

## Are They Really Out to Get Trump?

Sometimes paranoia is justified

By [Philip Giraldi](#)

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*President Donald Trump is not exactly known for his self-restraint. The recent firing of Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) Director James Comey was not handled with any delicacy and has unleashed a firestorm of criticism coming from across the political spectrum. And since Comey's abrupt dismissal the backstabbing has become even worse, with many coming around to the view that Trump is actually crudely threatening Comey over the issue of what might or might not have been said at dinners and meetings between the two men.*

What exactly drove the firing at this time remains somewhat of a mystery though the media has been quick to link it directly to Trump's reported anger at the seemingly endless investigation into his Administration's possible ties to Russia, an investigation that nominally Comey headed as FBI Director. But that explanation somehow makes no sense as even a white-hot Trump would have realized that getting rid of Comey would only make the Russiagate problem worse as everyone would assume cover-up and would come after the White House with even greater intensity, which is precisely what has happened. Was Trump dumb enough to dig himself into a deeper hole? Possibly, but it seems unlikely.

What is real, however, is that constant innuendo means that anti-Russian hysteria has been mounting, including completely speculative pieces wondering whether the entourage of Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov had sought to sneak [a recording device](#) into the White House during last week's visit.

And what if there really is a conspiracy against Donald Trump being orchestrated within the various national security agencies that are part of the United States government? The

president has been complaining for months about damaging leaks emanating from the intelligence community and the failure of Congress to pay any attention to the illegal dissemination of classified information. It is quite possible that Trump has become aware that there is actually something going on and that something just might be a conspiracy to delegitimize and somehow remove him from office.

President Trump has also been insisting that the “Russian thing” is a made-up story, a view that I happen to agree with. I recently produced [my own analysis](#) of the possibility that there is in progress a soft, or stealth or silent coup, call it what you will, underway directed against the president and that, if it exists, it is being directed by former senior officials from the Obama White House. Indeed, it is quite plausible to suggest that it was orchestrated within the Obama White House itself before the government changed hands at the inauguration on January 20<sup>th</sup>. In line with that thinking, some observers are now suggesting that Comey might well have been party to the conspiracy and his dismissal would have been perfectly justified based on his demonstrated interference in both the electoral process and in his broadening of the acceptable role of his own Bureau, which Trump has described as “showboating.”

Two well-informed observers of the situation have recently joined in the discussion, Robert Parry of Consortiumnews and former CIA senior analyst Ray McGovern of the Veteran Intelligence Professionals for Sanity. McGovern has noted, as have I, that there is one individual who has been curiously absent from the list of former officials who have been called in to testify before the Senate Intelligence Committee. That is ex-CIA Director John Brennan, who many have long considered an extreme Obama/Hillary Clinton loyalist long rumored to be at the center of the information damaging to Team Trump sent to Washington by friendly intelligence services, including the British.



Ray (picture on the right) [suggests that](#) Brennan and also Comey may been at the center of a “Deep State” combined CIA-NSA-FBI cabal working to discredit the Trump candidacy and delegitimize his presidency. Brennan in particular was uniquely well placed to fabricate the Russian hacker narrative that has been fully embraced by Congress and the media even though no actual evidence supporting that claim has yet been produced. As WikiLeaks has now revealed that the CIA had the technical ability to hack into sites surreptitiously while leaving behind footprints that would attribute the hack to someone else, including the Russians, it does not take much imagination to consider that the alleged trail to Moscow might have been fabricated. If that is so, this false intelligence has in turn proven to be of immense value to those seeking to present “proof” that the Russian government handed the presidency to Donald Trump.

✖ Robert Parry asked in an article on May 10<sup>th</sup> whether we are seeing is [“Watergate redux or](#)

[‘Deep State’ coup?’](#) and then followed up with a second Piece [“The ‘Soft Coup’ of Russia-gate”](#) on the 13<sup>th</sup>. In other words, is this all a cover-up of wrongdoing by the White House akin to President Richard Nixon’s firing of Watergate independent special prosecutor Archibald Cox and the resignations of both the Attorney General and Deputy Attorney General or is it something quite different, an undermining of an elected president who has not actually committed any “high crimes and misdemeanors” to force his removal from office. Like Parry, I am reluctant to embrace conspiracy theories, in my case largely because I believe a conspiracy is awfully hard to sustain. The federal government leaks like a sieve and if more than two conspirators ever meet in the CIA basement it would seem to me their discussion would become public knowledge within forty-eight hours, but perhaps what we are seeing here is less a formal arrangement than a group of individuals who are loosely connected while driven by a common objective.

Parry sees the three key players in the scheme as John Brennan of CIA, Director of National Intelligence James Clapper and James Comey of the FBI. Comey’s role in the “coup” was key as it consisted of using his office to undercut both Hillary Clinton and Trump, neither of whom was seen as a truly suitable candidate by the Deep State. He speculates that a broken election might well have resulted in a vote in the House of Representatives to elect the new president, a process that might have produced a Colin Powell presidency as Powell actually received three votes in the Electoral College and therefore was an acceptable candidate under the rules governing the electoral process.

Yes, the scheme is bizarre, but Parry carefully documents how Russiagate has developed and how the national security and intelligence organs have been key players as it moved along, often working by leaking classified information. And President Barack Obama was likely the initiator, notably so when he de facto authorized the wide distribution of raw intelligence on Trump and the Russians through executive order. Parry notes, as would I, that to date no actual evidence has been presented to support allegations that Russia sought to influence the U.S. election and/or that Trump associates were somehow coopted by Moscow’s intelligence services as part of the process. Nevertheless, anyone even vaguely connected with Trump who also had contact with Russia or Russians has been regarded as a potential traitor. Carter Page, for example, who was investigated under a Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act warrant, was under suspicion because he made a speech in Moscow which was mildly critical of the west’s interaction with Russia after the fall of communism.

Parry’s point is that there is a growing Washington consensus that consists of traditional liberals and progressives as well as Democratic globalist interventionists and neoconservatives who believe that Donald Trump must be removed from office no matter what it takes. The interventionists and neocons in particular already control most of the foreign policy mechanisms but they continue to see Trump as a possible impediment to their plans for aggressive action against a host of enemies, most particularly Russia. As they are desirous of bringing down Trump “legally” through either impeachment or Article 25 of the Constitution which permits removal for incapacity, it might be termed a constitutional coup, though the other labels cited above also fit.

The rationale Trump haters have fabricated is simple: the president and his team colluded with the Russians to rig the 2016 election in his favor, which, if true, would provide grounds for impeachment. The driving force, in terms of the argument being made, is that removing Trump must be done “for the good of the country” and to “correct a mistake made by the

American voters.” The mainstream media is completely on board of the process, including the outlets that flatter themselves by describing their national stature, most notably the New York Times and Washington Post.

So what is to be done? For starters, until Donald Trump has unambiguously broken a law the critics should take a valium and relax. He is an elected president and his predecessors George W. Bush and Barack Obama certainly did plenty of things that in retrospect do not bear much scrutiny. Folks like Ray McGovern and Robert Parry should be listened to even when they are being provocative in their views. They are not, to be sure, friends of the White House in any conventional way and are not apologists for those in power, quite the contrary. Ray has been strongly critical of the current foreign policy, most particularly of the expansion of various wars, claims of Damascus’s use of chemical weapons, and the cruise missile attack on Syria. Robert in his latest article describes Trump as narcissistic and politically incompetent. But their legitimate concerns are that we are moving in a direction that is far more dangerous than Trump. A soft coup engineered by the national security and intelligence agencies would be far more dangerous to our democracy than anything Donald Trump can do.

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