

# The FBI and CIA Should Be Abolished, Not Reformed



FBI director J. Edgar Hoover is seen in his Washington office, May 20, 1963.

by Roger L. Simon

The FBI was a bad idea from its start in the days of J. Edgar Hoover. The agency began in an atmosphere of blackmail.

Now resembling police forces in totalitarian countries, the FBI has become an instrument of oppression of the people it was allegedly meant to protect and serve.

Reports that the bureau has been infiltrating almost all right-of-center organizations are myriad. In our elections, it hasn't just put its finger on the scale; It has placed its full arm, elbow first.

Just as it's said that Xi Jinping's China is "Communism with Chinese characteristics," it can be said that the FBI is the

“STASI or KGB with American characteristics” (the pretense that the Bill of Rights is being followed).

Since centralized power tends to corrupt, in many ways, this was inevitable.

On May 24, we got yet another view—as if we needed one—into the culture of the agency when, as reported [here](#), a deputy assistant FBI director of counterintelligence, Jill Murphy, admitted in congressional testimony that she hadn’t read the years-in-the-making Durham Report on her organization’s activities regarding supposed Trump–Russia collusion.

She was “too busy,” she said, in a response that sounded as if she were auditioning for Saturday Night Live. All she needed was a wink at the audience.

For good reason, the FBI (also the CIA—more in a moment) has come up as an important issue in the Republican presidential primary and also, via Robert F. Kennedy Jr., in the Democratic one.

Outsider (is he still that?) candidate entrepreneur Vivek Ramaswamy shares my assessment and has said he would immediately “shut down” the FBI, as well as the Department of Education and other agencies.

Former South Carolina Gov. [Nikki Haley](#), another GOP candidate, takes the reformist view, stating that “Heads need to roll” at the FBI after Durham. This same stance has been taken ad infinitum by Sean Hannity on all his Fox shows. Just punish the bad guys at the top and all will be well.

But would it? The FBI has more than 37,000 employees yet the whistleblowers—brave that they are—are but a handful. The overwhelming majority, afraid for their jobs, brainwashed, or just hunkered down, are in the end, much like Ms. Murphy, loyal followers of a corrupt and finally anti-democratic culture.

Besides, the reformist path was already tried by one Donald J. Trump, and look what it got him—Christopher Wray, the very image of the worst stonewalling bureaucrat.

Trump blames his nomination of Wray as FBI director on Chris Christie. One can assume that won't happen again and the 45th president will choose considerably better should he become president again. But would that too be enough?

It would be interesting to hear more details of what Trump plans to do in his executive capacity with both agencies, the FBI and CIA; perhaps, for strategic reasons, that should be left as a pleasant surprise.

That shouldn't stop us, however, from envisioning what replacement organizations might be like.

I am as interested here in what readers may think as much, or more, than I think, but I will throw out a few suggestions.

The FBI—with a new name—should be a seriously curtailed, domestic-only enterprise with a highly restricted budget and vastly fewer employees.

Most, virtually all, crime-stopping should be in the hands of local state and city constabulary with this new "FBI" stepping in only in obvious interstate situations—a serial killer on the run and so forth.

As an example, they shouldn't, as they do, have their nose in the Covenant School murders here in Nashville, Tennessee. The further investigations of this nature go from ground zero, the more likely they are to be misused for biased political purposes.

They shouldn't have anything to do with investigation of terrorism, spying and so forth, domestic or foreign. Their recent bungling, or apparent ignorance, of the Chinese communists having their own police forces in our cities is but

one illustration of extreme incompetence in this area. They were evidently too busy spying on us.

The major job of this organization should be aiding states in coordination, not in solving crimes. Above all, it shouldn't be located anywhere near the Beltway.

What to do about foreign and domestic spying is more complicated. The CIA that grew out of World War II's Office of Strategic Services (OSS) exists for a reason that need not be explained here.

The problem is its authority and reach has metastasized far beyond that logical explanation.

Kennedy—with obvious personal motivation—has had the courage to point that out. That's made his presidential campaign among the most noteworthy of recent times.

Mere reformation of the CIA, including the vaunted Church Commission of 1970, seems a prime example of that quote attributed to everybody and everything from Albert Einstein to a Chinese proverb: "The definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over and expecting different results."

Like the FBI, the CIA mustn't be reformed but canned.

But how, with China, Russia, Iran, North Korea, and others in the present or future out to get us?

I would submit one word: smaller. Maybe two words: much smaller.

Intelligence agencies by their nature become less efficient as they expand, as do most bureaucracies. We apparently have 17, and computers do most of the work now anyway.

But who keeps tabs on some lean version? Congress? I hate internet acronyms, but somehow SMH comes to mind.

Perhaps we need a new, second, Supreme Court of sorts (with or without lawyers) specifically tasked with keeping tabs on the new FBI and CIA to ensure they are spying on our adversaries and not us.

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