had violated his campaign promise not to become enmeshed in the Middle East. Some firmness was required in the run-up to the attempt to settle the North Korean impasse, which has emerged as a possibility only with the resurrection of the military option by the Trump administration. There was also the need to brush back the Russians and publicly ignore their customarily belligerent threats. Russia has a GDP smaller than Canada's, and even though it has an eminent culture and nationality – one the West does not want to drive sullenly into the arms of the Chinese (who voted with Russia at the U.N.) – the illusion cannot be allowed to take hold that Russia enjoys any sort of strategic parity with the United States, especially when the U.S. acts with its principal traditional allies.

It fell to Eliot Cohen to declare that the action was pitiful and cowardly and worse than doing nothing at all. This is the mind pathologically unable to credit Donald Trump with anything positive that still rules the American media and academia. The task remains to form the eastern part of Syria into a zone that is safe for the secular opponents of Assad, to have the refugees return, to make sure Iran does not become a permanent influence in Syria, to demarcate the Kurdish area, and to permit a restoration of reasonable relations with Turkey. Humanity cannot tolerate the use of poison gas to massacre civilians, and the United States must make it clear that President Obama's infamous self-evaporating red line was aberrant, and that succeeding American presidents, like

earlier ones, must be believed when they threaten just retaliation.

The pardon, last week, of Scooter Libby, former vice president Dick Cheney's chief of staff, was interpreted by the president's enemies as a message to General Michael Flynn and Michael Cohen (whose files were seized earlier in the week by the New York U.S. attorney at Special Counsel Robert Mueller's request): They need not fear anything, as Trump will pardon them. One of several close contenders with Eliot Cohen in witless Trumpophobia, Fox's Juan Williams, found the pardon of Libby evidence that the "swamp is overflowing," along with such further salient proof as "tax cuts for the rich," and Michael Cohen's acting for a Republican National Committee member who had committed the unprecedented atrocity of impregnating a woman with whom he had had an affair.

In fact, the pardon of Libby is a long-overdue recognition that he was framed by testimony from Judith Miller, falsely misrepresented – as Ms. Miller repeated last week – by one of Mueller and Comey's closest professional associates, Patrick Fitzgerald. Fitzgerald knew Libby was blameless and was just trying to take down the vice president by extorting false inculpatory evidence from his chief of staff. President George W. Bush's refusal to pardon Libby was itself unpardonable. In doing this now, Mr. Trump has served justice and put the spotlight more closely on the whole Mueller-Comey-Fitzgerald school of fascistic prosecution. (Fitzgerald was my prosecutor in Chicago in 2007 and we caught the government in lies almost every day; all of these people would be disbarred in any other judicially serious country, such as Britain or Canada.)

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Best of all for the president is the shambles of the James Comey book launch. The book has been generally panned, even by

the president's enemies. The ex-director acknowledged that he had made a political decision in his pre-election statement on Hillary Clinton's emails, as he didn't want Clinton's victory to be tainted by allegations that her emails weren't properly investigated (they weren't). Comey is squarely at odds with McCabe and casts serious aspersions on former attorney general Loretta Lynch. There are no suggestions of obstruction of justice by Trump, and a weak response on why he didn't tell Trump, as he was laying out the Steele dossier, that it had been paid for by the Clinton campaign (yet he expected to remain as FBI director). He breathes no life into the collusion fraud, which the Justice Department happily propagated for many months. Comey admitted there are no grounds for impeachment of the president. The Mueller pestilence was mere vengeance.

Comey did nothing to defend or deny using false information to snow a Foreign Intelligence Surveillance court into authorizing illegal monitoring of the Trump campaign (which led to the illegal publication in a negative context of the names of Trump-campaign individuals).

It is worth remembering that Mrs. Clinton wrote in her book that she had been defeated by being "shivved three times by Jim Comey" and by Trump's treason with Russia. She proved the treason by citing from the Steele dossier, which she did not hint her campaign had commissioned and bankrolled. Comey's parting shot, the spurious Mueller inquiry, is now reduced to chasing Trump's lawyer, ostensibly over a silence-payment to an enterprising adult-film actress with whom Mr. Trump allegedly had a one-evening stand ten years before he ran for president.

Stormy Daniels would be almost ingenuous if she didn't have a horribly partisan lawyer, an old friend of Rahm Emanuel and about as mouthy as the mayor of the sanctuary city of Chicago. I can't agree with my esteemed friend Andy McCarthy that this could be a problem for the president: If Michael Cohen paid

Stormy Daniels off, he presumably invoiced the client; Stormy doesn't allege any coercion, wrongdoing, or even ungentlemanliness. It is as likely to be found a campaign-funding violation as *The New Yorker's* piece this week predicting the impeachment of Trump for attacking Assad's chlorine-gas facilities is to be proved prophetic. (What might the giants of *The New Yorker's* past think of this recurrent imbecility?)

Mueller has been given a magic carpet on this disgraceful smear job for almost a year, packing his staff with foaming Trump-haters – who have been exposed as, to say the least, unprofessional – and wallowing in the prolonged hallelujah chorus of the fake, Trump-hating national media. The *Boston Herald* has been bombarding Mueller's office with questions of whether he recommended commuting the sentences of the falsely convicted defendants in the Deegan case of 1968, when he was in the U.S. attorney's office in Boston (from 1982 to 1987). Two of the wrongly accused men, deliberately framed by prosecutors, died in prison and their families and the other two men convicted collected \$102 million from the U.S. government in 2007 for their false convictions and imprisonment. There has been curiosity for many years about whether Mueller recommended against the complainants' appeal, as his predecessor (2016 Libertarian vice-presidential candidate Bill Weld) and successor did. There are also unanswered questions about his and Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein's role in the Uranium One affair.

The entrenched Clinton-Obama power structure set out to repeal the verdict of the election and they coopted key sections of the Justice Department. There has never been anything remotely as sleazy as this in the presidential history of the United States. The perpetrators are being relentlessly torn down, one by one, and only Robert Mueller tenuously remains, handing off this desperately absurd wild-goose chase to local New York prosecutors. In the reign of the Committee of Public Safety in

Paris in 1794, the ascetic and fanatical (almost Muelleresque) Robespierre set out to destroy the rich and cunning (perhaps slightly Trumpian) scoundrel Fouché. But Fouché destroyed Robespierre instead. There are some parallels, but the Reign of Terror did not turn into a raunchy Stormy Daniels nightclub act. Americans should ask themselves whether their country has gone mad, and not wait too long for the answer.