

Will the Real John Brennan Please Stand Up?

When will he answer for his war crimes?

By [Philip Giraldi](#)

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The battle between many former intelligence chiefs and the White House is becoming a gift that keeps on giving to the mass media, which is characteristically deeply immersed in Trump derangement syndrome in attacking the president for his having [stripped](#) former CIA Director John Brennan of his security clearance. One of the [most ludicrous claims](#), cited in the Washington Post on Sunday, was that the Trump move was intended to “stifle free speech.” While I am quite prepared to believe a lot of things about the serial maladroitness moves and explanations coming out of the White House, how one equates removing Brennan’s security clearance to compromising his ability to speak freely escapes me. Indeed, Brennan has been speaking out with his usual vitriol nearly everywhere in the media ever since he lost the clearance, rather suggesting that his loss has given him a platform which has actually served to enhance his ability to speak his mind. He should thank Donald Trump for that.

Indeed, Brennan’s retaining a Top Secret code word clearance had nothing to do with free speech and everything to do with enhancing his market value for those poor sods who actually pay him to mouth off as an “expert” on television and in the newspapers. Are you listening *New York Times* and *NBC*? Brennan’s clearance did not mean that he had any real insight into current intelligence on anything, having lost that access when he left his job with the government. It only meant that he could sound authoritative and well informed by relying on his former status, enabling him to con you media folks out of your money on a recurrent basis.

It has sometimes been suggested that free speech is best exercised when it is somehow connected to the brain’s prefrontal lobes, enabling some thought process before the words come out of the mouth. It might be argued that Brennan has been remarkably deficient in that area, which is possibly why he looks so angry in all his photographs. Even John Brennan’s supporters are shy about defending the former CIA Director’s more extravagant claims. James Clapper, the ex-Director of National Intelligence, [has described](#) Brennan’s comments as “overheated.”

The John Brennan backstory is important. In 2016 he was Barack Obama’s CIA Director and also simultaneously working quite hard to help Hillary Clinton become president, which some might regard at a minimum as a conflict of interest. After Clinton lost, he continued his attacks on Trump. He apparently played a part in the notoriously salacious Steele dossier, which was surfaced in January just before the inauguration. The dossier included unverifiable information and was maliciously promoted by Brennan and others in the intelligence and law enforcement community. And even after Trump assumed office,

Brennan continued to prove to be unrelenting.

In May 2017, Brennan [testified before Congress that](#) during the 2016 campaign [he had](#) “...encountered and [was] aware of information and intelligence that revealed contacts and interactions between Russian officials and U.S. persons involved in the Trump campaign that I was concerned about because of known Russian efforts to suborn such individuals. It raised questions in my mind whether or not Russia was able to gain the co-operation of those individuals.” *Politico* was also in on the chase and picked up on Brennan’s bombshell in an article entitled [Brennan: Russia may have successfully recruited Trump campaign aides](#).

What Brennan did not describe, because it was “classified,” was how he developed the information regarding the Trump campaign in the first place. We know [from Politico](#) and other sources that it derived from foreign intelligence services, including the British, Dutch and Estonians, and there has to be a strong suspicion that the forwarding of at least some of that information might have been sought or possibly inspired by Brennan unofficially in the first place. But whatever the provenance of the intelligence, it is clear that Brennan then used that information to request an FBI investigation into a possible Russian operation directed against potential key advisers if Trump were to somehow get nominated and elected, which admittedly was a longshot at the time. That is how Russiagate began.

Since that time, Brennan [has tweeted](#) President Donald Trump, asserting that

“When the full extent of your venality, moral turpitude, and political corruption becomes known, you will take your rightful place as a disgraced demagogue in the dustbin of history.”

He [has attacked](#) the president for congratulating President Vladimir Putin over his victory in Russian national elections. He said that the U.S. President is “wholly in the pocket of Putin,” definitely “afraid of the president of Russia” and that the Kremlin “may have something on him personally. The fact that he has had this fawning attitude toward Mr. Putin ...continues to say to me that he does have something to fear and something very serious to fear.” And he then administered what might be considered the *coup de main*, saying that the president should be impeached for “treasonous” behavior after Trump [stood next to President Vladimir V. Putin of Russia](#) at a news conference in Finland and cast doubt on the conclusion of the intelligence agencies that Moscow interfered in the 2016 presidential election.

Trump’s decision to pull Brennan’s clearance attracted an immediate tweeted response from the ex-CIA Director: “This action is part of a broader effort by Mr. Trump to suppress freedom of speech & punish critics. It should gravely worry all Americans, including intelligence professionals, about the cost of speaking out.” He also added, in a *New York Times* [op-ed](#), that “Mr. Trump’s claims of no collusion [with Russia] are, in a word, hogwash,” though he provided no evidence to support his claim and failed to explain how exactly one washes a hog. There has subsequently been an avalanche of suitably angry Brennan appearances all over the Sunday talk shows, a development that will undoubtedly continue for the immediate future.

The claim that Trump is a Russian agent is not a new one, having also been made repeatedly by Brennan CIA associate the grim and inscrutable Michael Morell, who flaunts his [insider expertise](#) both at *The Times* and on CBS. Regarding both gentlemen, one might note that it is an easy mark to allege something sensational that you don’t have to prove,

but the claim nevertheless constitutes a very serious assertion of criminal behavior that might well meet the Constitutional standard for treason, which comes with a death penalty. It is notable that in spite of the gravity of the charge, Brennan and Morell have been either unable or unwilling to substantiate it in any detail. Even a usually tone-deaf Congress has noted that there is a problem with Brennan's credibility on the issue, not to mention his integrity. Richard Burr, Chairman of the Senate Intelligence Committee, has [observed that](#)

"Director Brennan's recent statements purport to know as fact that the Trump campaign colluded with a foreign power. If Director Brennan's statement is based on intelligence he received while still leading the CIA, why didn't he include it in the Intelligence Community Assessment released in 2017? If his statement is based on intelligence he has seen since leaving office, it constitutes an intelligence breach. If he has some other personal knowledge of or evidence of collusion, it should be disclosed to the Special Counsel, not The New York Times."

This behavior by Brennan is no surprise to those who know him and have worked with him. An ambitious crawler with a checkered history, he was strongly disliked by his peers at CIA, largely because of his lack of any sense of restraint and his reputation for over-the-top vindictiveness. He notoriously flunked out of spy training at the Agency, forcing him to instead become an analyst, so he went after the Clandestine Service in his reorganization of CIA after he became Director.

John Brennan has always been a failure as an intelligence officer even as he successfully climbed the promotion ladder. He was the CIA's Chief of Station (COS) in Saudi Arabia [when the Khobar Towers were bombed](#), killing 19 Americans, a disaster which he incorrectly blamed on the Iranians. He was deputy executive director on 9/11 and was complicit in that intelligence failure. He subsequently served as CIA chief of staff when his boss George Tenet concocted phony stories about Iraqi weapons of mass destruction. He also approved of the Agency torture and rendition programs and was complicit in the destruction of Libya as well as the attempt to do the same to Syria.

Barack Obama wanted Brennan to be his CIA Director but his record with the Agency torture and rendition programs made approval by the Senate problematical. Instead, he became the president's homeland security advisor and deputy national security advisor for counterterrorism, where he did even more damage, expanding the parameters of the death by drone operations and sitting down with the POTUS for the [Tuesday morning counterterrorism sessions](#) spent refining the kill list of American citizens.

After Obama was re-elected in 2012, he was able to overcome objections and appoint Brennan CIA Director. Conniving as ever, Brennan then ordered the Agency to read the communications of the congressional committee then engaged in investigating CIA torture, the very program that he had been complicit in. Brennan then denied to Congress under oath that any such intramural spying had occurred, afterwards apologizing when the truth came out. Moon of Alabama [characterizes him](#) as "...always ruthless, incompetent and dishonest."

So the real John Brennan emerges as an unlikely standard bearer for the First Amendment. He has an awful lot of baggage and is far from the innocent victim of a madman Trump that is being portrayed in much of the media. Indeed, he should be answerable for torture, renditions, extrajudicial killing of foreigners and targeted murder of American citizens. Those

constitute war crimes and in the not too distant past Japanese and German officers were hung for such behavior. One has to hope that Brennan's day of judgment will eventually come and he will have to pay for his multiple crimes against humanity.

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Philip M. Girdi, Ph.D., is Executive Director of the Council for the National Interest, a 501(c)3 tax deductible educational foundation that seeks a more interests-based U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East. Website is www.councilforthenationalinterest.org, address is P.O. Box 2157, Purcellville VA 20134 and its email is inform@cnionline.org. He is a frequent contributor to Global Research.

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