

# Donald Trump in 2018:

## False or Misleading Facts, Unfit to be president

**Copyright 2018 by Ronald B. Standler**

No copyright claimed for quotations.

No copyright claimed for works of the U.S. Government.

### Table of Contents

Trump's changes to [White House website](#)

#### January 2018

Wolff's [book](#) about Trump

Trump proclaims himself a [genius](#)

Trump speaks at a [fourth-grade](#) level

Trump awards prizes for worst [fake news](#)

#### February 2018

16 Feb 2018: [Russians](#) indicted

23 Feb 2018: Trump's speech to [CPAC](#)

Trump's inconsistent positions on [gun control](#) legislation

#### March 2018

1 Mar 2018: [Russia more belligerent](#)

14 Mar: [Trump admits inventing "facts"](#)

[Trump hates McCabe](#) at FBI

Scott [Pruitt's](#) condominium

#### April 2018

[Comey's](#) book about Trump

Trump's response to chemical weapons in [Syria](#)

#### May 2018

9 May: [Negative News is Fake News](#)

17 May: Trump's paranoia about [Spy](#) in Trump's 2016 campaign

#### June 2018

3 June: [Pardon Me?](#)

6 June: Trump's [ignorance](#)

9 June: Trump hates [CNN](#)

15 June: More [lies](#) from Trump

20 June: Trump lies about [remains](#) from North Korea

#### July 2018

More [lies](#) from Trump

[Russia](#) interfered with 2016 U.S. election

Trump never shops for [groceries](#)

#### August 2018

More [lies](#) from Trump, no voter fraud

Another book about Trump: *Unhinged*

### Themes:

[Trump's low approval by voters](#)  
[Trump's Rude & Obnoxious Remarks](#)  
["You're fired!" & Resignations](#)  
[Allegations of Sexual Misconduct](#)  
    [Clifford aka "Stormy Daniels"](#)  
    [Giuliani makes a mess](#)  
    [continuation](#)  
    [McDougal](#)  
[Immigration reform and the Wall](#)  
[How Trump makes decisions](#)

### Conclusion

#### [Removal of Trump from Presidency](#)

[Bills in U.S. House of Representatives on removal of Trump](#)

6 Apr 2017 [Raskin](#)  
12 July 2017 [Sherman](#)  
18 Aug 2017 [Lofgren](#)  
11 Oct 2017 [Green](#) (first attempt)  
15 Nov 2017 [Cohen](#)  
6 Dec 2017 [Green](#) (second attempt)  
19 Jan 2018 [Green](#) (third attempt)

#### [Bibliography on Trump Unfit to be President](#)

---

## Introduction

On 22 January 2017 — two days after Trump was inaugurated as president of the USA — I began chronicling Trump's bizarre behavior, including his making many false statements of fact, and other evidence of Trump's unfitness to be president. My essay on [Trump](#) during 2017 has 239 pages of quotations, facts, and my commentary, with 1730 links to news articles and documents.

The current essay continues to document Trump's bizarre behavior during 2018. In writing this essay, I hope to explain to students how Trump's defective thought process created a crisis in the U.S. Government. I document details — with many citations — that I hope will assist future historians in understanding the turmoil in 2018.

My essay on Trump during 2017 documented many instances of false statements by Trump. Having established that Trump can *not* get his facts correct — especially when he is boasting of his accomplishment — there is *no* need to present more cumulative evidence. Accordingly, in this essay I only mention Trump's false facts in some major speeches, or when the factual error is particularly egregious. On 1 August 2018, The [Washington Post](#) reported Trump

made 4229 false or misleading claims during 558 days as president. And *The Post* found Trump's rate of false claims per day is increasing as his presidency continues.

I avoid mentioning Trump's policies, some of which may be unconstitutional or ill-conceived, even harmful to the interests of the USA. Disagreements about policy are disputable or controversial, a matter of subjective opinion. On the other hand, Trump's false statements of fact have been shown by journalists to be objectively *false*.

---

## Trump's changes to White House website

The White House website under President Obama had the following different sections for transcripts and documents:

1. [Speeches & Remarks](#) transcripts of Obama's and Biden's speeches
2. [Press Briefings](#) transcripts of press briefings
3. [Statements & Releases](#) documents released by White House

Obama's website was easy to navigate and contained what I would expect to find at the White House. But Trump's White House condensed all three of these separate topics into one section called [Briefings & Statements](#). The effect of Trump's change was to push recent items off the first page, forcing the reader to wade through irrelevant material, then click the next page button at the bottom of the webpage. Another effect was to conceal the fact that press briefings were less frequent in the Trump White House than in Obama's White House. Still another effect was to conceal that the White House website contained transcripts of only some of the president's speeches.

On 6 February 2017, the Trump White House added a new section to its website that collected newspaper-style [articles](#) that praised the president's policies and actions. Those articles struck me as unnecessary propaganda.

Many of Trump's important speeches are *not* available at the White House website, for example:

- 10 March 2018 speech in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.
- 14 March 2018 speech in Missouri.
- 4 May 2018 speech to National Rifle Association annual meeting. ([Pence's](#) speech is posted at the White House.)
- 25 May 2018 remarks to journalists about the Kim/Trump summit, as Trump departed from the White House to the Naval Academy.
- 25 May 2018 speech to graduating class at U.S. Naval Academy.

- 20 June 2018 speech in Duluth, Minnesota.
- 5 July 2018 speech in Great Falls, Montana
- 31 July 2018 speech at the Florida State Fairgrounds in Tampa, Florida (where Trump famously said one needs a photo identification card to purchase [groceries](#).)
- 

On 24 July 2018, [CNN](#) reported that the White House website would stop posting summaries of Trump's telephone calls with foreign leaders.

In summary, there was less information at Trump's White House website than at the White House websites for the two previous presidents.

---

## January 2018

### Goodbye, Pakistan

On 1 January 2018, Trump showed why he will never be elected "Miss Congeniality" on his beauty pageant.

The United States has foolishly given Pakistan more than 33 billion dollars in aid over the last 15 years, and they have given us nothing but lies & deceit, thinking of our leaders as fools. They give safe haven to the terrorists we hunt in Afghanistan, with little help. No more!

Donald J. Trump, [tweet](#), 07:12 EST, 1 January 2018.

The Pakistani government in Islamabad promptly summoned the U.S. Ambassador to explain Trump's tweet. [Express Tribune](#) in Pakistan; [The Nation](#) in Pakistan; [Reuters](#).

Trump forgot to mention the corruption in the Pakistani government and the widespread Islamic terrorism inside Pakistan. As my [essay](#) in 2013-2014 explained, the Pakistani government has failed to eradicate polio, making Pakistan one of three nations in the world where polio still infects people.

On 4 January, the U.S. Government suspended \$ 1355 million/year in "security aid" to Pakistan. [New York Times](#); [Washington Post](#).

---

### Trump did *not* make air travel safe

On 2 January 2018, Trump took credit for zero fatal airplane crashes by commercial airlines in the year 2017.

Since taking office I have been very strict on Commercial Aviation. Good news — it

was just reported that there were Zero deaths in 2017, the best and safest year on record!

Donald J. Trump, [tweet](#), 09:13 EST, 2 Jan 2018.

Trump arrogantly took credit for the good work of pilots, air traffic control, mechanics, as well as engineers' development of better engines and aircraft. Journalists pointed out that there had been zero fatalities on commercial airlines in the USA for each of the past four years. The two most recent fatal crashes in the USA are:

- A. 49 people died when a regional airline turboprop aircraft crashed near Buffalo, NY in February 2009.
- B. Three people died in the crash of a Korean airliner at San Francisco airport on 6 July 2013.

[Washington Post](#); [Washington Post](#); [Associated Press](#); [FactCheck.org](#); [The Atlantic](#).

Notice that when something good happens (e.g., stock market prices go up), then Trump takes credit and boasts of his accomplishment. But when something bad happens (e.g., North Korea develops better nuclear weapons), then Trump blames it on Bill Clinton, George W. Bush, or Obama.

---

**Goodbye, Mr. Bannon**  
**Hello, cease-and-desist letters from Trump's attorney**  
**or**  
**How to Sell Wolff's Book that is critical of Trump**

Steve Bannon was chief of Breitbart News website, where he helped elect Trump. Trump appointed Bannon to be chief strategist at the White House. In August 2017, Trump fired Bannon and Bannon returned to Breitbart. Bannon spoke to Michael Wolff, the author of a forthcoming book about Trump. The book quotes Bannon as saying a 9 June 2016 meeting between Trump's eldest son, Kushner, Manafort, and Russians was “treasonous” and “unpatriotic”. [The Guardian](#); [New York Times](#). Within hours of the publication of Bannon's remarks on 3 January by *The Guardian*, Trump issued a written statement to journalists, part of which said:

Steve Bannon has nothing to do with me or my Presidency. When he was fired, he not only lost his job, he lost his mind. Steve was a staffer who worked for me after I had already won the nomination by defeating seventeen candidates, often described as the most talented field ever assembled in the Republican party.

....

Steve pretends to be at war with the media, which he calls the opposition party, yet he spent his time at the White House leaking false information to the media to make himself seem far more important than he was. It is the only thing he does well. Steve was rarely in a one-on-one meeting with me and only pretends to have had influence to fool a few people with no access and no clue, whom he helped write phony books.

Donald J. Trump, "Statement from the President of the United States," [New York Times](#), 3 Jan 2018.

Also posted at [Associated Press](#).

Trump not only engages in an ad hominem attack on Bannon, but also Trump now attempts to deny that Bannon had influenced Trump during both the campaign and early months in the White House.

Callum Borchers, writing in the [Washington Post](#), said: "President Trump essentially excommunicated Stephen K. Bannon on Wednesday with a fire-breathing statement...."

Can this squabble get worse? Yes. Later on 3 January, Trump's personal attorney sent Bannon a cease-and-desist letter that claims Bannon violated a written employment agreement that contained confidentiality and non-disparagement clauses. Trump's attorney also claimed that Bannon had defamed Trump. [Washington Post](#); [ABC News](#).

The U.S. Supreme Court has repeatedly held that "political speech" receives the highest protection under the First Amendment, so it is difficult to make a case that one can defame the president. Also the U.S. Supreme Court has repeatedly held that a government employee can speak publicly on a "matter of public concern", which free-speech holding protects Bannon. The employment agreement was between Bannon and the Trump Organization, a private company. But Bannon was employed by the White House, so the agreement arguably does *not* cover what Bannon observed in the White House. The cease-and-desist letter was probably intended to intimidate Bannon into stopping criticism of Trump. [Washington Post](#); [Volkh Conspiracy](#).

On 4 January, Trump's personal attorney sent a "cease and desist" letter to Henry Holt, the publisher of Wolff's book on Trump, titled *Fire and Fury: Inside the Trump White House*. [Washington Post](#). My comment is that it is very inappropriate for the president of the USA to be engaging in attempted censorship. Henry Holt properly ignored the cease-and-desist letter, as described in the next paragraph.

The real winner in this event may be Henry Holt, a division of Macmillan, the publisher of Wolff's book on Trump. The book was scheduled to be publicly sold beginning 9 January, but the first sale was moved to 5 January, because of the publicity from Trump denouncing Bannon. Because of pre-orders, on 4 January this book is already Nr. 1 at [amazon.com](#) and Barnes & Noble, two leading online book stores. [CNN](#); [Wall Street Journal](#); [The Guardian](#).

When Trump attempted to protect his reputation, he actually further damaged his reputation, by increasing sales of Wolff's book. This episode would make a nice case study for students in business school on how *not* to respond to a crisis.

On 9 January, Bannon, his journalism career now in tatters, resigned from Breitbart. [Washington Post](#); [New York Times](#); [Associated Press](#).

On 10 January, the [Wall Street Journal](#) reported that one million copies of Wolff's book had been sold in the first four days, ending the night of 8 January.

On 11 January, the Rodong Sinmun newspaper in North Korea gleefully reported that the popularity of Wolff's book, *Fire and Fury: Inside the Trump White House*, "foretells Trump's political demise". Meanwhile, the publisher has ordered the printing of more than one million paper copies of Wolff's book. [Associated Press](#).

On 21 January 2018 — approximately two weeks after Wolff's book was available for sale — *The New York Times* listed Wolff's book as Nr. 1 on its nonfiction best-seller list for a second consecutive week.

On 18 March 2018, Wolff's book was Nr. 1 on *The New York Times* nonfiction best-seller list for the tenth consecutive week.

---

### Trump proclaims himself a "genius"

At the White House press briefing on Thursday, 4 January 2018, Trump's spokeswoman was asked about Trump's mental fitness to be president.

QUESTION: What's the President's reaction to the growing number of suggestions, both in this book and in the media, that he's mentally unfit to serve as President?

MS. SANDERS: The same way we have when it's been asked before: that it's disgraceful and laughable. If we was unfit, he probably wouldn't be sitting there and wouldn't have defeated the most qualified group of candidates the Republican Party has ever seen. This is an incredibly strong and good leader. That's why we've had such a successful 2017 and why we're going to continue to do great things as we move forward in this administration.

"Press Briefing by Press Secretary Sarah Sanders," [White House](#), 4 January 2018.

My comment is Whoa! The people who voted for Trump in the Republican primary elections in 2016 and who "defeated the most qualified group of candidates the Republican Party has ever seen" were *not* professional psychiatrists. Those voters lacked both the education and professional experience to decide whether Trump was mentally unfit. Further, the spokeswoman's remark about "successful 2017" is propaganda. Trump's promises to voters (e.g., the wall along the Mexican border, banning Muslims from entering the USA) remain unfilled. The proper way to respond to questions about the president's mental fitness is to have the president examined by a group of unbiased psychiatrists, and then have their report made public.

On Saturday morning, 6 January 2018, Trump gave himself a mental evaluation. He not only passed but also proclaimed himself a genius.

Now that Russian collusion, after one year of intense study, has proven to be a total hoax on the American public, the Democrats and their lapdogs, the Fake News Mainstream Media, are taking out the old Ronald Reagan playbook and screaming mental stability and intelligence.....

Donald J. Trump, [tweet](#), 07:19 EST, 6 Jan 2018.

....Actually, throughout my life, my two greatest assets have been mental stability and



being, like, really smart. Crooked Hillary Clinton also played these cards very hard and, as everyone knows, went down in flames. I went from VERY successful businessman, to top T.V. Star.....

Donald J. Trump, [tweet](#), 07:27 EST, 6 Jan 2018.

....to President of the United States (on my first try). I think that would qualify as not smart, but genius.... and a very stable genius at that!

Donald J. Trump, [tweet](#), 07:30 EST, 6 Jan 2018.

*The New York Times* retorted:

What it comes down to is an effort to understand and explain a president who acts so differently from every other person to have held his office. Mr. Trump's self-absorption, impulsiveness, lack of empathy, obsessive focus on slights, tenuous grasp of facts and penchant for sometimes far-fetched conspiracy theories have invited armchair diagnoses and generated endless commentary.

Michael Tackett, "Trump Defends His Mental Capacity, Calling Himself a 'Genius'," [New York Times](#), 6 Dec 2018.

At a press conference at Camp David on 6 January, Trump said:

QUESTION: Mr. President, you were talking about the policy issues that you all were focusing on the last few days here at Camp David, but this morning you were tweeting about your mental state. Why did you feel the need to tweet about that this morning?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, only because I went to the best colleges for college. I went to a — I had a situation where I was a very excellent student. Came out and made billions and billions of dollars. Became one of the top businesspeople. Went to television and, for ten years, was a tremendous success, as you probably have heard. Ran for President one time and won.

....

And when I saw some of the people say — and you look at some of [Wolff's] past books. He did a book on Rupert Murdoch. It was a terrible exposé and it was false. So much of it was false. I consider it a work of fiction and I think it's a disgrace that somebody is able to have something, do something like that. The libel laws are very weak in this country. If they were strong, it would be very helpful. You wouldn't have things like that happen where you can say whatever comes to your head.

"Remarks by President Donald Trump, Vice President Mike Pence, Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, and House Speaker Paul Ryan After Congressional Republican Leadership Retreat," [White House](#), noon, 6 Jan 2018.

My comment is that Trump is too stupid to understand global warming, even when it is explained to him. When someone is really smart, everyone around him knows it, and it is unnecessary for him to boast about his intelligence. Trump's "tenuous grasp of facts" and his delusions show a serious disconnect from reality. My [essay](#) on Trump during 2017 documents his delusions about the size of the crowd at his inauguration and his belief that Obama wiretapped the Trump Tower, amongst other examples.



In looking at photographs of Trump during the campaign in 2016 and since then, I am impressed by Trump's *appearance*. He is always wearing a nice suit, his neck tie is straight, his hair is combed, .... And then it occurred to me that *appearance* is all that Trump has. Any so-called accomplishments are the work of his subordinates.

One of the big problems in treating mental illness is that mentally ill people *believe* they are normal and do not need treatment. So it is *not* credible when a person denies he is mentally ill. Trump's assertion that one of his two greatest assets is "mental stability" and Trump's assertion that he is "very stable" are not only worthless, but also shows he does not understand mental illness.

In his first tweet on 6 January quoted above, Trump links the current interest in his mental stability to the Democrats failing to prove collusion between the Russians and the Trump campaign. He again attacks "the Fake News Mainstream Media", who have been reporting his failures and his problems. This may be evidence of paranoia by Trump.

Note that Trump accuses the Democrats and journalists of "taking out the old Ronald Reagan playbook and screaming mental stability and intelligence". But history shows that — in November 1994, after Reagan's presidency ended in Jan 1989 — Reagan publicly admitted he had Alzheimer's disease. So it is plausible that Trump may be in the early stages of some neurological or psychiatric condition, exacerbated by the pressure of being president of the USA with constant criticism by political opponents, commentators, and journalists. Moreover, as Callum Borchers said in the [Washington Post](#), Trump comparing himself to Reagan is "ill-advised" and "not the best historical reference."

There is now abundant accumulated evidence in Trump's tweets and Trump's public statements to seriously question Trump's mental ability. The reports by journalists of anonymous sources in the White House add to the concern that Trump is unfit to be president. The continued assurances by the White House press spokeswoman, and other senior government officials, are misleading and *not* plausible. It is a disservice to the public by keeping Trump in office when he is unfit to serve. When I say the "public", I mean not only the USA, but also worldwide. For example, Trump's inconsistent and childish responses to North Korea have greatly complicated the solution of the North Korean problem, as I document in my [essay](#). Trump's belligerent statements and insulting Kim Jong Un has increased the peril for people in South Korea, as well as American military personnel in South Korea and Japan.

On 12 July 2018, after a wild, disruptive, and insulting performance at the NATO summit in Brussels on 11-12 July (see, e.g., [Politico](#); [New York Times](#)), Trump again declared he was a stable genius.

QUESTION Thank you. We understand your message, but some people ask themselves, will you be tweeting differently once you board the Air Force One? Thank you.

THE PRESIDENT: No, that's other people that do that. I don't. I'm very consistent. I'm a very stable genius. (Laughter.)

"Remarks by President Trump at Press Conference After NATO Summit, Brussels, Belgium," [White House](#), 12 July 2018.

---

## Trump speaks at a fourth-grade level

On 8 January 2018, the Swedish website, [factba.se](http://factba.se), performed a lexicological analysis of the first 30,000 words spoken extemporaneously (e.g., press conferences) by each of the last 15 U.S. presidents, beginning with Hoover in 1929. By using extemporaneous speech, there is no influence by speechwriters. On the Flesch-Kincaid grade level scale, Trump spoke at the mid-fourth-grade (4.6) level, the lowest of any of the 15 presidents. Truman spoke at almost the sixth-grade (5.9) level, the next lowest of the presidents.

By any metric to measure vocabulary, using more than a half dozen tests with different methodologies, Donald Trump has the most basic, most simplistically constructed, least diverse vocabulary of any President in the last 90 years. This is by a statistically significant margin in each case.

....

It statistically made no difference which way we analyzed it, or which method. It affected some scores and some of the ranks, but not the position of Donald Trump on that list. In each case, he ranked last of the past 15 presidents.

By every metric and methodology tested, Donald Trump's vocabulary and grammatical structure is significantly more simple, and less diverse, than any President since Herbert Hoover, when measuring "off-script" words, that is, words far less likely to have been written in advance for the speaker.

Bill Frischling, "'Stable Genius' — Let's Go to the Data," [factba.se](http://factba.se), 8 Jan 2018.

Reported by [Newsweek](http://Newsweek), 8 Jan 2018.

The conclusion is obvious: Trump is *no* genius. The 71 year old Trump speaks like a child in the fourth grade of school. Trump's use of name-calling is also childish.

---

## 7 Jan 2018: Adam Schiff (D-Calif.)

On Sunday, 7 January 2018, Adam Schiff, the ranking Democrat on the House Intelligence Committee, appeared on CNN's State of the Union television program and said about Wolff's book:

JAKE TAPPER, CNN HOST: Congressman, I want to get your take on the president's response to Michael Wolff's new book, "Fire and Fury," the suggestion that there are many people around the president who are concerned he's mentally unfit for office.

President Trump, in response, tweeted — quote — "Actually, throughout my life, my two greatest assets have been mental stability and being, like, really smart. Crooked Hillary Clinton also played these cards very hard and, as everyone knows, went down in flames. I went from very successful businessman to top TV star to president of the United States on my first try. I think that would qualify as not smart, but genius, and a

very stable genius at that" — unquote.

What is your reaction to those tweets?

REP. ADAM SCHIFF (D), CALIFORNIA: Well, look, I don't think anyone is particularly surprised by what has been revealed in the Wolff book in terms of the questions that people working closest with the president have about his capacity to do the job.

I don't think there is anyone in Congress, frankly, of either party who does not concur at least privately with those observations and concerns. Certainly, very few are willing to express them publicly in Congress, and I think that's to the detriment of our institution.

The big question for us, though, is, you know, plainly, we have a seriously flawed human being in the Oval Office. Will those flaws be allowed to permeate the whole of government?

And I see honestly, Jake, some very disturbing signs that they are. And among the most serious, from my point of view, are these reports that the Justice Department, at the president's urging, is now investigating Hillary Clinton again.

transcript, "Mexico Not Paying for President Trump's Wall?; New Book Questions Trump's Mental Fitness; Interview With Senior Policy Adviser to the President Stephen Miller; Interview With California Congressman Adam Schiff," [CNN](#), interview on 7 Jan 2018, transcript first posted 10 Jan 2018.

Three sentences by Schiff are quoted by Ian Kullgren, "Schiff: 'We have a seriously flawed human being in the Oval Office'," [Politico](#), 12:53 EST, 7 Jan 2018.

---

## **Trump wants to change defamation law**

Trump has a long history of wanting to change defamation law to make it easier for public figures, like Trump, to sue news media, journalists, and authors who criticize him. One of the features of Trump's personality is that he likes to sue people who irritate him.

On 30 March 2017, Trump tweeted:

The failing @nytimes has disgraced the media world. Gotten me wrong for two solid years. Change libel laws?

Donald J. Trump, [tweet](#), 10:27 ET, 30 Mar 2017.

On 10 December 2017, Trump tweeted:

Very little discussion of all the purposely false and defamatory stories put out this week by the Fake News Media. They are out of control — correct reporting means nothing to them. Major lies written, then forced to be withdrawn after they are exposed...a stain on America!

Donald J. Trump, [tweet](#), 16:18 EST, 10 Dec 2017.

On 6 January 2018, Trump held a press conference — quoted in context in the section above titled "Trump proclaims himself a genius" — where Trump mentioned libel laws:

The libel laws are very weak in this country. If they were strong, it would be very helpful. You wouldn't have things like that happen where you can say whatever comes to your head.

"Remarks by President Donald Trump, Vice President Mike Pence, Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, and House Speaker Paul Ryan After Congressional Republican Leadership Retreat," [White House](#), noon, 6 Jan 2018.

Before a cabinet meeting on 10 January 2018, Trump told journalists:

On a separate front, we are going to take a strong look at our country's libel laws so that when somebody says something that is false and defamatory about someone, that person will have meaningful recourse in our courts. If somebody says something that's totally false and knowingly false, that the person that has been abused, defamed, libeled will have meaningful recourse.

Our current libel laws are a sham and a disgrace, and do not represent American values or American fairness. So we're going to take a strong look at that. We want fairness. You can't say things that are false — knowingly false — and be able to smile as money pours into your bank account. We're going to take a very, very strong look at that. And I think what the American people want to see is fairness.

Donald J. Trump, "Remarks by President Trump in Cabinet Meeting," [White House](#), 10 Jan 2018.

When Trump says "I think what the American people want to see is fairness", I think he means that journalists and authors who criticize the president should be punished in court. Before Trump became president, "American values" were respect for freedom of the press — such freedom is mentioned in the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. Trump believes it is "unfair" when Trump is offended by a journalist who criticizes Trump. Defamation law in the USA is mostly state law, limited by U.S. Supreme Court opinions that provide protections for authors and journalists who report on "public figures".

Various journalists reported on Trump's 10 January threat to change the federal law of defamation. See e.g., [New York Times](#); [Washington Post](#); [Associated Press](#).

As documented in my previous [essay](#) on Trump, he has defamed Obama in at least three series of false statements:

1. Repeatedly saying during 2011-17 that Obama was *not* born in the USA.
2. Alleging that Obama had ordered wiretapping of Trump Tower.
3. Stating that Obama rarely called widows of U.S. Military personnel killed in action.

If defamation law were easier for plaintiffs, then Obama could more easily sue Trump for defamation. This reason alone strongly suggests that Trump should *not* change defamation law. Note that Obama — unlike Trump — is *not* litigious, but this is just a hypothetical example of how changes in defamation law would endanger Trump.

## 12 Jan 2018: Trump's annual physical examination

On Friday, 12 January 2018, a U.S. Navy physician gave Trump an annual physical examination. Note the examination did *not* include a psychiatric examination. [Politico](#) noted the irony that launch officers in the U.S. Air Force receive an annual psychiatric examination, but the commander-in-chief — who orders the launch of nuclear weapons — does *not* receive a regular psychiatric examination.

On 12 January, the [Associated Press](#) reported the physician said Trump was in "excellent" health, although it is obvious that Trump is fat.

On 16 January, the White House posted a [summary](#) of the physician's report on Trump's health. The important part for this essay is the one sentence: "A cognitive screening exam using the Montreal Cognitive Assessment was normal, with a score of 30 over 30."

The president's physician attended the daily press briefing at the White House on 16 January. He said the following about the president's cognitive function:

QUESTION: Thank you. Two questions for you. Number one: There have been some questions as part of your exam — I'm wondering if you talked to the President about this — about the President's mental fitness. He has pushed back on that calling himself a "stable genius". Can you assess the President's mental fitness for office?

DR. JACKSON: Absolutely. So, many of you may have picked up on the fact that we did do a cognitive assessment as part of the exam. And initially, you know, I had no intention of including the cognitive assessment in this exam because, to be honest with you, per all the guidelines that are out there, it's not indicated at this time.

A lot of the guidelines would suggest that you do cognitive screening questions, and that, if you have a positive or concerning answer in the screening questions, that then you engage with a cognitive screening tool.

So I had no intentions whatsoever doing that, like I said, because I didn't feel it was clinically indicated. And part of the reason I didn't think it was clinically indicated is because I've spent almost every day in the President's presence since January 20 — or, you know, last year, when he got into office. And I've seen him every day. I'll see him one, two, sometimes three times a day because of the location of my office. We have conversations about many things, most don't revolve around medical issues at all. But I've gotten to know him pretty well and I had absolutely no concerns about his cognitive ability or his neurological functions.

So I was not going to do a cognitive exam, I had no intention of doing one. The reason that we did the cognitive assessment is, plain and simple, because the President asked me to do it. He came to me and he said, is there something we can do — a test, or some type of screen that we can do — to assess my cognitive ability?

And so I looked into it, and once again — and my initial question was that I didn't think it was indicated and I didn't think we should do it. After looking at some of the

guidelines, there are a few guidelines out there that lean in the direction of potentially doing it. You know, the Medicare guidelines and some of the NIH, National Institute of Aging — they've indicated that it might be a good thing to start doing for most patients in the future.

With that in mind, I went through and I looked at a variety of the cognitive assessments that were available. Most of them were very simple, very short. And I think that's the goal, actually, for primary care providers, in doing this, is to keep it simple. Keep it short.

We picked one of the ones that was a little bit more involved, it was longer. It was the more difficult one of all of them. It took significantly longer to complete, but the President did exceedingly well on it. So that was not driven at all by any clinical concerns I have; it was driven by the President's wishes and he did well on it.

....

QUESTION: Dr. Jackson, thank you. Could you just elaborate, in layman's terms, if possible — and you've been doing a great job of that — what you ruled out in these cognitive tests?

You know, there have been reports that the President has forgotten names, that he's repeating himself. Are you ruling out things like early onset Alzheimer's? Are you looking at dementia-like symptoms?

[Irrelevant second question omitted here.]

DR. JACKSON: Yes, so I think that that cognitive test, it's well respected. It's a test that's used throughout the United States; lots and lots of institutions use that test. It's the one that they use at Walter Reed for patients that they feel like they need to do cognitive screens on.

So it's a universally accepted test. And, like I said, it's a little bit more extensive than some of the shorter ones that are in some of the guidelines. But, yeah, it screens for all those things. It screens for any type of cognitive issues like Alzheimer's and all those other things.

So the fact that the President got 30 out of 30 on that exam, I think that there's no indication whatsoever that he has any cognitive issues. And on a day-to-day basis, like I said before, it's been my experience that the President — he's very sharp, and he's very articulate when he speaks to me. And I've never known him to repeat himself around me. He says what he's got to say, and he speaks his mind. And I've found no reason whatsoever to think that the President has —

QUESTION: He speaks his mind? (Laughter.)

DR. JACKSON: Yeah. I've found no reason whatsoever to think that the President has any issues whatsoever with his thought process.

....

DR. JACKSON: But, no, I mean, I think at this particular point, based on my exam, and the cognitive testing that we did, and just my day-to-day interactions with the President — you know, the President is mentally very, very sharp; very intact.

QUESTION: Do believe he is fit for duty?

DR. JACKSON: Absolutely, he's fit for duty. I think he will remain fit for duty for the remainder of this term and even for the remainder of another term, if he's elected.

....

QUESTION: Dr. Jackson, just to make sure we're clear on this — when you analyzed his cognitive ability or neurological functions, that is not the same thing as a psychiatric exam or psychological exam, correct?

DR. JACKSON: It is not. No, it's a screening assessment for cognitive impairment. Yeah, right.

"Press Briefing by Press Secretary Sarah Sanders and Dr. Ronny Jackson," [White House](#), 16 Jan 2018.

Dr. Jackson's press briefing became a cheerleading performance when he said: "I think [Trump] will remain fit for duty for the remainder of this term and even for the remainder of another term, if he's elected." Trump's first term expires in January 2021, Trump's hypothetical second term expires in January 2025. I suggest that it is ridiculous to extrapolate one medical exam of a now 71-year old president for seven more years.

Several news articles suggested that Trump has serious cardiovascular disease, which Dr. Jackson minimized in his press briefing. [CNN](#); [New York Times](#); [Washington Post](#)

Many observers have concluded that Trump has mental problems, although there is *no* consensus whether the problems are neurological, psychiatric, or a psychological personality disorder. Trump's perfect score on the screening examination for cognitive impairment appears to indicate he does not have a neurological disease.

To take just one example — from my essay on [North Korea](#) — beginning 17 Sep 2017, Trump's repeated insults and belligerent taunting of Kim Jong Un in North Korea suggests that Trump lacks control of violent impulses. But then on 11 Jan 2018, Trump inconsistently said: "I [would?] probably have a very good relationship with Kim Jong Un." That suggests that Trump is unaware of what he has said.

Trump's defective thought process includes his inability to cite correct facts:

- Trump's belief that Obama was *not* born in Hawaii
- Trump's delusion that he would have won the popular vote in Nov 2016, except that millions of illegal immigrants voted for Hillary Clinton



- Trump's delusion about the size of the crowd at his inauguration
- Trump's delusion that Obama ordered the wiretapping of Trump Tower

These examples are documented in my essay about [Trump](#) during 2017.

### **Trump awards prizes for worst fake news**

Back on 27 November 2017, Trump suggested a prize for the worst fake news.

We should have a contest as to which of the Networks, plus CNN and not including Fox, is the most dishonest, corrupt and/or distorted in its political coverage of your favorite President (me). They are all bad. Winner to receive the FAKE NEWS TROPHY!

Donald J. Trump, [tweet](#), 09:04 EST, 27 Nov 2017.

On Monday, 2 January 2018, Trump announced on 8 January he would make awards for the worst fake news.

I will be announcing THE MOST DISHONEST & CORRUPT MEDIA AWARDS OF THE YEAR on Monday at 5:00 o'clock. Subjects will cover Dishonesty & Bad Reporting in various categories from the Fake News Media. Stay tuned!

Donald J. Trump, [tweet](#), 20:05 EST, 2 Jan 2018.

The Fake News Awards, those going to the most corrupt & biased of the Mainstream Media, will be presented to the losers on Wednesday, January 17th, rather than this coming Monday. The interest in, and importance of, these awards is far greater than anyone could have anticipated!

Donald J. Trump, [tweet](#), 15:35 EST, 7 Jan 2018.

My comment is that this is a highly inappropriate publicity stunt that is designed to excite Trump's supporters, who are ignorant of First Amendment law. It's entertainment for the plebeians.

There is a "chilling effect" on freedom of speech and freedom of the press when the U.S. president in the White House criticizes journalists. Moreover, the president's criticism of specific newspapers and television networks is a negative endorsement — it is inappropriate for the White House to be evaluating products and services.

Steve Cohen, U.S. Representative from Tennessee, considered Trump's "undermining freedom of the press" to be an impeachable offense, by including that count in his 15 Nov 2017 draft articles of impeachment. (See [bills](#), below.)

Finally, there is the irony of Trump — who the [Washington Post](#) documented made 1950 false claims as president during 2017 — giving awards for fake news. Trump himself should win that award for his continuing stream of false "facts" and delusions.

On the evening of 8 January 2018, the [Committee to Protect Journalists](#) gave Trump first prize in the "Overall Achievement in Undermining Global Press Freedom" category. The CPJ also awarded Trump the runner-up in the "Most Thin-skinned" category. My comment is that

all genuine Americans will stand a little taller now that our president has received the recognition that he so richly deserves. <sarcastic smirk>

On 17 January at 20:00 EST, Trump announced his awards for fake news. CNN took first place with four awards, *The New York Times* took second place with two awards, and third-place was shared by ABC, *The Washington Post*, Time, and Newsweek. Trump's awards were announced on a [Republican](#) party website, *not* on a White House website. [New York Times](#); [Washington Post](#).

I suggest that Trump used the Republican party website, instead of something from the White House, in what may be an attempt to evade government ethics regulations. Trump might argue that he is speaking as a political candidate, not as a government official. The problem with that position is that the awards were for 2017, during which time Trump was president, and most of the allegedly fake news criticized the president.

The [Washington Post](#) criticized Trump's fake news awards after the news media had acknowledged and corrected its error. In contrast, "President Trump almost never admits error, even as he has made more than 2,000 false or misleading [statements](#)." The fake news article attributed by Trump to *The Washington Post* was actually a tweet to the personal account of a reporter who writes for the *Post*.

Note that, back on 8 Dec 2017, [Politico](#) counted 15 nations where despotic leaders had adopted Trump's "fake news" label for any news article that angered the leader. The USA formerly was a beacon of freedom and democracy, but under Trump the USA has become an inspiration for authoritarian rulers.

---

### 30 Jan 2018: Trump's SOTU speech

On the night of 30 January 2018, Trump read his State of the Union (SOTU) speech. Trump apparently did *not* depart from the text prepared by his speechwriters. But Trump did make numerous factual errors in his SOTU speech. Worse, many of the errors in his SOTU speech were repeats of errors that had been detected by journalists in previous speeches and statements by Trump. [Washington Post](#); [New York Times](#); [Associated Press](#); [Los Angeles Times](#).

I am particularly irritated by Trump's phrase "clean coal". This phrase is propaganda, *not* a fact. Burning coal emits sulfur dioxide, which makes acid rain that damages vegetation. Burning coal emits large amounts of soot. There are many alternative energy sources that are less harmful to the environment than coal. Trump's ignorance of atmospheric chemistry and Trump's willingness to champion coal miners is on display here.

Trump falsely claimed that more people watched his SOTU speech on television than any previous president's SOTU speech.

Thank you for all of the nice compliments and reviews on the State of the Union speech. 45.6 million people watched, the highest number in history. @FoxNews beat every other Network, for the first time ever, with 11.7 million people tuning in. Delivered from the heart!

Donald J. Trump, [tweet](#), 07:02 EST, 1 Feb 2018.

One day before Trump's erroneous Tweet, [Forbes](#) magazine posted at its website a commentary that Trump's Nielsen ratings "did not beat Barack Obama's first State of the Union ratings back in 2010."

The [Associated Press](#) reported "Trump's TV viewership as measured by Nielsen (45.6 million, as he said) trailed that for first State of the Union speeches by Barack Obama (48 million), George W. Bush (51.7 million) and Bill Clinton (46.8 million)."

The [Washington Post](#) reported that "15 of the last 25 [SOTU] speeches" had a larger audience share in the Nielsen ratings.

[PolitiFact](#) also criticized Trump's false facts: "Trump came in sixth in total State of the Union viewers since Nielsen began collecting the data in 1993."

This is perhaps another appearance of Trump's narcissistic character flaw, which requires him to be the best, or most important, in everything that he does.

On 5 February 2018, Trump characterized Democrats who failed to applaud his SOTU message as "treasonous" and "unAmerican". See [below](#).

---

## February 2018

### Trump's Military Parade

On 6 February, news leaked out that on 18 January Trump had ordered the Pentagon to plan a grand military parade. Apparently, Trump was inspired by a French military parade on Bastille Day. [Washington Post](#); [CNN](#).

The [Washington Post](#) reminds us that "Trump's interest in having a large-scale military parade now is likely to receive a mixed reception, especially among those who are concerned about nationalism, militarism or the president's past praise for authoritarian leaders. The tradition stretches back centuries but typically has followed the conclusion of wars."

On 14 February, the White House budget director said Trump's parade will cost between US\$ 10 million and 30 million. [Associated Press](#); [Washington Post](#).

My comment is that a military parade seems like something that North Korea, Iran, or the former Soviet Union would do. Why does Trump want to emulate rogue nations with a totalitarian government? Aside from the cost of transporting military equipment to Washington, DC, there is also concern that a military parade would inflame tensions with North Korea.

---

### 16 Feb 2018: Russians indicted in the USA

On 16 Feb 2018, the U.S. Government indicted 13 Russian citizens for interference in the 2016 U.S. presidential election. The Russians supported Trump and opposed Hillary Clinton. Of course, the Russian government will refuse to extradite these 13 criminal suspects. But if the suspects travel to Europe, then they can be arrested in Europe and extradited to the USA. There appears to be *no* evidence that Trump's campaign knowingly conspired with the Russian online disinformation campaign. [DoJ](#); [Washington Post](#); [New York Times](#).

Here is what is really important. During late 2016, and continuing during 2017, Trump repeatedly said he believed that Russians did *not* interfere with the presidential election. [New York Times](#); [Washington Post](#).

On 17 February, Trump's national security adviser, General McMaster, said “As you can see with the FBI indictment, the evidence is now really incontrovertible and available in the public domain.” [Associated Press](#); [Washington Post](#); [New York Times](#). The conclusions of the U.S. intelligence community in 2016, and now the grand jury's indictment, show that Trump was wrong. Trump's thought process is defective when he believes his delusion instead of the conclusion of people who have examined the evidence. The conventional explanation is that Trump refuses to believe that Russian propaganda helped him be elected, because recognizing Russian interference casts doubt on the legitimacy of the election that Trump won.

On 16 February, Trump tweeted:

Russia started their anti-US campaign in 2014, long before I announced that I would run for President. The results of the election were not impacted. The Trump campaign did nothing wrong — no collusion!

Donald J. Trump, [tweet](#), 15:18 EST, 16 Feb 2018.

Trump is correct about the 2014 date. Trump offers *no* evidence that the Russian inference did not influence the election. The Department of Justice (DoJ) press release cited above says only “There is no allegation in the indictment that the charged conduct altered the outcome of the 2016 election.” It is now clear that Russia *intended* to interfere with the 2016 U.S. presidential election. Trump *may* be correct that his campaign did not collude with the Russians.

On 17 February, Trump mixed the FBI investigation of a school shooting with the FBI investigation of Russian meddling in the 2016 U.S. presidential election.

Very sad that the FBI missed all of the many signals sent out by the Florida school shooter. This is not acceptable. They are spending too much time trying to prove Russian collusion with the Trump campaign — there is no collusion. Get back to the basics and make us all proud!

Donald J. Trump, [tweet](#), 23:08 EST, 17 Feb 2018.

In September 2017, a man alerted the FBI to a YouTube video posted by “Nikolas Cruz” (who killed 17 people at a high school on 14 February 2018). In the video, Cruz says “I’m going to be a professional school shooter.” The FBI was unable to do anything, because the FBI did not know the location of Cruz. (See, e.g., [New York Times](#); [Sun-Sentinel](#).) That *one* event is the only publicly reported oversight by the FBI in this high school shooting at

the time of Trump's 17 February tweet. Trump's plural "all of the many signals" is fiction. The Broward County Sheriff's Office in Florida may have missed many signals, but that is separate from the FBI. Moreover, the FBI investigation of the YouTube video was entirely separate from the Special Prosecutor's investigation of Russian inference in the election. Note how Trump mangles the facts, and winds up relating a school shooting to the FBI's alleged persecution of Trump.

On 17 February, Trump criticized General McMaster's comment about the evidence is "really incontrovertible" that Russia interfered with the 2016 U.S. presidential election.

General McMaster forgot to say that the results of the 2016 election were not impacted or changed by the Russians and that the only Collusion was between Russia and Crooked H, the DNC and the Dems. Remember the Dirty Dossier, Uranium, Speeches, Emails and the Podesta Company!

Donald J. Trump, [tweet](#), 23:22 EST, 17 Feb 2018.

My comment is that it is *not* McMaster's job either to defend Trump's 2016 campaign or to feed Trump's ego about winning the election. As Trump's delusion collides with reality, Trump's behavior is bizarre. See The [Washington Post](#) and The [New York Times](#) for more about Trump's Tweet Storm. (Later [Washington Post](#) article.) The [Associated Press](#) and The [Washington Post](#) have articles on factual errors by Trump in his Tweet Storm. [CNN](#) has a news analysis with the headline "Trump blames everyone but Russia".

---

### 23 Feb 2018: Trump's speech to CPAC

On 23 February, Trump gave a purely partisan speech at the Conservative Political Action Conference (CPAC). Here is a small part of what Trump said:

But we have a very crooked media. We had a crooked candidate, too, by the way. But we have a very, very crooked media.

AUDIENCE: Lock her up! Lock her up! Lock her up!

THE PRESIDENT: I will say this, folks: Everything that's turning out, now it's amazing that's come full circle. Boy, have they committed a lot of atrocities when you look. (Applause.) Right? When you look. Have they done things that are wrong.

....

And then everybody said, "He cannot get elected. He cannot do it." You need 270 votes. You need Electoral College — which, by the way, is much tougher than the popular vote. The popular vote, actually, would be so much easier. You go three or four states, and you just go and you just do great job. Hillary forgets that. You know, she went to these states. I said, "What's she doing? Why does she keep going back to California?" (Laughter.) Crazy.

Next time, they're going to remember Iowa. They're going to remember Ohio. (Applause.) Remember? They spent a lot of time in Pennsylvania to no avail.

(Applause.) They spent a lot of money. They spent a lot of money in North Carolina, the great state of North Carolina. (Applause.) We did very well there. ....

....

Don't worry, you're getting the wall. Don't worry, okay? I heard some — (applause) — we're getting the wall.

AUDIENCE: Build that wall! Build that wall! Build that wall!

THE PRESIDENT: I had a couple of these characters in the back say, "Oh, he really doesn't want the wall. He just used that for campaigning." I said, are you — can you believe it? (Laughter.) You know, I say, every time I hear that, the wall gets 10 feet higher. You know that, right? (Applause.) Every time. Every single time. Okay?

No, we're going to have the wall or they're not going to have what they want. You know, we have a problem: We need more Republicans. We have a group of people that vote against us in a bloc. They're good at two things: resisting, obstruction. Resisting, obstruction. And they stick together. They do. They always vote in a bloc. You know, it's very rare that you get a couple of them to come your way. Even on the tax cuts. I mean, we're going to be fighting these people in the '18 election. We're going to be fighting people that voted against the tax cuts, because the tax cuts are phenomenal and popular, and helping people and helping our country.

....

Donald J. Trump, "Remarks by President Trump at the Conservative Political Action Conference," [White House](#), 23 Feb 2018.

My comments on the above quotations:

1. The decision was made by the U.S. Government in 2016 *not* to prosecute Hillary and that is the end of the discussion. To prosecute Hillary Clinton in 2018 would be to politicize the Justice Department. Trump's attacks on the news media are getting old. Trump is rambling incoherently here.
2. So far, Trump has failed to obtain funding for his wall along the Mexican border. See [below](#).
3. Sadly, more than 15 months after the election in 2016, Trump is still boasting about his win in the Electoral College. The [Washington Post](#) commented that Trump's campaign never ended.
4. And then Trump condemns Democrats for voting in a bloc in Congress. What about when Republicans vote in a bloc — in lock-step with Der Führer?

Several news sources fact-checked Trump's CPAC speech and found the usual factual errors by Trump. [New York Times](#); [Associated Press](#); [PolitiFact](#); [NBC News](#).

---

## **Trump rejects U.S. Constitution Trump inconsistent on gun control**

On 14 February 2018, the third-worst school shooting occurred in Florida, in which 17 people were killed. That tragedy created an opportunity for demagogues to call for new laws in an attempt to prevent future mass murders. On 28 February, Vice-President Mike Pence and Trump held a meeting in the White House of some members of the U.S. Congress. At that meeting, Trump made two astounding statements:

THE PRESIDENT: We could work on that. And we have to do something about the mentally ill not being able to buy a gun. I mean, they have so many checks and balances that, you could be mentally ill, and it takes you six months before you can prohibit him. So we have to do something very decisive. Number one, you can take the guns away immediately from people that you can adjudge easily are mentally ill, like this guy. You know, the police saw that he was — the problem, they didn't take any guns away. Now, that could have been policing. I think they should have taken them away anyway, whether they had the right or not.

....

THE PRESIDENT: .... But you can't buy a handgun at 18, 19, or 20. You have to wait until you're 21. But you can buy the gun [assault rifle], the weapon used in this horrible shooting, at 18.

You are going to decide — the people in this room, pretty much, are going to decide. But I would give very serious thought to it. I can say that the NRA is opposed to it. And I'm a fan of the NRA. I mean, there's no bigger fan. I'm a big fan of the NRA. They want to do it. These are great people. These are great patriots. They love our country. But that doesn't mean we have to agree on everything. It doesn't make sense that I have to wait until I'm 21 to get a handgun, but I can get this weapon at 18. I don't know.

So I was just curious as to what you did in your bill.

SENATOR TOOMEY: We didn't address it, Mr. President, but I think —

THE PRESIDENT: You know why? Because you're afraid of the NRA, right?  
(Laughter.)

....

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Well, the category you spoke about, Mr. President — the gun violence restraining orders ....

But the focus is to literally give families and give local law enforcement additional tools if an individual is reported to be a potential danger to themselves or others. Allow



due process, so that no one's rights are trampled. But the ability to go to court, obtain an order, and then collect not only the firearms, but any weapons in the possession of that individual.

THE PRESIDENT: Or, Mike, take the firearms first and then go to court, because that's another system. Because a lot of times, by the time you go to court, it takes so long to go to court, to get the due process procedures.

I like taking the guns early, like in this crazy man's case that just took place in Florida. He had a lot of firearms. They saw everything. To go to court would have taken a long time. So you could do exactly what you're saying, but take the guns first, go through due process second.

"Remarks by President Trump, Vice President Pence, and Bipartisan Members of Congress in Meeting on School and Community Safety," [White House](#), 28 Feb 2018.

There are two things wrong in the above quotations from Trump:

1. Trump asserts that the police should have removed the assault rifle from the possession of the school shooter in Florida, "whether they had the right or not". If the police did not have a legal right to remove his rifle, then the police would be acting in violation of his constitutional rights.
2. Then Trump asserts "take the guns first, go through due process second." This is a blatant violation of the Fifth Amendment to the U.S Constitution, made applicable to the states by the Fourteenth Amendment.

In January 2017, Trump took an oath at his inauguration to "preserve, protect and defend the Constitution of the United States". Thirteen months later, Trump violated that oath at a meeting in the White House. Remarkably, there were many Representatives and Senators at the 28 February 2018 meeting, but none of them objected to Trump's blatantly unconstitutional proposals. Notice that there is also *no* discussion of whether the government would need to pay compensation for firearms and ammunition seized from mentally ill citizens.

James Hohmann, writing in The [Washington Post](#), said Trump's remarks showed "both disregard and even disdain for the rule of law."

Dr. Ben Sasse, U.S. Senator for Nebraska, later issued a three-sentence statement that said:  
Strong leaders don't automatically agree with the last thing that was said to them. We have the Second Amendment and due process of law for a reason. We're not ditching any Constitutional protections simply because the last person the President talked to today doesn't like them.

"Sasse Statement on President's Due Process Comments," [Sasse](#), 28 Feb 2018.

Sasse's references to "last thing said to them" and "last person the President talked to today" reflect the common belief that Trump adopts the opinion of the last person with whom Trump talked on an issue, see [below](#).

On 2 March 2018, the [Associated Press](#) reported that Trump's endorsement of gun control legislation (e.g., increasing the minimum age for the purchase of assault rifles from 18 to 21 years, seizing firearms possessed by mentally ill people) put Republicans in the U.S. Congress in disarray and temporarily delayed legislation on the subject of gun control.

The day after the White House meeting quoted above, Trump met privately in the White House with the Executive Director of the National Rifle Association (NRA). After meeting with the NRA, Trump appeared to change his position on gun control, although Trump did *not* specify any details. [New York Times](#); [ABC News](#); [Washington Post](#).

After the NRA meeting, Trump tweeted:

Good (Great) meeting in the Oval Office tonight with the NRA!  
Donald J. Trump, [tweet](#), 22:04 EST, 1 Mar 2018.

The Executive Director of the NRA provided a few details of the meeting.

I had a great meeting tonight with @realDonaldTrump & @VP. We all want safe schools, mental health reform and to keep guns away from dangerous people. POTUS & VPOTUS support the Second Amendment, support strong due process and don't want gun control.

Chris Cox, [tweet](#), 21:07 EST, 1 Mar 2018.

Did Trump insincerely tell Cox what Cox wanted to hear? Or did Trump really change his position from the previous day? If Trump changed his position, this would be an example of Trump adopting the position of the last person with whom Trump spoke on an issue.

On 28 February, Trump was willing to disagree with the NRA and Trump even accused Senator Toomey (R-Penn.) of being afraid of the NRA. The next day, after a meeting with the Executive Director of the NRA, Trump seemed to be in lock-step with the NRA.

On 12 March 2018, Trump announced his gun-control measures. *All* of Trump's proposals are approved by the NRA. Trump abandoned his previous proposal of increasing the minimum age to purchase rifles from 18 to 21 years, probably because the NRA opposed that proposal. [Washington Post](#); [New York Times](#).

On 18 May 2018 at 07:30 CDT, a 17 year old pupil entered Santa Fe High School in Santa Fe, Texas (near Galveston) with a shotgun and revolver. He killed 10 people and wounded at least 10 people. Three hours later, Trump commented:

Unfortunately, I have to begin by expressing our sadness and heartbreak over the deadly shooting at Santa Fe High School in Texas. Just took place moments ago. We're closely monitoring the situation, and federal authorities are coordinating with local officials. This has been going on too long in our country. Too many years. Too many decades now.

We grieve for the terrible loss of life, and send our support and love to everyone affected by this absolutely horrific attack. To the students, families, teachers, and personnel at Santa Fe High: We're with you in this tragic hour, and we will be with you forever.

My administration is determined to do everything in our power to protect our students, secure our schools, and to keep weapons out of the hands of those who pose a threat to themselves and to others. Everyone must work together, at every level of government, to keep our children safe. May God heal the injured and may God comfort the wounded, and may God be with the victims and with the victims' families. Very sad day. Very, very sad.

"Remarks by President Trump at White House Prison Reform Summit," [White House](#), 11:41 EDT 18 May 2018.

My comment is that politicians are quick to send their "thoughts and prayers" after each mass shooting in the USA, but those same politicians refuse to defy the National Rifle Association and **do something** that might prevent future mass shootings in the USA.

Trump says "we will be with you forever", but that is surely hyperbole — Trump will forget about this shooting in a few days, as he confronts other problems and plays golf.

Trump is absolutely correct when he said: "This has been going on too long in our country. Too many years. Too many decades now." Politicians like Trump have failed to do anything significant to prevent these mass murders. Note that shootings in schools in the USA began in the 1990s. I believe the culture of violence in movies and video games is responsible for this current epidemic of real violence. Further, firearms are easy for anyone — even people with a history of violent crimes, threats of violence, or mental illness — to purchase.

On 18 May 2018, there was a shooting at a school near Houston Texas that killed 10 people. On 31 May, Trump traveled to Houston to meet with families of the victims. Afterwards, Rhonda Hart — the mother of a dead girl — told journalists that talking to Trump "was like talking to a toddler". [Houston Chronicle](#); [NBC News](#)(AP). Her remark makes sense, because [above](#) I cite an analysis that Trump speaks at the fourth-grade level, the lowest of any recent U.S. president.

---

## March 2018

### Russia more belligerent

#### Russia's new weapons

During 2016 and 2017, Trump repeatedly praised Russian president Putin and Trump said he wanted to work with Putin. Trump's love of Russia is despite Russia's illegal annexation of Crimea in 2014, Russia protecting Assad from prosecution for war crimes in Syria, Russia helping North Korea evade economic sanctions imposed by the United Nations, and Russia's interference in the U.S. presidential election in 2016.

On 1 March 2018, Putin suddenly announced Russia had developed five new weapons that were designed to evade U.S. defenses:

1. a cruise missile that is powered by a nuclear reactor and can fly *anywhere* in the world.
2. a torpedo that is powered by a nuclear reactor and can travel long distances underwater, and carries a nuclear warhead.
3. a new intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) named SARMAT that can fly over the North and South poles and evade missile defense systems.
4. a vaguely described new hypersonic cruise missile.
5. a vaguely described hypersonic glide vehicle named Avengard, that is surrounded by a cloud of plasma that will frustrate radars.

[New York Times](#)(1Mar); [New York Times](#)(2Mar); [Washington Post](#); [Associated Press](#); [Reuters](#).

The unveiling of Russia's new weapons indicates a resumption of the cold war, and underscores that Western Civilization can *not* trust Russia. Trump is a fool to have trusted Russia. To be clear, there is *no* evidence that Russia's new weapons exist, but the fact that Putin would brag about these alleged new weapons shows Russia can not be trusted.

---

### **Russia murders in England**

In March 2018, Russian agents brazenly attempted to kill two former Russian citizens who are now living in England.

Sergei Skripal is a former Russian army colonel who in 2006 was convicted in Russia of spying for the United Kingdom. He was released from Russia in 2010, in an exchange of espionage agents. Skripal moved to Salisbury, England where he purchased a home. [The Guardian](#)(5Mar). On 4 March 2018, Sergei Skripal and his 23 year old daughter were found unconscious on a bench in a shopping mall in Salisbury, after they had visited a pub and a restaurant. Skripal and his daughter were taken to a hospital, where they remained in critical condition. A total of 21 people received medical treatment, including policemen and medical personnel who had responded to Skripal. [The Guardian](#); [The Independent](#); [Associated Press](#)(9Mar); [Associated Press](#)(timeline). On 8 March, journalists reported that the two had been poisoned with a rare nerve agent. [Reuters](#)(8Mar). On 12 March, the British prime minister said it was “highly likely” that the Russian government was responsible for the attempted murder of Skripal. The chemical that was used to poison Skripal was developed in Russia as a chemical weapon for military use. [Reuters](#); [Reuters](#)(13Mar).

Notice that Russia simply denied any involvement in the attack on Skripal, and Russia did *not* offer an antidote or medical treatment advice for its chemical weapon. Because Russia developed this chemical weapon, they have more experience with its biological effects than any other nation.

On 22 March, the policeman was discharged from the hospital, 17 days after he was exposed to the nerve agent. Skripal and his daughter remain “heavily sedated”, in critical condition.

[The Guardian](#); [Reuters](#); [Associated Press](#).

On 29 March, Yulia Skripal was out of a coma and talking to police. [The Guardian](#). On 5 April, Yulia was still "disoriented" but improving. [The Guardian](#). On 6 April, Sergei Skripal's condition was upgraded from critical. [Associated Press](#); [The Guardian](#).

On 28 March, police in England suggested that the nerve agent was applied to the front door handle of Sergei Skripal's home in England. [BBC](#); [New York Times](#).

On 12 April, OPCW confirmed that the Skripals were poisoned with a nerve agent "of high purity". The OPCW report said: "The results of analysis by the OPCW designated laboratories of environmental and biomedical samples collected by the OPCW team confirm the findings of the United Kingdom relating to the identity of the toxic chemical that was used in Salisbury and severely injured three people." [OPCW](#)(report summary); [Associated Press](#); [Reuters](#).

In the second recent attack, Nikolai Glushkov — a former Russian businessman with connections to a critic of Putin — was found dead in his home in London on the night of 12 March. Glushkov had been strangled. [The Guardian](#); [The Telegraph](#)(subscription); [Reuters](#). On 16 March, police began a murder investigation. [Associated Press](#); [Reuters](#); [Metro](#)(17Mar).

We are reminded that Russia — a rogue nation — in October 2006 used radioactive Polonium-210 in a cup of tea to kill Alexander Litvinenko in London. Litvinenko was a former spy for the Soviet Union.

#### **Trump's weak response to Russia**

On 13 March, Trump said: "As soon as we get the facts straight, if we agree with them, we will condemn Russia or whoever it may be." [BBC](#); [tweet from BBC](#). My comment is that Trump never waits for facts, he simply invents the so-called facts that he imagines are true. Note that even when the facts are straight, Trump reserves the right to reject those facts if he does not agree with them. On 14 March, Trump had still *not* condemned the Russian attacks in England. [New York Times](#); [Associated Press](#); [The Guardian](#)(opinion).

Trump, as documented in my 2017 essay on Trump, has a long history of refusing to believe that Russia meddled in the 2016 U.S. presidential election. Trump also has a long-standing desire for better relationship with Putin in Russia. Trump's delusions make it difficult for Trump to believe that Russia is a rogue nation that is committing crimes worldwide.

In contrast to Trump, on 12 March, U.S. Secretary of State Rex Tillerson told journalists the poison used to attack Skripal "clearly came from Russia". [U.S. State Dept](#)(statement); [New York Times](#); [Associated Press](#); [NBC News](#); [CBS News](#).

On 15 March 2018, there was a joint statement by the leaders of France, Germany, the United States, and the United Kingdom. The entire statement said:

We, the leaders of France, Germany, the United States and the United Kingdom, abhor

the attack that took place against Sergei and Yulia Skripal in Salisbury, United Kingdom, on March 4, 2018. A British police officer who was also exposed in the attack remains seriously ill, and the lives of many innocent British citizens have been threatened. We express our sympathies to them all, and our admiration for the United Kingdom police and emergency services for their courageous response. This use of a military-grade nerve agent, of a type developed by Russia, constitutes the first offensive use of a nerve agent in Europe since the Second World War. It is an assault on the United Kingdom's sovereignty and any such use by a state party is a clear violation of the Chemical Weapons Convention and a breach of international law. It threatens the security of us all. The United Kingdom thoroughly briefed its allies that it was highly likely that Russia was responsible for the attack. We share the United Kingdom's assessment that there is no plausible alternative explanation, and note that Russia's failure to address the legitimate request by the government of the United Kingdom further underlines Russia's responsibility. We call on Russia to address all questions related to the attack in Salisbury. Russia should, in particular, provide full and complete disclosure of the Novichok program to the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW). Our concerns are also heightened against the background of a pattern of earlier irresponsible Russian behavior. We call on Russia to live up to its responsibilities as a member of the U.N. Security Council to uphold international peace and security.

"Statement from the United States, France, Germany, and the United Kingdom on the Attack in Salisbury," [White House](#), 15 March 2018.

Trump's national security advisers gave Trump a written list of talking points for Trump's 20 March telephone call with Russian president Vladimir Putin. Trump ignored those talking points. Specifically, Trump failed to condemn the Russian poisoning of Skripal.

[White House](#); [Washington Post](#). The White House reaction was to search for the person who leaked the talking points to journalists. [Associated Press](#). On 2 April, the Kremlin revealed that Trump invited Putin to the White House during their 20 March telephone conversation. [Washington Post](#); [New York Times](#).

On 14 March, the U.K. government expelled 23 Russian diplomats as a protest against the poisoning of Skripal. [Reuters](#). The U.S. Government did nothing until 26 March — 12 days after the U.K. expulsion — when Trump expelled 60 Russians. Many of the expelled Russians are believed to be engaged in espionage, *not* diplomacy. [Washington Post](#); [New York Times](#); [Associated Press](#).

During a 3 April 2018 press conference at the White House, Trump said:

... I think I could have a very good relationship with President Putin. I think. It's possible I won't. And you will know about it. Believe me, this room will know about it before I know about it. It's a real possibility that I could have a good relationship.

And remember this: Getting along with Russia is a good thing. Getting along with China is a good thing. .... So I think I could have a very good relationship with Russia and with President Putin. And if I did, that would be a great thing. And there's also a great possibility that that won't happen. Who knows. Okay?

"Remarks by President Trump and Heads of the Baltic States in Joint Press Conference," [White House](#), 3 April 2018.



---

## Trump admits inventing "facts"

On 14 March 2018, Trump gave a private campaign fundraising speech in Missouri. There Trump said that, in his discussion of trade with Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, Trump claimed that the United States has a trade deficit with Canada. But the important point is that Trump admitted that he did *not* know whether his claim was true.

*The Washington Post* reported Trump's actual words in his 14 March speech were:

Trudeau came to see me. He's a good guy, Justin. He said, 'No, no, we have no trade deficit with you, we have none. Donald, please,' .... 'Donald, we have no trade deficit.' ....

... So, he's proud. I said, 'Wrong, Justin, you do.' I didn't even know. I had no idea. I just said, 'You're wrong.' You know why? Because we're so stupid.

Josh Dawsey, Damian Paletta, & Erica Werner, "In fundraising speech, Trump says he made up trade claim in meeting with Justin Trudeau," [Washington Post](#), first posted 14 March 2018.

Unlike Trump, *The Washington Post* actually learned the correct facts:

The Office of the United States Trade Representative says the United States has a trade surplus with Canada. [It reports](#) that in 2016, the United States exported \$12.5 billion more in goods and services than it imported from Canada, leading to a trade surplus, not a deficit.

*Ibid.*

See also: [Washington Post](#)(transcript of Trump's remarks); [Washington Post](#)(15Mar); [New York Times](#); [Globe&Mail](#); [Associated Press](#); [CNN](#)(commentary).

There are at least three things wrong with Trump's behavior in this episode:

1. Trump, a man with a bachelor's degree in economics, planned to discuss trade policy with the leader of Canada without Trump bothering to learn whether the USA has a trade deficit with Canada.
2. On 14 March, Trump publicly boasted about his ignorance of essential facts in an important discussion!
3. On 15 March, after criticism by journalists and commentators, Trump still falsely asserts that the USA has a trade deficit with Canada, as shown by Trump's tweet quoted below. It is one thing to make a mistake about a fact, but only a moron would continue to make the same mistake *after* being corrected.

Taken together, these three problems show that Trump does *not* care about facts, which makes Trump unfit to be president. And this episode is *not* an isolated problem for Trump. The [Washington Post](#) reports Trump made 2436 false or misleading statements in the first 406 days of his presidency.



In response to the article in *The Washington Post*, Trump tweeted:

We do have a Trade Deficit with Canada, as we do with almost all countries (some of them massive). P.M. Justin Trudeau of Canada, a very good guy, doesn't like saying that Canada has a Surplus vs. the U.S.(negotiating), but they do...they almost all do...and that's how I know!

Donald J. Trump, [tweet](#), 09:29 EDT, 15 Mar 2018.

There is a glaring flaw in Trump's tweet. Just because most nations have a trade surplus with the USA does *not* imply that one particular nation has a trade surplus with the USA. And on the morning following his 14 March speech, Trump is still insisting that the USA has a trade deficit with Canada, despite the U.S. Trade Representative website saying the USA has a trade surplus with Canada.

Trump's fictitious trade deficit is *not* the only problem with facts in his speech in Missouri on 14 March. In that speech, Trump invented a story about Japanese testing of imported U.S. automobiles. Trump said:

It's called the bowling ball test, do you know what that is? That's where they take a bowling ball from 20 feet up in the air and they drop it on the hood of the car. And if the hood dents, then the car doesn't qualify. Well, guess what, the roof dented a little bit, and they said, nope, this car doesn't qualify. It's horrible, the way we're treated. It's horrible.

"Transcript of Trump's remarks at fundraiser in Missouri on March 14," [Washington Post](#), 15 Mar 2018.

Trump's spokeswoman at the White House admitted that Trump's bowling ball test was false. The Associated Press reported:

THE FACTS: That "test" didn't happen. "He's joking about this particular test," White House press secretary Sarah Huckabee Sanders said Thursday [15 Mar].

Possible inspiration for Trump's story: a fanciful old Nissan ad showing its SUV miraculously escaping damage as bowling bowls cascade down an urban street, trashing other vehicles.

Calvin Woodward, "AP FACT CHECK: Trump and the attack of the bowling balls," [Associated Press](#), 17 Mar 2018.

My read of the transcript of Trump's speech shows Trump was *not* joking. This part of Trump's speech was a serious discussion of trade imbalances. Sanders' admission did *not* appear in a press briefing with a transcript at the White House website, so I am unable to quote her remarks in context.

I want to call attention to a section of Trump's speech that was badly rambling and also contained *three* factual errors.

Now we have a very big trade deficit with [South Korea], and we protect them. So we lose money on trade, and we lose money on the military. We have right now 32,000 soldiers on the border between North and South Korea.

Let's see what happens. Think I've done a good job with that one. That's sort of interesting.

People are saying, "oh, his rhetoric is terrible. He's going to go" — well, the rhetoric from last 30 years hasn't been so good. It was called appeasement.

Please don't do anything. Obama, let's not talk about that. In the meantime, he's [i.e., Kim is] making nuclear weapons. He had a test, they had a test of a nuclear weapon about a year ago, and it registered as an 8.6. Now, you heard of that, on the Richter scale, right? So they said, "man, there was an earthquake." Eight point six someplace in Asia. Where was it? Oh it was in North Korea. It wasn't — it was a nuclear test, and it shifted a mountain — it was a real mountain. ....

"Transcript of Trump's remarks at fundraiser in Missouri on March 14," [Washington Post](#), 15 Mar 2018.

In the three sentences in the first paragraph quoted above, Trump complained about a trade imbalance with South Korea and complained about South Korea not reimbursing the USA for the cost of 32,000 U.S. soldiers. In the next three paragraphs, Trump praised himself, Trump appears to complain about the "rhetoric" either from North Korea or about North Korea (Trump is *not* clear), Trump complained about Obama's "appeasement" of North Korea, and then Trump mentioned the yield of the most recent North Korean nuclear weapon test. Trump did not develop any of these complaints in his speech, they are only incoherent rambling. Note also that Trump uses pronouns (e.g., "he") without clearly saying to whom they refer. Trump's speech has degenerated into random thoughts that occur to Trump.

There is a factual error in Trump's 14 March speech, when Trump claimed there are 32,000 U.S. soldiers in South Korea, but the [Pentagon](#) and [U.S. Forces Korea](#) say there are only approximately 28,500. So Trump is fraudulently asking South Korea to pay the USA for 3,500 ghost soldiers.

There are two more factual errors in Trump's 14 March speech, when he described the sixth (most recent) test of North Korea's nuclear weapons. This test was on 3 Sep 2017, approximately 6 months ago — *not* "about a year ago". The U.S. Geological Survey said the test registered 6.3 on the Richter scale, *not* Trump's exaggeration of 8.6, which was fictitious. The Richter scale uses base 10 logarithms, so the difference between 8.6 and 6.3 on the Richter scale corresponds to a factor of 200 in energy released. Trump made a significant exaggeration. Frankly, I would be surprised if Trump understands how earthquakes and underground nuclear weapons tests are measured on the Richter scale. Trump is probably ignorant of logarithms too. Trump did *not* mention the yield of the North Korean nuclear weapon in kilotons of TNT, which is the way nuclear weapons are usually described by the military.

The USA has real problems. Trump is unfit to be president when he invents fictitious "facts" to describe real problems, and when he rambles incoherently in a public speech.

---

## Trump hates Andrew McCabe at FBI

On 29 January 2018, Andrew McCabe announced he would retire as deputy director of the

FBI on 18 March 2018, when he was eligible for a full pension. Trump had harshly criticized McCabe because in 2015 McCabe's wife was a Democratic candidate for State Senator in Virginia.

On Friday night at 22:00 EDT, 16 March 2018, former FBI Deputy Director Andrew McCabe was fired. McCabe was scheduled to retire on Sunday, 18 March, with full retirement benefits after 21 years of service at the FBI.

For citations to news articles about McCabe's scheduled retirement and his termination, see [below](#).

[CNN](#) and [Reuters](#) posted a written rebuttal by McCabe that clearly explains the political nature of his termination.

Here are some of the tweets by Trump about McCabe. These tweets show that Trump hated McCabe. Trump's first tweet that mentions McCabe was in July 2017, when Trump tweeted:

Problem is that the acting head of the FBI & the person in charge of the Hillary investigation, Andrew McCabe, got \$700,000 from H for wife!

Donald J. Trump, [tweet](#), 06:21 EDT, 25 July 2017.

In December 2017, Trump tweeted:

FBI Deputy Director Andrew McCabe is racing the clock to retire with full benefits. 90 days to go?!!!

Donald J. Trump, [tweet](#), 15:30 EST, 23 Dec 2017.

Adding to suspicion that the firing of McCabe was politically motivated, two hours after McCabe was fired, Trump gloated:

Andrew McCabe FIRED, a great day for the hard working men and women of the FBI — A great day for Democracy. Sanctimonious James Comey was his boss and made McCabe look like a choirboy. He knew all about the lies and corruption going on at the highest levels of the FBI!

Donald J. Trump, [tweet](#), 24:08 EDT, 16 Mar 2018.

The Fake News is beside themselves that McCabe was caught, called out and fired.

How many hundreds of thousands of dollars was given to wife's campaign by Crooked H friend, Terry M, who was also under investigation? How many lies? How many leaks? Comey knew it all, and much more!

Donald J. Trump, [tweet](#), 13:34 EDT, 17 Mar 2018.

On 18 March, The [Washington Post](#) reported numerous factual errors in Trump's recent tweets. See also [Associated Press](#).

---

## Scott Pruitt's condominium

U.S. Government employees are supposed to fly in coach-class on commercial airline flights. In February 2018, it was revealed that Scott Pruitt — head of the Environmental Protection Agency in Trump's cabinet — traveled first-class on airliners. On one short flight from

Washington, DC to New York City, Pruitt's first-class ticket cost taxpayers \$1641, more than six times the price of a coach-class ticket. [Washington Post](#). The EPA explained that Pruitt flew in first-class, because of security concerns if Pruitt traveled in coach-class. For example, in May 2017, a member of the public recognized Pruitt and "approached Pruitt 'with threatening language' that was 'vulgar'", according to the [Washington Post](#).

Just as outrage over Pruitt's airplane expenses died down, a new problem emerged over the ethics of Pruitt's lease on a condominium in Washington, DC in early 2017.

On 29 March 2018, [ABC News](#) reported that Scott Pruitt had lived in a townhouse in Washington, DC during Pruitt's first six months in Washington. But the townhouse is "co-owned by the wife of a top energy lobbyist". The [Associated Press](#) confirmed the ABC News article.

On 30 March, the [Associated Press](#) reported that Pruitt paid only \$50/night that he occupied in the condominium, and paid nothing for nights he was not in Washington. Assuming he occupied the condominium for 30 days, the rental would be \$1500/month. The AP mentions prices of other condominiums in the area: "One-bedroom apartments range between \$1,600 and \$2,500 a month, depending on amenities. Single rooms listed online for one-night rentals averaged about \$120 a night."

On 30 March, [Bloomberg News](#) reported that Pruitt paid only \$6100 over six months, as a result of the lease specifying rent only for days Pruitt lived in the condominium. That is an effective rate of \$1017/month.

On 30 March, the [Washington Post](#) reported that Pruitt now lives where "One-bedroom apartments in the building ... start at about \$3,100 per month and go to nearly \$4,500."

On 31 March, Aaron Blake at the [Washington Post](#) wrote about the appearance of impropriety. Blake says Pruitt's "rental agreement is pretty swampy."

There are at least three things wrong with Pruitt's lease on the condominium:

1. The \$50/night rate is too low, and constitutes a gift of approximately \$70/night.
2. Not charging for 58 nights when Pruitt was absent was an additional gift to Pruitt.
3. The condominium is co-owned by the wife of a lobbyist for energy companies.

On 2 April, the EPA again said Pruitt's lease did *not* violate any ethics rules, because the \$50/night did "constitute a fair market rate". [Associated Press](#); [The Hill](#). My comment is that journalists report that the EPA is *wrong* about the fair-market rate, and the EPA ignored the nonpayment for nights that Pruitt was absent.

On the night of 2 April, the [New York Times](#) reported: "The Environmental Protection Agency signed off last March on a Canadian energy company's [Enbridge Inc.] pipeline-expansion plan at the same time that the E.P.A. chief, Scott Pruitt, was renting a condominium linked to the energy company's powerful Washington lobbying firm."

On 3 April, [The Atlantic](#) and the [Washington Post](#) reported that Pruitt brought two aides from

Oklahoma to Washington, DC. The EPA gave these aides huge salary increases (e.g., 33% and 52%), after the White House refused to approve the increased salaries. On 4 April, the [Associated Press](#) reported that the EPA is asking the two aides to repay the salary increase and Pruitt claims he did *not* know about the salary increases.

On 4 April, at a White House press briefing, the president's press secretary said:

QUESTION: ... My question to you though has to do with another sweetheart deal, that's the \$50-a-night payment that the EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt pays to — paid to a lobbyist that did business with the EPA. As you know, Sarah, the President promised to drain the swamp. His behavior — his actions seem very swamp-like. Why is the President okay with this?

MS. SANDERS: The President is not. We're reviewing the situation. When we have had a chance to have a deeper dive on it, we'll let you know the outcomes of that. But we're currently reviewing that here at the White House.

QUESTION: Does the President have confidence in the EPA Administrator at this point?

MS. SANDERS: The President thinks that he's done a good job, particularly on the deregulation front. But again, we take this seriously and we're looking into it and we'll let you know when we finish.

"Press Briefing by Press Secretary Sarah Sanders and Department of Homeland Security Secretary Kirstjen Nielsen," [White House](#), 4 April 2018.

But the following day, 5 April, Trump himself told journalists that Pruitt has done a "fantastic job". The transcript at the White House reported Trump's words:

QUESTION: How are you feeling about Scott Pruitt, Mr. President? Is he —

THE PRESIDENT: I think he's done a fantastic job at EPA. I think he's done an incredible job. He's been very courageous. Hasn't been easy, but I think he's done an absolutely fantastic job. I think he'll be fine.

QUESTION: (Inaudible.)

THE PRESIDENT: I think he'll be fine. Yeah, I want to look at it. I haven't seen the details, but I can tell you, at EPA he has done a fantastic job.

QUESTION: Are you bothered by the reports about him, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: On Scott?

QUESTION: Yeah.

THE PRESIDENT: Who's saying that? I have to look at it, and close. You know, I hear different versions of it. But I'll make that determination.

But he's a good man. He's done a terrific job. But I'll take a look at it very closely.

"Remarks by President Trump in Press Gaggle en route Washington, D.C.," [White House](#), 16:22 EDT, 5 April 2018.

See also: Cristiano Lima, "Trump praises Pruitt for 'fantastic job' amid ethics scandals," [Politico](#), 17:11 EDT, 5 April 2018.

My comment is that I doubt Trump *understands* ethics rules. Trump's promise in 2016 to "drain the swamp" was a campaign promise, *not* a sincere belief. And Trump is oblivious to facts in general, as well as the facts about Pruitt. The controversy over Pruitt's lease is one week old on 5 April, and Trump is still unaware of reports by journalists. Nonetheless, Pruitt is helping industry increase pollution and increase global warming, and Trump believes that makes Pruitt a great man.

On 5 April, another detail about Pruitt's lease was exposed. The lease agreement was originally intended to be signed by J. Steven Hart, the head of a lobbying firm for energy companies. Some unknown person crossed off Steven's name and hand wrote the name of Stephen's wife on the final contract. [Washington Post](#); [Washington Post](#). If there is really no conflict of interest here, why would someone change the name on the contract?

On 5 April, the [New York Times](#) reported that at least five EPA employees were either reassigned or demoted after they questioned Pruitt's lavish spending. On 6 April, the [Associated Press](#) reported on the excessive security costs for Pruitt, compared to previous EPA administrators.

The original lease on the condominium ended on 1 April 2017. [Politico](#) and [CNN](#) reported that, after Pruitt overstayed, the condominium owners ordered Pruitt to leave in July 2017. In August 2017, the condominium owners changed the locks on the door to the condominium.

On 7 April, the [Washington Post](#) reported more facts that showed Pruitt's rent was below market rate.

On Saturday, 7 April, Trump decided to support Pruitt.

While Security spending was somewhat more than his predecessor, Scott Pruitt has received death threats because of his bold actions at EPA. Record clean Air & Water while saving USA Billions of Dollars. Rent was about market rate, travel expenses OK.

Scott is doing a great job!

Donald J. Trump, [tweet](#), 20:03 EDT, 7 April 2018.

My comment is that, as usual, Trump got the facts wrong. Pruitt's security cost more than three times his predecessor (see e.g., [Associated Press](#) and [Washington Post](#)), Pruitt's rent was approximately half the market rate, and the travel expenses are *not* ok. Also, Trump shows *no* understanding of ethical rules for attorneys and judges about conflict of interest and the appearance of impropriety.

On 8 April, the [Associated Press](#) exposed Trump's factual errors in his 7 April tweet about Pruitt. On 11 April, [PolitiFact](#) exposed three errors in Trump's tweet:

1. "somewhat more" is "mostly false",

2. "record clean air and water" is "inaccurate, and the overall claim lacks substance", and
3. "rent was about market rate" is "mostly false".

On 9 April, it was disclosed that the top ethics officer in the U.S. Government sent a letter to the top ethics officer at the EPA. The letter questions Pruitt's lease of one room in a condominium, Pruitt's allegedly demoting employees who questioned his lavish spending, Pruitt using federally funded flights home to Oklahoma, and other alleged misconduct by Pruitt. [New York Times](#); [Washington Post](#); [Bloomberg News](#).

On 16 April, the General Accounting Office said it was unlawful for Pruitt to spend approximately \$ 43,000 on a soundproof booth in his office at EPA headquarters. [GAO](#); [Washington Post](#); [New York Times](#); [Politico](#).

On 20 April, [Politico](#) reported that J. Steven Hart — husband of the woman who leased a condominium to Pruitt — "lobbied the agency while Pruitt was leading it, contrary to his and Pruitt's public denials that he had any business before the [Environmental Protection] Agency". Also on 20 April, Hart resigned from the lobbying firm after 35 years of employment.

On 21 April, the [Washington Post](#) reported more details on lobbying of Pruitt by Hart's firm.

On 26 April, Pruitt testified under oath at the House Energy and Commerce subcommittee, where he admitted he was involved in giving large raises to two employees. (On 3 April, Pruitt publicly denied being involved in the raises.) [Washington Post](#).

On the night of 1 June 2018, the [Associated Press](#) reported: "Newly filed reports show the Washington lobbyist whose wife rented a bargain-priced Capitol Hill condo to Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Scott Pruitt had far more contact with the agency than previously disclosed, despite repeated denials by both men." See also: [New York Times](#).

Also on 1 June, the [Washington Post](#) reported the EPA spent \$1560 for a dozen fountain pens "each emblazoned with the seal of the Environmental Protection Agency and the signature of its leader, Scott Pruitt." For comparison, I use a Japanese pen that is \$18 per dozen, but then I don't work for Trump's Government.

In June 2018, *The Washington Post* reported that Pruitt had assigned U.S. Government employees to help his wife find a job. [Washington Post](#)(5June); [Washington Post](#)(13June).

On 5 July 2018, Pruitt finally [resigned](#).

---

While I am generally not commenting on policy matters in this essay, I can not resist remarking that Pruitt is eviscerating automobile emission standards. [New York Times](#); [Washington Post](#). Not only is air pollution harmful to people, but also petroleum is a scarce natural resource that should be conserved. And then there is increased global warming from increased carbon dioxide emissions.

---



## April 2018

### Swamp Monster is Nr. 2 Man at EPA

In the 2016 campaign, Trump promised to "drain the swamp" in Washington, DC. So Trump appointed Andrew Wheeler, a former coal-mining lobbyist for 9 years, to be the second-in-command at the EPA. On 12 April 2018, the U.S. Senate confirmed Wheeler by a vote of 53 to 45. [New York Times](#)(5Oct2017); [Bloomberg News](#)(7Feb); [Washington Post](#)(12Apr).

---

### Comey's book about Trump

On 9 May 2017, Trump fired FBI Director James Comey. Comey retaliated by writing a book titled *A Higher Loyalty: Truth, Lies, and Leadership*, which is scheduled for first public sale on 17 April 2018. *The Washington Post* obtained an advance copy of this book and reported:

In his memoir, Comey paints a devastating portrait of a president who built “a cocoon of alternative reality that he was busily wrapping around all of us.” Comey describes Trump as a congenital liar and unethical leader, devoid of human emotion and driven by personal ego.

Philip Rucker, "James Comey's memoir: Trump fixates on proving lewd dossier allegations false," [Washington Post](#), 17:41 EDT, 12 April 2018.

*The New York Times* also obtained an advance copy of Comey's book, and *The Times* reported:

“This president is unethical, and untethered to truth and institutional values,” Mr. Comey writes in the book, saying his service to Mr. Trump recalled for him the days when he investigated the mob in New York. “The silent circle of assent. The boss in complete control. The loyalty oaths. The us-versus-them worldview. The lying about all things, large and small, in service to some code of loyalty that put the organization above morality and above the truth.”

....

“We are experiencing a dangerous time in our country,” [Comey] writes, “with a political environment where basic facts are disputed, fundamental truth is questioned, lying is normalized and unethical behavior is ignored, excused or rewarded.”

Michael D. Shear, "Comey's Memoir Offers Visceral Details on a President 'Untethered to Truth'," [New York Times](#), 12 April 2018.

*The New York Times* said in its book review:

In his absorbing new book, “A Higher Loyalty,” the former F.B.I. director James B. Comey calls the Trump presidency a “forest fire” that is doing serious damage to the country's norms and traditions.

“This president is unethical, and untethered to truth and institutional values,” Comey writes. “His leadership is transactional, ego driven and about personal loyalty.”

.....

A February 2017 meeting in the White House with Trump and then chief of staff Reince Priebus left Comey recalling his days as a federal prosecutor facing off against the Mob: “The silent circle of assent. The boss in complete control. The loyalty oaths. The us-versus-them worldview. The lying about all things, large and small, in service to some code of loyalty that put the organization above morality and above the truth.”

....

Michiko Kakutani, "James Comey Has a Story to Tell. It's Very Persuasive." [New York Times](#), 12 April 2018.

On Friday morning, 13 April 2018, Trump exploded:

James Comey is a proven LEAKER & LIAR. Virtually everyone in Washington thought he should be fired for the terrible job he did — until he was, in fact, fired. He leaked CLASSIFIED information, for which he should be prosecuted. He lied to Congress under OATH. He is a weak and.....

Donald J. Trump, [tweet](#), 08:01 EDT, 13 April 2018.

...untruthful slime ball who was, as time has proven, a terrible Director of the FBI. His handling of the Crooked Hillary Clinton case, and the events surrounding it, will go down as one of the worst “botch jobs” of history. It was my great honor to fire James Comey!

Donald J. Trump, [tweet](#), 08:17 EDT, 13 April 2018.

DOJ just issued the McCabe report — which is a total disaster. He LIED! LIED! LIED! McCabe was totally controlled by Comey — McCabe is Comey!! No collusion, all made up by this den of thieves and lowlifes!

Donald J. Trump, [tweet](#), 15:36 EDT, 13 April 2018.

Trump spewed a stream of unsubstantiated insults about Comey: "proven leaker", "liar", "untruthful slime ball". My comment is that Trump seems eager to prove that he needs to repeat the fourth-grade in school.

Moreover, the White House enlisted the Republican National Committee (RNC) to engage in a conspiracy to further defame Comey. The RNC created a website — [lyin' comey](#) — to collect criticism of Comey. See e.g., [Washington Post](#); [New York Times](#); [CNN](#); [Voice of America](#).

We have been here before. Instead of ignoring criticism of the president, in January 2018 the White House attacked Wolff, the author of a book critical of Trump, and helped make Wolff's book a best-seller for many weeks. (See [above](#).)

Furthermore, when the Republican National Committee defends Trump, that RNC arguably tarnishes the reputation of *all* Republicans. As documented in my previous [essay](#), and again in this essay, Trump has many real defects, including:

- Trump frequently gives wrong "facts", especially when he is either boasting of his accomplishment or boasting about public admiration for himself.
- Trump is ignorant of how the U.S. Government works, including ignorance of the law.
- Trump [speaks](#) at the fourth-grade level, the lowest of the past 15 U.S. presidents, showing Trump's lack of intellectual ability.
- Psychologists and psychiatrists have [warned](#) of Trump's erratic and impulsive style, and perhaps a narcissistic personality disorder.
- Trump engages in [obnoxious](#) remarks and ad hominem attacks on people, a renunciation of civil discourse.
- Trump *may* have committed obstruction of justice when he fired FBI Director Comey.

In summary, Trump has real problems that Republicans should be loath to support.

On the morning of 15 April, Trump issued a tweetstorm:

Unbelievably, James Comey states that Polls, where Crooked Hillary was leading, were a factor in the handling (stupidly) of the Clinton Email probe. In other words, he was making decisions based on the fact that he thought she was going to win, and he wanted a job. Slimeball!

Donald J. Trump, [tweet](#), 07:42 EDT, 15 April 2018.

The big questions in Comey's badly reviewed book aren't answered like, how come he gave up Classified Information (jail), why did he lie to Congress (jail), why did the DNC refuse to give Server to the FBI (why didn't they TAKE it), why the phony memos, McCabe's \$700,000 & more?

Donald J. Trump, [tweet](#), 07:57 EDT, 15 April 2018.

Notice that "badly reviewed book" is ambiguous. Are the reviews badly written? Or do the high-quality reviews say Comey's book is bad? Further, the president should not be saying that Comey (or anyone else) deserves jail, because that is for courts to decide.

Comey throws AG Lynch "under the bus!" Why can't we all find out what happened on the tarmac in the back of the plane with Wild Bill and Lynch? Was she promised a Supreme Court seat, or AG, in order to lay off Hillary. No golf and grandkids talk (give us all a break)!

Donald J. Trump, [tweet](#), 08:08 EDT, 15 April 2018.

Trump's incoherent tweet refers to a 27 June 2016 meeting between Attorney General Lynch and Bill Clinton, when both of their airplanes were parked at the Phoenix Arizona airport. Bill walked to Lynch's airplane. Later Bill claimed they talked about golf and their grandchildren. Amazingly, Trump can see the appearance of impropriety in the Lynch/Clinton meeting, but *not* in [Pruitt's](#) condominium lease.

Slippery James Comey, a man who always ends up badly and out of whack (he is not smart!), will go down as the WORST FBI Director in history, by far!

Donald J. Trump, [tweet](#), 09:07 EDT, 15 April 2018.

The [Washington Post](#) reported that "The tweets were filled with unproven assertions. Comey

has not been formally accused of disclosing classified information or lying to Congress."

The Associated Press reported two factual errors by Trump in his tweetstorms about Comey. President Donald Trump is again twisting facts when it comes to former FBI director James Comey's disclosure of a sensitive investigation into Democrat Hillary Clinton right before the 2016 election.

In a flurry of tweets, Trump claims Comey was motivated by a desire to please Clinton during the 2016 campaign in an anticipation of a Democratic win. But in going public about a renewed investigation into Clinton's email practices, he infuriated Democrats who believe to this day the revelation cost her a victory.

Trump also wrongly asserts that Comey was behind former FBI deputy director Andrew McCabe's decision to authorize the disclosure of a probe into the Clinton Foundation, in violation of agency rules. In fact, a Justice Department watchdog report concluded the opposite.

....

TRUMP: "Unbelievably, James Comey states that Polls, where Crooked Hillary was leading, were a factor in the handling (stupidly) of the Clinton Email probe. In other words, he was making decisions based on the fact that he thought she was going to win, and he wanted a job. Slimeball!" — tweet Sunday [15 April].

THE FACTS: Trump's claim seems to defy logic. If Comey were angling for a job in an anticipated Hillary Clinton administration, disclosing a renewed FBI investigation into her email practices right before the 2016 election wouldn't be the way to do it.

Trump appears to be referring to a passage in Comey's new book, "A Higher Loyalty," revealing that he had "assumed from media polling that Hillary Clinton was going to win." Comey writes that he has since wondered whether his decision to disclose the reopened probe was affected by a concern that "concealing" it as Clinton appeared to hold a poll lead would make her an "illegitimate president."

....

TRUMP, speaking of a report by the Justice Department's inspector general on McCabe: "He LIED! LIED! LIED! McCabe was totally controlled by Comey — McCabe is Comey!! No collusion, all made up by this den of thieves and lowlives!" — tweet Friday [13 April].

THE FACTS: Trump mischaracterizes the report, which concludes that McCabe had misled Comey about his role in a news media disclosure about Clinton in the days before the 2016 election. It's a finding that contradicts Trump claim that McCabe was "totally controlled" by Comey.

Last week's report describes how Comey and McCabe had entirely different accounts about a Justice Department interview with a Wall Street Journal reporter that revealed

an investigation into the Clinton Foundation, violating agency rules. According to the report, Comey said he was led to believe that McCabe had not authorized the disclosure to the Journal. But McCabe told investigators that he informed Comey that he had approved it.

Ultimately, the watchdog report found that McCabe's actions were at odds with the wishes of Comey — and not, as Trump asserts, at Comey's behest. "We do not believe that Comey would have been approving of such a disclosure by McCabe if he had been told about it," the report states.

In a statement Friday, McCabe noted that as deputy director he had full authority to approve sharing information with the media and said he permitted subordinates to do so in this case to correct a false story that he had tried to stymie an FBI probe into the Clinton Foundation.

Hope Yen & Eric Tucker, "AP FACT CHECK: Trump twists Comey role in Clinton disclosure," [Associated Press](#), 16 April 2018.

### **15 April: Comey's interview**

On 10 April, Comey recorded a five-hour interview with George Stephanopoulos of ABC News. The interview was distilled to one hour and broadcast at 22:00 EDT on 15 April. Here are three significant quotations that have not already been quoted in reviews of Comey's book:

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: And [Trump's] refusal to criticize Vladimir Putin?

JAMES COMEY: I don't know what's behind that. I mean, that mystified me even after President Trump became president 'cause I discovered that he wouldn't criticize him even in private, which — I can understand a president making a geopolitical decision that, "I ought not to criticize an adversary country's leader for some reason publicly." But I discovered President Trump wouldn't even do it privately, and I don't know why that is.

....

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: You saw it right there, and we talked about this earlier — why is President Trump so reluctant to call out Vladimir Putin?

JAMES COMEY: I don't know. I'm struck by it and I'm struck by it both in public and in private. Because I can understand the arguments why the president of the United States might not want to criticize the leader of another country because there's always good reasons to try and build better relationships, I suppose, even when that other leader is someone who is killing his own citizens and engaging in attacks against our country. But you would think that in private — talking to the F.B.I. director, whose job it is to thwart Russian attacks, you might acknowledge that this enemy of ours is an enemy of ours. But I never saw. And so I don't know the reason. I really don't.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: Do you think the Russians have something on

Donald Trump?

JAMES COMEY: I think it's possible. I don't know. These are more words I never thought I'd utter about a president of the United States, but it's possible.

....

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: You write that President Trump is unethical, untethered to the truth. Is Donald Trump unfit to be president?

JAMES COMEY: Yes. But not in the way m— I often hear people talk about it. I don't buy this stuff about him being mentally incompetent or early stages of dementia. He strikes me as a person of above average intelligence who's tracking conversations and knows what's going on. I don't think he's medically unfit to be president. I think he's morally unfit to be president.

A person who sees moral equivalence in Charlottesville, who talks about and treats women like they're pieces of meat, who lies constantly about matters big and small and insists the American people believe it, that person's not fit to be president of the United States, on moral grounds. And that's not a policy statement. Again, I don't care what your views are on guns or immigration or taxes.

There's something more important than that that should unite all of us, and that is our president must embody respect and adhere to the values that are at the core of this country. The most important being truth. This president is not able to do that. He is morally unfit to be president.

"Transcript: James Comey's interview with ABC News chief anchor George Stephanopoulos," [ABC News](#), 22:36 EDT, 15 April 2018.

---

On Monday morning, 16 April, Trump tweeted:

Comey drafted the Crooked Hillary exoneration long before he talked to her (lied in Congress to Senator G), then based his decisions on her poll numbers. Disgruntled, he, McCabe, and the others, committed many crimes!

Donald J. Trump, [tweet](#), 08:25 EDT, 16 April 2018.

In the above tweet, "Senator G" is Senator Grassley, chairman of the U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee. Comey adequately explained what Trump mischaracterized as "based his decisions on her poll numbers".

Two days later, Trump tweeted again about Comey.

Slippery James Comey, the worst FBI Director in history, was not fired because of the phony Russia investigation where, by the way, there was NO COLLUSION (except by the Dems)!

Donald J. Trump, [tweet](#), 08:05 EDT, 18 April 2018.

In his 11 May 2017 interview with Lester Holt (see my previous essay on Trump), Trump said he fired Comey because of "this Russia thing". Now Trump denies firing Comey because of the Russia investigation.

On Friday, 20 April 2018, Trump tweeted:

So General Michael Flynn's life can be totally destroyed while Shadey James Comey can Leak and Lie and make lots of money from a third rate book (that should never have been written). Is that really the way life in America is supposed to work? I don't think so!

Donald J. Trump, [tweet](#), 06:34 EDT, 20 April 2018.

My comments is that General Flynn was "totally destroyed" after he lied to Vice-President Pence and then Trump fired Flynn. Comey had a distinguished career and his book is *not* "third-rate".

On 24 April, [The Hill](#) reported that more than 600,000 copies of Comey's book were sold in the first week.

On 6 May 2019, Comey's book was Nr. 1 on *The New York Times* best-seller list of nonfiction books for the second consecutive week.

---

On 27 April, Trump again attacked Comey.

Is everybody believing what is going on. James Comey can't define what a leak is. He illegally leaked CLASSIFIED INFORMATION but doesn't understand what he did or how serious it is. He lied all over the place to cover it up. He's either very sick or very dumb. Remember sailor!

Donald J. Trump, [tweet](#), 06:26 EDT, 27 April 2018.

Trump has been falsely asserting that Comey leaked classified information. Trump refers to some memoranda that Comey wrote about his meetings with Trump. The memorandum that Comey leaked to *The New York Times* was **not** classified. See:

- John Kruzel, "Fact-checking Donald Trump's tweets about former FBI Director James Comey," [PolitiFact](#), 18 April 2018.
- Philip Bump, "The Comey memos bolster his claim that he didn't leak classified information," [Washington Post](#), 20 April 2018.
- Philip Bump, "There's still no evidence Comey leaked classified information to the media," [Washington Post](#), 23 April, updated 27 April 2018.
- John Kruzel, "What the law says about James Comey's leaked memos," [PolitiFact](#), 24 April 2018.
- Eugene Kiely & D'Angelo Gore, "Trump Wrong on Comey 'Leak,' McCabe Funds," [FactCheck](#), 26 April 2018.



John Wagner, "'Either very sick or very dumb': Trump escalates attacks on former FBI director," [Washington Post](#), 27 April 2018.

- Eileen Sullivan, "Trump Renews Attacks on Comey Before Turning to Praise of Korean Talks," [New York Times](#), 27 April 2018.

There are several things wrong with Trump's 27 April tweet about Comey. First, as usual, Trump gets his facts wrong — Comey did *not* leak classified information. Comey did *not* lie to cover up his alleged leak. Second, Trump displays his uncontrolled anger in his tweet. Third, Trump accuses Comey of either mental illness or stupidity, in a childish, ad hominem attack on Comey. Each of these three errors by Trump is a good reason why Trump is unfit to be president. Trump is oblivious to how immature he appears in his angry tweets with childish insults and false facts.

---

On the night of 2 May 2018, Rudolph W. Giuliani — the former mayor of New York City and a recent addition to Trump's collection of personal attorneys — appeared on a Fox News Channel program and gave a *third* explanation for why Trump fired Comey.

He fired Comey because Comey would not, among other things, say that [Trump] wasn't a target of the investigation. He's entitled to that. Hillary Clinton got that, and he couldn't get that. So he fired him, and he said, 'I'm free of this guy.'

Greg Sargent, "Giuliani's other big admission may be even worse for Trump," [Washington Post](#), 09:54 EDT, 3 May 2018.

See also: [Politico](#); [The Hill](#); [CBS News](#).

I disagree that Trump was "entitled" to a public declaration by Comey that Trump was not a target in the ongoing FBI investigation.

On 31 May 2018, Trump tweeted another explanation for why he fired Comey.

Not that it matters but I never fired James Comey because of Russia! The Corrupt Mainstream Media loves to keep pushing that narrative, but they know it is not true!

Donald J. Trump, [tweet](#), 08:11 EDT, 31 May 2018.

[The Hill](#) explains that this tweet is *not* consistent with Trump's previous explanations. My opinion is that Trump is trying to avoid being charged with the crime of obstruction of justice for firing Comey. Philip Bump of the [Washington Post](#) wrote a detailed explanation of why Trump fired Comey. The most important point is what Trump himself told Lester Holt of [NBC News](#) on 11 May 2017. (See my 2017 essay on Trump.)

---

## Trump loves perjurers and leakers

I. Lewis "Scooter" Libby Jr. was chief of staff for Vice-President Dick Cheney. In 2003, syndicated columnist Robert Novak reported the identity of a CIA agent. In 2007, Libby was convicted of four felonies resulting from the leak of the agent's name, but *no* one was charged with the leak itself. [New York Times](#).

On Friday afternoon, 13 April 2018, Trump issued a pardon to Libby. In July 2007, President George W. Bush commuted Libby's 30-month prison sentence. [Associated Press](#); [New York Times](#); [Washington Post](#).

I interpret Trump's pardon as indicating that Trump approves of both leaking government secrets and lying to investigators. This is strange, because Trump often angrily condemns people for leaking confidential matters in Trump's White House.

An alternative interpretation was given by journalists at the [Washington Post](#), who suggested that Trump was assuring his cronies that if they made false statements to investigators, then Trump would protect them. But that assurance assumes that Trump is still president when his cronies are convicted of perjury, obstruction of justice, and false statements to the FBI.

---

### Trump's response to chemical weapons in Syria

On the night of 7 April 2018, Assad's government used chemical weapons (i.e., chlorine gas, probably also a nerve agent) on people in Douma, an eastern suburb of Damascus. Trump immediately began threatening Assad with U.S. Military airstrikes, which threats gave Assad six days of warning to move his military assets. On the night of 13 April, the U.S. Military — with token contributions from France and England — destroyed three targets in Syria. All of that is chronicled in my [essay](#) on the civil war in Syria. In that essay, I cite that Trump *knows* not to announce military strikes in advance, but Trump did it anyway.

On the morning of 14 April, Trump gloated about his military strike on Syria, a third-world nation.

A perfectly executed strike last night. Thank you to France and the United Kingdom for their wisdom and the power of their fine Military. Could not have had a better result. Mission Accomplished!

Donald J. Trump, [tweet](#), 08:21 EDT, 14 April 2018.

My comment is that "mission accomplished" will be true only if Assad stops using chemical weapons. Then NBC News, one of the three major television networks in the USA, wrote: President Donald Trump never gets tired of declaring that he's winning.

He's often said that he [won](#) the popular vote in 2016, though he lost by nearly 3 million ballots. His re-election [slogan](#), rolled out less than 14 months into his presidency suggests a job already done — "Keep America Great." And on Saturday morning, he declared "Mission Accomplished!" in a tweet about limited airstrikes designed to degrade Bashar al-Assad's chemical weapons capabilities.

The tendency to overstate his success served him well in marketing Trump brands long before he became president and has been a central element of his political persona in the White House.

The narrow achievement of executing a single military operation demonstrates just how much Trump needs every victory he can declare at a time when the FBI just

raided the offices of his personal lawyer, he's still fending off special counsel Robert Mueller's investigation of his campaign and possible obstruction of justice, his agenda is stalled in Congress, his major legislative triumphs promise to greatly exacerbate the debt he vowed to eliminate and his approval ratings remain [underwater](#) [approximately 41% approval].

Jonathan Allen, "Trump overstates what he's 'accomplished.' Again." [NBC News](#), 18:31 EDT, 14 April 2018.

My comment is that the tone of the NBC News article hints at terminal frustration with Trump, perhaps the beginning of mainstream media becoming disrespectful of Trump. I suggest that, after 14 months of the Trump presidency, a majority of people are beginning to see Trump as the children's story about the emperor who wore clothing so fine that no one could see the clothing.

### **Trump's airstrikes were unconstitutional**

Now we come to an important question of whether the airstrikes on Syria were legal, according to laws in the USA. On the night of the airstrikes, the U.S. Secretary of Defense said:

We and our allies find these atrocities inexcusable. As our commander in chief, the president has the authority under Article II of the Constitution to use military force overseas to defend important United States national interests. The United States has vital national interests in averting a worsening catastrophe in Syria, and specifically deterring the use and proliferation of chemical weapons.

"Briefing by Secretary Mattis on U.S. Strikes in Syria," [Pentagon](#), 13 April 2018.

I disagree with the Secretary of Defense, because I do *not* see any "important United States national interests" to justify this airstrike. Assad did *not* use chemical weapons to attack U.S. citizens. Assad has never threatened U.S. citizens with chemical weapons. What Trump has done is unilaterally appoint the USA to enforce international law that prohibits use of chemical weapons. If Trump wants to punish alleged violations of international law, then Trump needs specific authorization from the U.S. Congress. During the Obama presidency, Trump clearly stated this need for Congressional approval in *two* tweets:

What will we get for bombing Syria besides more debt and a possible long term conflict? Obama needs Congressional approval.

Donald J. Trump, [tweet](#), 29 August 2013.

The President must get Congressional approval before attacking Syria — big mistake if he does not!

Donald J. Trump, [tweet](#), 30 August 2013.

Violating the allocation of power in the U.S. Constitution is obviously an impeachable offense.

More than one day *after* the attack on Syria, Trump informed Congress of what they already knew from reading news articles:

At approximately 9:00 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time on April 13, 2018, at my direction,

United States military forces, acting in concert with French and British military forces, struck Syrian military chemical weapons-related facilities. The targets of the combined operation were a scientific research center installation, a storage facility, and a bunker. I directed this action in response to the Syrian government's continued and unlawful use of chemical weapons, including in the horrific attack in Duma, Syria, on April 7 that injured or killed numerous innocent civilians. The purpose of this military action was to degrade the Syrian military's ability to conduct further chemical weapons attacks and to dissuade the Syrian government from using or proliferating chemical weapons.

I acted pursuant to my constitutional authority to conduct foreign relations and as Commander in Chief and Chief Executive and in the vital national security and foreign policy interests of the United States to promote the stability of the region, to deter the use and proliferation of chemical weapons, and to avert a worsening of the region's current humanitarian catastrophe. The United States will take additional action, as necessary and appropriate, to further its important national interests.

I am providing this report as part of my efforts to keep the Congress fully informed, consistent with the War Powers Resolution (Public Law 93-148). I appreciate the support of the Congress in this action.

"Text of a Letter from the President to the Speaker of the House of Representatives and the President Pro Tempore of the Senate," [White House](#), 15 April 2018.

### **15 April 2018: Haley says more sanctions on Russia**

### **16 April 2018: Trump says no**

On Sunday, 15 April 2018, U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations Nikki Haley said on CBS News program "Face the Nation" that more sanctions against Russia would be announced on Monday. Haley said the new sanctions would be targeted at "companies that were dealing with equipment related to Assad and chemical weapons use". [CBS News](#); [Politico](#).

But on Monday, 16 April, the White House said that there would *not* be more sanctions on Russia, unless Russia committed new misconduct. [Washington Post](#); [Washington Post](#)(Nikki under the bus); [Associated Press](#); [Politico](#).

The White House basically blamed Haley for misunderstanding possible future sanctions on Russia. One White House staffer, Larry Kudlow, blamed Haley for "momentary confusion." On 17 April, Haley retaliated by essentially calling the White House staff liars. What actually happened was the White House changed policy on Russia, but failed to inform Haley. [Washington Post](#); [New York Times](#); [Politico](#).

My comment is that Haley regularly speaks in the United Nations Security Council and shreds the Russian position like lettuce. Only an idiot would want to tangle with Haley. Since the beginning of Trump's presidency, the White House has been disorganized and dysfunctional, and Trump appears to like that chaos. Trump's amateurish White House staff undercut the U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations, which is a serious gaffe.

One other point. Ambassador Haley has a difficult job dealing with professional liars from Russia, Syria, Iran, and North Korea. The amateurs in the White House should *not* be making Haley's life more difficult by failing to inform her of changes of policy.

---

## May 2018

### Trump dictated health report

On 1 May 2018, [CNN](#) revealed that Trump dictated a health report that Dr. Harold Bornstein signed in December 2015. The report said, in part: “If elected, Mr. Trump, I can state unequivocally, will be the healthiest individual ever elected to the presidency.”

When Trump released the report to the public during the presidential campaign, Trump may have perpetrated a fraud on the American public.

On 1 February 2017, Bornstein told the [New York Times](#) that Trump takes the drug finasteride (brand name: Propecia) to treat male-pattern baldness. That public disclosure angered Trump. Two days later, Trump sent his former personal bodyguard and an attorney to Bornstein's office to retrieve all of Bornstein's original records on Trump. [NBC News](#).

Trump's staff explained that the White House physician wanted the medical records, to provide continuity of care. But the White House physician is only entitled to a *copy* of Bornstein's records on Trump. The original records are Bornstein's property.

My comment is that Bornstein was wrong to tell *The New York Times* that Trump was taking finasteride. But that violation of physician-patient confidentiality does *not* justify Trump sending two men to Bornstein's office to intimidate Bornstein into surrendering Trump's original medical records.

---

### 9 May: Negative News is Fake News

On 9 May 2018, Trump resumed his attack on the news media.

The Fake News is working overtime. Just reported that, despite the tremendous success we are having with the economy & all things else, 91% of the Network News about me is negative (Fake). Why do we work so hard in working with the media when it is corrupt? Take away credentials?

Donald J. Trump, [tweet](#), 07:38 EDT, 9 May 2018.

*The Washington Post* explained the "91%" remark:

He was spending his morning watching “Fox and Friends,” as he is wont to do, and up flashed a [report](#) from the Media Research Center stating that 91 percent of network news coverage of Trump from January through April was negative. The Media Research Center, we’ll note, is part of the conglomerate of conservative enterprises

funded by Robert Mercer and his family, the folks that also funded Cambridge Analytica, Breitbart and former White House adviser Steve Bannon. Philip Bump, "Trump makes it explicit: Negative coverage of him is fake coverage," [Washington Post](#), 09:17 EDT, 9 May 2018.

Predictably, the White House Correspondents' Association condemned Trump's tweet. [Washington Post](#); [The Hill](#).

I have three comments:

1. The 9 May tweet is a continuation of Trump's longstanding hatred of the mainstream news media that exposes Trump's mistakes and false facts (i.e., lies). See this essay for [change defamation law](#); [fake news awards](#); [Cohen's impeachment bill](#) at §5. See my 2017 [essay](#) on Trump, especially at 16-17 Feb, 24 Feb, and 11 Oct 2017. See [FactCheck.org](#) for 16 Jan 2018.
2. The 9 May tweet is more evidence of Trump's narcissistic character: according to Trump's tweet, any "negative" coverage of Trump is "Fake" news.
3. Trump's suggestion that the White House should "take away credentials" is a way to manipulate news coverage so that criticism of Trump is suppressed. This is a blatant violation of freedom of the press, in the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution.

On 16 July, after a [disastrous](#) press conference with Russian President Putin, Trump was excoriated by both Democrats and Republicans. Trump's response was to blame journalists for failing to report the alleged successes of his meeting with Putin. And on 19 July 2018, Trump again called journalists the "enemy of the American people".

The Summit with Russia was a great success, except with the real enemy of the people, the Fake News Media. I look forward to our second meeting [with Putin] so that we can start implementing some of the many things discussed, including stopping terrorism, security for Israel, nuclear.....

Donald J. Trump, [tweet](#), 09:24 EDT, 19 July 2018.

Seventeen months ago, Trump first tweeted that journalists were the enemy of the American people:

The FAKE NEWS media (failing @nytimes, @NBCNews, @ABC, @CBS, @CNN) is not my enemy, it is the enemy of the American People!

Donald J. Trump, [tweet](#), 16:48 EDT, 17 Feb 2017.

On 19 July 2018, the [New York Times](#) published an article on Trump calling journalists an enemy of the people.

My comment is that Trump is not only a demagogue, but also unamerican to criticize journalists who are legally protected by the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution.

On 29 July 2018, Trump tweeted about a meeting nine days earlier.

Had a very good and interesting meeting at the White House with A.G. Sulzberger, Publisher of the New York Times. Spent much time talking about the vast amounts of

Fake News being put out by the media & how that Fake News has morphed into phrase, "Enemy of the People." Sad!

Donald J. Trump, [tweet](#), 08:30 EDT, 29 July 2018.

"Fake News" did *not* morph into "Enemy of the People". Trump escalated his inflammatory rhetoric from "Fake News" to "Enemy of the People". What is really "sad" is that the USA has a president who is a demagogue and a habitual liar.

In explanation of Trump's 29 July tweet, two hours after Trump's tweet, Sulzberger said:  
My main purpose for accepting the meeting was to raise concerns about the president's deeply troubling anti-press rhetoric.

I told the president directly that I thought that his language was not just divisive but increasingly dangerous.

I told him that although the phrase "fake news" is untrue and harmful, I am far more concerned about his labeling journalists "the enemy of the people." I warned that this inflammatory language is contributing to a rise in threats against journalists and will lead to violence.

I repeatedly stressed that this is particularly true abroad, where the president's rhetoric is being used by some regimes to justify sweeping crackdowns on journalists. I warned that it was putting lives at risk, that it was undermining the democratic ideals of our nation, and that it was eroding one of our country's greatest exports: a commitment to free speech and a free press.

"Statement of A.G. Sulzberger, Publisher, The New York Times, in Response to President Trump's Tweet About Their Meeting," [New York Times](#), 29 July 2018.

See news articles at: [New York Times](#); [Washington Post](#); [Associated Press](#).

On the afternoon of 29 July 2018, Trump had another tweet storm about journalists.

When the media — driven insane by their Trump Derangement Syndrome — reveals internal deliberations of our government, it truly puts the lives of many, not just journalists, at risk! Very unpatriotic! Freedom of the press also comes with a responsibility to report the news...

Donald J. Trump, [tweet](#), 15:09 EDT, 29 July 2018.

...accurately. 90% of media coverage of my Administration is negative, despite the tremendously positive results we are achieving, it's no surprise that confidence in the media is at an all time low! I will not allow our great country to be sold out by anti-Trump haters in the...

Donald J. Trump, [tweet](#), 15:09 EDT, 29 July 2018.

...dying newspaper industry. No matter how much they try to distract and cover it up, our country is making great progress under my leadership and I will never stop fighting for the American people! As an example, the failing New York Times...

Donald J. Trump, [tweet](#), 15:09 EDT, 29 July 2018.



...and the Amazon Washington Post do nothing but write bad stories even on very positive achievements — and they will never change!

Donald J. Trump, [tweet](#), 15:09 EDT, 29 July 2018.

My comments on these four tweets:

1. Dr. Charles Krauthammer, a psychiatrist and commentator, created the phrase "Bush Derangement Syndrome". "Trump Derangement Syndrome" is a phrase used on 16 July 2018 by Dr. Rand Paul, a former ophthalmologist and now a U.S. Senator from Kentucky. [Associated Press](#). Using fancy words like "syndrome" pretends there is an intellectual diagnostic process here, instead of propaganda.
2. Trump calls the news media "insane". But journalists have good reason to hate Trump, after Trump's many insults at the news media.
3. Trump is grieved that journalists expose "internal deliberations of our government". Revealing "internal deliberations of our government" often shows errors or dysfunction by Trump, which embarrasses Trump.
4. Trump boasts of "the tremendously positive results we are achieving". Construction of Trump's wall along the Mexican border has not begun. North Korea continues to build more nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles. Trump has failed to achieve much of his agenda.
5. How is Trump going to stop "anti-Trump haters in the dying newspaper industry"?
6. "I will never stop fighting for the American people!" is propaganda. Us versus them. But [opinion polls](#) show only 40% of the American people approve of Trump's job performance. The American people do *not* — and should not — speak with one voice.
7. Trump routinely refers to *The New York Times* as "the failing New York Times". But the [Associated Press](#) tells us "the Times' ownership company in May [2018] reported a 3.8 percent increase in first-quarter revenue compared to the same period in 2017." So the "failing Times" is more propaganda — if not an outright lie — by Trump.
8. Trump forgot to mention [CNN](#), which Trump claims is the worst of fake news.

Trump learned nothing from his meeting with Sulzberger.

On Tuesday morning, 31 July 2018, Trump tweeted:

The Fake News Media is going CRAZY! They are totally unhinged and in many ways, after witnessing first hand the damage they do to so many innocent and decent people, I enjoy watching. In 7 years, when I am no longer in office, their ratings will dry up and they will be gone!

Donald J. Trump, [tweet](#), 09:34 EDT, 31 July 2018.

The word "unhinged" is the title of a book written by a former employee in Trump's White House. On 26 July, it was publicly announced that the book is scheduled for first sale on

14 August 2018. [CNN](#); [Washington Post](#). So in two weeks, Trump will be hearing a lot about he is [unhinged](#).

Trump's use of "crazy" and "unhinged" is a childish insult, which demeans people who really suffer from mental illness.

It is strange that Trump would "enjoy watching" the "damage [that Fake News] do[es] to so many innocent and decent people". One wonders if Trump really intended to say that.

On Sunday, 5 August 2018, Trump exploded:

The Fake News hates me saying that they are the Enemy of the People only because they know it's TRUE. I am providing a great service by explaining this to the American People. They purposely cause great division & distrust. They can also cause War! They are very dangerous & sick!

Donald J. Trump, [tweet](#), 07:38 EDT, 5 Aug 2018.

My comment is in his third sentence, Trump says "they cause great division". The pronoun "they" properly refers to its nearest antecedent, which is "American People" — but that makes no sense. Trump frequently makes this grammar error, but I have been avoiding picking at the grammar of the uneducated Trump. It is appropriate that Trump's stupid tweet is marred by a grammar error. It would be a "great service" to the American people if the president would use correct grammar.

---

## 17 May: Trump's Paranoia

On 4 March 2017, Trump alleged — without any evidence — that the FBI had wiretapped his office in the Trump Tower in New York City during the 2016 presidential campaign. Eventually, Trump stopped asserting that baseless claim. On 17 May 2018, Trump began alleging that the FBI had put an informant in Trump's campaign office. This time, Trump initially cited Andrew McCarthy, a former Assistant United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York.

Wow, word seems to be coming out that the Obama FBI “SPIED ON THE TRUMP CAMPAIGN WITH AN EMBEDDED INFORMANT.” Andrew McCarthy says, “There’s probably no doubt that they had at least one confidential informant in the campaign.” If so, this is bigger than Watergate!

Donald J. Trump, [tweet](#), 08:45 EDT, 17 May 2018.

“Apparently the DOJ put a Spy in the Trump Campaign. This has never been done before and by any means necessary, they are out to frame Donald Trump for crimes he didn’t commit.” David Asman @LouDobbs @GreggJarrett Really bad stuff!

Donald J. Trump, [tweet](#), 06:24 EDT, 18 May 2018.

Reports are there was indeed at least one FBI representative implanted, for political purposes, into my campaign for president. It took place very early on, and long before the phony Russia Hoax became a “hot” Fake News story. If true — all time biggest political scandal!

Donald J. Trump, [tweet](#), 09:50 EDT, 18 May 2018.

Notice that Trump's narcissistic character flaw is on display: "bigger than Watergate!" and "all time biggest political scandal!". Is Trump the all-time biggest liar?

The FBI used an informant to provide information from *three* people in Trump's campaign on Russian collusion with the Trump campaign. The informant was *not* embedded in the campaign and he did *not* spy on the political campaign. Once again, Trump hysterically exaggerates. [New York Times](#); [Washington Post](#).

On 19 May, Trump continued his tweets:

If the FBI or DOJ was infiltrating a campaign for the benefit of another campaign, that is a really big deal. Only the release or review of documents that the House Intelligence Committee (also, Senate Judiciary) is asking for can give the conclusive answers.

Drain the Swamp!

Donald J. Trump, [tweet](#), 17:27 EDT, 19 May 2018.

On 20 May, Trump decided to waste taxpayer's money on an investigation of his implausible claim that the FBI surveilled his presidential campaign "for political purposes".

I hereby demand, and will do so officially tomorrow, that the Department of Justice look into whether or not the FBI/DOJ infiltrated or surveilled the Trump Campaign for Political Purposes — and if any such demands or requests were made by people within the Obama Administration!

Donald J. Trump, [tweet](#), 13:37 EDT, 20 May 2018.

At 18:30 EDT on Sunday, 20 May, the [Associated Press](#) reported: "The Justice Department has asked its inspector general to determine whether there was any impropriety or political motivation in how the FBI conducted its counterintelligence investigation of persons suspected of involvement with Russian agents who interfered in the presidential election." See also [Washington Post](#).

On Monday, 21 May, Trump had a meeting at the White House with the Deputy Attorney General (Rod Rosenstein) and the head of the FBI (Christopher Wray). [Washington Post](#)(AP); [Bloomberg](#); [New York Times](#). My comment is that this extraordinary meeting erodes the independence of the FBI investigation of Trump's 2016 presidential campaign. The DoJ had already publicly agreed to investigate Trump's claims of an FBI spy in his campaign, so the meeting was *not* necessary, except as an improper attempt by Trump to influence the investigation.

On Tuesday night, 22 May, Trump made two tweets:

If the person placed very early into my campaign wasn't a SPY put there by the previous Administration for political purposes, how come such a seemingly massive amount of money was paid for services rendered — many times higher than normal...

Donald J. Trump, [tweet](#), 21:13 EDT, 22 May 2018.

...Follow the money! The spy was there early in the campaign and yet never reported Collusion with Russia, because there was no Collusion. He was only there to spy for political reasons and to help Crooked Hillary win — just like they did to Bernie Sanders, who got duped!

Donald J. Trump, [tweet](#), 21:13 EDT, 22 May 2018.

On Wednesday morning, 23 May, Trump made three tweets:

Look how things have turned around on the Criminal Deep State. They go after Phony Collusion with Russia, a made up Scam, and end up getting caught in a major SPY scandal the likes of which this country may never have seen before! What goes around, comes around!

Donald J. Trump, [tweet](#), 06:54 EDT, 23 May 2018.

Trump quoted a legal commentator on the Fox News cable television channel:

“It’s clear that they had eyes and ears all over the Trump Campaign” Judge Andrew Napolitano

Donald J. Trump, [tweet](#), 07:00 EDT, 23 May 2018.

SPYGATE could be one of the biggest political scandals in history!

Donald J. Trump, [tweet](#), 07:12 EDT, 23 May 2018.

On 23 May, [CNN](#) had a story with the headline: "Donald Trump turned a rumor into a full-blown government conspiracy in just 5 days".

On 24 May, the Department of Justice disclosed some evidence to senior senators and congressmen. After the briefing, Adam Schiff, the ranking Democrat on the U.S. House of Representatives Intelligence Committee, told journalists: “Nothing we heard today has changed our view that there is no evidence to support any allegation that the FBI or any intelligence agency placed a spy in the Trump campaign or otherwise failed to follow appropriate procedures and protocols.” [New York Times](#); [Washington Post](#); [Reuters](#).

On 25 May, Trump continued his tweet paranoia:

The Democrats are now alluding to the the concept that having an Informant placed in an opposing party’s campaign is different than having a Spy, as illegal as that may be. But what about an “Informant” who is paid a fortune and who “sets up” way earlier than the Russian Hoax?

Donald J. Trump, [tweet](#), 08:04 EDT, 25 May 2018.

Can anyone even imagine having Spies placed in a competing campaign, by the people and party in absolute power, for the sole purpose of political advantage and gain? And to think that the party in question, even with the expenditure of far more money, LOST!

Donald J. Trump, [tweet](#), 08:04 EDT, 25 May 2018.

On 26 May, the *one* informant has now expanded to plural spies "all over my campaign" as Trump's delusions worsen.

With Spies, or “Informants” as the Democrats like to call them because it sounds less sinister (but it’s not), all over my campaign, even from a very early date, why didn’t the crooked highest levels of the FBI or “Justice” contact me to tell me of the phony Russia problem?

Donald J. Trump, [tweet](#), 15:28 EDT, 26 May 2018.

On 29 May 2018, Andrew Napolitano — a former judge in a New Jersey trial court, and now a Fox News legal commentator — said: “But the allegations by Mayor Giuliani over weekend which would lead us to believe that the Trump people think that the FBI had an undercover agent who inveigled his way into the campaign, and was there as a spy on the campaign seem to be baseless, there's no evidence for that whatsoever.” On 23 May, Trump himself had tweeted to quote Napolitano. That nicely demolishes Trump's delusion. Further, the Republican Chairman of the House Oversight Committee, Trey Gowdy, said the FBI was justified in using the informant. [The Hill](#); [Washington Post](#); [Fox News](#)(transcript of Gowdy).

On 29 May, Trump promised to do some real work and stop tweeting about the FBI investigation of collusion between his presidential campaign and Russia.

Sorry, I've got to start focusing my energy on North Korea Nuclear, bad Trade Deals, VA Choice, the Economy, rebuilding the Military, and so much more, and not on the Rigged Russia Witch Hunt that should be investigating Clinton/Russia/FBI/Justice/Obama/Comey/Lynch etc.

Donald J. Trump, [tweet](#), 07:27 EDT, 29 May 2018.

I comment that Trump's 29 May tweet would have been a graceful end to this topic, but Trump continued his obsession with the FBI investigation.

On 31 May, Trump continued his obsession with his delusion about FBI spies in his 2016 presidential campaign:

The corrupt Mainstream Media is working overtime not to mention the infiltration of people, Spies (Informants), into my campaign! Surveillance much?

Donald J. Trump, [tweet](#), 08:05 EDT, 31 May 2018.

Trump refused to abandon his delusion about FBI spies in his campaign. On Tuesday, 5 June, Trump tweeted:

Great interview by @LouDobbs with Chris Farrell of Judicial Watch concerning the governments counter-intelligence operation into the Trump Campaign. SPYGATE at the highest level. Who would believe?

Donald J. Trump, [tweet](#), 21:02 EDT, 5 June 2018.

Of course, Trump claims the FBI wronged him worse than anyone else in U.S. History.

...This is a level of criminality beyond the pale. This is such a grave abuse of power and authority, it's like nothing else we've seen in our history. This makes the Nixon Watergate burglary look like keystone cop stuff

Donald J. Trump, [tweet](#), 21:27 EDT, 5 June 2018.

On 6 June, the Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives, Paul Ryan (R-Wisc.), agreed with Representative Trey Gowdy (R-S.Car.) that there was *no* evidence of a spy in Trump's presidential campaign. [Associated Press](#); [New York Times](#); [Washington Post](#). The remarks in these news articles about Trump's pardoning himself refer to an issue discussed [below](#).

On 23 July 2018, Trump's delusion reappeared about an FBI spy in his presidential campaign. The occasion was the release of search warrant documents at the FISA court on Carter Page.

....and the DOJ, FBI and Obama Gang need to be held to account. Source #1 was the major source. Avoided talking about it being the Clinton campaign behind it. Misled the Court to provide a pretext to SPY on the Trump Team. Not about Carter Page..was all about getting Trump.....

Donald J. Trump, [tweet](#), 07:01 EDT, 23 July 2018.

The [Associated Press](#); [Los Angeles Times](#); and [NBC News](#) explained that Trump mentions false "facts" about the surveillance application for Carter Page.

---

## June 2018

### 2 June 2018: Another Big Lie from Trump

On 9 June 2016, Donald Trump Jr. met with Russians at Trump Tower in New York City. When journalists reported that fact in July 2017, the White House issued a terse statement. On 29 January 2018, Trump's personal attorney acknowledged in a letter to Mueller that the president himself "dictated" that terse statement. That letter to Mueller was published by the [New York Times](#) on 2 June 2018.

In addition to the terse mention of the statement about Trump Jr., the letter to Mueller also argues that the president can *not* obstruct justice, because the U.S. Constitution gives the president complete control over federal criminal investigations. That ignores historical precedent that the U.S. House of Representatives was planning to impeach richard nixon for obstruction of justice, and the House did impeach Bill Clinton for obstruction of justice. There is a long tradition of independence for FBI investigations and criminal prosecutions, to avoid political motivations for criminal investigations and prosecutions.

What was known in 2017 about the Russians meeting Donald Trump Jr. — and the changing story from Trump Jr. and the White House — was chronicled in my previous [essay](#) at pages 206-208. Major news media reported on the January 2018 admission by Trump's attorneys: [New York Times](#)(2June); [Associated Press](#); [Washington Post](#)(AP); [CNN](#); [New York Times](#)(4June).

On 4 June 2018, John Berman — co-anchor of the CNN cable television program "New Day" — compared the changing story from the White House to a "a writhing hydra of dishonesty. — You chop off one lie, and two more emerge in its place." [CNN](#).

The [Associated Press](#) explained that Jay Sekulow, one of Trump's personal lawyers, denied on 16 July 2017 and again on 31 July 2017 that Trump had drafted the statement. On 1 August 2017, White House spokeswoman Sarah Huckabee Sanders said Trump “certainly didn’t dictate, but he — like I said, he weighed in, offered suggestion like any father would do.” All falsehoods.

---

### 3 June 2018: Pardon Me?



Back in July 2017, Trump was already considering pardoning himself.

While all agree the U. S. President has the complete power to pardon, why think of that when only crime so far is LEAKS against us. FAKE NEWS  
Donald J. Trump, [tweet](#), 07:35 EDT, 22 July 2017.

Once again, Trump shows his ignorance of the law. It is false that "all agree" that Trump has the power to pardon himself. Amongst attorneys, a president pardoning himself is highly controversial. [Washington Post](#); [New York Times](#); [The Guardian](#); [Politico](#).

On Sunday, 3 June 2018, Trump's personal attorney, Rudy Giuliani was interviewed by George Stephanopoulos. Here is some of what Giuliani said about Trump's alleged power to pardon himself.

STEPHANOPOULOS: The [29 Jan 2018] letter also cites the president's pardon power. Do you and the president's attorneys believe the president has the power to pardon himself?

GIULIANI: He — he's not but he probably does. He has no intention of pardoning himself but he probably — not to say he can't. I mean, that — that's another really interesting constitutional argument, can the president pardon himself.

STEPHANOPOULOS: Do you think it's an open question?

GIULIANI: It would be an open question. I think it would probably get answered by gosh, that's what the constitution says and if you want to change it, change it. But yes.

STEPHANOPOULOS: A lot of focus on the president...

GIULIANI: I think the political ramifications of that would be tough. Pardoning other people is one thing, pardoning yourself is another. Other presidents have pardoned people in circumstances like this both in their administration and sometimes the next president, even of a different party will come along and pardon.

STEPHANOPOULOS: A lot of focus on the president's pardon power this week. He pardoned Dinesh D'Souza we saw this week. Roger Stone says the president's sending a signal to those caught up in the Russia investigation.

GIULIANI: He is not. I think what he's doing — I think the president feels guilty that some of these were delayed. Maybe there was too much concern with injustice or the White House about doing it because it would look bad. These are so different than the case — cases he's involved in. And the issue of any pardon there is so far — no — I mean, except for a couple guilty pleas, nobody's really been convicted yet.

"This Week' Transcript 6-3-18: President Trump's Personal Attorney Rudy Giuliani," [ABC News](#), 3 June 2018.

On Monday, 4 June 2018, Trump arrogantly asserted he had "the absolute right to pardon myself".

As has been stated by numerous legal scholars, I have the absolute right to PARDON



myself, but why would I do that when I have done nothing wrong? In the meantime, the never ending Witch Hunt, led by 13 very Angry and Conflicted Democrats (& others) continues into the mid-terms!

Donald J. Trump, [tweet](#), 08:35 EDT, 4 June 2018.

As usual, Trump did not mention names or citations for the so-called "legal scholars" on whom Trump relies for his assertion. In 1974, president richard nixon asked the Department of Justice if he could pardon himself, and the [DoJ](#) said: "Under the fundamental rule that no one may be a judge in his own case, the President cannot pardon himself."

Trump's assertion of an "absolute right" is hyperbole. A president pardoning himself is unprecedented, therefore there are no judicial opinions on whether such a pardon is valid and lawful.

Trump's tweet is nonsense for another reason. Trump asserts that he "has done nothing wrong". *If* that is really true, then that is a good reason *neither* to prosecute *nor* convict Trump. And if Trump were wrongly convicted, then that is a good reason to pardon Trump. But — and this is important — Trump *should not* pardon himself.

*The Washington Post* published a [news article](#) and an [analysis](#) that suggest that Trump might be impeached if he pardoned himself.

---

## 6 June 2018: Trump's Ignorance

### Trump believes Canadians burnt White House in 1812

Trump invoked "national security" to justify placing tariffs on imported aluminum and steel from Canada. This seems strange, because Canada is a long-time ally of the USA, and Canada has *never* attacked the USA.

During a telephone call on 25 May, Canadian Prime Minister Trudeau asked Trump what Canada had done to become a national security threat to the USA. And Trump replied "Didn't you guys burn down the White House?" during the War of 1812. Trump's gaffe was first reported on 6 June by [CNN](#). See also: [New York Times](#); [Canadian Broadcasting Corp](#); [Edmonton Journal](#).

For those who went to the same school as Trump, it was the British who burnt the White House in 1812. It is bad enough that Trump is imposing burdensome tariffs on our allies, but justifying those tariffs with ignorance and stupidity should be an embarrassment to the USA.

---

### Trump believes Texans gawked in boats during Hurricane Harvey

On 6 June 2018, the [White House](#) transcript showed Trump said at a Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) briefing: "People went out in their boats to watch the

hurricane. That didn't work out too well." That was during Hurricane Harvey in Houston during August 2017. Trump really believes stupid Texans went out in boats to gawk at the hurricane. The Truth is that those boats were rescuing people who were trapped in their home by a flood. [Houston Chronicle](#); [Associated Press](#); [PolitiFact](#).

Does the USA have a better government when the president is delusional?

---

## 9 June 2018: Trump hates CNN

Just before Trump departed from the G-7 summit in Quebec for a summit with Kim Jong-Un in Singapore, Trump held a press conference:

QUESTION: As you were heading into these G7 talks, there was a sense that America's closest allies were frustrated with you and angry with you, and that you were angry with them and that you were leaving here early to go meet for more friendlier talks with Kim Jong Un in Singapore. And I'm wondering if you —

THE PRESIDENT: It's well put, I think.

QUESTION: — if you view it the same way. And do you view the U.S. alliance system shifting under your presidency, away —

THE PRESIDENT: Who are you with, out of curiosity?

QUESTION: CNN.

THE PRESIDENT: I figured. Fake News CNN. The worst. But I could tell by the question. I had no idea you were CNN. After the question, I was just curious as to who you were with. You were CNN.

....

Now, we are going to fix that situation. And if it's not fixed, we're not going to deal with these countries. But the relationship that I've had is great. So you can tell that to your fake friends at CNN.

....

QUESTION: Mr. President, we're sitting here, and kind of you've attacked the U.S. press back home, but you've also done it on foreign soil. I guess I want — I'd like to ask you why you do that. Do you think —

THE PRESIDENT: Because the U.S. press is very dishonest, much of it. Not all of it. Oh, I have some folks in your profession that are with the U.S., in the U.S. — citizens, proud citizens; they're reporters. These are some of the most outstanding people I know. But there are many people in the press that are unbelievably dishonest. They don't cover stories the way they're supposed to be. They don't even report them, in

many cases, if they're positive.

So there's tremendous — you know, I came up with the term, “fake news.” It's a lot of fake news. But at the same time, I have great respect for many people in the press. "Press Conference by President Trump After G7 Summit," [White House](#), 10:13 EDT, 9 June 2018.

Trump's public display of his personal hatred for CNN is inappropriate.

In this same press conference, Trump said: "... but the latest number is \$817 billion on trade. That's ridiculous and it's unacceptable." Trump alleged that the U.S. trade deficit was "\$817 billion", but the true government number is actually \$568.4 billion. [Associated Press](#). Ignoring the U.S. trade surplus in services to Canada is the same error that Trump made in March 2018, see [above](#). Trump is not only *wrong*, but also he refuses to correct his error.

---

On 15 June 2018, the U.S. Government admitted it had separated 1,995 children from 1,940 illegal immigrant parents at the border with Mexico from 19 April to 31 May 2018. [Reuters](#). Although moral people were aghast, it is long-standing policy to separate criminal adults from their children. On 14 June, Attorney General Jeff Sessions gave a [speech](#) on the topic that mentioned the Bible: “I would cite you to the Apostle Paul and his clear and wise command in Romans 13, to obey the laws of the government because God has ordained them for the purpose of order.” [Washington Post](#).

On 14 June 2018, Sarah Sanders — the White House press secretary and a henchwoman of Trump — gave a press briefing at which she insulted a CNN journalist.

QUESTION [by Jim Acosta of CNN]: Can I just ask a second question, completely unrelated, on these children who are being separated from their families as they come across the border? The Attorney General, earlier today, said that somehow there's a justification for this in the Bible. Where does it say in the Bible that it's moral to take children away from their mothers?

SANDERS: I'm not aware of the Attorney General's comments or what he would be referencing. I can't —

QUESTION: Is it a moral policy, in your view?

SANDERS: I can say that it is very biblical to enforce the law. That is, actually, repeated a number of times throughout the Bible. However, this —

QUESTION: But where in the Bible does it say —

SANDERS: Hold on, Jim. If you'll let me finish.

QUESTION: — it's okay to take children away from their parents?

SANDERS: Again, I'm not going to comment on the Attorney's specific comments that I haven't seen.

QUESTION: You just said it's in the Bible to follow the law.

SANDERS: That's not what I said. And I know it's hard for you to understand even short sentences, I guess, but please don't take my words out of context. But the separation of —

QUESTION: That's a cheap shot, Sarah. That's a cheap shot, Sarah.

SANDERS: — illegal alien families is the product of the same legal loopholes that Democrats refuse to close. And these laws are the same that have been on the books for over a decade. And the President is simply enforcing them.

QUESTION: But how is it moral? How is it a moral policy to take children away from their parents? Can you imagine —

SANDERS: It's a moral policy to follow and enforce the law.

"Press Briefing by Press Secretary Sarah Sanders," [White House](#), 15:16 EDT, 14 June 2018.

I am appalled at the White House press secretary Sanders for the ad hominem attack on Acosta.

At a press conference in England on 13 July, Trump refused to answer a question from CNN.

QUESTION: Mr. President, since you attacked CNN, can I ask you a question —

PRESIDENT TRUMP: John Roberts, go ahead. Go ahead, John.

QUESTION: Can I ask you a question? (Inaudible.)

PRESIDENT TRUMP: No. No. John Roberts, go ahead. CNN is fake news. I don't take questions — I don't take questions from CNN. CNN is fake news. I don't take questions from CNN.

John Roberts of Fox. Let's go to a real network. John, let's go.

"Remarks by President Trump and Prime Minister May of the United Kingdom in Joint Press Conference," [White House](#), 13 July 2018.

On 14 July, the White House canceled a scheduled interview of John Bolton by Jake Tapper of CNN. The cancelation was retaliation for an allegedly disrespectful question asked by Jim Acosta of CNN at the 13 July press conference quoted in the previous paragraph. [The Hill](#); [The Hill](#). My comment is that Trump is good at starting childish feuds.

On 25 July 2018, the White House banned CNN reporter Kaitlan Collins from an event in the Rose Garden, in retaliation for questions that she asked Trump earlier in the day. The event in the Rose Garden was open to all credentialed journalists, except Collins, who was disinvited by Sarah Sanders. [CNN](#); [Washington Post](#); [New York Times](#); [Associated Press](#); [Reuters](#).

[Fox News](#), Trump's favorite news source, also condemned banning Collins: "We stand in strong solidarity with CNN for the right to full access for our journalists as part of a free and

unfettered press."

On the night of 31 July 2018, Trump gave a speech in Tampa Florida, in which Trump's supporters heckled CNN correspondent Jim Acosta. Trump [retweeted](#) a video of the heckling, indicating Trump's approval. [Washington Post](#); [New York Times](#); [Sun-Sentinel](#); [The Hill](#).

My comment is that Trump is inciting a mob to attack journalists. This is *not* how a president should behave.

---

## 15 June 2018: More Lies from Trump

On Friday morning, 15 June, Trump gave a press conference in the driveway in front of the White House. Trump spewed out a series of remarkable statements, some of which are quoted here:

Now, I feel badly for a lot of those people. I feel badly for General Flynn. He's lost his house. He's lost his life. And some people say he lied, and some people say he didn't lie. I mean, really, it turned out maybe he didn't lie.

....

QUESTION: Mr. President, did you tape that statement about Don Jr.? Did you dictate the statement about Donald Trump, Jr.?

THE PRESIDENT: Let's not talk about it. You know what that is?

QUESTION: But can you tell us?

THE PRESIDENT: It's irrelevant. It's a statement to the New York Times — the phony, failing New York Times.

QUESTION: Well, just to clear it up. To clear it up.

THE PRESIDENT: Just wait a minute. Wait a minute. That's not a statement to a high tribunal of judges.

QUESTION: Understood.

THE PRESIDENT: That's a statement to the phony New York Times.

In fact, frankly, he shouldn't even speak to the New York Times because they only write phony stories anyway, although yesterday they wrote a nice story about what a (inaudible).

QUESTION: Thank you, sir. On the [Department of Justice Inspector General's] IG report, you've said twice now that it exonerated you and it proved there's no collusion. The IG report —

THE PRESIDENT: Look, if you read the IG report, I've been totally exonerated. As far

as I'm concerned —

QUESTION: It had nothing to do with collusion. It had nothing to do with that.

THE PRESIDENT: Take a little at it. Take — no, take a look at the investigation. Take a look at how it started. Take a look at the horrible statements that Peter Strzok, the chief investigator, said. And take a look at what he did with Hillary Clinton. Take a look at —

QUESTION: (Inaudible), sir, that has nothing to do with collusion. Why are you lying about it, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: I'll tell you what — you're asking me about Peter Strzok being fired. I am amazed that Peter Strzok is still at the FBI, and so is everybody else that read that report. And I'm not even talking about the report; I'm talking about long before the report. Peter Strzok should have been fired a long time ago, and others should have been fired.

....

QUESTION: Is Crimea part of Russia? Do you —

THE PRESIDENT: No, no. President Obama lost Crimea, just so you understand. This was long before I got there. Just — I want to make it so the fake news prints it properly. President Obama lost Crimea.

QUESTION: So it's his fault?

THE PRESIDENT: Wait, wait. That's his fault. Yeah, yeah, it's his fault. Yeah, it's his fault.

.... But just to put it — one more time, President Obama gave away Crimea. That should have never happened.

"Remarks by President Trump in Press Gaggle," [White House](#), 09:03 EDT, 15 June 2018.

My comments:

Trump fired General Flynn because he lied to Pence. Then Flynn pled guilty to lying to the FBI. Now Trump says "it turned out maybe he didn't lie."

Trump asserted he can make false statements to *The New York Times* about his son, Don Jr. It is true that those false statements are not perjury, because Trump was not under oath. But do Americans really want their president brazenly lying to journalists?

Then Trump asserted the Inspector General's report on Comey's investigation of Hillary Clinton's e-mails somehow exonerated Trump on collusion with Russians. That was a huge false statement, as a journalist said during the press conference: "Why are you lying about it,

sir?" Trump ignored that good question.

At the end of this press conference, Trump rewrote history so that Russian President Putin's annexation of Crimea is the fault of Obama.

There are many more errors by Trump in this one press conference than the three terse snippets that I quoted above. Journalists wrote many articles exposing factual errors in this press conference by Trump. See e.g., [Associated Press](#); [Washington Post](#); [New York Times](#); [PolitiFact](#); [ABC News](#); [CBS News](#); [NBC News](#). The [Toronto Star](#) found 22 errors by Trump in this one press conference.

The [Washington Post](#) found 3251 false or misleading claims by Trump from 20 Jan 2017 to 31 May 2018.

On 19 June, Ashley Parker, writing in The [Washington Post](#), suggested that Trump had recently increased his rate of making false statements. Parker said: "President Trump — a man already known for trafficking in mistruths and even outright lies — has been outdoing even himself with falsehoods in recent days, repeating and amplifying bogus claims on several of the most pressing controversies facing his presidency."

One should be appalled at Trump's frequent false facts and delusions. But the bigger problems is that most politicians in the U.S. Congress ignore Trump's falsehoods, instead of removing Trump from office. Trump is clearly unfit to be president when he can not distinguish fact from fiction.

---

### **18 June 2018: Trump needs more praise**

On Monday, 18 June 2018, Trump publicly whined about journalists giving him too little credit for the Kim/Trump summit.

If President Obama (who got nowhere with North Korea and would have had to go to war with many millions of people being killed) had gotten along with North Korea and made the initial steps toward a deal that I have, the Fake News would have named him a national hero!

Donald J. Trump, [tweet](#), 10:57 EDT, 18 June 2018.

Again we see the narcissistic personality disorder in Trump, when he demands more praise. Trump's "initial steps" in denuclearizing North Korea are signing an inadequate Statement, which I criticized in my separate [essay](#) on North Korea, and a photo opportunity with Kim Jong-Un.

---

### **18-19 June 2018: Trump lies about crime by refugees in Germany**

On Monday, 18 June 2018, Trump opined on Germany — and also Europe — allowing millions of Muslim migrants to enter Europe, and especially Germany. Trump lied when he



said: "Crime in Germany is way up."

The people of Germany are turning against their leadership as migration is rocking the already tenuous Berlin coalition. Crime in Germany is way up. Big mistake made all over Europe in allowing millions of people in who have so strongly and violently changed their culture!

Donald J. Trump, [tweet](#), 09:02 EDT, 18 June 2018.

On Tuesday, 19 June 2017, Trump again lied when he said that crime in Germany had increased by 10% and "migrants" were to blame. Trump then alleges that unspecified "Others [sic] countries are even worse."

Crime in Germany is up 10% plus (officials do not want to report these crimes) since migrants were accepted. Others countries are even worse. Be smart America!

Donald J. Trump, [tweet](#), 09:52 EDT, 19 June 2018.

Later on 19 June, Trump gave a speech that repeated his errors about crime in Germany:

The United States has just surpassed Germany as having the most asylum seekers of any nation on Earth. Can you image that? Can you image? And Germany — we talk about Germany — they allowed millions of people in. And, by the way, their crime, from the time they started, is up more than 10 percent. And that's one of the reasons it's at that level is because they don't like reporting that kind of crime, so they put it down as different kind of crime. But their crime is up more than 10 percent since they started taking them in.

"Remarks by President Trump at the National Federation of Independent Businesses 75th Anniversary Celebration," [White House](#), 19 June 2018.

The [Associated Press](#) and [Washington Post](#) both reported that the per capita crime rate in Germany in 2017 was the lowest in the past 30 years (since 1988). German government statistics showed a 10% *decrease* in reported crimes during 2017, compared to 2016.

See also: [Washington Post](#)(20June); [New York Times](#); [Deutsche Welle](#)(18June); [Deutsche Welle](#)(19June); [CBS News](#); [The Hill](#).

[Deutsche Welle](#), the German government news service for foreigners, reported 785 murders in Germany during 2017. There are approximately 82 million people living in Germany, so the per capita murder rate is 0.95 per 100,000 people per year. For comparison, the [FBI](#) says there were 17,250 murders in the USA during 2016, the most recent year available when I wrote this paragraph in June 2018. The population of the USA in 2016 is approximately 323 million, giving a per capita murder rate in the USA of 5.3 per 100,000 people per year. The per capita murder rate is more than 5 times greater in the USA than in Germany.

Instead of false tweets about Germany's problem, Trump should be working to decrease the murder rate in the USA.

Back on 11 January 2018, Trump had an outburst about emigrants to the USA from "shithole countries" (e.g., Haiti, El Salvador, and African countries, probably also Muslim-majority nations). (See [below](#).) Trump quickly learned not to say "shithole countries", but he continued thinking about the concept that immigration from some nations is more desirable than other nations.

We don't want what is happening with immigration in Europe to happen with us!

Donald J. Trump, [tweet](#), 09:04 EDT, 18 June 2018.

Donald Trump's grandfather emigrated to the USA from Germany in 1885. Donald's grandfather began purchasing property in New York City in 1908, which began the Trump real-estate empire. It took only two generations in the USA for the German values of attention to detail (Gründlichkeit) and accuracy (Richtigkeit) to dissipate from Donald Trump. This is a problem not only with Trump's personal failings, but also with American voters who elected Trump. Opinion [polls](#) show approximately 40% of American voters continue to approve of Trump's performance.

---

### **20-23 June 2018: Trump lies about quick delivery of remains by North Korea**

In a speech in Duluth Minnesota on Wednesday, 20 June 2018, Trump claimed that North Korea had already returned the remains of 200 U.S. Military personnel who were killed in the Korean war. [Reuters](#) quoted Trump: "We got back our great fallen heroes, the remains sent back today, already 200 got sent back." The [Washington Post](#) quoted Trump: "We got back our great fallen heroes, the remains. In fact, today, already 200 have been sent back." The transcript of Trump's speech in Duluth is not posted at the White House website, so I relied on news reports.

On Saturday, 23 July 2018, Trump told an audience in Nevada:

One of the big things we just did is we had a great meeting, as you know, and a very successful one with North Korea. And the relationships is now very good. (Applause.) We got along really good. The total denuclearization of North Korea, and the process is beginning. And further talks are going on.

We're getting our — the remains back of our great heroes. There have been — so many people asked me, "Could you do it?" The remains are coming back. (Applause.) They have over 200 already. This is something — we never got anything back, anybody back. And so many — I guess, for the most part, it would be the children and the grandchildren, they want to get the remains back of their fathers and their grandfathers. And we're starting that, and it's been really incredible.

Donald J. Trump, "Remarks by President Trump at a Roundtable Discussion on Tax Reform," [White House](#), 14:01 PDT, 23 June 2018.

Trump lied twice in one paragraph on 23 June. First, North Korea has delivered *zero* remains since the Kim/Trump summit on 12 June, while Trump falsely claimed delivery of "over 200" remains. [Associated Press](#)(27June); [Associated Press](#)(25June).

Second, Trump falsely claimed "we never got anything back, anybody back", while the [Associated Press](#) reported: "Between 1996 and 2005, joint U.S.-North Korea military search teams ... recovered 229 sets of American remains. .... The last time North Korea turned over remains was in 2007, when Bill Richardson, a former U.N. ambassador and New Mexico governor, secured the return of six sets." [Yonhap](#) reported: "More than 440 sets of remains were repatriated to the U.S. from 1990-2007, ...."

On 24 June, the [Associated Press](#) reported that the U.S. Military had 100 coffins ready for whenever North Korea returned remains. That was four days after Trump falsely claimed North Korea had already returned 200 corpses.

On 17 July 2018, [Reuters](#) reports that North Korea has returned *zero* remains since the 12 June Kim/Trump summit, 35 days ago.

Finally, on 27 July 2018, North Korea repatriated 55 cases of remains. At the Kim/Trump summit, Kim apparently told Trump that North Korea had collected approximately 200 remains. It is *not* known why North Korea did not hand over the other 145 remains.

---

## July 2018

### More Lies from Trump

On 3 July 2018, Trump repeated a false statement about Obama.

Just out that the Obama Administration granted citizenship, during the terrible Iran Deal negotiation, to 2,500 Iranians — including to government officials. How big (and bad) is that?

Donald J. Trump, [tweet](#), 08:03 EDT, 3 July 2018.

Why is Trump defaming Obama? In 2016, Trump's opponent was Hillary Clinton, *not* Obama. Perhaps Trump is blaming Obama for one of the many problems that Trump inherited when he became president in January 2017.

The [Associated Press](#); [New York Times](#); and [Washington Post](#) all condemned Trump's tweet as false. *The Washington Post* traced this false fact back to its origin with an Iranian politician, which was then reported by the FARS news agency in Iran, and then repeated by [Fox News](#), which is Trump's major source of news.

---

### Russia interfered with 2016 U.S. election

On 3 July 2018, the U.S. Senate Intelligence Committee issued a summary of its future report that concluded that Russians interfered with the 2016 U.S. elections. [Politico](#); [Associated Press](#); [Washington Post](#).

Trump has repeatedly denied that Russia interfered with the 2016 U.S. elections, probably because such interference could make Trump an illegitimate winner. Trump's opinion was contradicted by factual conclusions from the U.S. Intelligence community in 2016.

On 13 July 2018, the Special Counsel, Robert Mueller, indicted 12 Russian agents for hacking e-mails of Democrats during the 2016 U.S. elections. [DoJ](#); [New York Times](#); [Associated Press](#); [Washington Post](#). Note that these 12 are residents of Russia, and Russia

will surely *not* extradite them to the USA, so they will never stand trial in the USA.

On 16 July, Trump met with Russian President Putin in Helsinki. Then Trump had a disastrous press conference, see the transcript at the [White House](#). Trump publicly continued his delusion that Russia did *not* interfere in the 2016 U.S. election. [Washington Post](#); [Washington Post](#)(fact-check); [New York Times](#); [New York Times](#)(fact-check); [Politico](#); [Associated Press](#); [Associated Press](#)(fact-check); [Reuters](#).

On 16 July, John McCain, the chairman of the U.S. Senate Armed Services Committee, blasted Trump's performance with Putin.

Today's press conference in Helsinki was one of the most disgraceful performances by an American president in memory. The damage inflicted by President Trump's naiveté, egotism, false equivalence, and sympathy for autocrats is difficult to calculate. But it is clear that the summit in Helsinki was a tragic mistake.

President Trump proved not only unable, but unwilling to stand up to Putin. He and Putin seemed to be speaking from the same script as the president made a conscious choice to defend a tyrant against the fair questions of a free press, and to grant Putin an uncontested platform to spew propaganda and lies to the world.

It is tempting to describe the press conference as a pathetic rout — as an illustration of the perils of under-preparation and inexperience. But these were not the errant tweets of a novice politician. These were the deliberate choices of a president who seems determined to realize his delusions of a warm relationship with Putin's regime without any regard for the true nature of his rule, his violent disregard for the sovereignty of his neighbors, his complicity in the slaughter of the Syrian people, his violation of international treaties, and his assault on democratic institutions throughout the world.

Coming close on the heels of President Trump's bombastic and erratic conduct towards our closest friends and allies in Brussels and Britain, today's press conference marks a recent low point in the history of the American Presidency. That the president was attended in Helsinki by a team of competent and patriotic advisors makes his blunders and capitulations all the more painful and inexplicable.

No prior president has ever abased himself more abjectly before a tyrant. Not only did President Trump fail to speak the truth about an adversary; but speaking for America to the world, our president failed to defend all that makes us who we are — a republic of free people dedicated to the cause of liberty at home and abroad. American presidents must be the champions of that cause if it is to succeed. Americans are waiting and hoping for President Trump to embrace that sacred responsibility. One can only hope they are not waiting totally in vain.

John S. McCain, "SASC CHAIRMAN JOHN McCAIN ON TRUMP-PUTIN MEETING," [McCain](#), 16 July 2018.

On 16-17 July, there was a firestorm of criticism of Trump by politicians and commentators. But it was already well known that (1) Trump is ignorant of facts, (2) Trump admires dictators (e.g., Putin in Russia, Xi Jin-Ping in communist china, Kim Jong-Un in North Korea). Moreover, Trump's narcissistic character flaw makes it impossible for Trump to

admit that Russia helped him be elected president. Trump's defects makes it easy to understand Trump's disastrous performance with Putin.

On 17 July, Trump offered the lame excuse that he had omitted a "not" from one sentence in his disastrous press conference yesterday. [White House](#). But there is much more wrong with his press conference than one sentence. What Trump said at the disastrous press conference is consistent with what Trump has said on many previous occasions. Furthermore, after the disastrous press conference, Trump was interviewed by Sean Hannity of [Fox News](#), in which Trump failed to correct any of his errors in the disastrous press conference. On 17 July, Trump was interviewed by Jeff Glor of [CBS News](#), in which Trump said "... I accept our intelligence community's conclusion that Russia's meddling in the 2016 election took place. It could be other people, also. There are lots of people out there." Trump refuses to accept the Truth that Russia influenced the 2016 U.S. presidential election. See also: [NBC News](#); [CBS News](#); [Associated Press](#); [Associated Press](#).

On 22 July, Trump asserted another reason why he believes Russia did *not* interfere in the 2016 U.S. presidential election: Trump now believes claims of Russian interference were a "hoax".

So President Obama knew about Russia before the Election. Why didn't he do something about it? Why didn't he tell our campaign? Because it is all a big hoax, that's why, and he thought Crooked Hillary was going to win!!!

Donald J. Trump, [tweet](#), 18:23 EDT, 22 July 2018.

As usual, Trump offers *no* evidence of a hoax.

On 24 July, Trump said he was concerned that Russia would interfere with the 2018 election in the USA. But in a surprise, Trump said that Russia would support Democrats.

I'm very concerned that Russia will be fighting very hard to have an impact on the upcoming Election. Based on the fact that no President has been tougher on Russia than me, they will be pushing very hard for the Democrats. They definitely don't want Trump!

Donald J. Trump, [tweet](#), 11:50 EDT, 24 July 2018.

Trump's ignominious performance in Helsinki is in contrast to Trump's unsupported assertion that "no President has been tougher on Russia than me". Trump's assertion that Russians are supporting Democrats is also *not* plausible. On 27 July, the [Associated Press](#) reported that Russians had attempted to access the computers of a Democrat, U.S. Senator Claire McCaskill.

On 2 August 2018, NBC News reported a White House press briefing that Russia was continuing to attempt to influence elections in the USA.

Top U.S. national security and intelligence officials on Thursday [2 Aug] unambiguously warned that Russia has undertaken "pervasive" efforts to interfere in the 2018 midterm elections and beyond, and offered a sketch of how the government plans to combat such meddling.

At a White House press briefing, the five — [1] National Security Adviser John

Bolton; [2] Homeland Security Secretary Kirstjen Nielsen; [3] FBI Director Chris Wray; [4] Director of National Intelligence Dan Coats; and [5] Gen. Paul Nakasone, the director of the National Security Agency and the commander of U.S. Cyber Command — also took turns expressing concern over ongoing efforts by Moscow to interfere in U.S. elections, with Nielsen sounding the alarm that "our democracy itself is in the cross hairs."

Adam Edelman, "Russia still working to undermine U.S. elections, top national security officials warn," [NBC News](#), 2 Aug 2018.

See also: [White House](#)(transcript of briefing); [Washington Post](#); [New York Times](#); [Wall Street Journal](#); [Reuters](#).

My comment is that Trump has refused to believe that Russia interfered with the election in the USA in 2016. Trump's disbelief may have stalled the attempt of the U.S. Government to prevent further interference by Russia. Meanwhile, Trump's press conference with Putin on 16 July 2018 sure looks like collusion with Russia.

For a brief moment in January 2017 (see, e.g., [Washington Post](#); [New York Times](#)) and again in July 2018, Trump — apparently *insincerely* — said he believed Russia interfered with the 2016 U.S. election. But then Trump reverted to his delusion that Russia did *not* interfere with the 2016 U.S. election.

Only hours after the press briefing at the White House, Trump gave a speech in Pennsylvania that asserted that Russian interference with the 2016 U.S. election was a "hoax". [NBC News](#); [NBC News](#); [CNN](#).

---

### **How to Convince Trump: Colorful Flash Cards**

On 25 July 2018, European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker visited the White House and quickly negotiated a trade agreement with Trump. Trump agreed to no tariffs on imports from Europe, and Juncker promised Europe would purchase lots of soybeans and liquified natural gas from the USA.

How did Juncker accomplish this negotiating feat? The [Wall Street Journal](#) reported that Juncker came prepared with "more than a dozen colorful cue cards with simplified explainers". Each simple card had a maximum of three numbers. See also: [MarketWatch](#); [The Independent](#); [Washington Post](#). My comment is that it is an embarrassment to the USA, when its president is stupid and needs to see elementary-school-style flash cards.

---

### **Trump never shops for groceries**

I remember back in 1992, when George Herbert Walker Bush was campaigning for president. Bush went into a grocery store and marveled at a laser scanner at the cash register that read barcode on groceries. Such laser scanners had been in common use since the mid-1970s, but



Bush apparently never went into a grocery store. I was impressed that Bush was so patrician, so important, that he could not be bothered to go grocery shopping. That was a colossal disconnect between Bush and the vast majority of American people. Bush was acting like he was royalty, who could not be bothered with plebeian activities like grocery shopping.

It happened again on 31 July 2018. In a speech in Tampa Florida, Trump claimed one needed a photo identification card to purchase groceries. The context is that Trump is fighting voter fraud by advocating a requirement that voters show a photo identification card before being issued a ballot. The following day, Sarah Sanders noted one does need a photo identification to purchase alcoholic beverages — but Trump was talking about groceries, *not* alcohol, furthermore Trump does not drink alcohol. [Associated Press](#); [Associated Press](#)(fact-check); [New York Times](#); [ABC News](#); [CNN](#); [Salt Lake Tribune](#); [BBC](#); [Washington Post](#)(video); [Huffington Post](#).

My comment is to ask whether Americans want a president who is so wealthy, so self-important, so out-of-touch with ordinary people, that the president never goes grocery shopping.

---

## August 2018

### More Lies from Trump

While Trump was criticizing journalists for alleged "fake news", Trump himself on 31 July and 2 August falsely claimed that U.S. Steel was opening *six* or *seven* new plants in the USA, when the Truth was they were opening zero new plants. [Associated Press](#); [PolitiFact](#).

In early August 2018, the largest wildfire in California history was destroying homes and killing people. Trump tweeted a simplistic solution:

Governor Jerry Brown must allow the Free Flow of the vast amounts of water coming from the North and foolishly being diverted into the Pacific Ocean. Can be used for fires, farming and everything else. Think of California with plenty of Water — Nice! Fast Federal govt. approvals.

Donald J. Trump, [tweet](#), 13:43 EDT, 6 Aug 2018.

California wildfires are being magnified & made so much worse by the bad environmental laws which aren't allowing massive amounts of readily available water to be properly utilized. It is being diverted into the Pacific Ocean. Must also tree clear to stop fire from spreading!

Donald J. Trump, [tweet](#), 17:53 EDT, 6 Aug 2018.

The [Los Angeles Times](#) responded to Trump's tweets with the headline: "In a strikingly ignorant tweet, Trump gets almost everything about California wildfires wrong". The real problem is that California is becoming hotter and drier, as the result of climate change, which Trump denies. California's drought makes vegetation more flammable. The water problem affects the Central Valley, while the fires are in northern California — two different



locations. The [Associated Press](#) and [PolitiFact](#) also conclude that Trump is mentioning wrong facts. The [Washington Post](#) mentioned that Trump ignored "residents who lost their homes or firefighters who lost their lives." More than 1000 homes have been destroyed by the wildfires currently burning in California.

### ***No Evidence of Voter Fraud***

In 2016, Trump claimed that he lost the popular vote to Hillary Clinton because more than three million people voted illegally. In May 2017, Trump created a commission to validate his delusion of millions of illegal voters. Trump ended the commission in January 2018, after it became mired in litigation. (See my previous [essay](#).) On 3 August 2018, Maine Secretary of State Matthew Dunlap — one of 11 members of the commission — [concluded](#) that there was *no* evidence of fraudulent voting. Dunlap said that his participation on the commission was “the most bizarre thing I’ve ever been a part of.” [Washington Post](#); [Associated Press](#); [NBC News](#); [Portland Press-Herald](#).

It is *not* enough that Trump won the vote in the Electoral College in 2016. Trump's narcissistic character flaw also requires him to win the popular vote, as evidence that the American people admire Trump more than Hillary Clinton. So Trump created his delusion that he would have won the popular vote, except that more than three million illegal votes were allegedly cast for Clinton. Then Trump created a presidential commission to validate his delusion.

I am *not* concerned by the waste of taxpayer's money on this commission. I am concerned about Trump's repeated lies about fraudulent voting, lies that tarnish the reputation of elections in the USA, one of the foundations of U.S. Democracy. I am concerned about the commission's attempts to obtain confidential voting records from states. *If* there is any evidence of fraudulent voting, the state's attorney general should investigate and prosecute this crime.

---

### **14 Aug 2018: *Unhinged*, another book about Trump**

In January 2018, Trump's White House [fired](#) Omarosa Manigault Newman. She had her revenge, when her book titled *Unhinged: An Insider's Account of the Trump White House* went on public sale on 14 August 2018.

On 26 July 2018, the publisher publicly announced that her book is scheduled for first sale on 14 August 2018. [CNN](#); [Washington Post](#).

On 2 August, *The Daily Mail* in England reported on one excerpt from Omarosa's book. Back on 9 May 2017, Trump terminated the employment of the FBI Director, James Comey. The official White House explanation was that Deputy Attorney General Rod J. Rosenstein had written a memo to Trump recommending the termination of Comey. Then, on 11 May 2017 Donald Trump was interviewed by Lester Holt of NBC News, where Trump told Holt that Trump had already decided to terminate Comey before Trump received Rosenstein's memo.

Omarosa says:

“While watching the interview I realized that something real and serious was going on in Donald's brain. His mental decline could not be denied. .... Throughout this erratic and contradictory interview, I kept thinking, 'Oh no! Oh no! This is bad! Donald rambled. He spoke gibberish. He contradicted himself from one sentence to the next. Hope [Hicks, then communications director] had gone over the briefing with him a dozen times hitting the key point that he had fired Comey based on the recommendation by the DOJ which the vice president and other surrogates had been reinforcing for days.”

Hazel Jones, "EXCLUSIVE: 'Something serious was going on in Donald's brain.' Omarosa tells how President Trump exhibited a 'mental decline that could not be denied' as she watched his rambling Lester Holt interview in her explosive book," [Daily Mail](#), 2 Aug 2018.

Omarosa had worked with Trump intermittently for 15 years, so she is in a good position to notice "his mental decline".

Significantly, Omarosa is the first person from inside Trump's White House to speak of Trump's mental defect. Trump's defective thought process is increasingly obvious, but everyone wants to ignore it.

---

## Trump's Low Approval by Voters

When I was a physics student in 1970, I read a statistical analysis textbook that mentioned one could ask 100 people about the height of the Queen of Siam, then calculate an average and standard deviation. But then the textbook mentioned the problem is that Siam does *not* have a Queen. Since then I have not taken opinion polls seriously. <smile> There is *no* guarantee that the people polled will be well informed about Trump's performance. Let's be honest here — most people have neither the time nor the desire to spend hours each day reading *The Washington Post* or *The New York Times*. If some of the people polled are not well informed, then the poll has little significance.

Because professional politicians (e.g., members of the U.S. Congress) take opinion polls seriously, sustained low approval ratings for Trump might help persuade Congress to impeach and convict Trump.

A new president's approval rating in opinion polls typically starts at a relatively high value, perhaps expressing the hope of citizens. But then the president's approval rating slowly declines, as unpopular events occur. This initial high approval is often called a "honeymoon" by professional pollsters. But Trump is *not* a typical new president — he had *no* honeymoon. In early February 2009 the Gallup poll found a 64% approval rating for Obama, but in early February 2017 only a 40% approval rating for Trump. Trump's initial approval rating was not only the lowest of any president since 1953, but also Trump's initial approval rating was 21% less than the average for presidents in early February after their inauguration. [Gallup](#).

One can find details of opinion polls at:

- [Real Clear Politics](#) summaries of polls
- [Gallup](#)
- [Pew Research Center](#)
- [Quinnipiac Univ.](#)

---

Here are some news articles on Trump's low approval in opinion polls during his presidency in 2018.

- "Trump ends 1st year with lowest average approval rating," [Associated Press](#); 16 Jan 2018. (The Gallup poll shows a current 38% approval rating for Trump, with a first-year average 39% approval rating. Trump's first-year average is the lowest of any U.S. president since opinion polls began in 1953.)
- An opinion poll of 170 current and recent members of the Presidents and Executive Politics section of the American Political Science Association ranked Trump as the worst president in U.S. history. Amongst Republican scholars who participated in the survey, Trump comes fifth from worst. [New York Times](#); [Politico](#); [CBS News](#). Unlike opinion polls of randomly chosen Americans, the participants in this poll are well informed.
- On 21 February 2018, a Quinnipiac University opinion poll showed Trump with a 37% approval rating. Only 30% of Americans "like Trump as a person". [Q.U.](#); [CNN](#).
- On 7 March 2018, [Politico](#) reported their new opinion poll that shows in a hypothetical election a "generic Democrat" beats Trump by 44 to 36%, with 19% undecided.
- On 18 March 2018, an NBC News/Wall Street Journal poll showed a slight increase in Trump's approval rating — 43%, an increase of 4% from January 2018. [Wall Street Journal](#); [Bloomberg](#).
- On 26 March 2018, a [CNN](#) opinion poll showed a 42% approval rating for Trump, the highest number in the past 11 months.
- On 23 April 2018, a [Gallup](#) poll found a 39% approval rating for Trump. Moreover, only 37% believe Trump should be re-elected, while 59% want a new president in 2020. [Washington Post](#).
- On 18 June 2018, a [Gallup](#) opinion poll conducted after the Kim/Trump summit in Singapore showed the highest approval rating for Trump's presidency: 45%, while 50% disapprove of Trump's job performance. [The Hill](#).
- On 22 June 2018, a [CNN](#) opinion poll shows 42% of Americans favor impeaching Trump and then removing him from office, "including 77% of Democrats (not surprising) and only 9% of Republicans (even less surprising)."

- On 25 June 2018, a [Gallup](#) opinion poll showed Trump had returned to a 41% approval rating, while 55% disapprove of Trump's job performance. The decrease in approval was probably owing to Trump forced by bipartisan public condemnation to stop separating children from their illegal immigrant parents at the Mexican border. [Washington Post](#).
- On 23 July 2018, an [NBC News](#) Wall Street Journal opinion poll showed "Trump's overall job-approval rating in the poll stands at 45 percent among registered voters — up 1 point from June — while 52 percent of voters disapprove of his job." The 1% change is *not* significant, given the  $\pm 3.3\%$  margin of error.
- 

---

## Trump's Rude & Obnoxious Remarks

### Trump's "shithole countries"

On 11 January 2018, Trump had a burst of candor, when he declared in a White House Oval Office meeting with several U.S. Senators: "Why are we having all these people from shithole countries come here?" The shithole countries include Haiti, El Salvador, and African countries. Instead of allowing immigrants from shithole countries, Trump suggested allowing immigration from countries like Norway. [Washington Post](#); [Los Angeles Times](#); [Associated Press](#). On 15 January, Trump made an ad hominem attack on Senator Durbin, who attended the 11 January meeting. More on this outburst by Trump is [below](#).

---

On the morning of 5 February, Trump attacked the ranking Democrat on the House Intelligence Committee.

Little Adam Schiff, who is desperate to run for higher office, is one of the biggest liars and leakers in Washington, right up there with Comey, Warner, Brennan and Clapper! Adam leaves closed committee hearings to illegally leak confidential information. Must be stopped!

Donald J. Trump, [tweet](#), 07:39 EST, 5 Feb 2018.

If Trump has evidence that Schiff is leaking classified information, then Trump should give the evidence to the FBI. Twitter is *not* the place to enforce the laws. Calling Schiff "little" is childish.

---

### Trump says Democrats are unamerican and treasonous

On 5 February 2018, Trump went to the Sheffer Corporation in Blue Ash, Ohio — near Cincinnati — and gave a speech. Trump described the reaction of the Democrats to Trump's SOTU speech:

But you know, the other day — did anybody happen to see the State of the Union

Address? Right? Okay. (Applause.) So I got good marks.

....

So that means they [Democrats] would rather see Trump do badly, okay, than our country do well. That's what it means. It's very selfish. And it got to a point where I really didn't even want to look too much during the speech over to that side. Because, honestly, it was bad energy. That was bad energy.

You're up there, you've got half the room going totally crazy, wild — they loved everything, they want to do something great for our country. And you have the other side [Democrats], even on positive news — really positive news, like that [lowest African-American and Hispanic unemployment in the history of our country] — they were like death and un-American. Un-American.

Somebody said, “treasonous.” I mean, yeah, I guess, why not? (Laughter.) Can we call that treason? Why not? (Applause.) I mean, they certainly didn't seem to love our country very much.

But you look at that, and it's really very, very sad. So we have to keep it going because this country is turning, and it's turning much faster. And I said I'm going to do it, but it's happening faster than I thought.

Donald J. Trump, "Remarks by President Trump on Tax Reform," [White House](#), 5 Feb 2018.

The word "treason" is defined in the U.S. Constitution (Article 3, §3) to mean giving "aid and comfort" to enemies of the USA during a war. The word "treason" can *not* be properly applied to Democrats — or anyone else — because we are not at war.

Trump also called Democrats "un-American" just because they disagree with Trump.

Incidentally, while Trump was taking credit for a strong U.S. economy, the Standard & Poors 500 Index lost 4.1% of its value in a single day. [Reuters](#); [Washington Post](#).

Journalists criticized Trump for his inflammatory speech. [Cincinnati Enquirer](#); [Cincinnati Enquirer](#)(fact-check); [Washington Post](#); [New York Times](#); [Associated Press](#); [Wall Street Journal](#)(subscription); [Washington Post](#)(6Feb).

---

### **Trump says Chuck Todd is an SOB**

On 10 March 2018, Trump traveled to Pennsylvania to give a campaign speech in support of Rick Saccone, the Republican candidate for the U.S. House of Representatives in the 13 March special election. Trump again criticized the news media:

President Trump attacked NBC host Chuck Todd at a campaign rally on Saturday [10 Mar], calling the news anchor a “son of a bitch.”

Trump mentioned Todd, who now hosts NBC's “Meet the Press,” in mentioning a 1999 appearance on the show in which he spoke about needing to “take out” North Korea.

“A show now headed by ‘Sleepy eyes Chuck Todd,’” Trump said. “He’s a sleeping son of a bitch.”

"Trump rips NBC's Chuck Todd: 'He's a sleeping son of a bitch'," [The Hill](#), 19:29 EST, 10 Mar 2018.

Railing against much of the mainstream press, President Donald Trump continued to air his grievances with the media, honing in on NBC News anchor Chuck Todd.

"It's 1999, I'm on Meet the Press, a show now headed by sleepy eyes Chuck Todd," Trump recalled. "He's a sleeping son of a bitch. I'll tell you."

"Trump insults Chuck Todd again," [CNN](#), 20:48 EST, 10 Mar 2018.

The [Washington Post](#) published video.

Being called a "son of a bitch" is one of the worst insults in the English language. Many newspapers refused to print the actual insult, instead either omitting letters or using the abbreviation "SOB". Is this the kind of behavior that is acceptable from the president of the USA?

I searched Google and the White House website, but could not find a transcript of Trump's 10 March speech, so I am unable to quote Trump in context. [New York Times](#) and [CBS News](#) have many brief quotes from the speech.

Not only was Trump's 10 March speech offensive, but also it was full of factual errors. [Associated Press](#).

---

### **Trump says Maxine Waters has a low IQ**

Insulting Chuck Todd was *not* the only rude remark in Trump's 10 March speech. Maxine Waters — a liberal Democrat in the U.S. House of Representatives — has been publicly calling for Trump's impeachment. Trump rudely attacked Maxine Waters in his 10 March speech: “And Maxine Waters, a very low IQ individual. Did you ever see her? .... She's a low IQ individual. She can't help it. She really is.” [The Hill](#); [CNN](#); [RealClearPolitics](#).

On 20 March 2018, Trump again attacked Maxine Waters, in a rambling paragraph that promised to keep the Republican majority in the U.S. House of Representatives, mentioned Rep. Waters wanted to impeach Trump, and promised to "keep the economy strong."

But we’re going to defy the predictions once again. We will keep the House majority. (Applause.) And we will keep fighting for the change the American people want and they deserve. The Democrats think they’re invincible. I mean, I watch this Maxine Waters. You ever see Maxine Waters? (Laughter.) A low-IQ individual. (Applause.) Low IQ. “We will impeach him. We will impeach him.” “But he hasn’t done anything wrong.” “It doesn’t matter. We will impeach him.” (Laughter.) This is what we’re going to have. This is what we’re going to have to fight against. It’s easier just keep going good. We’re going to keep the economy strong.

"Remarks by President Trump at the National Republican Congressional Committee March

Dinner," [White House](#), 20 Mar 2018.

After the White House spokeswoman was asked to leave a Red Hen restaurant in Virginia (see [below](#)), Maxine Waters publicly called for people to harass Trump administration officials. (See e.g., [Washington Post](#); [CNN](#); [Los Angeles Times](#); [RCP](#)(video).) Trump responded with a tweet about Maxine Waters:

Congresswoman Maxine Waters, an extraordinarily low IQ person, has become, together with Nancy Pelosi, the Face of the Democrat Party. She has just called for harm to supporters, of which there are many, of the Make America Great Again movement. Be careful what you wish for Max!

Donald J. Trump, [tweet](#), 13:11 EDT, 25 June 2018.

Trump got his facts wrong. Waters did *not* call for "harm to supporters" of Trump. Waters called for harassment of Trump administration officials, such as Cabinet members.

On 28 June 2018, Maxine Waters canceled her appearance at two public events in Texas and Alabama, because of a death threat. [CNN](#); [Washington Post](#); [The Hill](#). The threats are presumably from supporters of Trump, which reminds us that Trump's obnoxious insults can have real consequences.

On 3 July, Trump made another ad hominem attack on Maxine Waters.

Crazy Maxine Waters, said by some to be one of the most corrupt people in politics, is rapidly becoming, together with Nancy Pelosi, the FACE of the Democrat Party. Her ranting and raving, even referring to herself as a wounded animal, will make people flee the Democrats!

Donald J. Trump, [tweet](#), 06:16 EDT, 3 July 2018.

Trump offers *no* evidence for his defamatory assertion that Water is "one of the most corrupt people in politics".

---

### **Trump and Biden slug it out**

On 20 March 2018, former U.S. vice-president Joe Biden spoke at a University of Miami program on ending violence against women, where Joe said, if he were in high school, he would have "beat the hell out of" Trump. ABC News reported:

"A guy who ended up becoming our national leader said, 'I can grab a woman anywhere and she likes it,'" Biden said. "They asked me if I'd like to debate this gentleman, and I said 'no.' I said, 'If we were in high school, I'd take him behind the gym and beat the hell out of him.'"

"I've been in a lot of locker rooms my whole life," Biden continued. "I'm a pretty damn good athlete. Any guy that talked that way was usually the fattest, ugliest S.O.B. in the room."

"Biden says he would have 'beat the hell out' of Trump in high school for disrespecting women," [ABC News](#), 05:22 EDT, 21 Mar 2018.



CNN reported Biden's pugnacious remarks:

Former Vice President Joe Biden said he would "beat the hell out of" President Donald Trump if they were in high school over his crude comments about women.

"When a guy who ended up becoming our national leader said, 'I can grab a woman anywhere and she likes it' and then said, 'I made a mistake,'" Biden said Tuesday [20 Mar] of Trump, according to video of the remarks posted on Facebook by the University of Miami College Democrats.

"They asked me would I like to debate this gentleman, and I said no. I said, 'If we were in high school, I'd take him behind the gym and beat the hell out of him,'" said Biden, getting laughter and applause from the crowd at the University of Miami.

Biden was referencing the "Access Hollywood" video that surfaced in 2016 in which Trump was heard making lewd comments about women. Trump issued an apology, calling his comments "locker room talk."

Biden said Tuesday [20 Mar], "I've been in a lot of locker rooms my whole life. I'm a pretty damn good athlete."

He added, "Any guy that talked that way was usually the fattest, ugliest S.O.B. in the room."

....

.... The former vice president has made similar remarks before about Trump during the 2016 election.

"The press always ask me, 'Don't I wish I were debating him?' No, I wish we were in high school — I could take him behind the gym. That's what I wish," Biden said then at a campaign rally in Pennsylvania for Hillary Clinton.

"Biden says he would 'beat the hell' out of Trump if in high school," [CNN](#), 13:46 EDT, 21 Mar 2018.

So that's the democratic party position: beat the hell out of men who disrespect women and then call them an SOB. Well, Donald Trump did *not* like having a loathsome democrat beat the hell out of him, so Trump fired back at Biden.

Crazy Joe Biden is trying to act like a tough guy. Actually, he is weak, both mentally and physically, and yet he threatens me, for the second time, with physical assault. He doesn't know me, but he would go down fast and hard, crying all the way. Don't threaten people Joe!

Donald J. Trump, [tweet](#), 06:19 EDT, 22 March 2018.

So two of the most prominent 70-year old politicians in the USA behave like young children. Are we really heading toward solving problems in a boxing ring, with a nationally televised fight to the finish between Joe "slug 'em" Biden and Donald "grab 'em by the pussy" Trump?

On 22 March 2018, journalists had fun reporting on this debacle:

- "Septuagenarian smackdown? Trump, Biden trade fighting words," [Associated Press](#), reprinted in the [Miami Herald](#) and [Washington Post](#).
- "Trump Threatens Biden, Saying He 'Would Go Down Fast and Hard' if They Fought," [New York Times](#).
- Chris Cillizza, "3 big things revealed by Donald Trump's tweet that he could knock out Joe Biden," [CNN](#).
- "Trump and Biden are both openly fantasizing about who would win in a fistfight," [Washington Post](#).
- Dan Balz, "Biden vs. Trump: How low can you go?" [Washington Post](#).
- "Trump attacks 'crazy Joe Biden' after the former VP said he would have 'beat the hell out of' Trump for disrespecting women," [CNBC](#).

**My comments:** It is important to remember how this slugfest began. At a rally on ending violence against women, Joe Biden said he would like to go back 55 years — when Trump was in high school — and physically attack the future president of the USA. Does anyone see the irony in urging violence against men at a rally to end violence against women? Despite Biden's pugnacious threat, Trump *should* have ignored Biden. Instead, Trump is willing to fight for the right to sexually assault women. This is Trump's entertainment for the Plebeians, but it diminishes the office of the president of the USA.

---

### Trump throws candy at Dr. Merkel

Dr. Angela Merkel — a former physics professor and currently the Chancellor of Germany for four consecutive terms — attended the G7 meeting in Quebec on 8-9 June 2018. Six of the world leaders at the G7 meeting were angry at the tariffs imposed by Trump.

On 20 June 2018, Eurasia Group President Ian Bremmer told CBS News about extremely rude behavior by Trump at the G7 meeting on 9 June 2018.

WATCH: [@IanBremmer](#) describes exchange between Chancellor Merkel and Pres. Trump at #G7 summit: "He stood up, he put his hand in his pocket... and he took two Starbursts candies out, threw them on the table and said to Merkel, 'Here, Angela. Don't say I never give you anything.'" CBS This Morning, [tweet](#), 10:02 EDT, 20 June 2018.

"Trump was sitting there with his arms crossed, clearly not liking the fact that they were ganging up on him," Bremmer said to the news outlet. "He eventually agreed and said OK, he'll sign it. And at that point, he stood up, put his hand in his pocket, his suit

jacket pocket, and he took two Starburst candies out, threw them on the table and said to Merkel, 'Here, Angela. Don't say I never give you anything.' ”

“The relationship is about as dysfunctional as we've seen between America and its major allies since the trans-Atlantic relationship really started after World War II,” Bremmer continued.

Shortly after the summit, Trump refused to endorse the joint communiqué signed by the other G-7 members, rebuking Trudeau and threatening to impose further tariffs on the country. The president also earned a rebuttal from Merkel on Tuesday [19 June] after he criticized her country's immigration system, falsely claiming crime in her country was on the rise.

Aris Folley, "Ian Bremmer: Trump tossed candy to Merkel at G-7, said 'don't say I never give you anything'," [The Hill](#), 15:57 EDT, 20 June 2018.

Cited by [Washington Post](#); [The Independent](#); [Newsweek](#).

The final sentence from *The Hill* — about Trump's lies about the crime rate in Germany — is chronicled [above](#).

---

### Trump condemns little restaurant in Virginia

On Friday evening, 22 June, Sarah Sanders — Trump's press secretary — was asked to leave the Red Hen restaurant in Lexington, Virginia. The reason that Sanders was asked to leave was that the staff and owner were uncomfortable with Trump's politics and Sanders worked for Trump. The Red Hen is a tiny restaurant, only 26 chairs, in a small town of 7000 residents. [Washington Post](#); [Associated Press](#)(23June); [Associated Press](#)(24June).

On 25 June, Trump condemned the Red Hen restaurant, *not* because the staff and owner were liberal democrats who discriminated against Trumpites, but because the restaurant — which Trump never visited — was "filthy".

The Red Hen Restaurant should focus more on cleaning its filthy canopies, doors and windows (badly needs a paint job) rather than refusing to serve a fine person like Sarah Huckabee Sanders. I always had a rule, if a restaurant is dirty on the outside, it is dirty on the inside!

Donald J. Trump, [tweet](#), 07:41 EDT, 25 June 2018.

The [Washington Post](#) reported that the Red Hen was *not* in bad condition on the exterior. More telling is that Red Hen has better state health inspection reports than the restaurants in Trump's hotels in Washington, DC and Mar-a-Lago. See also [Roanoke Times](#).

Incidentally, Red Hen is a common name for restaurants. Ignorant Trump supporters harassed innocent Red Hen restaurants in other states, spreading the incivility. [Washington Post](#); [WTOP](#)(DC); [6ABC](#)(NJ); [Philly.com](#)(NJ); [CBS News](#); [ABC News](#)(Calif.). Trump's failure to mention the location of the Red Hen in his 25 June tweet may have contributed to his supporters attacking innocent Red Hen restaurants in other states.

My opinion is that the staff and owner of the Red Hen should have allowed Sanders and her family to eat there in peace. Sanders was not misbehaving in any way. But then Trump condemned the Red Hen with false statements, which worsened an already unpleasant episode. What began as a wrongful act by liberal democrats quickly became a nasty fight in which Trump and his supporters also committed wrongful acts.

---

### **Conclusion to Trump's obnoxious behavior**

**What's wrong with Trump's obnoxious tirades?** When Trump is criticized, he lashes out with an irrational, ad hominem tirade. This is childish behavior by Trump. The real concern is that Trump might do this to the leader of another nation and create an unnecessary military or diplomatic crisis. Another concern is that Trump is a poor role model for children and adults in the USA. Certainly, Trump's rants diminish the office of the president, by his uncivil behavior.

Back in January 2017, when I drafted the conclusion of my previous essay, I wondered: “It is unknown how Trump will react to the incessant criticism [as president]. However, the criticism will surely affect Trump's narcissistic craving for strong majority admiration.” By the end of June 2017, it was clear that, because Trump has neither the knowledge nor the experience to be president, he was accomplishing little and making problems worse. Trump's response was to criticize the news media for reporting his mistakes, failures, and character flaws. Trump's leadership style that was tolerable when he led a privately-owned company is now unacceptable when he is president of the USA.

---

### **“You're fired!” & Resignations**

In 2017, I had the impression that there was a higher turnover of personnel in Trump's administration than in most previous U.S. Presidents' administrations. Here is a list of departed persons:

1. Sally Yates, acting attorney general, fired on 30 Jan 2017 for refusing to defend Trump's first Executive Order on immigration. (On 6 March 2017, Trump himself revoked that flawed first Executive Order.)
2. Michael Flynn, national security adviser, resigned on 13 Feb 2017.
3. Katie Walsh, White House deputy chief of staff, resigned on 30 March 2017. [Politico](#); [Washington Post](#).
4. Kathleen "K.T." McFarland, deputy national security adviser, removed on 9 April 2017, [Bloomberg](#); [Washington Post](#); [New York Times](#). On 19 May 2017, Trump nominated McFarland to be U.S. Ambassador to Singapore. [White House](#).
5. James Comey, director of FBI, fired on 9 May 2017.

6. Michael Dubke, White House communications director, resigned on 18 May 2017, [Washington Post](#); [New York Times](#).
7. Walter Shaub, director of the Office of Government Ethics, resigned on 6 July 2016.
8. Sean Spicer, Press Secretary, abruptly resigned on 21 July 2017, [Washington Post](#); [New York Times](#); [Washington Post](#).
9. Michael Short, senior assistant press secretary, resigned on 25 July 2017. [Fox News](#).
10. Derek Harvey, member of the National Security Council, removed on 27 July 2017. [Washington Post](#); [Weekly Standard](#); [Reuters](#); [NBC News](#).
11. Reince Priebus, White House chief of staff, resigned on 27 July 2017. The resignation was publicly announced on 28 July at 16:49 EDT, when Trump [tweeted](#) that the Secretary of Homeland Security, John Kelly, would be the new White House chief of staff. Priebus, the former chairman of the Republican National Committee, had brought Katie Walsh, Sean Spicer, and Michael Short to the White House. Priebus — who represented the Republican establishment — was never accepted by Trump, who likes to upset the political establishment. [Washington Post](#); [New York Times](#); [CNN](#).
12. Anthony Scaramucci, White House communications director, fired on 31 July 2017. [Politico](#); [New York Times](#); [Associated Press](#). Scaramucci was hired on 21 July, and his ten-day tenure must be one of the shortest in White House history. Scaramucci distinguished himself with a string of profanities, expletives, and vulgar expressions on 26 July, see my essay for 2017.
13. Ezra Cohen-Watnick, member of the National Security Council, removed on 2 August 2017. [Washington Post](#); [Politico](#).
14. Stephen Bannon, Trump's chief strategist, fired on 18 August 2017. [Associated Press](#); [Reuters](#); [Washington Post](#); [New York Times](#).
15. Andrew Hemming, White House "director of rapid response" to journalists, resigned on 24 August 2017. Hemming was formerly employed by the Republican National Committee and brought to the White House by Priebus. [Politico](#); [CNN](#).
16. Sebastian Gorka, a White House counterterrorism adviser, resigned on 25 August 2017. [The Federalist](#); [CNN](#); [The Hill](#); [Washington Post](#); [New York Times](#).
17. Keith Schiller, Trump's bodyguard and head of security at Trump Tower in New York City since 2004, announced in early September 2017 that he was quitting his job at the White House. Schiller had been a long-time confidant of Trump. Schiller allegedly quit because of the relatively low pay for government employees and because of disputes with the White House Chief of Staff, John Kelly. [CNN](#)(1Sep); [CBS News](#)(2Sep); [New York Times](#)(5Sep); [Bloomberg](#)(5Sep); [Washington Post](#)(9Oct).

18. Chuck Rosenberg, acting head of the Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA), resigned on 26 September 2017. The [New York Times](#) says Rosenberg was "disillusioned" with Trump. See also: [Politico](#); [Washington Post](#).
19. Tom Price, Secretary of Health and Human Services, resigned on Friday, 29 Sep 2017. Price had been widely criticized for spending approximately \$52,000 for his travel aboard private, chartered airplanes, instead of flying coach class on commercial airliners. Including costs of private travel for his aides, the total spent was approximately \$400,000. Moreover, Price spent over \$500,000 for travel to Europe and Asia on U.S. Military aircraft. [Associated Press](#); [New York Times](#); [Washington Post](#); [Politico](#)(21Sep); [Politico](#)(2Sep).
20. Dina Powell, deputy national security adviser, announced on 8 Dec 2017 that she would resign in January. [Washington Post](#); [New York Times](#); [Wall Street Journal](#).
21. Omarosa Manigault Newman, director of communications for the White House Office of Public Liaison, announced on 13 December 2017 that she would leave on 20 Jan 2018. She also functioned as Trump's principal adviser on African-American issues. [The Hill](#); [Politico](#); [Washington Post](#). [CNN](#) reported: "... according to a White House official, Manigault Newman has had no access to Trump for months and is considered to be a non-stop problem in the West Wing." On 14 Dec, [ABC News](#) reported that Omarosa Manigault said: "I have seen things [in the White House] that have made me uncomfortable." On 14 Aug 2018, Omarosa had her revenge, when her [book](#) was released for sale.
22. In the last week of December 2017, Trump terminated the service of all of the members of the Presidential Advisory Council on HIV/AIDS. Trump did *not* explain his decision. [Washington Blade](#)(28Dec); [Washington Post](#); [New York Times](#).
23. On 27 Dec 2017 — but first publicly announced on 12 Jan 2018 — John Feeley resigned as U.S. Ambassador to Panama. Feeley, a career diplomat, felt that he could no longer serve Trump. [Reuters](#); [Newsweek](#); [McClatchy](#). On 9 March, Feeley wrote in the [Washington Post](#) about why he could no longer serve Trump.
24. On 18 Jan 2018, Carl Higbie resigned as head of Corporation for National and Community Service, which operates AmeriCorps. [CNN](#) had published racist anti-black statements, anti-Muslim statements, anti-homosexual statements, and other offensive statements by Higbie in 2013, when he was host of a radio program prior to his appointment by Trump to head CNCS. [Washington Post](#); [Politico](#); [New York Times](#)(20Jan).
25. On 7 February 2018, Rob Porter announced his resignation as the White House staff secretary, after his two ex-wives accused him of physical abuse during their marriages. [New York Times](#); [Washington Post](#); [CNN](#).
26. On 9 February 2018, David Sorensen announced his resignation as a speechwriter for Trump, after allegations of his abuse of his ex-wife became public. Sorensen denied the allegations. Sorensen told [The Washington Post](#) he resigned because he "didn't

want the White House to have to deal with this distraction.” [Washington Post](#); [CNN](#); [Politico](#).

27. On 26 February 2018, Joseph Yun — the North Korean expert at the U.S. State Department — suddenly announced he would retire on 2 March after 32 years of service. Yun speaks Korean fluently and would have been extremely useful in negotiations with North Korea. The [Washington Post](#) reported: Yun's "departure reflects the widespread frustration within the State Department at diplomats' relative lack of power in the Trump administration, according to someone familiar with Yun's thinking." See also: [Yonhap](#); [CNN](#); [Reuters](#); [The Telegraph](#). For more on the significance of Yun's retirement, see my essay on [North Korea](#).
28. On 27 February 2018, journalists reported that Jared Kushner — Trump's son-in-law and an amateurish presidential adviser in the White House — had his top-secret security clearance revoked. [Politico](#); [New York Times](#); [Washington Post](#); [NBC News](#). On 23 May 2018, Kushner again had a top-secret security clearance. [Washington Post](#); [New York Times](#).
29. On 28 February 2018, Hope Hicks resigned as White House Communications Director. She had worked for Trump for the past three years. [New York Times](#); [Washington Post](#); [Los Angeles Times](#). Her last day at the White House was 29 March 2018. [New York Times](#).
30. On 1 March 2018, Roberta S. Jacobson, Trump's ambassador to Mexico, announced she would resign on 5 May 2018. She spent 31 years working for the U.S. State Department. [New York Times](#); [Associated Press](#).
31. On 6 March 2018, Gary Cohn, Trump's top economic adviser, resigned. Cohn opposed the tariffs on imported steel and aluminum that Trump had announced a few days earlier. [New York Times](#); [Washington Post](#); [Politico](#).
32. On 13 March 2018 at 08:44 EDT, in a [tweet](#), Trump publicly sacked Rex Tillerson, the U.S. Secretary of State. [Washington Post](#); [New York Times](#); [Associated Press](#). Tillerson's farewell speech is posted at the [U.S. State Dept](#).
33. On 13 March, Stephen Goldstein, the undersecretary of state for public diplomacy, released a statement disputing the White House version of how Tillerson was fired. Trump immediately sacked Mr. Goldstein. [Associated Press](#); [Washington Times](#).
34. On 13 March 2018, the [Wall Street Journal](#) reported that Trump yesterday sacked his personal assistant, John McEntee, after McEntee's security clearance was revoked. Strangely, McEntee was immediately hired by Trump's re-election campaign. [The Hill](#); [Washington Post](#); [New York Times](#); [Associated Press](#).
35. On 29 January 2018, Andrew McCabe announced he would retire as deputy director of the FBI on 18 March 2018, when he was eligible for a full pension. Trump had harshly criticized McCabe because in 2015 McCabe's wife was a Democratic candidate for State Senator in Virginia. [NBC News](#); [Washington Post](#); [New York Times](#).



**On Friday night at 22:00 EDT, 16 March 2018**, former FBI Deputy Director Andrew McCabe was fired. McCabe was scheduled to retire on Sunday, 18 March, with full retirement benefits after 21 years of service at the FBI. [Washington Post](#); [New York Times](#); [NBC News](#). Some of Trump's tweets about McCabe are quoted [above](#). On 23 March, the [Washington Post](#) published an op-ed by McCabe on his termination.

36. On 22 March 2018, John Dowd — Trump's principal personal attorney in special counsel Mueller's investigation — resigned. [New York Times](#); [Washington Post](#); [Associated Press](#); [The Hill](#).
37. At 18:26 EDT on 22 March 2018, Trump announced in a [tweet](#) that on 9 April John Bolton would become his new National Security Adviser, replacing Lt. General H.R. McMaster. [Washington Post](#); [New York Times](#).
38. At 17:31 EDT on 28 March 2018, Trump terminated Veterans Affairs Secretary David Shulkin. [tweet1](#), [tweet2](#); [New York Times](#); [Washington Post](#). Hours later, Shulkin fired back with an opinion-editorial published by the [New York Times](#). As recently as 26 March, White House staff said Trump "does have confidence" in Shulkin "at this point in time". [Associated Press](#); [Washington Post](#).
39. On 8 April 2018, Michael Anton — National Security Council spokesman — announced he would be resigning. [Politico](#); [The Hill](#); [Reuters](#); [New York Times](#)(Anton was the first person to leave in Bolton's house cleaning.).
40. On 10 April 2018, Thomas Bossert — Homeland Security adviser to Trump — resigned, as requested by the new National Security Adviser, John Bolton. [New York Times](#); [Washington Post](#); [Associated Press](#); [Reuters](#).
41. On 11 April 2018, Nadia Schadlow — National Security Council deputy — resigned, as requested by the new National Security Adviser, John Bolton. Her last day at the White House will be 27 April. [The Hill](#); [Fox News](#).
42. On 2 May 2018, Ty Cobb — Trump's lead attorney in the special counsel investigation — decided to retire at 67 years of age. [New York Times](#); [Washington Post](#). Note that on 11 March 2018, Trump [tweeted](#): “The Failing New York Times purposely wrote a false story stating that I am unhappy with my legal team on the Russia case and am going to add another lawyer to help out. Wrong. I am VERY happy with my lawyers, John Dowd, Ty Cobb and Jay Sekulow. They are doing a great job and.....” Dowd resigned on 22 March, and Cobb "retired" on 2 May. The [Washington Post](#) clarified that “The White House calls Ty Cobb’s exit a ‘retirement,’ but it sounds as though he was pushed.”
43. On 16 May 2018, Mark S. Inch — Trump's director of federal prisons for the past nine months — resigned. [New York Times](#)(18May); [New York Times](#)(24May).
44. On 5 June 2018, Kelly Sadler — a White House communications aide — was fired. On

- 10 May 2018, the [Washington Post](#) reported that Sadler was dismissive of U.S. Senator John McCain, who is dying of brain cancer. Sadler's disrespectful remark in a White House meeting was widely condemned. [CNN](#)(5June); [Associated Press](#); [NBC News](#).
45. On 19 June 2018, Joe Hagin — the White House deputy chief of staff for operations — announced he would leave the White House on 6 July 2018. [Associated Press](#); [Washington Post](#); [New York Times](#); [Politico](#).
46. On 20 June 2018, Andrea Hall — the National Security Council expert on weapons of mass destruction — resigned. [Washington Post](#); [Reuters](#). During the Trump administration, the U.S. Government has been hemorrhaging talented people who have knowledge and experience on North Korea. For example, Joseph Yun resigned on 26 Feb 2018.
47. On 30 June 2018, Susan Thornton — Acting Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs, and a career diplomat with more than 25 years of service — announced she was retiring at the end of July 2018. [Politico](#); [Reuters](#). With her retirement, the Trump administration lost another person with knowledge and experience on North Korea.
48. On 5 July 2018, Scott Pruitt — head of the Environmental Protection Agency — finally resigned after a long series of [scandals](#). [Associated Press](#); [Washington Post](#); [New York Times](#); [Politico](#).
49. On 12 July 2018, Marc Short — Trump's liaison with the U.S. Congress — resigned. [Washington Post](#); [CBS News](#); [Politico](#).
50. On 12 July 2018, Jennifer Arangio — a senior director at the White House National Security Council for International Organizations and Alliances since January 2017 — was terminated by John Bolton. [Politico](#); [Reuters](#).
- 51.

---

### **General Remarks About High Turnover of Personnel in Trump's Government**

On 16 January 2018, the [Washington Post](#) reported that "Trump set a record for White House staff turnover in the first year."

On 1 March 2018, the [New York Times](#) reported: "The White House suffered a staff turnover rate of 34 percent during Mr. Trump's first year, a rate that would be unfathomable at nearly any for-profit enterprise. Even by political standards, it's off the charts — triple that of the Obama administration, and twice that of Ronald Reagan, the previous record-holder...."

On 2 March 2018, the [Associated Press](#) reported that resignations and FBI investigations "have Trump administration adrift".

On 2 July 2018, the [Associated Press](#) reported that 141 White House staff have resigned or been fired during the one year that ended on 30 June. That turnover of 37% is the highest of the past five presidents.

The high turnover of Trump appointees shows either (1) Trump's poor judgment about people or (2) Trump creating a work environment in which people want to quit.

In early March 2018, journalists had been reporting for three months that the National Security Adviser, H.R. McMaster, would be replaced. On 15 March 2018, the White House press secretary firmly denied those rumors:

Just spoke to @POTUS and Gen. H.R. McMaster — contrary to reports they have a good working relationship and there are no changes at the NSC.

Sarah Sanders, @PressSec, [tweet](#), 22:12 EDT, 15 Mar 2018.

But just 7 days after this reassurance by Ms. Sanders, Trump replaced General McMaster.

I want to avoid discussing policy matters, but it seems obvious that Trump has little respect for either expertise or experience, given his appointments and nominations. (See, e.g., [Washington Post](#).) It seems to be human nature to select friends and associates who have similar backgrounds and values. Because Trump has *neither* knowledge *nor* experience in government, Trump selects people with a similar lack of credentials. This creates two problems: (1) competent government employees are frustrated by incompetent managers, and (2) managers are in over their head, swamped by problems they can *not* solve. As a result, there is an exodus of both competent and incompetent government employees, and the high turnover in personnel leads to instability and delays.

---

## Allegations of Sexual Misconduct

Several websites have posted a list of women who have accused Donald Trump of sexual misconduct. Trump denies these allegations.

- "A Running List Of The Women Who've Accused Donald Trump Of Sexual Misconduct," [Huffington Post](#), (21 women on 8 Dec 2017).
- "President Trump and accusations of sexual misconduct: The complete list," [Washington Post](#), (13 women on 22 Nov 2017).
- "Donald Trump's sexual assault allegations: The full list of women who have accused the President," [The Independent](#) in the U.K., (20 women on 4 Dec 2017).
- "The 19 Women Who Accused President Trump of Sexual Misconduct," [The Atlantic](#), (19 women on 7 Dec 2017).
- "Here's The List Of Women Who Accused Donald Trump Of Sexual Misconduct," [National Public Radio](#), (20 women on 6 Dec 2017).

On 22 March 2018, Trump inappropriately responded to Joe Biden's pugnacious remarks about Trump disrespecting women, as chronicled [above](#).

---

### **Stephanie Clifford, aka "Stormy Daniels"**

On 12 January 2018, *The Wall Street Journal* reported that Trump's personal attorney had paid \$130,000 in October 2016 to a porn actress to purchase her silence about consensual sex with Trump in 2006. Trump denies sex with her and also denies paying hush money to her. [Wall Street Journal](#); [New York Times](#).

On 13 February 2018, The [New York Times](#) reported "Michael D. Cohen, President Trump's longtime personal lawyer, said on Tuesday [13 Feb] that he had paid \$130,000 out of his own pocket to a pornographic-film actress who had once claimed to have had an affair with Mr. Trump." Bizarrely, Cohen claimed "Neither the Trump Organization nor the Trump campaign was a party to the transaction with Ms. Clifford, and neither reimbursed me for the payment, either directly or indirectly." Notice that Cohen's precise words leaves open the possibility that someone other than the Trump Organization or the Trump campaign reimbursed Cohen — possibly Trump personally reimbursed Cohen. The [Washington Post](#) had a news article with the title "Did Trump's lawyer just implicate Trump in the Stormy Daniels payment?" Normally, an attorney would obtain full payment in advance, deposit the money into an escrow account at a bank, and then pay fees or other money to a third party.

On 6 March 2018, Ms. Clifford sued Trump in Los Angeles Superior Court to void the 28 Oct 2016 contract between her and Trump, because Trump never signed the contract. The Complaint alleges that Trump's attorney, Michael Cohen, filed for arbitration in Los Angeles on 27 February 2018 to enforce the hush-money contract. [NBC News](#); [Los Angeles Times](#); [Washington Post](#); [New York Times](#); [Associated Press](#).

On 7 March 2018, The [New York Times](#) reported that, on Cohen's request, on 27 February a private arbitrator granted a temporary restraining order that prevents Clifford from speaking about her relationship with Trump.

On 10 March 2018, Danny Cevallos, a legal analyst for NBC News, wrote an insightful [article](#) about this complicated case. While the contract might not be enforceable by Trump (because Trump did not sign), the arbitration clause may be enforceable, because Cohen did sign for corporation EC that paid the money to Clifford. Further, because Clifford signed the contract and because she accepted the \$130,000 payment, she is now arguably estopped from denying the validity of the contract. One complexity is that only Trump (not EC) has the right to compel arbitration, but Trump did not sign the contract.

I see a complicated public policy argument in this difficult case. Trump and Cohen are allegedly using a contract with pseudonyms to prevent public disclosure of Trump's alleged adultery. A judge might find it unconscionable to use the courts to enforce this contract. Because adultery is still a crime in many states, and because this contract — and the publicity on this subject matter — has a nationwide scope, the contract might be an illegal

bargain. An injunction issued in California would have a nationwide effect.

On 16 March, Trump's attorney filed a motion to have this litigation transferred to federal court in Los Angeles. Additionally, Trump's attorney claims Clifford violated the nondisclosure agreement at least twenty times. If a judge agrees, then Clifford could owe Trump at least twenty million dollars in liquidated damages under the contract. [NBC News](#); [New York Times](#); [Los Angeles Times](#). On the other hand, a judge could find a million dollars per disclosure exceeded Trump's actual damages (i.e., was actually a nonenforceable penalty), so the judge would refuse to enforce the million dollar liquidated damages clause in the contract.

On 25 March 2018, an interview with Ms. Clifford was broadcast on the CBS television program "60 Minutes". CBS posted the [transcript](#) of the interview.

On Monday morning, 26 March, Ms. Clifford amended her litigation in Federal court to allege that Cohen had defamed her in February 2018 when Cohen claimed she lied about sexual relations with Trump. [Washington Post](#); [Los Angeles Times](#).

On 5 April, Trump told journalists that he did *not* know that his lawyer paid \$130,000 to Ms. Clifford, and Trump did *not* know the source of the money. [Washington Post](#); [Wall Street Journal](#); [New York Times](#). Later, the White House posted a transcript of Trump's remarks:

QUESTION: Mr. President, did you know about the \$130,000 payment to Stormy Daniels?

THE PRESIDENT: No. No. What else?

QUESTION: Then why did Michael Cohen make those if there was no truth to her allegations?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, you'll have to ask Michael Cohen. Michael is my attorney. And you'll have to ask Michael Cohen.

QUESTION: Do you know where he got the money to make that payment?

THE PRESIDENT: No, I don't know. No.

"Remarks by President Trump in Press Gaggle en route Washington, D.C.," [White House](#), 16:22 EDT, 5 April 2018.

My comment is that Trump's disclosure helps Clifford argue that *no* contract was formed between Trump and Clifford, which is consistent with the absence of Trump's signature on the written contract. Trump should have refused to answer these questions from journalists. Nevertheless, Trump can claim he is *not* a party to the contract — despite the blank space for his signature — but only a third-party beneficiary of the contract.

On 9 April 2018, the FBI raided the office of Michael Cohen, Trump's long-time personal attorney, and seized records pertaining to Clifford. [New York Times](#); [Washington Post](#); [Wall Street Journal](#)(subscription). My comment is that it is highly unusual for

law enforcement to raid an attorney's office and violate attorney-client privilege. If Cohen had assisted Trump in continuing or future activity that is either criminal or fraudulent, those activities are not protected by attorney-client privilege. If Cohen did something without Trump's knowledge, then that something is also not protected by attorney-client privilege.

At 18:06 EDT on 9 April, *The Washington Post* updated the article linked in the previous paragraph here, to report that Cohen is being investigated "for possible bank fraud, wire fraud, and campaign finance violations".

On 10 April, the [Associated Press](#) and [New York Times](#) reported the FBI was seeking records of Cohen's payments to Ms. Clifford, as well as records of third-party payments to Ms. McDougal.

On 26 April 2018, Trump was interviewed on "Fox & Friends" program:

TRUMP: Well, [Michael Cohen] has a percentage of my overall legal work — a tiny, tiny little fraction. But, Michael would represent me and represent me on some things. He represents me — like with this crazy Stormy Daniels deal he represented me. And, you know, from what I see he did absolutely nothing wrong. There were no campaign funds going into this — which would have been a problem. Because he's got other things. He's got businesses, and from what I understand they're looking at his businesses, and I hope he's in great shape.

Aaron Blake, "Trump's unwieldy 'Fox and Friends' interview, annotated," [Washington Post](#), 26 April 2018.

That is an important admission by Trump, that Cohen represented Trump in negotiating a nondisclosure agreement with Clifford, and paying hush money to Clifford.

---

### 2-6 May 2018: Giuliani makes a mess

On the night of 2 May 2018, Rudolph W. Giuliani — the former mayor of New York City and a recent addition to Trump's collection of personal attorneys — appeared on a Fox News Channel program hosted by Sean Hannity. Giuliani said Trump reimbursed Cohen for the \$130,000 payment to Clifford. [Associated Press](#); [Washington Post](#)(2May); [Washington Post](#)(Aaron Blake on 3 May); [New York Times](#); [NBC News](#). The [New York Times](#) posted a transcript of Giuliani's disclosure. One wonders why Giuliani would go on nationwide television and reveal a fact that contradicted Trump's 5 April statement to journalists (quoted above), a fact that makes it appear that Trump knowingly paid hush money to Clifford. Giuliani claims Trump's payments are acceptable because Trump used his personal funds to reimburse Cohen, *not* "campaign money". Further, Giuliani disclosed that Trump reimbursed Cohen for the \$130,000 in a series of \$35,000 payments over many months. My comment is that the series of small payments may have been intended to confuse any future audit, which might be evidence of fraud or money laundering.

On the morning of 3 May, Trump made a series of three tweets:

Mr. Cohen, an attorney, received a monthly retainer, not from the campaign and having nothing to do with the campaign, from which he entered into, through reimbursement, a private contract between two parties, known as a non-disclosure



agreement, or NDA. These agreements are.....  
Donald J. Trump, [tweet](#), 06:46 EDT, 3 May 2018.

...very common among celebrities and people of wealth. In this case it is in full force and effect and will be used in Arbitration for damages against Ms. Clifford (Daniels). The agreement was used to stop the false and extortionist accusations made by her about an affair,.....

Donald J. Trump, [tweet](#), 06:54 EDT, 3 May 2018.

...despite already having signed a detailed letter admitting that there was no affair. Prior to its violation by Ms. Clifford and her attorney, this was a private agreement. Money from the campaign, or campaign contributions, played no roll [sic] in this transaction.  
Donald J. Trump, [tweet](#), 07:00 EDT, 3 May 2018.

Notice that Trump admits that hush money was paid to Clifford.

Trump suggests that paying hush money to Clifford had "nothing to do with the campaign" because Trump used his personal money, *not* campaign funds. How does Trump know this payment was legal? Trump himself is ignorant of law. Did Trump consult an attorney who is an expert on campaign finance law?

It seems obvious that the purpose of this hush money was to suppress information that might reduce Trump's chances of being elected president. The hush money was paid on 28 Oct 2016, just days before the presidential election, which timing is additional evidence that the purpose was to protect candidate Trump in the election. (If Trump wanted to protect his family, Trump could have negotiated Clifford's silence years earlier, perhaps in 2007 when the alleged adulterous relationship ended.) That purpose makes Cohen's payment to Clifford a gift that benefited Trump's presidential campaign. Trump later reimbursed Cohen for the payment to Clifford. Trump and Cohen failed to declare the payment to the Federal Election Commission.

Trump asserts that paying hush money is "very common among celebrities and people of wealth." Ok, but should presidential candidates be paying hush money? There is a problem with American Values here that Trump ignores. Trump not only had his attorney pay hush money, but also Trump concealed (i.e., lied about) the payment.

Trump says that Clifford was committing extortion. Given that Trump repeatedly makes false statements of fact, and given that more than a dozen women have accused Trump of sexual misconduct, I think Clifford is much more credible than Trump.

The style of Trump's three tweets is different from Trump's usual tweet style. One wonders if these tweets were drafted by an attorney for Trump to plagiarize.

Giuliani's public statements, based in part on conversations with Trump, may have destroyed attorney-client privilege, opening the door for prosecutors to question Trump and Cohen about the payment of hush money to Clifford.

See commentary by Dan Balz in the [Washington Post](#) that asks: "Does it bother anyone that



President Trump has been caught lying? Does it bother anyone that this is not new? Does it bother anyone that the president has been shown to be a liar?"

See commentary by Peter Baker in the [New York Times](#) that says: "Whether called lies or misstatements, Mr. Trump's [history of falsehoods](#) has been extensively documented, but the string of factual distortions that came to light this week could come back to haunt him." Baker's article is titled: "New Revelations Suggest a President Losing Control of His Narrative".

Later on 3 May, Philip Rucker, Josh Dawsey, Robert Costa, & Ashley Parker reported in the [Washington Post](#) that "It has become standard operating procedure for Trump and his aides to deceive the public with false statements and shifting accounts."

On 3 May, the [Washington Post](#) and the [New York Times](#) review the history of public statements by Trump, Cohen, and others about the hush money paid to Clifford.

On the morning of 3 May, Giuliani appeared on "Fox & Friends" television program and added more reasons for why the hush money was intended to influence the presidential election.

"Imagine if that came out on Oct. 15, 2016, in the middle of the, you know, last debate with Hillary Clinton," Giuliani told Fox News' "Fox & Friends," of the \$130,000 payment made by Michael Cohen, President Donald Trump's personal lawyer.

[Giuliani said:] "Cohen didn't even ask. Cohen made it go away. He did his job."

Louis Nelson, "Giuliani: What if Daniels allegations came out during 2016 election?" [Politico](#), 08:47 EDT, 3 May 2018.

Same quotation from Giuliani reported in the [New York Times](#) and the [Washington Post](#).

On 4 May 2018, Trump told reporters that Rudy Giuliani disclosed wrong "facts".

THE PRESIDENT: I tell you what — Rudy is a great guy, but he just started a day ago. But he really has his heart into it. He's working hard. He's learning the subject matter. And he's going to be issuing a statement too. But he is a great guy. He knows it's a witch hunt. That's what he knows. He's seen a lot of them. And he said he's never seen anything so horrible.

....

So Rudy knows it's a witch hunt. He started yesterday. He'll get his facts straight. He's a great guy. But what he does is he feels it's a very bad thing for our country, and he happens to be right.

QUESTION: When did you find out what the retainer was being spent on?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, you're going to find out, because we're going to give a full list. And people know. And virtually everything said has been said incorrectly, and it's been said wrong, or it's been covered wrong by the press — just like NBC and ABC yesterday covered the story wrong.

But you'll be finding out. [interruption omitted] It's actually very simple. It's actually

very simple. But there has been a lot of misinformation, really. People wanting to say — and I say, you know what, learn before you speak. It's a lot easier.

"Remarks by President Trump Before Marine One Departure," [White House](#), 09:59 EDT, 4 May 2018.

See also [New York Times](#).

If Giuliani started work for Trump "yesterday" [i.e., 3 May], then *why* was Giuliani giving interviews on television on the night of 2 May? Actually, Giuliani was hired by Trump on 19 April 2018, although it is not publicly known when Giuliani began work for Trump. (cites to hiring: [Washington Post](#); [New York Times](#).) On the night of 2 May, Giuliani told the [Washington Post](#) that he had talked to Trump "probably four or five days ago." On another issue, Trump does *not* take his own advice to "learn before you speak."

On 4 May, Trump criticized journalists for reporting the continually changing story of Cohen paying hush money to Clifford.

QUESTION: Mr. President, why did you change your story on Stormy Daniels?

THE PRESIDENT: I'm not changing any stories. All I'm telling you is that this country is right now running so smooth. And to be bringing up that kind of crap, and to be bringing up witch hunts all the time — that's all you want to talk about. You're going to see —

QUESTION: But you said on Air Force One [on 5 April] that you did not know (inaudible).

THE PRESIDENT: No, but you have to — excuse me. You take a look at what I said. You go back and take a look. You'll see what I said.

QUESTION: You said, "No," when I asked you, "Did you know about the payment?"

THE PRESIDENT: Excuse me, you go take a look at what we said. But this is a witch hunt like nobody has ever seen before. And what they should do is look at the other side [Democrats], where terribly bad things have happened, where terribly bad things have been done.

But what I do want you to do is look at our economy. Today, we broke 4 percent [unemployment]; 3.9 percent we hit today for the first time in many, many years. We're really proud of it, and we'll talk to you folks later. But I will tell you — I will tell you this, I will tell you this: When Rudy made the statement — Rudy is great — but Rudy had just started, and he wasn't totally familiar with every — you know, with everything. And Rudy — we love Rudy, he's a special guy. What he really understands is that this is a witch hunt. He understands that probably better than anybody.

"Remarks by President Trump Before Air Force One Departure," [White House](#), 10:23 EDT, 4 May 2018. Text in brackets added by Standler.

My comment is that Trump made a rambling and ineffective reply to good questions. Trump asserted that the USA is "running so smooth[ly]", which is *not* a relevant response to the

question. Trump attempted to deny what he had told journalists on 5 April. Trump told journalists to look at what Democrats had done, a second irrelevant response. Then Trump took credit for a low unemployment rate, a third irrelevant response. Finally, Trump blamed Giuliani for not being "totally familiar" with the facts of paying hush money to Clifford. Notice that Trump never answered the original question of why he changed his story about the hush money.

On the afternoon of 4 May, Giuliani issued a written statement that offers a new, improved version of the Truth. Here is the entire statement by Giuliani:

This is intended to clarify the views I expressed over the past few days.

These are my views:

First:

There is no campaign violation. The payment was made to resolve a personal and false allegation in order to protect the President's family. It would have been done in any event, whether he was a candidate or not.

Second:

My references to timing were not describing my understanding of the President's knowledge, but instead, my understanding of these matters.

Third:

It is undisputed that the President's dismissal of former Director Comey — an inferior executive officer — was clearly within his Article II power. Recent revelations about former Director Comey further confirm the wisdom of the President's decision, which was plainly in the best interests of our nation.

"Full text: Rudy Giuliani issues statement clarifying his earlier remarks," [Politico](#), 14:26 EDT, 4 May 2018.

Gone is the bogus argument that Trump spent his personal funds, *not* campaign money, on the \$130,000 hush money. Now Giuliani properly focuses on Trump's (and Cohen's) intent. In the third point, Giuliani ignored that the president can *not* dismiss an executive for an unlawful reason, such as the president committing obstruction of justice when he dismisses an employee.

Now that the public knows some of the facts about paying hush money to Clifford, it is time for Trump to make a full disclosure, in an attempt to move past this scandal. Instead, Trump continues to conceal this transaction, with continuing lies and omissions. The concealment makes one suspect that there is more embarrassing material in this transaction that has not yet been publicly disclosed. On 5 May 2018, it is premature to discuss the legality of what Cohen and Trump did, because we do *not* know all of the legally relevant facts.

On Sunday morning, 6 May, Giuliani appeared on ABC News's "This Week" television program and told George Stephanopoulos, the host of the program:

STEPHANOPOULOS: But you acknowledge that Michael Cohen would tell the president this is what it's for?

GIULIANI: On October 15, 16, right before the election? \$130,000 payment when there were other — I did make clear — and I don't know what they are yet. I will know. There were other things involved that had nothing to do with Stormy Daniels. In other words, other amounts of money. This was not uncommon for him to do that.

So no, I would not — I would not — if I were him and I were the president's lawyer and I had done this in the past and it had worked out in the past, I would not go to him and bother him two weeks before the election with this thing.

....

STEPHANOPOULOS: And — and you've said he — this was a regular arrangement he had with Michael Cohen. So did Michael Cohen make payments to other women for the president?

GIULIANI: I have no knowledge of that but I would think if it was necessary, yes. He made payments for the president, or he conducted business for the president, which means he had legal fees, monies laid out, and expenditures, which I have on my bills to my clients.

....

GIULIANI: .... My issue is getting up to speed on the facts here. I'm about halfway there.

....

[Interview with Michael Avenatti, Clifford's attorney:]

STEPHANOPOULOS: You heard — you heard the whole [interview with Giuliani], what's your reaction?

AVENATTI: It's an absolute unmitigated disaster for Rudy Giuliani and the president. It's a train wreck. I can't believe that that actually just happened. I mean what we witnessed by Rudy Giuliani may be one of the worst T.V. appearances by any attorney on behalf of a client in modern times.

He now expects the American people to believe that he doesn't really know the facts, that as to every key question you asked, he hasn't communicated with the president about it. I mean this guy's all over the map over the last 72 hours on some very simple facts that should be very straightforward.

I think it is obvious, George, to the American people that this is a cover up, that they are making it up as they go along, they don't know what to say because they've lost track of the truth.

....

STEPHANOPOULOS: Do you have any evidence that President Trump knew in real

time about this agreement about this payment?

AVENATTI: George, we have evidence that the president knew in the — in the months at least following the campaign of this payment, certainly knew it long before his statement on Air Force One in April of this year where he effectively stood there and lied to the American people about not knowing anything about this payment. And then of course Rudy Giuliani a few days ago goes out and contradicts that.

And now they're trying to claim that Rudy Giuliani doesn't know the facts. I mean, any attorney that's worth anything could have a 30 minute meeting or conversation with his client and get to the bottom of this. This is not a complicated matter that takes months or years to get to the bottom of, George. I mean, this is absurd.

STEPHANOPOULOS: One of the other points we made with Rudy Giuliani, he said he didn't have any knowledge of payments made by Michael Cohen to other women but he — but he couldn't rule it out either and has (ph) said that the payments might have been made if necessary. Do you have any evidence of any other — that any other women were paid by Michael Cohen or other agents of the president?

AVENATTI: Women have come forward and contacted our office, George, as I've stated in the past. And we haven't completed vetting those stories but I think at the end of the day, there's going to be evidence of such payments. But I think it's also important to go back and — and think about what we've just heard and what we've heard the last few days.

According to Rudy Giuliani, this was basically commonplace. The president had effectively an extramarital affair slush fund that was administered by Michael Cohen and that he would just be expected to take care of these things. They were a regular occurrence. I mean, that in and of itself should be very disturbing. Most people of means, most people of wealth and celebrity, they don't have extramarital affair slush funds and the suggestion is insulting.

"This Week' Transcript 5-6-18: President Trump's personal attorney Rudy Giuliani and Stormy Daniels' lawyer Michael Avenatti," [ABC News](#), 09:54 EDT, 6 May 2018.

When asked if Cohen made payments for Trump to other women, Giuliani should have said "I do not know," and then stopped speaking. Instead, Giuliani speculated that Cohen made payments to other women "if it was necessary". Giuliani's speculation quickly evolved into a story that Cohen was operating a slush fund to pay hush money to multiple women.

Giuliani should be alone in an office, reading legal documents and reading evidence, and *not* appearing on television talk shows. Giuliani himself said he is "about halfway" "up to speed on the facts here."

In April 2018, Trump hired Giuliani to help end Mueller's investigation of Russian influence on the 2016 presidential election. But during 2-6 May 2018, Giuliani made substantial public statements on Cohen's payment of hush money to Clifford and Trump's payments to Cohen. Giuliani's public statements made matters worse for Trump, as described above. Giuliani also made bizarre public statements about when North Korea would release three U.S. citizens —

a topic for the U.S. State Department, *not* Giuliani. On the morning of 3 May, Giuliani appeared on the "Fox & Friends" television program and said the three would be released later that day. [CNN](#); [CNBC](#). Giuliani was *wrong*, the three were not released on 3 May. On 5 May, Giuliani said the three "will be released over the next several days". [CNN](#); [Korean Broadcasting Service](#); [Yonhap](#). The South Korean news media treated Giuliani as a credible source, which he is not. Giuliani was *wrong* again about the release. Then on 7 May, the U.S. State Department issued a statement that said Giuliani did *not* speak for the Government on North Korea. (Original statement *not* available at U.S. State Dept. website.) [Associated Press](#); [Washington Post](#)(AP); [NBC News](#).

Giuliani is clearly out-of-control (1) when Giuliani publicly spoke about the Clifford matter without knowing the facts, and (2) especially when Giuliani twice spoke about the release of the three U.S. citizens by North Korea. On 7 May, [Politico](#) was among the first to suggest that — unless Giuliani stops his erroneous public statements and harmful speculation — Trump will fire Giuliani: "... some aides said they expect the president to fire Giuliani if his behavior doesn't change."

Early on Tuesday, 8 May, the Associated Press reported:

President Donald Trump is growing increasingly irritated with lawyer Rudy Giuliani's frequently off-message media blitz, which has included muddying the waters on hush money paid to porn actress Stormy Daniels and making claims that could complicate the president's standing in the special counsel's Russia probe.

Trump has begun questioning whether Giuliani, an old friend and former New York City mayor, should be sidelined from television interviews, according to two people familiar with the president's thinking but not authorized to speak publicly about private discussions.

Trump also expressed annoyance that Giuliani's theatrics have breathed new life into the Daniels story. It's a concern shared by Trump allies who think Giuliani is only generating more legal and political trouble for the White House.

....

.... As for Giuliani, the president has not yet signaled to him to stop appearing on television but told a confidant recently that perhaps Giuliani should "be benched" — at least temporarily — if he can't improve his performance.

Jonathan Lemire, "Trump considers benching Giuliani from doing TV interviews," [Associated Press](#), 03:30 EDT, 8 May 2018.

In April 2018, Giuliani took a leave of absence from Greenberg Traurig, the law firm that employed him. But on 10 May, in response to public comments by Giuliani on 6 May, the law firm told Giuliani to resign. *The New York Times* reported:

Mr. Giuliani suggested that such payments [i.e., hush money to Clifford] were common at his firm, even without the knowledge of the clients. "That was money that was paid by his lawyer, the way I would do, out of his law firm funds," he said on Fox News. He added, "Michael [Cohen] would take care of things like this like I take care of this with my clients."

The New York Times asked Greenberg Traurig about those remarks early this week. Shortly after Mr. Giuliani's resignation was announced, the firm responded.

"We cannot speak for Mr. Giuliani with respect to what was intended by his remarks," said a spokeswoman, Jill Perry. "Speaking for ourselves, we would not condone payments of the nature alleged to have been made or otherwise without the knowledge and direction of a client."

Michael S. Schmidt & Maggie Haberman, "Giuliani's Law Firm Undercuts His Statements as They Part Ways," [New York Times](#), 10 May 2018.

My comment is that Greenberg Traurig repudiated Giuliani, because *no* ethical attorney would pay \$130,000 in hush money without the explicit knowledge and approval of the client.

---

### Continuation of Clifford

On 8 May 2018, the [New York Times](#) reported that a company linked to Viktor Vekselberg, a Russian oligarch, paid at least a half-million dollars to Essential Consultants L.L.C., a shell company controlled by Michael D. Cohen. The money was allegedly paid beginning January 2017 and ending August 2017. Essential Consultants is Cohen's corporation that paid hush money to Clifford in October 2016. See also: [Washington Post](#); [Los Angeles Times](#); [Associated Press](#); [NBC News](#). The implication seems to be that Russians paid for some of the hush money that Cohen paid to Trump's alleged mistresses, but I see *no* evidence to support that speculation.

On 9 May, [NBC News](#) reported that the Swiss drug company Novartis paid Cohen US\$ 1.2 million for access to Trump, but Novartis received nothing.

On 11 May, the [New York Times](#) reported that American Telephone & Telegraph admitted that it made a "big mistake" in paying Cohen \$ 600,000 for advice about its proposed merger with Time-Warner cable television. The Trump administration opposed the merger.

*The Washington Post* interviewed "22 White House and Justice Department officials, witnesses, Trump confidants and attorneys connected to the [Mueller] probe" and then on 13 May provided insight into Trump's current thinking.

The Mueller operation, like the former Marine Corps platoon commander who leads it, is secretive and methodical. Ten blocks west in the White House, President Trump combats the probe with bluster, disarray and defiance as he scrambles for survival.

The president vents to associates about the FBI raids on his personal attorney Michael Cohen — as often as "20 times a day," in the estimation of one confidant — and they frequently listen in silence, knowing little they say will soothe him. Trump gripes that he needs better "TV lawyers" to defend him on cable news and is impatient to halt the "witch hunt" that he says undermines his legitimacy as president. And he plots his battle plans with former New York mayor Rudolph W. Giuliani, his new legal



consigliere.

....

Giuliani met with Mueller five days after his hiring, on April 24, to try to understand issues ranging from the scope of a possible Trump interview to whether Mueller believes that Comey, whose firing by Trump triggered the probe, is a credible witness. Ashley Parker, Philip Rucker, Tom Hamburger, Robert Costa, & Matt Zapposky, "'Buckle up': As Mueller probe enters second year, Trump and allies go on war footing," [Washington Post](#), 15:20 EDT, 13 May 2018.

If Trump really believes he is innocent of collusion with Russians in the 2016 elections, and if Trump really believes he is innocent of obstruction of justice in firing Comey (and possibly other cases), then Trump should relax. Trump is obsessed with the Mueller investigation, instead of concentrating on being president. Trump is ignorant of law, and he has chosen Giuliani — a celebrity attorney (or as Trump says: "TV lawyer") — instead of an attorney with substantial, recent criminal defense litigation experience. As explained above, Giuliani has made matters worse for Trump.

Note that *The Washington Post* reports that Giuliani met with Mueller on 24 April, which contradicts Trump's public statement on 4 May that Giuliani "started yesterday". This is yet another example of Trump stating false facts.

On 16 May 2018, Trump's financial disclosure for 2018 listed his payment of less than \$250,000 to Cohen in 2017 to reimburse Cohen for payment to Clifford. Trump's payment *should* have been included on his 2017 financial disclosure form. [Washington Post](#). Trump has another problem. As the [New York Times](#) pointed out, "Rudolph W. Giuliani, Mr. Trump's lawyer, said this month that Mr. Cohen was paid \$460,000 or \$470,000 from Mr. Trump, which also included money for 'incidental expenses' that he had incurred on Mr. Trump's behalf." That leaves at least \$210,000 of Trump's payment to Cohen unreported on Trump's financial disclosure.

---

## Karen McDougal

On 20 March 2018, Karen McDougal filed litigation in state court in Los Angeles against American Media Inc., publisher of the *National Enquirer*. The litigation seeks to void a 6 Aug 2016 contract in which American Media paid her \$150,000 for the exclusive rights to her story. The *National Enquirer* never published her story, which may have been a favor to Trump. [New York Times](#); [CNN](#).

On 22 March 2018, Karen McDougal gave an hour-long interview to Anderson Cooper of CNN about her adulterous relationship with Trump that began in June 2006 and continued until April 2007, with Trump seeing her at least five times/month during those 10 months. McDougal was Playboy magazine's Playmate of the Year in 1998. [CNN](#); [CNN](#)(highlights); [Washington Post](#); [New York Times](#).

On 18 April 2018, the litigation was settled, with McDougal released from the contract. [Los Angeles Times](#); [New York Times](#); [Washington Post](#). McDougal does *not* need to repay the \$150,000 that she was paid in 2016, which makes that payment appear to be purchasing her silence during the presidential campaign.

On 20 July 2018, it was publicly reported that Cohen had tape recorded conversations with Trump regarding possible payments to Karen McDougal. But neither Trump nor Cohen paid McDougal. [New York Times](#); [Washington Post](#); [Politico](#); [CNBC](#). The special master who reviewed evidence seized by the FBI in their raid of Cohen's office determined that the recording was protected by attorney-client privilege. But then Trump's legal team bizarrely waived that privilege. [CBS News](#); [CNBC](#). After Trump waived privilege, Trump complained in a [tweet](#) about being recorded by Cohen.

On 26 July, the [Washington Post](#) reported on false statements by Trump regarding his affairs with Karen McDougal and Stephanie Clifford: “In other words, the initial denials were ‘fake news’ — and the original reporting was correct.”

---

## Immigration Reform & the Wall

On 5 January 2018, the [Wall Street Journal](#) tells us that Trump wants \$18 billion to spend on the border wall during the next *ten years*. Trump wants \$1.6 billion to spend in 2018 for 60 miles of wall in Texas and 14 miles in San Diego. Trump bizarrely claims that rapists, murderers, and illicit drugs are pouring across the border, but he wants to take ten years to solve the problem.

Trump is asking U.S. Congress for the following as part of immigration reform:

1. allocate \$ 1.6 billion to spend in 2018 for part of Trump's wall along the Mexican border
2. end chain migration, in which immigrants in the USA can bring their family to the USA
3. end lottery for immigration visas
4. end "temporary protected status" for immigrants from El Salvador, Haiti, Sudan, and Nicaragua
5. in exchange, Trump is willing to continued the "Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals" (DACA) for children who illegally entered the USA.

On 11 January, U.S. Senators Lindsey O. Graham (R-S.C.) and Richard J. Durbin (D-Ill.) told Trump that Congress would agree to part of what Trump wanted, but Congress would only give a 50% reduction in visas chosen by lottery and Congress wanted to continue the "temporary protected status". Trump angrily rejected that compromise.

On 11 January 2018, Trump had a burst of candor, when he declared in a White House Oval Office meeting with several U.S. Senators: “Why are we having all these people from shithole countries come here?” The shithole countries include Haiti, El Salvador, and African countries. Instead of allowing immigrants from shithole countries, Trump suggested allowing

immigration from countries like Norway. [Washington Post](#); [Los Angeles Times](#); [Associated Press](#). [NBC News](#) reported that Trump's outburst made an immigration compromise more difficult to obtain. On 12 January, [Fox News](#) reported: "Trump blunder raises chances of shutdown" if a compromise is not reached before 19 January, when the current budget expires. Trump demands that the budget contain funding for his wall, while Congress is unwilling to fund the wall unless the wall is part of a grand compromise.

On the morning of 12 January, Trump denied he said "shithole countries".

The language used by me at the DACA meeting was tough, but this was not the language used. What was really tough was the outlandish proposal made — a big setback for DACA!

Donald J. Trump, [tweet](#), 07:28 EST, 12 Jan 2018.

Never said anything derogatory about Haitians other than Haiti is, obviously, a very poor and troubled country. Never said "take them out." Made up by Dems. I have a wonderful relationship with Haitians. Probably should record future meetings — unfortunately, no trust!

Donald J. Trump, [tweet](#), 08:48 EST, 12 Jan 2018.

When Trump says "made up by Dems", Trump is accusing Senator Durbin (D-Ill.) of lying. On the afternoon of 12 January, Durbin defended himself in the [Chicago Tribune](#). Trump will *not* record meetings in the White House, because then there would be physical evidence of stupid remarks by Trump. On 12 January, the [Associated Press](#) reports that Trump is unapologetic.

On the morning of 14 January, Trump added a little bit of drama with his criticism of Democrats:

DACA is probably dead because the Democrats don't really want it, they just want to talk and take desperately needed money away from our Military.

Donald J. Trump, [tweet](#), 08:09 EST, 14 Jan 2018.

On 14 January at noon, the [Washington Post](#) published an article with the headline: "Hopes for immigration deal fade as Trump declares DACA 'probably dead'". At 22:13 EST, the [Washington Post](#) published a new article with the headline: "Trump says that he is 'not a racist,' denies souring chances for immigration overhaul by using vulgarity".

On 15 January, Trump made an ad hominem attack on Senator Durbin:

Senator Dicky Durbin totally misrepresented what was said at the DACA meeting.

Deals can't get made when there is no trust! Durbin blew DACA and is hurting our Military.

Donald J. Trump, [tweet](#), 15:28 EST, 15 Jan 2018.

---

On 17 January, during a meeting with Democrats from Congress, the White House Chief of Staff, John Kelly, told the Democrats that some of Trump's campaign promises about immigration were "uninformed". Kelly specifically said we need only 700 miles of "physical barrier" along the border, *not* the entire 2100 miles. Kelly also specifically said Mexico would

*not* pay for the wall, despite Trump's repeated promises in 2016 that Mexico would pay. On a Fox News channel broadcast, Kelly politely said Trump's opinion on the wall had "evolved". [Associated Press](#); [Fox News](#); [Washington Post](#)(18Jan).

On the morning of 18 January, Trump reacted to Kelly claiming Trump was "uninformed".  
The Wall is the Wall, it has never changed or evolved from the first day I conceived of it. Parts will be, of necessity, see through and it was never intended to be built in areas where there is natural protection such as mountains, wastelands or tough rivers or water.....

Donald J. Trump, [tweet](#), 06:15 EST, 18 Jan 2018.

Trump asserts that his opinion is so rigid that the concept of the wall "has never changed", despite Trump hearing new facts or changing conditions. Trump was also clear in his campaign promises that the wall would be built along the *entire* border, but on 13 July 2017 Trump admitted he would build a wall along only 700 to 900 miles of the border. The shortening of Trump's wall is one change that Trump has made.

Trump finished his previous tweet:

....The Wall will be paid for, directly or indirectly, or through longer term reimbursement, by Mexico, which has a ridiculous \$71 billion dollar trade surplus with the U.S. The \$20 billion dollar Wall is "peanuts" compared to what Mexico makes from the U.S. NAFTA is a bad joke!

Donald J. Trump, [tweet](#), 06:25 EST, 18 Jan 2018.

We need the Wall for the safety and security of our country. We need the Wall to help stop the massive inflow of drugs from Mexico, now rated the number one most dangerous country in the world. If there is no Wall, there is no Deal!

Donald J. Trump, [tweet](#), 08:16 EST, 18 Jan 2018.

If we need the wall to prevent horrible things from happening, why did Trump include in the 2018 budget a mere \$1.6 billion for a tiny part of the new wall? Why not include \$22 billion for the entire wall? The wall will stop some illegal immigration. The wall will *not* stop illicit drugs from Mexico, because the drugs can be sent via mail or by drug cartel courier.

At midnight on Friday, 19 January, the U.S. Government shut down, as Congress was unable to agree on a budget. *The Washington Post* provided some insight into why the budget negotiations failed.

After the president ordered cameras out of the Cabinet Room that day [9 Jan], the group delved into the details [of immigration reform]. Kirstjen Nielsen, Trump's homeland security secretary, and her staff passed out a four-page document on the administration's "must haves" for any immigration bill — a hard-line list that included \$18 billion for Trump's promised border wall, eliminating the diversity visa lottery program and ending "extended family chain migration," according to the document, which was obtained by *The Washington Post*.

But one person seemed surprised and alarmed by the memo: the president.

With Democrats and Republicans still in the room, Trump said that the document

didn't represent all of his positions, that he wasn't familiar with its contents and that he didn't appreciate being caught off-guard. He instructed the group to disregard the summary and move on, according to one of the lawmakers in the room, speaking on the condition of anonymity to describe a private conversation.

"It's like the wedding where someone actually stands up and objects to the wedding," the lawmaker said. "It was that moment."

That meeting nearly two weeks ago, and the president's ambivalence, marked the beginning of yet another period of Trump-fueled tumult that helped push the federal government into a shutdown at midnight Friday. Pinging from one upheaval to the next — while clearly not understanding the policy nuances of the negotiation — Trump clashed at different times with Democrats and members of his own party, who grew increasingly exasperated with the president even as they sought to cast blame upon the other side.

....

"Negotiating with President Trump is like negotiating with Jell-O," Minority Leader Charles E. Schumer (D-N.Y.) complained on the Senate floor Saturday [20 Jan], some 12 hours into the shutdown. "It's next to impossible."

This account of Trump's divisive role in shutdown negotiations is based on interviews with more than a dozen lawmakers, White House advisers, government aides and Trump confidants, most of whom requested anonymity to discuss private negotiations.

....

As the shutdown loomed, the president grew more erratic. ....

[On the morning of 18 January, Trump [tweeted](#) "CHIP should be part of a long term solution, not a 30 Day, or short term, extension!" CHIP = Children's Health Insurance Program. Trump's] stance directly contradicted the strategy of congressional Republicans, who were attempting to use CHIP to lure reluctant Democrats into supporting the plan.

....

The president, however, did not seem to fully grasp just how problematic his CHIP tweet was for his own party. Minutes after tweeting his criticism, Trump spoke by phone with McConnell, according to people familiar with the conversation. Trump praised the Republican bill, showed no reluctance when McConnell explained his plan to forge ahead with it and made no mention of his tweet, these people said. Trump also reassured House Speaker Paul D. Ryan (R-Wis.) that he liked the bill as it was.

The whole episode left congressional leaders puzzled: Why, they wondered, would the president tweet something negative about their legislation and rattle Republican lawmakers without ever raising concerns with them — and then act as if nothing had happened?

Ashley Parker, Josh Dawsey, & Ed O'Keefe, "Negotiating with Jell-O': How Trump's shifting positions fueled the rush to a shutdown," [Washington Post](#), 14:53 EST, 20 Jan 2018.

The government shutdown is another failure for Trump, the self-proclaimed master negotiator and dealmaker. Trump also boasts of his intelligence and knowledge, yet Trump does *not* understand what he is trying to negotiate. Trump's *inconsistent* and apparently randomly changing positions are apparent in immigration reform, as well as in his positions on North Korea.

Trump's criticism of CHIP followed by Trump's ignoring his criticism reminds me of how Trump repeatedly insulted Kim Jong Un in North Korea, but then, in an 11 Jan 2018 interview with Reuters, Trump insisted he had a "very good relationship" with Kim. As *The Washington Post* said with CHIP, it was "as if nothing had happened".

On 21 January, the [New York Times](#) reported: "The president was either unwilling or unable to articulate the immigration policy he wanted, much less understand the nuances of what it would involve."

On the weekend and Monday, 20-22 January, White House staff and Republican leaders in Congress, urged Trump to keep a low-profile and *not* contact Democrats in Congress. [Associated Press](#); [Washington Post](#); [BBC](#) ("... Donald Trump was largely sidelined through the process."); [Politico](#). The strategy to sideline Trump — the self-proclaimed Master Negotiator and Dealmaker — was successful. At noon on Monday, the Democrats in the Senate caved and voted to continue the budget until 8 February. In exchange, Republicans who have a slim majority in the U.S. Senate will permit debate on continuing DACA.

On 19 January, Schumer told Trump that Democrats in the Senate would vote for funding Trump's wall in exchange for continuation of the DACA. Trump rejected that offer, because Trump wants more concessions from the Democrats. On 23 January, Schumer announced he was rescinding his offer. [Associated Press](#); [Washington Post](#); [New York Times](#). Since Trump rejected Schumer's offer, Schumer was rescinding a dead deal, but Schumer hoped to appear tough to liberals who support more immigration.

On 25 January 2018, the [White House](#) issued Trump's demands on immigration reform:

1. create "\$25 billion trust fund for the [Mexican] border wall system, ports of entry/exit, and northern border improvements and enhancements."
2. continue DACA, with ten-year path to citizenship for 1.8 million illegal immigrants (including the 0.69 million who registered under the DACA)
3. end "extended" chain migration, in which immigrants in the USA can bring their relatives to the USA. But allow immigrants to bring spouses and minor children into the USA.
4. end lottery for immigration visas

The [Associated Press](#) and [The Hill](#) reported that Trump's supporters were dismayed that Trump proposed granting citizenship to approximately 700,000 illegal immigrants in the USA.



Trump began an unnecessarily partisan attack on Democrats:

DACA has been made increasingly difficult by the fact that Cryin' Chuck Schumer took such a beating over the shutdown that he is unable to act on immigration!

Donald J. Trump, [tweet](#), 12:16 EST, 26 Jan 2018.

On 1 February, Trump called on Democrats to do something to continue the DACA.

March 5th is rapidly approaching and the Democrats are doing nothing about DACA.

They Resist, Blame, Complain and Obstruct — and do nothing. Start pushing Nancy Pelosi and the Dems to work out a DACA fix, NOW!

Donald J. Trump, [tweet](#), 06:51 EST, 1 Feb 2018.

The Democrats just aren't calling about DACA. Nancy Pelosi and Chuck Schumer have to get moving fast, or they'll disappoint you again. We have a great chance to make a deal or, blame the Dems! March 5th is coming up fast.

Donald J. Trump, [tweet](#), 22:32 EST, 1 Feb 2018.

On 5 February, Senators John McCain (R-Ariz.) and Christopher A. Coons (D-Del.) proposed a compromise on immigration, which Trump immediately rejected because it did not contain US\$ 25 billion in funding for Trump's wall. [Washington Post](#). Trump continued to blame Democrats for lack of a consensus on immigration reform in the following Tweet:

Any deal on DACA that does not include STRONG border security and the desperately needed WALL is a total waste of time. March 5th is rapidly approaching and the Dems seem not to care about DACA. Make a deal!

Donald J. Trump, [tweet](#), 09:36 EST, 5 Feb 2018.

Congress must pass a budget before midnight on 8 February 2018, or else the U.S. Government will shut down. The plan on 6 February is to pass another continuing resolution, to give Congress until 23 March to agree on a budget, but fund the military until 30 September. Trump's position is that the budget must authorize at least US\$ 25 billion for the Wall and other border security improvements. [Washington Post](#); [New York Times](#).

On 6 February, Trump threatened another U.S. Government shutdown during a press briefing on efforts to deport the MS-13 gang that came from El Salvador. Trump rambled and repeated himself.

If we don't change [immigration legislation], let's have a shutdown. We'll do a shutdown. And it's worth it for our country. I'd love to see a shutdown if we don't get this stuff taken care of.

....

And if we have to shut it down because the Democrats don't want safety and — unrelated but still related — they don't want to take care of our military, then shut it down. We'll go with another shutdown.

....

QUESTION: Sir, do you get the sense that there will be a shutdown given the differences over this issue?



THE PRESIDENT: I would shut it down over this issue. I can't speak for everybody at the table, but I will tell you, I would shut it down over this issue. If we don't straighten out our border, we don't have a country. Without borders, we don't have a country.

So would I shut it down over this issue? Yes. I can't speak for our great representatives here, but I have a feeling they may agree with me. Okay? Thank you.

Donald J. Trump, "Remarks by President Trump at Law Enforcement Roundtable on MS-13," [White House](#), 6 Feb 2018.

On 9 February, the U.S. Government shut down for 9 hours until Congress could pass another continuing resolution for the budget. The issue of funding Trump's wall was postponed until 23 March, when a final budget is due. [Associated Press](#).

On 10 February, Trump attacked the Democrats again.

Republicans want to fix DACA far more than the Democrats do. The Dems had all three branches of government back in 2008-2011, and they decided not to do anything about DACA. They only want to use it as a campaign issue. Vote Republican!

Donald J. Trump, [tweet](#), 13:50 EST, 10 Feb 2018.

On 13 February, Trump tweeted:

Negotiations on DACA have begun. Republicans want to make a deal and Democrats say they want to make a deal. Wouldn't it be great if we could finally, after so many years, solve the DACA puzzle. This will be our last chance, there will never be another opportunity! March 5th.

Donald J. Trump, [tweet](#), 05:52 EST, 13 Feb 2018.

On 14 February, The [New York Times](#) reported that Trump's 25 January demands were as far as Trump would compromise. Trump will veto any bill that fails to meet these demands.

On 15 February, the U.S. Senate rejected Trump's immigration reform bill by a vote of 39 to 60. The bill needed an additional 21 votes to be debated by the Senate. A bipartisan immigration reform bill was considered by the Senate, but it too failed. Two other immigration bills also failed. [New York Times](#); [Washington Post](#); [Politico](#); [Associated Press](#).

Again, Trump — the self-proclaimed Master Negotiator and Deal-Maker — sat on the sidelines during the debate in the U.S. Senate. As a result, Trump failed to get funding for his wall and Trump failed to get any of his desired immigration reform. According to Trump himself, murderers, rapists, and drug dealers will continue to pour across the Mexican border into the USA.

On Friday, 16 February, Trump tweeted:

Cannot believe how BADLY DACA recipients have been treated by the Democrats...totally abandoned! Republicans are still working hard.

Donald J. Trump, [tweet](#), 09:49 EST, 16 Feb 2018.

My comment is that the Republicans are enjoying the three-day weekend caused by

Presidents' Day on Monday, 19 February. And Trump needs to be reminded that *he* ended DACA in September 2017.

On 14 February 2018, a 19 year old high-school dropout returned to his high school and killed 17 people with an assault rifle, in the third-worst school shooting in U.S. history. On 17 February, Trump compared the Democrats failure to enact gun control legislation in 2013 with the Democrats failure to extend the DACA.

Just like they don't want to solve the DACA problem, why didn't the Democrats pass gun control legislation when they had both the House & Senate during the Obama Administration. Because they didn't want to, and now they just talk!

Donald J. Trump, [tweet](#), 18:45 EST, 17 Feb 2018.

Note that Trump himself is opposed to gun control legislation, so his criticism of Democrats is hypocritical. Trump is lucky that Americans have a short-attention span, and that the 14 Feb school shooting pushed Trump's failed immigration reform out of the news.

On 17 February, the [Associated Press](#) exposed some of Trump's factual errors in blaming Democrats for the collapse of immigration reform.

On 23 February, Trump again tweeted about the failure of Democrats on DACA.

For those of you who are still interested, the Democrats have totally forgotten about DACA. Not a lot of interest on this subject from them!

Donald J. Trump, [tweet](#), 08:09 EST, 23 Feb 2018.

Unable to get funding from Congress for the wall, on 20 February Trump attempted to get the Mexican president to pay for the wall. El presidente was offended and canceled his planned trip to Washington, DC. [Washington Post](#).

On 21 February, the [Associated Press](#) reported that Trump will begin construction of a 3 km segment of the wall in downtown Calexico, California.

On 28 February, Trump issued a baffling Tweet:

I have decided that sections of the Wall that California wants built NOW will not be built until the whole Wall is approved. Big victory yesterday with ruling from the courts that allows us to proceed. OUR COUNTRY MUST HAVE BORDER SECURITY!

Donald J. Trump, [tweet](#), 07:29 EST, 28 Feb 2018.

See [Los Angeles Times](#) and the [Associated Press](#).

On 6 March 2018, the U.S. Government filed litigation in Federal court in Sacramento, seeking to invalidate state laws in California that protect illegal immigrants. [Los Angeles Times](#); [New York Times](#). My comment is that — regardless of the immigration issues — the federal government should win this litigation, because immigration and citizenship are solely matters of federal law, and the U.S. Constitution (Article 6) says federal law "shall be the supreme Law of the Land". The same technical argument will also invalidate so-called "sanctuary city" laws, that purport to exempt a city from federal immigration law.

---

Beginning on 1 February 2018, Trump issued a long series of tweets — some of which are quoted above — that criticize Democrats for abandoning the beneficiaries of DACA. In contrast to Democrats, Trump makes himself the champion of 700,000 illegal immigrants who entered the USA when they were children — *but* Trump demands concessions from Democrats (e.g., funding of Trump's wall along the Mexican border) before Trump will allow a path to U.S. citizenship for these beneficiaries of DACA. Here are some of Trump's tweets after 23 Feb 2018 and before 30 March 2018:

Dems are no longer talking DACA! “Out of sight, out of mind,” they say. DACA beneficiaries should not be happy. Nancy Pelosi truly doesn't care about them.

Republicans stand ready to make a deal!

Donald J. Trump, [tweet](#), 16:18 EST, 24 Feb 2018.

It's March 5th and the Democrats are nowhere to be found on DACA. Gave them 6 months, they just don't care. Where are they? We are ready to make a deal!

Donald J. Trump, [tweet](#), 15:37 EST, 5 Mar 2018.

The Democrats do not want to help DACA. Would be so easy to make a deal!

Donald J. Trump, [tweet](#), 20:28 EDT, 19 Mar 2018.

DACA was abandoned by the Democrats. Very unfair to them! Would have been tied to desperately needed Wall.

Donald J. Trump, [tweet](#), 08:26 EDT, 23 Mar 2018.

I find Trump's tweets to be strange. Illegal immigrants can *not* legally vote, so why would Trump pander to illegal immigrants? And U.S. citizens of hispanic ancestry are likely to vote for Democrats, because of Trump's immigration policies and Trump's bigotry toward immigrants from hispanic nations.

---

The temporary government funding expires at midnight on Friday, 23 March. Congress waited until about 19 March to begin discussions of the budget. On the afternoon of 22 March, the U.S. House of Representatives passed their budget bill with a length of 2232 pages. That bill contains a paltry \$1.57 billion for repair of existing barriers along the Mexican border plus other border security measures — Trump had asked for \$18 billion for his wall over ten years and \$7 billion for other border security. [Washington Post](#); [Associated Press](#). At about 00:45 on Friday, 23 March, the U.S. Senate passed the same budget bill.

Instead of signing the bill on Friday morning, at 08:55 EDT Trump threatened to veto the bill because the bill: (1) does not mention the DACA recipients *and* (2) does not fund Trump's wall with Mexico. The veto would mean a U.S. Government shutdown, because many Representatives and Senators have already fled from Washington, DC for a two-week ~~vacation~~ recess. [tweet](#); [Washington Post](#); [New York Times](#); [Politico](#).

At approximately 13:00 EDT on Friday, Trump finally signed the bill. Trump actually told journalists at the White House:

But I say to Congress: I will never sign another bill like this again. I'm not going to do it again. Nobody read it. It's only hours old. Some people don't even know what is in — \$1.3 trillion — it's the second largest ever. President Obama signed one that was actually larger, which I'm sure he wasn't too happy with either.

....

To prevent the omnibus situation from ever happening again, I'm calling on Congress to give me a line-item veto for all government spending bills. And the Senate must end. They must end the filibuster rule and get down to work. We have to get a lot of great legislation approved. And without the filibuster rule, it will happen just like magic.

"Remarks by President Trump at Signing of H.R. 1625," [White House](#), 13:25 EDT, 23 Mar 2018.

Trump is too ignorant about the U.S. Government to know that this is the way Congress routinely does business: imperfect bills with something for everyone to hate, tossed together with poorly considered last-minute changes that wreck any careful design. This particular budget bill was cobbled together without any committee hearings in Congress. Trump ignores the fact that the U.S. Supreme Court held the line-item veto is unconstitutional in *Clinton v. City of New York*, 524 U.S. 417 (1998).

Six hours later, Trump reiterated what he has said earlier in the day:

As a matter of National Security I've signed the Omnibus Spending Bill. I say to Congress: I will NEVER sign another bill like this again. To prevent this omnibus situation from ever happening again, I'm calling on Congress to give me a line-item veto for all govt spending bills!

Donald J. Trump, [tweet](#), 19:01 EDT, 23 Mar 2018.

On Thursday, 22 March, White House staff — Office of Management and Budget Director Mick Mulvaney and White House Legislative Affairs Director Marc Short — announced that Trump would sign the budget bill on Friday. Trump's unexpected veto threat shows that Trump is unpredictable and impulsive. Trump's sudden changes diminish his personal credibility, as well as make meaningless any assurances by White House staff.

[Associated Press](#)(23Mar); [Associated Press](#)(24Mar); [New York Times](#); [Politico](#). This is another example that shows that Trump is unfit to be president.

---

On 25 March, Trump made a cryptic tweet about his wall.

Because of the \$700 & \$716 Billion Dollars gotten to rebuild our Military, many jobs are created and our Military is again rich. Building a great Border Wall, with drugs (poison) and enemy combatants pouring into our Country, is all about National Defense. Build WALL through M!

Donald J. Trump, [tweet](#), 06:33 EDT, 25 Mar 2018.

On 27 March, the [Washington Post](#) tells us that Trump is privately discussing using the military budget to pay for his new border wall that Congress did not fund. *The Post* and the [Associated Press](#) agree that "through M" at the end of Trump's tweet refers to the military.

My comment is that Trump is again floating an unconstitutional proposal: only Congress can decide whether to fund Trump's wall, and only Congress can decide how much money to allocate to that wall. Instead of watching television, Trump should *read* the U.S. Constitution.

---

On 28 March 2018, Trump tweeted a photograph of construction of a wall:

Great briefing this afternoon on the start of our Southern Border WALL!

Donald J. Trump, [tweet](#), 15:47 EDT, 28 Mar 2018.

But Trump lied to the American people again. The Associated Press reported:

Actually, no new work got underway. The photos showed the continuation of an old project to replace 2 miles of existing barrier.

....

... the photos Trump tweeted were misleading. They showed work that's been going on for more than a month on a small border wall replacement project in Calexico, California, that has nothing to do with the federal budget he signed into law last week.

The Calexico project that began Feb. 21 to replace a little more than 2 miles (3.2 kilometers) of border wall was financed during the 2017 budget year. A barrier built in the 1990s mainly from recycled metal scraps is being torn down and replaced with bollard-style barriers that are 30 feet (9.1 meters) high.

Hope Yen & Jill Colvin, "AP FACT CHECK: Trump departs from reality on wall, Amazon," [Associated Press](#), 31 Mar 2018.

See also 2 April version at [Associated Press](#).

---

Trump had given democrats six months to make a deal that would restore DACA. The democrats failed. On Easter, 1 April 2018, Trump permanently closed the door on restoring DACA.

Border Patrol Agents are not allowed to properly do their job at the Border because of ridiculous liberal (Democrat) laws like Catch & Release. Getting more dangerous.

“Caravans” coming. Republicans must go to Nuclear Option to pass tough laws NOW.

NO MORE DACA DEAL!

Donald J. Trump, [tweet](#), 09:56 EDT, 1 April 2018.

A half-hour later, Trump threatened to end NAFTA if Mexico did not stop the flow of migrants to the USA.

Mexico is doing very little, if not NOTHING, at stopping people from flowing into Mexico through their Southern Border, and then into the U.S. They laugh at our dumb immigration laws. They must stop the big drug and people flows, or I will stop their cash cow, NAFTA. NEED WALL!

Donald J. Trump, [tweet](#), 10:25 EDT, 1 April 2018.

On 2 April, Trump again demanded that Mexico stop the flow of migrants to the USA.

Mexico has the absolute power not to let these large “Caravans” of people enter their

country. They must stop them at their Northern Border, which they can do because their border laws work, not allow them to pass through into our country, which has no effective border laws.....

Donald J. Trump, [tweet](#), 07:02 EDT, 2 April 2018.

...Congress must immediately pass Border Legislation, use Nuclear Option if necessary, to stop the massive inflow of Drugs and People. Border Patrol Agents (and ICE) are GREAT, but the weak Dem laws don't allow them to do their job. Act now Congress, our country is being stolen!

Donald J. Trump, [tweet](#), 07:10 EDT, 2 April 2018.

DACA is dead because the Democrats didn't care or act, and now everyone wants to get onto the DACA bandwagon... No longer works. Must build Wall and secure our borders with proper Border legislation. Democrats want No Borders, hence drugs and crime!

Donald J. Trump, [tweet](#), 07:17 EDT, 2 April 2018.

Honduras, Mexico and many other countries that the U.S. is very generous to, sends many of their people to our country through our WEAK IMMIGRATION POLICIES. Caravans are heading here. Must pass tough laws and build the WALL. Democrats allow open borders, drugs and crime!

Donald J. Trump, [tweet](#), 20:12 EDT, 2 April 2018.

So when is Trump going to show some leadership and convince Congress to fund his Wall? Blaming democrats — currently the minority party in both houses of Congress — is an inadequate excuse. If Mexico's border laws really work, why are caravans of people from Central America (e.g., Honduras) entering the southern border of Mexico?

On 3 April, Trump continued his tweets:

The big Caravan of People from Honduras, now coming across Mexico and heading to our “Weak Laws” Border, had better be stopped before it gets there. Cash cow NAFTA is in play, as is foreign aid to Honduras and the countries that allow this to happen. Congress MUST ACT NOW!

Donald J. Trump, [tweet](#), 06:49 EDT, 3 April 2018.

Congress can *not* act *now*, because they are in the second week of a two-week vacation. On 3 April, the [Associated Press](#) reported that the caravan of migrants has stopped in southern Mexico.

At noon on 3 April, Trump remarked to journalists at the White House about Mexico.

Mexico — if you look at the caravan of thousands of people coming across — I told Mexico, look, you have a cash cow in NAFTA. NAFTA has been great for Mexico; it has not been good for the United States. A lot of businesses have closed down because of NAFTA. You look at empty plants all over the place — and this is from years ago — and they still haven't recovered. NAFTA has been a terrible deal for the United States. We're renegotiating the deal right now, but it will still be good for Mexico and for Canada.

And when this caravan came in — and this is a caravan of a lot of people coming in — in this case, from Honduras. If it reaches our border, our laws are so weak and so pathetic, you would not understand this because — I know how strong your laws are at the border. It's like we have no border because we had Obama make changes. President Obama made changes that basically created no border. It's called catch-and-release. You catch them, you register them, they go into our country and we can't throw them out. And, in many cases, they shouldn't be here. In many, many cases, they shouldn't be here. And after they get whatever happens over the next two or three years, they're supposed to come back to court. Almost nobody comes back to court. They're in our country, and we can't do anything about it because the laws that were created by Democrats are so pathetic and so weak.

So I told Mexico — and I respect what they did — I said, look, your laws are very powerful; your laws are very strong. We have very bad laws for our border, and we are going to be doing some things — I've been speaking with General Mattis — we're going to be doing things militarily. Until we can have a wall and proper security, we're going to be guarding our border with the military. That's a big step. We really haven't done that before — certainly not very much before.

But we will be doing things with Mexico, and they have to do this, otherwise I'm not going to do the NAFTA deal. NAFTA has been fantastic for Mexico, bad for us. We've had our car plants moved to Mexico — many of them. We make tremendous numbers — millions of cars in Mexico that years ago didn't exist. They closed in Michigan, they closed in Ohio, they closed in other places. Now they're starting to move back. Because of what we've done with regulation and with taxes, they're starting to come back into our country in a big way.

But I told Mexico very strongly: You're going to have to do something about these caravans that are coming up. And I just noticed that the caravan now, which is toward the middle of Mexico coming up from Honduras, is breaking up very rapidly. That's because Mexico has very strong immigration laws, as we should have. We should have those laws. We don't have — we have immigration laws that are laughed at by everybody. And it's going to be changed. We need the wall, we need the protection, and we have to change our immigration laws at the border and elsewhere.

So Mexico has — at this moment, it seems they've broken up large numbers of that particular caravan. And we'll see what happens. But we're prepared at our border. We cannot have people flowing into our country illegally, disappearing, and, by the way, never showing up to court. So the court case will be set for two years or three years, if you can believe this, and they never show up, for the most part. Very rarely do they show up.

....

QUESTION: Mr. President, it seems as though the caravan is starting to irritate you.

PRESIDENT TRUMP: No, the caravan doesn't irritate me. The caravan makes me very sad that this can happen to the United States, where you have thousands of people



that decide to just walk into our country, and we don't have any laws that can protect it. And the wall, because of the Democrats, has been delayed — which we've started the wall.

Just so you understand, we have \$1.6 billion. We're fixing and building brand-new walls in certain areas. And we're doing a lot of work on walls. We have \$1.6 billion, and we're starting brand-new sections of walls. But we need to have a wall that's about 800 miles — 700 to 800 miles of the 2,000-mile stretch. We have a lot of natural boundaries.

"Remarks by President Trump Before a Working Lunch with Heads of the Baltic States," [White House](#), 12:12 EDT, 3 April 2018.

The [Associated Press](#) reported at least three factual errors in Trump's remarks.

Trump was vague when he said: "we're going to be guarding our border with the military." At night on 3 April, the [New York Times](#) reported that Trump would use the National Guard to secure the Mexican border. *The Times* said: "President Barack Obama sent 1,200 [National Guard troops] in 2010 and President George W. Bush dispatched 6,000 in 2006, while governors of border states have done the same when faced with large inflows from the south."

On 26 May 2018, the [Associated Press](#) tell us that Trump continues to assert that the rate of illegal immigration has declined more than 40% during his presidency, while the Truth is that the rate of illegal immigration has increased by 20% from January 2017 to April 2018.

### **June 2018: immigration debacle**

In April 2018, the Trump administration quietly began a new policy of separating illegal-immigrant parents from their children. [New York Times](#)(20April). On 15 June 2018, the U.S. Government admitted it had separated 1,995 children from 1,940 illegal immigrant parents at the border with Mexico from 19 April to 31 May 2018. [Reuters](#). It is long-standing policy to separate criminal adults from their children.

Beginning approximately 5 June 2018, there was a chorus of outrage from conservative and liberal politicians, as well as religious leaders, that condemned Trump's policy of separating children from their parents. [New York Times](#)(5June); [Washington Post](#)(5June); [Washington Post](#)(13June).

On 14 June, Attorney General Jeff Sessions gave a [speech](#) on the topic that mentioned the Bible: "I would cite you to the Apostle Paul and his clear and wise command in Romans 13, to obey the laws of the government because God has ordained them for the purpose of order." More than 630 Methodists filed a complaint in their church against Sessions. [New York Times](#); [Washington Post](#).

After a series of false or misleading statements by the Trump administration, on 20 June, Trump signed an Executive Order that ended the policy of separating children from their parents. [Washington Post](#)(14June); [Washington Post](#)(19June); [New York Times](#)(19June);

[Washington Post](#)(20June); [New York Times](#)(20June).

During 11-16 June 2018 — the week of the overhyped Kim/Trump summit in Singapore — Republicans in the U.S. House of Representatives discussed two immigration bills. The first was a hard-line bill, [H.R.4760](#), sponsored by Robert W. Goodlatte of Virginia; the second was a so-called compromise bill, [H.R.6136](#). [New York Times](#)(12June); [Washington Post](#)(15June); [New York Times](#)(15June).

Trump believes there is one thing worse than illegal immigrants that "infest" the USA, and that is the loathsome Democrats in Congress.

Democrats are the problem. They don't care about crime and want illegal immigrants, no matter how bad they may be, to pour into and infest our Country, like MS-13. They can't win on their terrible policies, so they view them as potential voters!

Donald J. Trump, [tweet](#), 09:52 EDT, 19 June 2018.

On 19 June, Trump met at the Capitol with a group of Republican congressmen to discuss immigration. Trump refused to endorse one bill, saying he would sign either bill that passed Congress. [New York Times](#); [Washington Post](#); [CNN](#); [Politico](#).

On 20 June, Trump met at the White House with a group of Republican congressmen to discuss immigration. The [White House](#) posted a transcript of the 24-minute meeting. Trump said almost nothing of substance.

It is not surprising that Trump, who had *no* experience in government when he was elected president, fails to show effective leadership in Congress. It is particularly appalling that Democrats were excluded from the meetings with Trump on 19-20 June, and Democrats were not involved in drafting either of the two bills.

On 21 June, Trump continued his nasty attacks on Democrats.

Democrats want open Borders, where anyone can come into our Country, and stay.

This is Nancy Pelosi's dream. It won't happen!

Donald J. Trump, [tweet](#), 10:38 EDT, 21 June 2018.

In remarks to journalists before a cabinet meeting, Trump blasted Democrats:

My administration is also acting swiftly to address the illegal immigration crisis on the southern border. Loopholes in our immigration laws, all supported by extremist, open-border Democrats — and that's what they are. They're extremist, open-border Democrats. If you look at Nancy Pelosi and you look at Chuck Schumer, you'll see tapes where they wanted to have borders — they needed borders for security — just a short while ago. A number of years ago, I see Chuck Schumer — "We must have borders." Hillary Clinton — "We must have borders. If people penetrate our borders, we must get them out of our country." Now, all of a sudden, they're big open-border people. It's a whole big con job. In the meantime, people are suffering because of the Democrats.

....

And they [Democrats] generally stick together. I respect them for that. That's about it.

Their policies stink. They're no good. They have no ideas. They have no nothing — the Democrats. All they can do is obstruct, and stay together, and vote against, and make it impossible to take care of children and families and to take care of immigration.

"Remarks by President Trump at Cabinet Meeting," [White House](#), 11:55 EDT, 21 June 2018.

Trump repeated his statement about "extremist, open-border Democrats" in a tweet:

My Administration is acting swiftly to address the illegal immigration crisis on the Southern Border. Loopholes in our immigration laws all supported by extremist open border Democrats...and that's what they are — they're extremist open border Democrats....

Donald J. Trump, [tweet](#), 13:02 EDT, 21 June 2018.

On Thursday, 21 June 2018, the U.S. House of Representatives scheduled a vote on the two immigration bills. H.R.4760 was [defeated](#) by a vote of 231-193. Then the House leadership postponed the vote on H.R.6136 until 22 June, and later postponed the vote until sometime next week. [Washington Post](#); [New York Times](#).

Republicans are 55% of the U.S. House of Representatives, so they should be able to smoothly pass legislation. Instead, the dysfunctional — and effectively leaderless — Republicans repeatedly fail.

Trump torpedoed the House's immigration bills with two tweets. The first tweet came on Thursday, 21 June:

What is the purpose of the House doing good immigration bills when you need 9 votes by Democrats in the Senate, and the Dems are only looking to Obstruct (which they feel is good for them in the Mid-Terms). Republicans must get rid of the stupid Filibuster Rule — it is killing you!

Donald J. Trump, [tweet](#), 09:08 EDT, 21 June 2018.

The Republicans currently have 51 votes in the U.S. Senate, while it takes 60 votes to end a filibuster. Trump said it was futile for the House to do good work when the Senate would reject the House bill.

The second tweet came on Friday, 22 June:

Republicans should stop wasting their time on Immigration until after we elect more Senators and Congressmen/women in November. Dems are just playing games, have no intention of doing anything to solves this decades old problem. We can pass great legislation after the Red Wave!

Donald J. Trump, [tweet](#), 07:06 EDT, 22 June 2018.

Assuming the Republican majority in the U.S. Senate increases after the November 2018 elections, the new Senators do not appear until January 2019.

Commentators on how Trump ruined immigration reform:

- "On immigration, Trump keeps making life absolutely miserable for Republicans in Congress," [Washington Post](#), 20 June 2018.

- "Trump questions the 'purpose' of House immigration bills only hours before critical votes," [CNBC](#), 21 June 2018.
- "How Donald Trump killed the immigration bill with 1 tweet," [CNN](#), 22 June 2018.
- "Trump undercuts House GOP: Don't waste time on immigration," [Associated Press](#); 22 June 2018. ("GOP leaders said they'd press on anyway, but [Trump's] comments further damaged their attempt to win over wavering lawmakers for a measure already facing likely defeat.")
- "Trump betrays House Republicans on immigration," [Politico](#); 22 June 2018.
- "Republicans fume after Trump's latest immigration tweet undermines House talks," [Washington Post](#), 22 June 2018.
- "Trump sabotages GOP plans in Congress. Again." [Associated Press](#), 22 June 2018. ("It's hardly the first time the president has abandoned his allies in a moment of need. Over and over, Trump has proven himself a saboteur, willing to walk away from promises and blow up a deal, undermining the GOP agenda in Congress.")

---

On Sunday, 24 June, Trump suggested immediately returning all immigrants to their homeland without a judicial hearing in the USA.

We cannot allow all of these people to invade our Country. When somebody comes in, we must immediately, with no Judges or Court Cases, bring them back from where they came. Our system is a mockery to good immigration policy and Law and Order. Most children come without parents...

Donald J. Trump, [tweet](#), 11:02 EDT, 24 June 2018.

....Our Immigration policy, laughed at all over the world, is very unfair to all of those people who have gone through the system legally and are waiting on line for years! Immigration must be based on merit — we need people who will help to Make America Great Again!

Donald J. Trump, [tweet](#), 11:08 EDT, 24 June 2018.

Trump shows he does *not* understand the current immigration laws. Currently, with the possibility of refugee status, a judicial hearing is necessary to determine eligibility as a refugee and to give "due process" to immigrants. Congress would need to remove refugee status before we can immediately return all immigrants to their homeland. [Washington Post](#); [ABC News](#). When Trump mentions "Law and Order", it is only a slogan. Trump does *not* understand law, and he openly disagrees with the U.S. Constitution, statutes, and regulations.

On Wednesday, 27 June, a vote was scheduled in the U.S. House of Representatives on the compromise immigration bill, H.R.6136. Trump again changed his opinion and now supported the compromise bill.

HOUSE REPUBLICANS SHOULD PASS THE STRONG BUT FAIR IMMIGRATION BILL, KNOWN AS GOODLATTE II, IN THEIR AFTERNOON VOTE TODAY, EVEN THOUGH THE DEMS WON'T LET IT PASS IN THE

SENATE. PASSAGE WILL SHOW THAT WE WANT STRONG BORDERS & SECURITY WHILE THE DEMS WANT OPEN BORDERS = CRIME. WIN!

Donald J. Trump, [tweet](#), 08:39 EDT, 27 June 2018.

Someone needs to tell Trump that all upper-case letters in cyberspace is equivalent to yelling. Yelling is rude behavior.

On 27 June at 13:50 EDT, [H.R.6136](#) was defeated by a vote of 121 to 301. *All* of the democrats voted against this bill, along with 48% of Republicans.

On 30 June, Trump tweeted:

I never pushed the Republicans in the House to vote for the Immigration Bill, either GOODLATTE 1 or 2, because it could never have gotten enough Democrats as long as there is the 60 vote threshold. I released many prior to the vote knowing we need more Republicans to win in Nov.

Donald J. Trump, [tweet](#), 15:17 EDT, 30 June 2018.

As [Politico](#) observed, Trump's 30 June tweet is false, because it contradicts Trump's 27 June tweet in all upper-case letters. Trump is inconsistent over a three-day span. Apparently, Trump is rewriting history to avoid the fact that he supported a bill that failed by a massive number of votes. The explanation may be that Trump's narcissistic character flaw requires him to always win, so he needs to rewrite history to conceal his defeats.

---

On 29 July 2018, Trump again tweeted that he was willing to shut down the U.S. Government if Congress did not fund Trump's wall.

I would be willing to “shut down” government if the Democrats do not give us the votes for Border Security, which includes the Wall! Must get rid of Lottery, Catch & Release etc. and finally go to system of Immigration based on MERIT! We need great people coming into our Country!

Donald J. Trump, [tweet](#), 09:13 EDT, 29 July 2018.

Notice that Trump does *not* meet with representatives and senators to build a consensus. Instead, Trump threatens a shutdown if Congress fails to please Trump.

On Monday, 30 July 2018, Trump reiterated his threat of a shutdown.

QUESTION [by Saagar Enjeti of the Daily Caller]: Thank you, Mr. President. To follow up on what you were saying about the shutdown, sir, are you saying that you would be willing to shut the government down in September if it does not fully fund \$25 billion worth of your border wall and also deliver all of the immigration priorities that you listed in your tweet? Or are you leaving some room for negotiation there?

PRESIDENT TRUMP: I'll always leave room for negotiation. But this has been many years; this isn't just Trump administration. We're new. This has been many years, even decades. We have immigration laws. We have border security. We have all sorts of things going on that are — it's disgraceful. We are doing a phenomenal job. We're setting records. But we have laws that don't work. So we're working around those laws, and it's unfortunate.

I have to take my hat off to the Border Patrols, for the law enforcement, to ICE, which really has been maligned by the Democrats. The job they do — they go into these MS-13 nests — nests of bad, bad people — killers, in many cases. And they go in there fearless, and they do an incredible job. And they get them out. They either go to jail or they get out of the country. So I want to just take my hat off to ICE and the brave people that have really been maligned by the Democrats.

We need border security. Without a border, as this gentleman can tell you also — because the Prime Minister really was — it was a very big factor in his win, and other people's win in Italy — but it was a big factor in my win. We need border security. Border security includes the wall, but it includes many other things. We have to end the lottery. We have to end the chain. The chain is like a disaster. You bring one person in, and you end up with 32 people. We have to end these horrible catch-and-release principles, where you catch somebody, you take their name, and you release them. You don't even know who they are. And then they're supposed to come back to a court case, where they want us to hire thousands of judges. The whole thing is ridiculous. And we have to change our laws, and we do that through Congress.

So I would certainly be willing to close it down to get it done. As you know, we are already approving things in various bills, including we're going to be taking care of the military. We always put the military and law enforcement very high. But I would be certainly willing to consider a shutdown if we don't get proper border security. Thank you.

"Remarks by President Trump and Prime Minister Conte of Italy in Joint Press Conference," [White House](#), 30 July 2018.

The current funding authorization expires at midnight on 30 September. On 30 July, [ABC News](#) reminds us that there are only 11 legislative days before the end-of-September deadline. That is not enough time to negotiate a compromise on a complicated issue like immigration reform. Furthermore, a government shutdown in early October might affect the Congressional elections on 6 November.

On Tuesday, 31 July, Trump again reiterated his threat of a shutdown.

I don't care what the political ramifications are, our immigration laws and border security have been a complete and total disaster for decades, and there is no way that the Democrats will allow it to be fixed without a Government Shutdown...

Donald J. Trump, [tweet](#), 13:33 EDT, 31 July 2018.

...Border Security is National Security, and National Security is the long-term viability of our Country. A Government Shutdown is a very small price to pay for a safe and Prosperous America!

Donald J. Trump, [tweet](#), 13:33 EDT, 31 July 2018.

---

## How Trump makes decisions

A number of commentators have observed that Trump tends to adopt the position of the last person who Trump hears on an issue. See, e.g.,

You can say this for President Trump: Unlike most other politicians, he's totally at peace with changing his mind at any given moment, with very little explanation.

We've also noticed that some of his biggest flip-flops on a key issue of his issue happen immediately after he's talked to a person directly involved on the other side. Amber Phillips, "Want to change Trump's mind on policy? Be the last one who talks to him." [Washington Post](#), 28 April 2017.

... [Trump] is so prone to having his mind changed that any Friend of Canada in the Oval Office, be it Ivanka or someone else, is liable to have her work undone by the next person to brief him, or by a talking head on Fox News.

Many people who have dealt with Mr. Trump report that his position on an issue tends to align with that of the last person he spoke to. "Globe editorial: When at the NAFTA table, avoid the Jell-O," [Globe&Mail](#), 22 Jan 2018.

... the picture that emerged over the weekend, some Democrats who met with the president were part of saying this, Senator Lindsey Graham [R-S.Car.], that the president was there, but he was basically listening to the last person he talked to, that he would say one thing to a senator, I agree with you, and then he would be swayed by his staff members who have a much more restrictionist view of immigration than he does. Judy Woodruff, "Trump 'willing to have a conversation about citizenship' for DACA recipients, says White House official" [PBS](#), 22 Jan 2018.

See U.S. Senator's Sasse's remarks on 28 Feb 2018, quoted [above](#).

This method leads to Trump taking inconsistent and incoherent positions, as he listens to different people at different times. Because Trump reads very little, and because Trump has a tenuous understanding of facts, Trump is vulnerable to being influenced by people who he hears.

---

## Conclusion

There are four ways that Trump misuses facts:

1. Apparently, Trump decides on his opinion, then creates fictitious "facts" to support his opinion. When one ignores Trump's fictitious "facts", Trump's assertions have *no* factual basis. That makes Trump's opinions based on fantasy or delusions.
2. Sometimes Trump relies on "facts" asserted by an unreliable source, usually by a guest or anonymous source on the Fox News channel. Repeating false facts shows a lack of critical thinking by Trump, and a failure to have his staff check the alleged facts before the president repeats those false facts.



3. Additionally, Trump creates fictitious "facts" to boast about a strong majority admiration for him, which some psychiatrists have suggested is a narcissistic character flaw.
4. When a journalist reports the Truth that embarrasses Trump, Trump condemns the journalist's report as "fake news". Trump's reaction not only dismisses the Truth, but also establishes journalists as "the enemy of the American people". By making journalists the enemy, Trump establishes himself as the champion of the American people.

Each of these four misuses of facts is a defect in Trump's thought process.

Worse, months after journalists have exposed the errors in Trump's so-called "facts". Trump continues to cite the same discredited "facts". Trump's refusal to learn from his mistakes shows his disdain for the Truth.

Furthermore, I presented examples of Trump making an inflammatory accusation without citing any facts (not even citing fictitious "facts"), and without citing any sources. At colleges with decent academic standards, students are required to write term papers with footnotes and a bibliography, to teach the students how to think like an educated person. Assertions without reasons are worthless. Trump is clearly unfit to be president when he can not distinguish fact from fiction.

Trump repeatedly asserted that journalists are failing to report important news (e.g., voting fraud, Islamic terror attacks, high murder rate in the USA). As journalists exposed Trump's errors and mistakes, Trump responded by repeatedly characterized journalists as "dishonest" and providers of "fake news". Trump's war with the news media is not only unbecoming to the president, but also gives journalists incentive to expose Trump's factual errors.

A number of commentators have observed that Trump tends to adopt the position of the last person who Trump hears on an issue. See [above](#). This method leads to Trump taking inconsistent or incoherent positions, as he hears different people at different times.

In my opinion, it is incredibly dangerous to have a president of the USA — in charge of a powerful military with a large arsenal of nuclear weapons — who has a defective thought process.

I believe Trump is unfit to be president, because he can not distinguish between delusions and facts. Trump should be impeached and removed from office. But that probably will not happen until 2019, after an election in which Democrats might become the majority party in the U.S. House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate.

### **Proposed Constitutional Amendment**

The U.S. Constitution specifies only two requirements for the U.S. president: he must be born in the USA and he must be at least 35 years old. We need an Amendment to the Constitution to also specify that any candidate for president or vice-president have served

either at least six years in the U.S. Senate, at least four years in the U.S. House of Representatives, *or* at least one full term as governor of any state in the USA. That requirement would have several benefits:

1. give candidates either experience at the highest levels of the U.S. Government, or experience as a governor working with a legislature.
2. develop a track record that will clearly expose candidates who are unable to work successfully in government.
3. expose candidates who have a character flaw, personality disorder, or some other condition that makes them unfit to be president.

Note that *all* of the U.S. presidents between 1961 and 2016 pass this proposed test. It is *not* an unusual test.

### Reform Electoral College

Additionally, Congress should consider replacing the Electoral College with direct popular vote. The Electoral College gives too much weight to states with a small population (e.g., Wyoming, Vermont). The real reason, of course, is Hillary Clinton won the popular vote in 2016.

On the other hand, perhaps a better solution is to return the Electoral College to its original purpose: voters would elect local Electors, and the Electors alone would decide who would become president and vice-president. In the 2016 election, voters in the USA had access to abundant information about Trump's narcissistic character flaw, Trump's inability to cite facts, and Trump's absolute lack of experience in government — but voters elected Trump anyway. What does that say about voters? In my opinion, Trump's victory says voters were either poorly informed or lacked critical thinking skills. That conclusion makes the direct popular vote an unreliable way of choosing a president.

---

## Removal of Trump from Presidency

There are three possible ways to remove a U.S. president from office:

1. **Impeachment** by U.S. House of Representatives and conviction by U.S. Senate. (U.S. Constitution, Article I, §3, clause 6)
2. **Declaration of Inability** (U.S. Constitution, 25<sup>th</sup> Amendment, §4) by either:
  - A. the Vice-President and a majority of the Cabinet members
  - B. "or of such other body as Congress may by law provide".
3. **Resignation** by the president.

Of the three ways, I think resignation is the most likely for Trump. After a year or two,

Trump may become frustrated with Congress and the Judiciary blocking his programs. At some point, Trump might resign and return to being a real-estate mogul.

Moreover, Trump will surely become tired of relentless criticism by journalists, commentators, politicians, and opinion leaders. Trump has never before worked in a government, where criticism from someone is routine. This is also Trump's highest profile job in his 70 year life. For both reasons, Trump is experiencing high levels of stress from criticism in the year 2017.

Back in January 2017, when I drafted the conclusion of this essay, I wondered: “It is unknown how Trump will react to the incessant criticism. However, the criticism will surely affect Trump's narcissistic craving for strong majority admiration.” By July 2017 it was clear that Trump was failing as president. Trump's response was to criticize the news media for reporting his mistakes, failures, and character flaws. Trump's leadership style that was tolerable when he led a privately-owned company is now unacceptable when he is president of the USA.

---

## **Bills in U.S. House of Representatives on removal of Trump**

Rather than split this section between my 2017 and 2018 essays on Trump, I am repeating here what I wrote in 2017, then adding new material in 2018.

### **6 April 2017: Raskin**

On 6 April 2017, Jamie Raskin — a former law professor at American University in Washington, DC and now a member of the U.S. House of Representatives from Maryland — filed [H.R. 1987](#) to form a commission of 8 physicians and 2 former government officials to examine Trump's fitness to be president, under the 25th Amendment.

#### **News about Raskin's bill**

- Jenna Portnoy, "Is Trump unfit to serve? This congressman has a bill for that." [Washington Post](#), 12 May 2017. (Jamie Raskin's bill.)
- John Bowden, "More Dems sign onto bill to impeach Trump," [The Hill](#), 1 July 2017. (Bill proposed by Rep. Jamie Raskin on 6 April 2017, now has 25 [co-sponsors](#).) See also [NBC News](#)(3July).

---

### **12 July 2017: Sherman**

On 12 July 2017, Brad Sherman — Democrat from the San Fernando Valley, California — filed the first articles of impeachment in the U.S. House of Representatives, [House Resolution 438](#). Sherman alleged that Trump's firing of Comey obstructed justice.

### News about Sherman's bill

On 12 July 2017, Brad Sherman filed the first impeachment article against Trump. [Washington Post](#); [The Hill](#).

Sherman's statement at his House website said:

Every day Democrats, Republicans, and the entire world are shocked by the latest example of America's amateur President. Ignorance accompanied by a refusal to learn. Lack of impulse control, accompanied by a refusal to have his staff control his impulses. We're no longer surprised by any action, no matter how far below the dignity of the office — and no matter how dangerous to the country.

But the Constitution does not provide for the removal of a President for impulsive, ignorant incompetence. It does provide for the removal of a President for High Crimes and Misdemeanors.

Brad Sherman, "Congressman Sherman Introduces Article of Impeachment: Obstruction of Justice," [House](#), 12 July 2017.

Sherman's statement at his House website concluded:

.... I am introducing Articles of Impeachment to begin a long process to protect our country from abuse of power, obstruction of justice, and impulsive, ignorant incompetence.

*Ibid.*

---

### 18 Aug 2017: Lofgren

On 18 August 2017, Zoe Lofgren — a liberal Democrat from San Jose California — filed [House Resolution 497](#) that “urges the Vice President and the Cabinet to quickly secure the services of medical and psychiatric professionals to examine the President....”

### News about Lofgren's bill

On 18 August 2017, Zoe Lofgren introduced a draft Resolution in the U.S. House of Representatives that called on Trump to get a psychiatric examination. [Mercury-News](#); [The Hill](#). Lofgren told *The Mercury-News* that her bill “probably will not pass, but it will stimulate a conversation”. Lofgren was wrong: there was *no* conversation as a result of her bill.

Part of Lofgren's statement at her House website said:

Does the President suffer from early stage dementia? Has the stress of office aggravated a mental illness crippling impulse control? Has emotional disorder so impaired the President that he is unable to discharge his duties? Is the President mentally and emotionally stable?

Today, U.S. Representative Zoe Lofgren (D-Calif.) introduced a resolution that urges

the Vice President and Cabinet to have the President examined by medical and psychiatric professionals to assist them in determining whether the President is unfit and unable to fulfill his Constitutional duties. Section 4 of the 25th Amendment of the United States Constitution outlines this obligation.

Zoe Lofgren, "Lofgren introduces resolution urging Vice President and Cabinet to fulfill duties under 25th Amendment," [House](#), 18 August 2017.

---

### 11 Oct 2017: Green

On 11 October 2017, Al Green — a Democrat from Houston, Texas — announced articles of impeachment in the U.S. House of Representatives. In a speech on the House floor, Mr. Green asserted the following grounds for impeachment:

- I. Trump has "produced a demonstrable record of inciting white supremacy, sexism, bigotry, hatred, xenophobia, race-baiting, and racism by demeaning, defaming, disrespecting, and disparaging women and certain minorities."
- II. "Trump ... did betray his trust as President and bring shame and dishonor to the office of the Presidency by associating the majesty and dignity of the Presidency with causes rooted in White supremacy, bigotry, racism, anti-Semitism, White nationalism, and neo-Nazism"
- III. "Trump ... did engage in perfidy by making the widely reported claim that 3 to 5 million people voted illegally in the 2016 Presidential election and, further, expending tax dollars to establish a commission to investigate his claim"
- IV. "Trump ... did betray his trust as President, bringing shame and dishonor to the office of the Presidency by encouraging law enforcement officials to violate the constitutional rights of suspects in their custody and control"

Al Green, "Notice Of Intention To Offer Resolution Raising A Question Of The Privileges Of The House," 163 *Congressional Record* at H7928-30 (11 Oct 2017).

### News about Green's first bill

On 11 October 2017, Al Green read his draft bill that called for the impeachment of Trump. After reading his draft articles of impeachment on the House floor, Mr. Green did *not* offer his draft bill. 163 *Congressional Record* at H7935. On the night of 1 December 2017, Mr. Green still had *not* submitted his bill for consideration. [House](#).

Part of Al Green's statement at his House website said:

Today, I rise to use the constitutionally prescribed political process of impeachment to speak truth to the most powerful man on earth, the President of the United States of America.

I do so knowing that the public has been led to believe that a President must commit a

crime to be impeached, which is not true. If any President persisted with the lie that “Hitler was right,” he would be, and should be, impeached not for a crime, but for betraying his trust as President.

I do so knowing that many, of my contemporaries will criticize my actions. Some will castigate me, others may desire to do something more dastardly with hopes of suppressing all embers of courage that might inflame others to speak truth to power or the powerful.

Ultimately, to again quote Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., I will do that which is “neither safe, nor politic, nor popular.” I will do that which is right and let others do what they may and allow history to judge us all.”

Al Green, "Congressman Al Green's Statement on Impeachment," [House](#), 11 Oct 2017.

Note that Mr. Green cites *no* authority to support his assertion that a president can be impeached for "betraying his trust as President". Mr. Green's final paragraph is self-serving praise for himself. The Democratic party leadership in the House wants to wait for the results of the FBI investigation before considering impeachment. [Washington Post](#); [The Hill](#); [Politico](#).

---

### 15 Nov 2017: Cohen

On 15 November 2017, Steve Cohen (D-Tenn.) introduced his articles of impeachment — with co-sponsors Al Green (D-Tex.), and four other Democrats. Cohen gave a lengthy and detailed recitation of five grounds for impeachment, a small part of which is quoted here:

#### I. OBSTRUCTION OF JUSTICE

Trump ... has prevented, obstructed, and impeded the administration of justice, and has to that end engaged personally, and through his subordinates and agents, in a course of conduct or scheme designed to delay, impede an investigation, and to conceal information sought by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) in the course of its investigation into Russian interference with the 2016 United States Presidential election, including any possible collusion between Russia and Donald J. Trump’s campaign.

The means used to implement this course of conduct or scheme included one or more of the following acts:

....

In all of this, Donald J. Trump has obstructed the administration of justice. In so doing he has undermined the integrity of his office, brought disrepute on the Presidency, and betrayed his trust as President in a manner subversive of constitutional government, to the great prejudice of the cause of law and justice and to the manifest injury of the people of the United States.

Wherefore Donald J. Trump, by such conduct, warrants impeachment and trial, and removal from office.

**II. VIOLATION OF THE FOREIGN EMOLUMENTS CLAUSE (Article I, Section 9 Of The United States Constitution)**

In his conduct while President of the United States, Donald J. Trump, in violation of his constitutional oath to faithfully execute the office of President of the United States and, to the best of his ability, preserve, protect, and defend the Constitution of the United States, as well as his constitutional obligation to take care that the laws be faithfully executed, accepted, without the consent of Congress emoluments from foreign states in the following manner:

- Donald J. Trump refused to divest, place into a blind trust, or otherwise give up his ownership interest in his worldwide business holdings since becoming President.
- Donald J. Trump refused to release his tax returns, with the intent to conceal the exact nature of his holdings from Congress and the American people.
- Donald J. Trump acknowledged, through his personal attorney, that his businesses receive funds and make a profit from payments by foreign governments, and would continue to do so while serving as President.

....

In all of this, Donald J. Trump has undermined the integrity of his office, brought disrepute on the Presidency, and betrayed his trust as President in a manner subversive of constitutional government, against the cause of law and justice and to the manifest injury of the people of the United States.

Wherefore Donald J. Trump, by such conduct, warrants impeachment and trial, and removal from office.

**III. VIOLATION OF THE DOMESTIC EMOLUMENTS CLAUSE (Article II, Section 1 Of The United States Constitution)**

In his conduct while President of the United States, Donald J. Trump, in violation of his constitutional oath to faithfully execute the office of President of the United States and, to the best of his ability, preserve, protect, and defend the Constitution of the United States, as well as his constitutional obligation to take care that the laws be faithfully executed, accepted, emoluments from the United States in the following manner:

- Donald J. Trump refused to divest, place into a blind trust, or otherwise give up his ownership interest in his worldwide business holdings since becoming President.



- Donald J. Trump refused to release his tax returns, with the intent to conceal the exact nature of his holdings from Congress and the American people.
- Donald J. Trump has an ownership interest in the Mar-a-Lago Club in Palm Beach, Florida.
- Donald J. Trump has an ownership interest in the Trump National Golf Club in Bedminster, New Jersey.
- Since becoming President, Donald J. Trump has visited Mar-a-Lago in Palm Beach, Florida, at least seven times, and has visited the Trump National Golf Club in Bedminster, New Jersey, at least five times.
- . . . .

By accepting emoluments from the United States in the form of payments for goods and/or services at businesses in which Donald J. Trump has an ownership interest, Donald J. Trump violated article II, section 1 of the U.S. Constitution.

In all of this, Donald J. Trump has undermined the integrity of his office, brought disrepute on the Presidency, and betrayed his trust as President in a manner subversive of constitutional government, against the cause of law and justice and to the manifest injury of the people of the United States.

Wherefore Donald J. Trump, by such conduct, warrants impeachment and trial, and removal from office.

#### **IV. ABUSE OF POWER — UNDERMINING THE INDEPENDENCE OF THE FEDERAL JUDICIARY AND THE RULE OF LAW**

In his conduct while President of the United States, Donald J. Trump, in violation of his constitutional oath to faithfully execute the office of the President of the United States and, to the best of his ability, preserve, protect, and defend the Constitution of the United States, as well as his constitutional obligation to take care that the laws be faithfully executed, has engaged in activities that undermine the independence of the Federal judiciary.

- [citing examples of Trump's public criticism of 2 federal judges: James Robart and Gonzalo P. Curiel]
- On August 25, 2017, before Joe Arpaio had been sentenced, or his conviction had been appealed, and without consulting the Justice Department, Donald J. Trump pardoned Joe Arpaio for his commission of criminal contempt of court.

In all of this, Donald J. Trump has sought to undermine the independence of the Federal judiciary and the rule of law, repeatedly attempted to upset the careful constitutional balance of power between the judicial and executive branches. By

pardoning Joe Arpaio's willful violation of a Federal court order, Donald J. Trump has offered encouragement to others to disobey Federal court orders with which Donald J. Trump may disagree. He has brought disrepute on the Presidency, and has acted in a manner subversive of constitutional government, to the great prejudice of the cause of law and justice and to the manifest injury of the people of the United States.

Wherefore Donald J. Trump, by such conduct, warrants impeachment and trial, and removal from office.

## V. UNDERMINING FREEDOM OF THE PRESS

In his conduct while President of the United States, Donald J. Trump, in violation of his constitutional oath to faithfully execute the office of the President of the United States and, to the best of his ability, preserve, protect, and defend the Constitution of the United States, as well as his constitutional obligation to take care that the laws be faithfully executed, has engaged in activities that undermine the freedom of the press guaranteed by the First Amendment to the Constitution.

- Donald J. Trump repeatedly called press organizations “fake news” including, on February 15, 2017, when he tweeted, “The fake news media is going crazy with their conspiracy theories and blind hatred. @MSNBC & @CNN are unwatchable. @foxandfriends is great!”.
- On February 17, 2017, Donald J. Trump tweeted, “The FAKE NEWS media (failing @nytimes, @NBCNews, @ABC, @CBS, @CNN) is not my enemy, it is the enemy of the American People!”.
- Donald J. Trump has repeatedly attacked members of the press, including as a candidate on August 7, 2015, when he commented about Fox News Channel anchor and Presidential debate moderator Megyn Kelly saying, “you could see there was blood coming out of her eyes, blood coming out of her whatever”.
- On June 29, 2017, Donald J. Trump tweeted, “I heard poorly rated Morning Joe speaks badly of me (don't watch anymore). Then how come low I.Q. Crazy Mika, along with Psycho Joe, came to Mar-a-Lago 3 nights in a row around New Year's Eve, and insisted on joining me. She was badly bleeding from a face-lift. I said no!”.
- On July 2, 2017, Donald J. Trump tweeted “#FraudNewsCNN#FNN” and circulated a video of him violently wrestling a man covered by a CNN logo, which, according to the Reporters Committee on Freedom of the Press, was a “threat of physical violence against journalists ... [and] beneath the office of the presidency”.
- On May 10, 2017, Donald J. Trump's White House barred American reporters from witnessing his meeting with Russian Foreign Minister

Sergey Lavrov and Russian Ambassador to the United States Sergey Kislyak in the Oval Office, but allowed a Russian photographer to document the meeting.

- In January 2017, Donald J. Trump's transition team considered a plan to relocate the press corps from the White House press room to the White House Conference Center near Lafayette Square or to space in the Old Executive Office Building.
- In June 2017, Donald J. Trump's administration prohibited video recordings of White House press briefings.
- On October 11, 2017, Donald J. Trump tweeted, "Fake @NBC News made up story that I wanted a 'tenfold' increase in our U.S. nuclear arsenal. Pure fiction, made up to demean. NBC=CNN!" and "With all of the Fake News coming out of NBC and the Networks at what point is it appropriate to challenge their License? Bad for country!".
- On October 11, 2017, Donald J. Trump also tweeted, "Network news has become so partisan, distorted and fake that licenses must be challenged and, if appropriate, revoked. Not fair to public!".
- On October 11, 2017, Donald J. Trump told reporters in the Oval Office, "It is frankly disgusting the way the press is able to write whatever they want to write, and people should look into it.".

In all of this, Donald J. Trump has sought to undermine the freedom of the press guaranteed by the First Amendment to the Constitution, brought disrepute on the Presidency, and has acted in a manner subversive of constitutional government, to the great prejudice of the cause of law and justice and to the manifest injury of the people of the United States.

Wherefore Donald J. Trump, by such conduct, warrants impeachment and trial, and removal from office.

Steven Cohen, "Impeaching Donald J. Trump, President of the United States, of high crimes and misdemeanors," [House Resolution 621](#), 15 Nov 2017.

#### **News about Cohen's bill**

On 15 November 2017, Steve Cohen (D-Tenn.) — joined by Al Green (D-Tex.) and four other Democrats — introduced one set of five articles of impeachment. [The Hill](#); [Politico](#); [Associated Press](#).

Cohen's press release said in part:

The time has come to make clear to the American people and to this President that his train of injuries to our Constitution must be brought to an end through impeachment.

I believe there is evidence that he attempted to obstruct an investigation into Russia's interference with the U.S. presidential election and links between between Russia and the Trump campaign, most notably the firing of FBI Director James Comey. The president's blatant refusal to separate himself from his businesses has led to clear instances of conflict of interest that appear to violate both the domestic and foreign emoluments clauses. And his attacks on 'so-called' judges and 'fake news' have undermined public confidence in the judiciary and the press. It's time for Congress to take action to stop this reckless and harmful behavior by removing Mr. Trump from office and to defend and uphold the Constitution of the United States.

Steve Cohen, "Members Introduce Articles of Impeachment," [House](#), 15 Nov 2017.

---

### 6 Dec 2017: Green

Around noon on Wednesday, 6 December 2017, Al Green posted a second draft of his articles of impeachment at his website. I have copied the following text from the official version at the Library of Congress website. I inserted a bulleted list of Green's supporting facts.

Resolved, That Donald John Trump, President of the United States is unfit to be President and is impeached for high misdemeanors, and that the following articles of impeachment be exhibited to the Senate:

Articles of Impeachment exhibited by the House of Representatives of the United States, in the name of itself and of the people of the United States, against Donald John Trump, President of the United States, in maintenance and support of its impeachment against him for high misdemeanors committed as President constituting harm to American society to the manifest injury of the people of the United States:

#### ARTICLE I

In his capacity as President of the United States, unmindful of the high duties of his high office and the dignity and proprieties thereof, and of the harmony and courtesies necessary for stability within the society of the United States, Donald John Trump has with his statements done more than insult individuals and groups of Americans, he has harmed the society of the United States, brought shame and dishonor to the office of President of the United States, sowing discord among the people of the United States by associating the majesty and dignity of the presidency with causes rooted in white supremacy, bigotry, racism, anti-Semitism, white nationalism, or neo-Nazism on one or more of the following occasions:

- On August 15, 2017, Donald John Trump made a widely published statement characterizing a group of anti-Semites, bigots, racists, white nationalists, and Ku Klux Klansmen who rallied in Charlottesville, Virginia, as "very fine people".
- On August [October?] 7, 2017, hate groups returned to Charlottesville, Virginia, at the statue of Robert E. Lee, the Confederate general, chanting "You will not replace us!" Since this event on October 7, the President has made many widely published statements about many things including, the National Football League,

but has not made one widely published statement condemning the hate groups for returning to the place where an innocent person lost her life at the hands of hate.

- On November 29, 2017, Donald John Trump shared 3 videos posted by a leader of a British political party considered by many to be an extremist group. ....

In all of this, the aforementioned Donald John Trump, by his statements, unmindful of the high duties of his high office and the dignities and proprieties thereof, and of the harmony, respect, and courtesies necessary for stability within the society of the United States, has undermined the integrity of his office, has sown discord among the people of the United States, has brought disrepute, contempt, ridicule and disgrace on the Presidency, has acted in a manner antithetical to the cause of a just society, has betrayed his trust as President to the manifest injury of the people of the United States, and committed a high misdemeanor in office.

Therefore, Donald John Trump by causing such harm to the society of the United States is unfit to be President and warrants impeachment, trial, and removal from office.

## ARTICLE II

In his capacity as President of the United States, unmindful of the high duties of his high office, of the dignity and proprieties thereof, and of the harmony, and respect necessary for stability within the society of the United States, Donald John Trump has with his statements done more than simply insult individuals and groups of Americans, he has harmed the American society by publicly casting contempt on individuals and groups, inciting hate and hostility, sowing discord among the people of the United States, on the basis of race, national origin, religion, gender, and sexual orientation, on one or more of the following occasions:

- On January 27, 2017, Donald John Trump issued Executive Order 13769 providing for a partial shutdown of immigration from mainly Muslim countries, to fulfill a campaign promise that read as follows: “DONALD J. TRUMP STATEMENT ON PREVENTING MUSLIM IMMIGRATION (New York, NY) December 7th, 2015 — Donald J. Trump is calling for a total and complete shutdown of Muslims entering the United States until our country’s representatives can figure out what’s going on”, thereby casting contempt upon Muslims, inciting hate and hostility, and sowing discord among the people of the United States on the basis of religion.
- On July 26, 2017, Donald John Trump made a public statement substantially as follows: “After consultation with my Generals and military experts, please be advised that the United States Government will not accept or allow Transgender individuals to serve in any capacity in the U.S. Military. Our military must be focused on decisive and overwhelming victory and cannot be burdened with the tremendous medical costs and disruption that transgender in the military would

entail”, and thereby casting contempt on transgender individuals, inciting hate and hostility, and sowing discord among the people of the United States on the basis of gender.

- On September 23, 2017, Donald John Trump made a public statement substantially as follows: “Wouldn’t you love to see one of these NFL owners, when somebody disrespects our flag, to say, ‘Get that son of a b-i-t-c-h off the field right now, out, he’s fired? He’s fired!’” thereby casting contempt on professional football players who engaged in constitutionally protected protests pertaining to allegations of police misconduct with regard to racial minorities, as well as casting contempt on the professional players’ mothers by calling the mothers “b-i-t-c-h-e-s”, effectively calling these mothers dogs, thereby inciting hate and hostility, and sowing discord among the people of the United States on the basis of race and gender.
- On September 30, 2017, Donald John Trump made a public statement substantially as follows: “They want everything to be done for them when it should be a community effort”, in the aftermath of Hurricane Maria thereby casting contempt on Puerto Rican citizens of the United States, inciting hate and hostility, and sowing discord among the people of the United States based on national origin and race.
- On October 3, 2017, Donald John Trump made a public statement substantially as follows: “I hate to tell you, Puerto Rico, but you’ve thrown our budget a little out of whack because we spent a lot of money on Puerto Rico, that’s fine, we’ve saved a lot of lives”, but Donald John Trump did not make similar comments about Texas or Florida in the aftermath of Hurricane Harvey or Hurricane Irma, treating the Puerto Rican citizens of the United States disparately, thereby casting contempt on Puerto Ricans, inciting hate and hostility, and sowing discord among the people of the United States based on national origin and race.
- On October 19, 2017, Donald John Trump made a public statement substantially as follows: “The Fake News is going crazy with wacky Congresswoman Wilson (D), who was SECRETLY on a very personal call, and gave a total lie on content!”, thereby casting contempt on an African-American Member of Congress, inciting hate and hostility, and sowing discord among the people of the United States based on gender and race.
- On October 21, 2017, Donald John Trump made a public statement substantially as follows: “I hope the Fake News Media keeps talking about Wacky Congresswoman Wilson in that she, as a representative, is killing the Democrat Party!” thereby casting contempt on an African-American female Member of Congress, inciting hate and hostility, and sowing discord among the people of the United States based on gender and race.
- On October 22, 2017, Donald John Trump made a public statement substantially as follows: “Wacky Congresswoman Wilson is the gift that keeps on giving for the Republican Party, a disaster for Dems. You watch her in action & vote R!”

thereby casting contempt on an African-American female Member of Congress inciting hate and hostility, and sowing discord among the people of the United States based on gender and race.

In all of this, the aforementioned Donald John Trump has, by his statements, brought the high office of President of the United States in contempt, ridicule, disgrace and disrepute, has sown discord among the people of the United States, has demonstrated that he is unfit to be President and has betrayed his trust as President of the United States to the manifest injury of the people of the United States, and has committed a high misdemeanor in office.

Therefore, Donald John Trump, by causing such harm to the society of the United States, is unfit to be President, warrants impeachment, trial, and removal from office. Al Green, "Impeaching Donald John Trump, President of the United States, of high misdemeanors," [House Resolution 646](#), 6 Dec 2017. (posted on Internet morning of 8 Dec 2017).

#### News about Green's second bill

On 6 December 2017 at 13:34 EST, Al Green (D-Tex.) forced a vote in the U.S. House of Representatives on his two articles of impeachment. The vote was 364 to 58, in favor of refusing to consider his articles. A total of 58 Democrats — 31% of the Democrats who voted on this issue — voted for Green's articles of impeachment. Another 4 Democrats voted "present", the equivalent of abstaining. [Washington Post](#); [Politico](#); [Associated Press](#). My comment is that, because Mr. Green released his draft articles of impeachment just one hour before the vote, few members of the House had read the articles on which they voted.

---

#### 19 Jan 2018: Green

On 19 January 2018, Al Green offered a third version of his resolution to impeach Trump, this time with only one Article.

Resolved, That Donald John Trump, President of the United States, is

- unfit to be President,
- unfit to represent the American values of decency and morality, respectability and civility, honesty and propriety, reputability and integrity,
- is unfit to defend the ideals that have made America great,
- unfit to defend liberty and justice for all as extolled in the Pledge of Allegiance,
- is unfit to defend the American ideal of all persons being created equal as exalted in the Declaration of Independence,
- is unfit to ensure domestic tranquility, promote the general welfare and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity as lauded in the preamble to the United States Constitution,
- is unfit to protect government of the people, by the people, for the people as elucidated in the Gettysburg Address,



and is impeached for high misdemeanors, and that the following article of impeachment be exhibited to the Senate:

Article of Impeachment exhibited by the House of Representatives of the United States, in the name of itself and of the people of the United States, against Donald John Trump, President of the United States, in maintenance and support of its impeachment against him for high misdemeanors committed as President constituting harm to American society to the manifest injury of the people of the United States:

#### ARTICLE I

In his capacity as President of the United States, unmindful of the high duties of his high office, of the dignity and proprieties thereof, and of the harmony, and respect necessary for stability within the society of the United States, Donald John Trump has with his bigoted statements done more than simply insult individuals and groups of Americans, he has harmed the American society by attempting to convert his bigoted statements into United States policy and by associating the presidency and the people of the United States with bigotry on one or more of the following occasions:

- On January 27, 2017, Donald John Trump issued Executive Order 13769 providing for a partial shutdown of immigration from mainly Muslim countries to fulfill a bigoted campaign promise that read as follows: “DONALD J. TRUMP STATEMENT ON PREVENTING MUSLIM IMMIGRATION (New York, NY) December 7th, 2015 — Donald J. Trump is calling for a total and complete shutdown of Muslims entering the United States until our country’s representatives can figure out what’s going on,” thereby attempting to convert a bigoted campaign promise into United States policy, associating the presidency and the people of the United States with bigotry, thereby casting contempt upon Muslims, inciting hate and hostility, and sowing discord among the people of the United States on the basis of religion.
- On July 26, 2017, Donald John Trump made a public statement substantially as follows: “After consulting with my Generals and military experts, please be advised that the United States Government will not accept or allow Transgender individuals to serve in any capacity in the U.S. Military. Our military must be focused on decisive and overwhelming victory and cannot be burdened with the tremendous medical costs and disruption that transgender in the military would entail,” thereby attempting to convert his bigoted statement into United States policy, associating the presidency and the people of the United States with bigotry, thereby casting contempt on transgender individuals, inciting hate and hostility, and sowing discord among the people of the United States on the basis of gender.
- On August 15, 2017, Donald John Trump made a widely-published statement characterizing a group of anti-Semites, bigots, racists, white nationalists, and Ku Klux Klansmen who rallied in Charlottesville, Virginia, as “very fine people,” thereby associating the presidency and the people of the United States with bigotry.

- On October 7, 2017, hate groups returned to Charlottesville, Virginia, at the statue of Robert E. Lee, the Confederate general, chanting “You will not replace us!” after having chanted in their August Charlottesville rally that “Jews will not replace us!”. Since this event on October 7, the President has made widely-published statements about many issues, including the National Football League, but has not made one widely-published statement condemning the hate groups for returning to the place where an innocent person lost her life at the hands of hate.
- On January 11, 2018, Donald John Trump held a meeting with a bipartisan group of Congressional leaders that focused primarily on legislation that would provide a statutory protected status for individuals brought to the United States without documentation. At this meeting, as has been widely-published, Donald John Trump made references to people from s-h-i-t-h-o-l-e (or s-h-i-t-h-o-u-s-e) countries. He also questioned why we need more Haitians or people from African countries, proclaiming that we should take them out. Donald John Trump then suggested that Norwegians were better suited to be immigrants to this country, thereby casting contempt on citizens and noncitizens who were welcomed here by previous Presidents due to natural disaster and civil unrest, thereby attempting to convert his bigoted statements into United States policy, associating the presidency and the people of the United States with bigotry, inciting hate and hostility, and sowing discord among the people of the United States on the basis of national origin.

In all of this, the aforementioned Donald John Trump has, by his statements, brought the high office of President of the United States in contempt, ridicule, disgrace and disrepute, has sown discord among the people of the United States, has demonstrated that he is unfit to be President, and has betrayed his trust as President of the United States to the manifest injury of the people of the United States, and has committed a high misdemeanor in office.

Therefore, Donald John Trump by causing such harm to the society of the United States is unfit to be President and warrants impeachment, trial, and removal from office.

Al Green, "Impeaching Donald John Trump, President of the United States, of high misdemeanors." [House Resolution 705](#), 19 Jan 2018. [Bulleted lists added by Standler.]

#### **News about Green's third bill**

On 12 January 2018, Al Green said he would again demand impeachment of Trump next week, after Trump referred to African nations and Haiti as "shithole countries". More facts on this mistake by Trump is [above](#). [Texas Tribune](#); [Houston Chronicle](#); [The Hill](#).

On 17 January 2018, Al Green gave a five-minute speech on the floor of the U.S. House of Representatives, where he said:

... it is within my power as a Member of the Congress of the United States of America

to bring Articles of Impeachment against this President for what he has done. I have done it before, and I will do it again and again and again. I will not allow it to happen unchallenged. .... We must take a stand against this President and his bigoted comments.

Al Green, "INJUSTICE ANYWHERE IS A THREAT TO JUSTICE EVERYWHERE," 164 *Congressional Record* H418 (17 Jan 2018).

The speaker pro tempore cautioned Mr. Green: "Members are reminded to refrain from engaging in personalities toward the President." That caution ended Mr. Green's speech.

Two days later, on 19 January 2018, there was a vote in the House of Representatives on Green's third attempt to impeach Trump. A total of 66 Representatives — all Democrats — voted for Resolution 705, 8 more than voted for Green's second attempt. A total of 355 Representatives voted against Green's Resolution 705. [House](#). The [Washington Post](#) was one of the few newspapers to cover Green's third attempt.

---

In my opinion, Raskin's bill and Cohen's bill are the best of these bills. Those two bills should receive hearings in the House Judiciary Committee, but will be blocked by the Republican majority. The refusal of the Chairman of the House Judiciary Committee to schedule hearings on any of these bills is consistent with the purely partisan refusal of the Senate Judiciary Committee in 2016 to schedule hearings on the confirmation of Obama's appointee to the U.S. Supreme Court, which I documented [here](#).

Sherman's bill is very narrow, with only one ground for impeachment. Lofgren herself recognizes that her draft Resolution has zero chance of passing. In my opinion, at least part of Green's proposals do *not* meet the Constitutional grounds for impeachment.

---

## **Bibliography on Trump Unfit to be President**

Rather than split this bibliography between my 2017 and 2018 essays on Trump, I am repeating here what I wrote in 2017, then adding new material.

The following politicians, mental health professionals, and commentators have suggested that Trump is *unfit* to be president:

- David L. Brooks, "No, Not Trump, Not Ever," [NY Times](#), 18 Mar 2016. ("Trump is perhaps the most dishonest person to run for high office in our lifetimes. All politicians stretch the truth, but Trump has a steady obliviousness to accuracy.")
- Barack Obama, "Remarks by President Obama and Prime Minister Lee of Singapore in Joint Press Conference," [White House](#), 2 Aug 2016. ("Yes, I think the Republican nominee [Trump] is unfit to serve as President. I said so last week, and he keeps on proving it. ..., the fact that he doesn't appear to have basic knowledge around critical issues in Europe, in the Middle East, in Asia, means that he's woefully unprepared to

do this job. And this is not just my opinion. I think what's been interesting is the repeated denunciations of his statements by leading Republicans, including the Speaker of the House and the Senate Majority Leader, and prominent Republicans like John McCain.”)

- Callum Borchers, "The latest media obsession: ‘Could there be something ... neurologically wrong’ with Donald Trump?," [Washington Post](#), 3 August 2016.
- Charles Krauthammer, "Donald Trump and the fitness threshold," [Washington Post](#), 4 August 2016. (Quoted in my 2017 essay.)
- 50 former Republican National Security Officials, "A Letter From G.O.P. National Security Officials Opposing Donald Trump," [NY Times](#), 8 Aug 2016. ("In our judgment, Mr. Trump has none of these critical qualities. He is unable or unwilling to separate truth from falsehood. .... He lacks self-control and acts impetuously. He cannot tolerate personal criticism.")
- David L. Brooks, "The View From Trump Tower," [NY Times](#), 11 Nov 2016. ("... [Trump's] main problem is going to be his own attention span, ignorance and incompetence. .... [Trump] will probably resign or be impeached within a year.")
- David L. Brooks, "The Internal Invasion," [NY Times](#), 20 Jan 2017. ("We've never had a major national leader as professionally unprepared, intellectually ill informed, morally compromised and temperamentally unfit as [Trump].")
- Jennifer Rubin, "Trump's emotional tailspin was predictable," [Washington Post](#), 24 Jan 2017. ("That reality — the rotten poll numbers, the low turnout at his inauguration, the massive turnout at worldwide protests, his widely panned appearance at the CIA and his press secretary Sean Spicer's disastrous debut with the White House press corps on Saturday [21 Jan] — seems to have thrown the narcissistic ex-mogul into an emotional tailspin. .... The obsession with replaying the election and concocting a phony excuse for losing the popular vote reminds us that despite mockery for constant lying, Trump cannot help himself. He lies because reality won't conform to his narcissistic view of the world.")
- Rachel Hosie, "'Malignant Narcissism': Donald Trump displays classic traits of mental illness, claim psychologists," [The Independent](#) in U.K., 30 Jan 2017.
- "Rep. Maxine Waters: Trump's actions 'leading himself' to impeachment," [CNN](#), 6 Feb 2017.
- Kathleen Parker, "Trump's two-year presidency," [Washington Post](#), 20:03 EST, 10 Feb 2017.
- Lance Dodes, Joseph Schachter, & 33 other mental health professionals, Letter, "Mental Health Professionals Warn About Trump," [NY Times](#), 13 Feb 2017. ("Mr. Trump's speech and actions demonstrate an inability to tolerate views different from his own, leading to rage reactions. .... We believe that the grave emotional instability

indicated by Mr. Trump's speech and actions makes him incapable of serving safely as president.")

- E.J. Dionne, Jr., "Admit it: Trump is unfit to serve," [Washington Post](#), 19:30 EST, 15 Feb 2017. ("Senators such as John McCain and Lindsey Graham seem to know it is only a matter of time before the GOP will have to confront Trump's unfitness.")
- Cristina Marcos, "Kentucky Dem lawmaker questions Trump's mental health," [The Hill](#), 22 Feb 2017. ("Trump is 'totally unfit for the office he serves in,' [Rep. John] Yarmuth (D-KY) said in remarks to a local NAACP chapter.... 'He is, in my opinion, a dangerous president. I'm not sure of his mental state, but I know that he doesn't portray someone who is in control of his faculties,' Yarmuth said in comments first highlighted by [CNN](#).")
- Jacquie Slater, "Mental Health Professionals call for Trump to be removed from office," [WTNH](#), 20 April 2017. (Conference of approximately two dozen mental health professionals at Yale School of Medicine. Dr. John Gartner: "Worse than just being a liar or a narcissist, in addition [Trump] is paranoid, delusional and grandiose thinking and he proved that to the country the first day he was President.") Also see [The Independent](#).
- George F. Will, "Trump has a dangerous disability," [Washington Post](#), 19:36 EDT, 3 May 2017. ("It is urgent for Americans to think and speak clearly about President Trump's inability to do either. This seems to be not a mere disinclination but a disability. It is not merely the result of intellectual sloth but of an untrained mind bereft of information and married to stratospheric self-confidence." "... it is up to the public to quarantine this presidency by insistently communicating to its elected representatives a steady, rational fear of this man whose combination of impulsivity and credulity render him uniquely unfit to take the nation into a military conflict.")
- Patricia Mazzei, "Miami lawmaker was first Republican to suggest Trump could be impeached," [Miami Herald](#), 16:20 EDT, 17 May 2017. (Rep. Carlos Curbelo of Florida became the first Republican in Congress to publicly suggest the impeachment of Trump, *if* it is true that Trump told Comey to end the investigation of Flynn.)
- Cristina Marcos, "First Republicans talk possibility of impeachment for Trump," [The Hill](#), updated 15:38 EDT, 17 May 2017. (Rep. Justin Amash of Michigan became the second Republican in Congress to publicly say, *if* it is true that Trump told Comey to end the investigation of Flynn, then Trump should be impeached.)
- Klaus Brinkbäumer, editorial, "It's Time to Get Rid of Donald Trump," [Der Spiegel](#), 19 May 2017. ("Donald Trump is not fit to be president of the United States. He does not possess the requisite intellect and does not understand the significance of the office he holds nor the tasks associated with it. He doesn't read. He doesn't bother to peruse important files and intelligence reports and knows little about the issues that he has identified as his priorities. His decisions are capricious and they are delivered in the form of tyrannical decrees. .... As has been demonstrated hundreds of times, he is a liar, a racist and a cheat. .... And one of the media's tasks is to continue telling things

as they are: Trump has to be removed from the White House. Quickly. He is a danger to the world.”)

- Paul Ryan, the leader of the Republicans in the U.S. House of Representatives, on 8 June 2017 explained why Trump had repeatedly made serious mistakes with the FBI Director, Comey: “The president’s new at this. He’s new to government, and so he probably wasn’t steeped in the long-running protocols that establish the relationships between DOJ, FBI and White Houses. He’s just new to this. .... I’m not saying it’s an acceptable excuse. It’s just my observation.” [Washington Post](#); [NBC News](#); [The Hill](#).
- On 16 August 2017, Tony Schwartz — the ghostwriter or co-author of Trump's famous book, *The Art of the Deal* — predicted that Trump would resign before the end of 2017. [Tweet](#): “The circle is closing at blinding speed. Trump is going to resign and declare victory before Mueller and congress leave him no choice.” [Tweet](#): “Trump's presidency is effectively over. Would be amazed if he survives till end of the year. More likely resigns by fall, if not sooner.” See also: [CNN](#); [Time](#).
- Bob Corker, the chairman of the U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee, and a leading Republican in the Senate, publicly blasted Trump on 17 August 2017: “I do think there need to be some radical changes. The president has not yet ... been able to demonstrate the stability, nor some of the competence that he needs to demonstrate in order to be successful, and we need for him to be successful.” [The Hill](#); [Politico](#); [Washington Post](#); [Associated Press](#); [Reuters](#). On 1 October 2017, Corker said "I stand by those comments" on 17 August. [NBC News](#).
- Alexander Burns & Jonathan Martin, "McConnell, in Private, Doubts if Trump Can Save Presidency," [New York Times](#), 22 Aug 2017. ("Mr. McConnell has fumed over Mr. Trump’s regular threats against fellow Republicans and criticism of Senate rules, and questioned Mr. Trump’s understanding of the presidency in a public speech. Mr. McConnell has made sharper comments in private, describing Mr. Trump as entirely unwilling to learn the basics of governing.")
- Rachel Chason, "James Clapper questions Trump’s fitness, worries about his access to nuclear codes," [Washington Post](#), 04:51 EDT, 23 Aug 2017. (Former Director of National Intelligence under Obama says: “I really question [Trump's] ability to be — his fitness to be — in this office.”) Also see: [CNN](#).
- John McCain, op-ed, "John McCain: It’s time Congress returns to regular order," [Washington Post](#), 20:21 EDT, 31 August 2017. (Calling Trump "a president who has no experience of public office, is often poorly informed and can be impulsive in his speech and conduct.")
- On 12 October 2017, Congresswoman Maxine Waters — a Democrat from Los Angeles, California — said on CNBC that Trump was "unstable" and should be impeached. [YouTube](#)(video); [RCP](#)(video); [The Hill](#).
- Jeannie Suk Gersen, "How Anti-Trump Psychiatrists Are Mobilizing Behind the

Twenty-Fifth Amendment," [New Yorker](#), 16 Oct 2017. (The group of mental-health professionals, "called Duty to Warn, claims that Donald Trump 'suffers from an incurable malignant narcissism that makes him incapable of carrying out his presidential duties and poses a danger to the nation.' ")

- On 24 October 2017, U.S. Senator Bob Corker (R-Tenn.) criticized Trump, see quotation in my 2017 essay. Then U.S. Senator Jeff Flake (R-Ariz.) criticized Trump, see quotation in my 2017 essay.
- Maggie Haberman, Glenn Thrush, & Peter Baker, "Inside Trump's Hour-By-Hour Battle For Self-Preservation," [New York Times](#), 9 Dec 2017. (Quoting Nancy Pelosi, leader of the Democrats in the U.S. House of Representatives: "The bigger problem, the thing people need to understand, is that he was utterly unprepared for this. It would be like you or me going into a room and being asked to perform brain surgery. When you have a lack of knowledge as great as his, it can be bewildering.")
- James Hamblin, "Is Something Neurologically Wrong With Donald Trump?," [The Atlantic](#), 10:56 EST, 3 Jan 2018. (Notes some symptoms of neurological decline in Trump, calls for evaluation of Trump by neurologists.)
- Sunlen Serfaty & Ryan Nobles, "Yale psychiatrist briefed members of Congress on Trump's mental fitness," [CNN](#), 4 Jan 2018. (On 5-6 December 2017, Dr. Bandy X. Lee — an Assistant Clinical Professor of Psychiatry at Yale School of Medicine — briefed some members of the House and Senate on Trump's fitness to be president. Dr. Lee said: "As [Trump] is unraveling he seems to be losing his grip on reality and reverting to conspiracy theories. There are signs that he is going into attack mode when he is under stress. That means he has the potential to become impulsive and very volatile.") See also [Politico](#); [The Hill](#).
- Bandy Lee, "Trump is now dangerous — that makes his mental health a matter of public interest," [The Guardian](#), 6 Jan 2018. ("Past violence is the best predictor of future violence, and [Trump] has shown: verbal aggressiveness, boasting about sexual assaults, inciting violence in others, an attraction to violence and powerful weapons and the continual taunting of a hostile nation with nuclear power. .... [Trump's] cognitive function, or his ability to process knowledge and thoughts, has begun to be widely questioned. Many have noted a distinct decline in his outward ability to form complete sentences, to stay with a thought, to use complex words and not to make loose associations.")
- Dan Balz, "Trump does more damage to himself than his opponents ever manage to do," [Washington Post](#), 13 Jan 2018. ("[Trump's own words] reinforce a portrait of a president who ..., often lacks clarity of his own views or the details of issues he is negotiating, and who projects an image that regularly flies in the face of standards long applied to those who occupy the Oval Office.")
- John Bowden, "Ex-CIA chief: Trump 'unstable, inept, inexperienced, and also unethical'," [The Hill](#), 2 March 2018. (Former CIA Director John Brennan said in an interview on [MSNBC](#) that Trump is "unstable, inept, inexperienced, and also



unethical".)

- Philip Rucker, Ashley Parker, & Josh Dawsey, "'Pure madness': Dark days inside the White House as Trump shocks and rages," [Washington Post](#), 16:26 EST, 3 March 2018. ("Trump is now a president in transition, at times angry and increasingly isolated. He fumes in private that just about every time he looks up at a television screen, the cable news headlines are trumpeting yet another scandal.")
- John Wagner & Seung Min Kim, "'Like a pinball machine': Lawmakers struggle to negotiate with an erratic Trump," [Washington Post](#), 17:16 EST, 4 March 2018. (Rep. Peter T. King (R-NY) compared Trump's negotiating style to a pinball machine. The Post said: "After more than a year of the Trump presidency, members of Congress have learned to brace themselves for unpredictable, confusing and often contradictory positions from the [president]....")
- Max Greenwood, "Lieu: Trump 'intentionally lying,' unfit for office," [The Hill](#), 11:53 EDT, 15 Mar 2018. ([Above](#), I quoted some of a 14 March speech by Trump. Ted Lieu (D-Calif.), a member of the U.S. House of Representatives, [tweeted](#) about that speech by Trump: "This is more evidence that Trump is unfit for the revered office in which he sits.")
- Jacqueline Thomsen, "Retired four-star Army general: Trump 'serious threat to US national security'," [The Hill](#), 19:56 EDT, 16 Mar 2018. (Retired U.S. Army General Barry McCaffrey [tweeted](#): "Reluctantly I have concluded that President Trump is a serious threat to US national security. He is refusing to protect vital US interests from active Russian attacks. It is apparent that he is for some unknown reason under the sway of Mr Putin.")
- Maggie Haberman, "Newly Emboldened, Trump Says What He Really Feels," [New York Times](#), 18 March 2018. ("A dozen people close to Mr. Trump or the White House, including current and former aides and longtime friends, described [Trump] as newly emboldened to say what he really feels and to ignore the cautions of those around him.")
- Aaron Blake, "What 'DO NOT CONGRATULATE' says about Trump — and the peril of meeting Kim Jong Un," [Washington Post](#), 06:31 EDT, 21 Mar 2018. ("[Trump's 20 Mar telephone call with Putin] crystallizes Trump's tendency to eschew basically any expert guidance — even on issues of huge import.")
- Mark Landler, & Julie Hirschfeld Davis, "After Another Week of Chaos, Trump Repairs to Palm Beach. No One Knows What Comes Next." [New York Times](#), 23 Mar 2018. ("Aides said there was no grand strategy to the president's actions, and that he got up each morning this week not knowing what he would do. Much as he did as a New York businessman at Trump Tower, Mr. Trump watched television, reacted to what he saw on television and then reacted to the reaction.")
- Philip Rucker & Robert Costa, "'Tired of the wait game': White House stabilizers gone, Trump calling his own shots," [Washington Post](#), 15:00 EDT, 31 Mar 2018.

(Trump's moderate advisers have resigned or been fired, which leaves Trump free to act impulsively.)

- Joe Garofoli, "Feinstein calls Trump erratic and unfit. But she'll try to work with him," [San Francisco Chronicle](#), 19:08 PDT, 3 April 2018. (U.S. Senator Dianne Feinstein told the *Chronicle*: "I do not believe he is a good president. I do not believe he is fit to be president. I do not believe that we have the stability in the executive office that we need to have. I think there's an erratic behavior there that is deeply concerning.")
- "Congresswoman Maxine Waters' Advice for President Trump: 'Please Resign'," [Time](#), 25 April 2018. (Maxine Waters: "Please resign, so that I won't have to keep up this fight of your having to be impeached because I don't think you deserve to be there.") See also [The Hill](#).
- John Brennan, "John Brennan: I will speak out until integrity returns to the White House," [Washington Post](#), 31 May 2018. (Brennan — director of the Central Intelligence Agency from March 2013 to January 2017 — said: "Mr. Trump, however, has shown highly abnormal behavior by lying routinely to the American people without compunction, .... [Trump's] strategy is to undercut real, potential and perceived opponents; his focus is to win at all costs, irrespective of truth, ethics, decency and — many would argue — the law. .... Most worrisome is that his use of falsehoods, his mean-spirited and malicious behavior, and his self-absorption will be emulated by many young Americans — indeed, young people globally — who look to the president of the United States as a role model.")
- Fareed Zakaria, "Trump's true talent isn't negotiating. It's marketing." [Washington Post](#), 24 May 2018. ("By now it is obvious Trump is actually a bad negotiator — an impulsive, emotional man who ignores briefings, rarely knows details, and shoots first and asks questions later. .... [Trump] has the confidence, bravado and skill to market failure as success.")
- Michael Kruse, "'He Pretty Much Gave In to Whatever They Asked For'," [Politico](#), 1 June 2018. (Trump had two early real-estate triumphs: (1) converting the "decrepit" Commodore Hotel to Grand Hyatt in 1980 and (2) Trump Tower. Then Trump started ignoring details and became a celebrity. "Trump was, and still is, they say, a confident, competitive, aggressive, impulsive, zero-sum, win-at-all-costs, transactional, unpredictable, often underinformed and ill-prepared, gut-following, ego-driven, want-it-and-want-it-now negotiator.")
- David Smith, "Trump goes it alone: running the White House not like a president, but a CEO," [The Guardian](#), 3 June 2018.
- Justin Wise, "Sanford: Trump is being allowed to lie without consequences," [The Hill](#), 15 June 2018 (Mark Sanford on NBC Meet the Press: "There is no seeming consequence to the president and lies and ... it is going to have incredibly harmful consequences in the way that we operate going forward, ...."). Later, [NBC News](#) posted a transcript of the interview with Sanford.

- John Harwood, "Trump, again and again, describes a world detached from reality," [CNBC](#), 22 June 2018.
- Christina Zhao, "TRUMP'S 'ART OF THE DEAL' CO-AUTHOR SAYS THE PRESIDENT IS LOSING HIS MIND: 'WE ARE IN A TRUE EMERGENCY'," [Newsweek](#), 16 July 2018. (Schwartz: "We are in a true emergency. [Trump] lives now inside his own version of reality almost 100 percent of the time and that reality has almost nothing to do with reality as the rest of us know it.")
- George Will, "This sad, embarrassing wreck of a man," [Washington Post](#), 17 July 2018. (Will: "Precision is not part of Trump's repertoire: He speaks English as though it is a second language that he learned from someone who learned English last week. So, it is usually difficult to sift meanings from Trump's word salads.")
- Christine Todd Whitman, op-ed, "Calling my fellow Republicans: Trump is clearly unfit to remain in office," [Los Angeles Times](#), 22 July 2018. (Whitman is the former governor of New Jersey and former administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency. Whitman: "President Trump's disgraceful performance in Helsinki, Finland, and in the days since is an indication that he is not fit to remain in office. .... [Republicans need to] ... demonstrate the leadership our country needs by calling on the president to step down.")
- Bandy X. Lee & Tony Schwartz, "Inside the Mind of Donald Trump," [Politico](#), 27 July 2018. (Qualities Trump displays: "paranoia, grandiosity, lack of empathy, and pathological deceit. .... His frequent lies reveal his need to redefine reality when the truth doesn't serve his needs.")
- "" , ### 2018.
- "" , ### 2018.

The statements of commentators and politicians cited above show that voters in the U.S. had ample information before the election in 2016 that Trump was unfit to be president. During 2017, only a few politicians had the courage to publicly condemn Trump's bizarre behavior as president.

---

This document is at <http://www.rbs0.com/trump2018.pdf>  
created 2 January 2018, revised 7 August 2018

Return to my [personal homepage](#).