# EXHIBIT 1

(Declaration of Beverly Gage)

The program resulted in a swift escalation of both investigations and dismissals of government employees, especially at the State Department, where former FBI agent R. W. Scott McLeod took the lead. Following the model set by the congressional committees, McLeod hired several former agents to assist with his investigations and met repeatedly with Hoover for advice and encouragement. According to one estimate, in just seven months McLeod succeeded in ousting nearly two hundred State Department employees for offenses ranging from homosexuality to alcoholism to political subversion. Such a record would have been impossible, he wrote to Hoover, "if it were not for the fact that you have offered your cooperation." By the fall of 1953, Eisenhower reported a total of 1,456 employees dismissed across the federal agencies. In a graduation speech before the National Academy, Brownell contrasted this record with that of the Truman years, when so much of the FBI's work had been ignored or disparaged. "We are now making certain that this fine work is not wasted," he told the graduating police officers, assuring them that the FBI finally had the "backing" and "follow-through" that it needed.[25]

JUST WHAT BROWNELL MEANT BY THIS BECAME CLEAR ON NOVEMBER 6, 1953, when he took the opportunity of an afternoon talk before the Executives' Club of Chicago to revisit a case that had long rankled Hoover. Brownell's remarks that afternoon set off "one of the greatest controversies of our controversial times," in the words of Washington columnist Doris Fleeson. The subject was the late Harry Dexter White, the Treasury official whose promotion to the IMF had first convinced Hoover that he could not rely on Truman. Parts of the story had been aired before, most notably in White's 1948 appearance before HUAC, which had been followed by his heart attack and death. Brownell brought it up again in 1953 to showcase Hoover's version of events, in which White was no mere victim of committee pressure and rumor mongering, but a longtime Soviet source whose disloyalty had been ignored by Truman. "I can now announce officially, for the first time in public, that the records in my department show that White's spying activities for the Soviet government were reported in detail by the F.B.I. to the White House by means of a report delivered to President Truman," Brownell informed the surprised Chicago executives.[26]

Hoover himself was feeling far more confident about White than he had been in 1946, when even he admitted that the evidence had been circumstantial rather than definitive. Among the documents revealed by Chambers during the Hiss affair had been a memo in White's handwriting, apparent substantiation that the assistant treasury secretary had passed along government information. Two years later, the Venona team had linked White "conclusively" to the cover name "Jurist," who appeared in at least one Soviet cable as an "active" source. Hoover's ongoing bitterness toward Truman showed up in his comments about the Venona discovery. "Wouldn't it be swell to

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send substance to [Truman's aide] Ad. Souers for information of the President," he wrote. But Truman did not know the details of Venona, and Hoover was determined to keep it that way.[27]

Truman denied that he had ever been informed of White's alleged Soviet connections. "I don't know what they're talking about. No such thing happened," he maintained. Almost immediately, Hoover's ex-employee Harold Velde, now head of HUAC, sent Truman a subpoena, the first time that anyone could remember a former president being called before Congress as a hostile witness. Truman refused to respond, ratcheting up the situation into what one paper described as "a political brawl of almost unprecedented rancor." On November 11, five days after the Chicago speech, Eisenhower held a press conference in which he expressed support for Brownell and Hoover, confirming that he had encouraged Brownell to go public with the White story. Five days later, having endured more than a week of such talk, Truman took to the airwaves to deliver a "volcanic outburst" in rebuttal, pointing out that the New York grand jury had itself rejected the FBI's supposedly stellar evidence of Soviet espionage by government officials. In an eleven p.m. broadcast carried live on both television and radio, Truman insisted that the matter was wildly overblown, and that Brownell had "lied to the American people" by suggesting that Truman would knowingly appoint a Soviet source to high international office. He said that the FBI had admitted that its information about White was inconclusive. According to Truman's version of events, everyone agreed that White should move on to the IMF without any public disclosure in order to allow the FBI investigation to continue.[28]

At this point Hoover's Republican friends at the Senate Internal Security Subcommittee stepped in with an offer: Did Hoover want to testify before the committee and give his own account of what had happened? The negotiations occurred quickly. Truman's broadcast ended around midnight on November 16. The next afternoon, the hundreds of spectators and reporters in the Senate caucus room gasped with surprise—and then burst into applause—as Hoover pushed open the main doors and strode to the witness table, an unannounced guest at the day's proceedings. During previous committee appearances, reporters had been struck by Hoover's poised and methodical affect. This time, they described him as "red-faced," "annoyed," and "tight-lipped," his wrath barely contained. Beyond the caucus room, far more people were watching than even just a few years earlier, thanks to the rapid spread of television. "We'd never seen Hoover on TV before," one viewer reflected. "It was quite an experience."[29]

Hoover repeated much of what he had said before, explaining that the FBI did not make policy but only followed the lead of Congress and the White House. In this case, however, he felt duty bound to correct the record, even if it meant contradicting a former president. With clipped precision, he retold the events of 1945 and 1946, insisting that "at no time was the F.B.I. a party to an agreement to promote Harry Dexter White." According to the media, "it wasn't what he said but the way that he said it"

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that made his testimony effective, "forceful, fairly and with a vibrant, competent ring to his voice." By the time he was finished, he had shown himself to be the "decisive witness" in the White controversy, according to *The New York Times*, as well as "probably the most powerful figure on Capitol Hill."[30]

In the days that followed, the praise for Hoover reflected his status as the toast of Eisenhower's Washington, a man of gravitas and long experience, now backed by both Congress and the White House. "I don't think I ever saw a more impressive witness," gushed a Dallas radio host. "I thrilled at the sight of Hoover—a great patriot, a great administrator, a great official dedicated to keeping your country free." In Washington, columnist John O'Donnell noted that the streets of the capital seemed "strangely empty" during Hoover's testimony, with everyone inside glued to the television or the radio, "looking and listening to the greatest story of foreign spying and internal treason ever told in the history of the Republic." O'Donnell declared November 17, 1953, one of the most exciting days the city had ever seen. "A century hence, if our Republic still survives in its tradition of freedom, our children's children will be reading in their history books how FBI Chief J. Edgar Hoover told the U.S. Senate of his efforts to block the Communist conspiracy of the Roosevelt-Truman era," he predicted.[31]

Public opinion polls bore out the perception of Hoover's testimony as an unmitigated triumph—not only the final word in the White case but also a sign that Hoover deserved the trust and free rein that Eisenhower and Brownell had been offering. According to a Gallup survey, 78 percent of Americans came away with a favorable opinion of Hoover, while just 2 percent expressed any doubts. (The other 20 percent registered no opinion at all.) Gallup once again declared the numbers all but unparalleled in the annals of American politics. "On other occasions the public has tossed bouquets to Government officials," the pollster explained, "but rarely is the attitude as favorable as that expressed in today's vote." By Gallup's calculations, thirty-nine out of forty Americans either liked or accepted what Hoover had done, whether they happened to be Democrats, Independents, or Republicans.[32]

Among the dissident few were longtime critics whose concerns about Hoover's concentrated power and increasingly conservative politics would eventually find a wider audience. But for at least a moment in 1953, with friends in the White House and the American public firmly behind him, even Hoover found it difficult to worry. On the night after his testimony, he attended a formal dinner at the White House, joining Eisenhower, Brownell, and Rev. Elson to honor the justices of the Supreme Court. The next day, he ventured out to the Bowie racetrack to enjoy opening-day festivities. When reporters approached him for further reflections on the White case, Hoover said he would prefer to enjoy lunch with friends on that warm and golden afternoon, offering only a "contented smile" in the way of comment.[33]

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29. Little "United Front," S18, FBI IA 94-1-17998 (AL-National Americanism Commission); "Trends and Developments," February 1950, S18, FBI IA 94-1-17998 (AL-National Americanism Commission); Pennington to Ladd, "American Legion Contacts," July 26, 1950, S18, FBI IA 94-1-17998-922 (AL-National Americanism Commission); Baumgardner to Fletcher, "The Inside Story," October 21, 1948, S14, FBI IA 94-1-17998-818 (AL-National Americanism Commission).

30. Hoover to SACs, "Re: Responsibilities of the FBI," February 17, 1951, FBI 62-93875, F1, B1, Sr42, AT.

31. "Action Taken," August 7, 1950, F: "1," B146, Subject File: FBI, President's Secretary File, HST; Woltman, "Ex-FBI Agents," *NYWT*, ca. June 12, 1947, FBI IA NY 62-9189 (American Business Consultants). For examples of *Counterattack*'s defense of the FBI, see *Counterattack*, June 16, 1950, December 1, 1950. For early Berlin consultation, see JEH LOGS, May 23, 1950, June 9, 1950. For Reid, see Nichols to Reid, December 10, 1953, F: "Hoover, J. Edgar," B7, Sr1, G755, ORR. For Disney, see SAC Los Angeles to Director, "Walt Disney," December 16, 1954, S1, FBI V 94-4-4667 (Disney); Mason to Tolson, "Walt Disney," March 7, 1956, S1, FBI V 94-4-4667 (Disney).

32. "Hoover Answers Ten Questions on the F.B.I.," *NYT Magazine*, April 16, 1950, F16, B996, ACLU; McCarthy to Hoover, July 30, 1952, S6B, FBI FOIA 94-37708-71 (McCarthy).

### Chapter 34: Inner Conflicts (1947–1952)

1. Johnson, *Lavender Scare,* 15–6; Keay to Belmont, March 10, 1950, S11B, FBI FOIA 121-23278 (McCarthy).

2. Hoey; Oshinsky, *A Conspiracy So Immense*, 157.

3. For "thousands," see Johnson, *Lavender Scare,* 166.

4. On the FBI and the Lavender Scare, see especially Johnson, *Lavender Scare*; Charles, *Hoover's War on Gays*. Also see Canaday, *Straight State*; Lvovsky, *Vice Patrol*; *The Lavender Scare*, directed by Josh Howard (PBS/American Experience).

5. Ladd to Director, "Review of State Department," July 20, 1950, S16C, FBI FOIA 121-23278-22 (McCarthy).

6. Hoey Hearings, 2728; Charles, *Hoover's War on Gays*, 71.

7. Tanenhaus, *Whittaker Chambers,* 343-5; Weinstein, *Perjury,* 407-8; Canaday, *Straight State*, 3–4, 10–3.

8. Hoey Hearings, 2268; Johnson, *Lavender Scare*, 53–5.

9. Jones, *Alfred C. Kinsey*, 632; Nichols to Tolson, January 5, 1950, S3, FBI V 62-87653 (Kinsey); Nichols to Tolson, "Professor Kinsey," January 11, 1950, S3, FBI V 62-87563 (Kinsey).

10. Johnson, *Lavender Scare,* 9, 95; Canaday, *Straight State,* 214-21; Hoey Hearings, 2258–72.

11. Beck, "Farmers Market," *LAT*, August 6, 1947, B98, JEHS.

12. Horney, *Our Inner Conflicts*, 14–7, 96-114.

13. Horney, *Self-Analysis,* 7–36.

14. Summers, *Official and Confidential*, 94–5; F414A: "Ruffin de, Marshall," Summers-JEHC.

15. F99, B2, NARA-P; PB85, NLEF.

16. "Eisler Calls Washington," *NYDN*, June 13, 1947, B97, JEHS; Lait and Mortimer, *Washington Confidential*, ix, 90.

17. Oshinsky, *A Conspiracy So Immense*, 131; Wherry, 5, 2.

18. Johnson, *Lavender Scare*, 101–5.

19. Hoey Hearings, 2099–102, 2131–2.

20. Hoey Hearings, 2268, 2278.

21. Hoey, 2, 4.

22. Hoey, 12-3; Charles, *Hoover's War on Gays*, 88-95.

23. Hoey Hearings, 2143-4; Hoover to Souers, April 10, 1950, F: "FBI: S," B147, PSF: Subject File, HST.

24. Charles, *Hoover's War on Gays*, 95–6; Hoover, "Re: Sex Deviates," June 20, 1951, S26, FBI FOIA 66-02-1112X (Sex Deviates Program).

25. "Hoover Doubts Lie Detector," *WP*, April 10, 1950, B110, JEHS.

26. Miller, *Plain Speaking*, 393; Demaris, *Director,* 106.

27. Ladd to Director, March 24, 1952, S5B, FBI V 67-561-279 (Hoover); Ladd to Director, March 26, 1952, S5B, FBI V 67-561 (Hoover); Ladd to Director, April 1, 1952, S5B, FBI V 67-561-280 (Hoover).

28. Malone to Tolson, November 4, 1953, S5B, FBI V 67-561-295 (Hoover); [Illegible] to Director, November 8, 1953, S5A, FBI V 67-561-298 (Hoover); SAC New York to Director, "Robert A. Collins," June 11, 1954, S5A, FBI V 67-561 (Hoover).

29. Johnson, *Lavender Scare*, 117.

30. "Letters to the Day," *New London Day*, April 29, 1950, B104, JEHS; Johnson, *Lavender Scare,* 140-1; McDaniel, *Dying for Joe McCarthy's Sins*.

31. Charles, *Hoover's War on Gays,* 112-9, 148-51, 131-41.

32. Hoover, "Memorandum for Mr. Tolson," January 17, 1952, S2, FBI FOIA 62-96332-3 (McCarthy); [Redacted] to [Redacted], December 27, 1952, S2, FBI FOIA 62-96332 (McCarthy).

33. Hoover, "Memorandum for Mr. Tolson," January 16, 1952, S2, FBI FOIA 62-96332-1 (McCarthy); Hoover, "Memorandum for Mr. Tolson," January 18, 1952, S2, FBI FOIA 62-96332-8 (McCarthy).

34. Hoover, "Memorandum for Mr. Tolson," January 17, 1952, S2, FBI FOIA 62-96332-6 (McCarthy); Hoover, "Memorandum for Mr. Tolson," January 23, 1952, S2, FBI FOIA 62-96332-12 (McCarthy); "I, Lieut. [Redacted]," January 16, 1952, S2, FBI FOIA 62-96332 (McCarthy); Hoover, "Memorandum for Mr. Tolson," January 18, 1952, S2, FBI FOIA 62-96332-7 (McCarthy).

35. Belmont to Ladd, "Senator Joseph McCarthy," November 19, 1952, S2, FBI FOIA 62-96332-35 (McCarthy); Greenspun, "Where I Stand," S2, FBI FOIA 62-96332 (McCarthy).

### Chapter 35: ☒ Glorious Year (1953)

1. Powers, *Secrecy and Power*, 316; Hayden, "FBI Stays Safely," *Detroit News*, February 1, 1953, B110, JEHS. For recent interpretations of Eisenhower, see especially Hitchcock, *Age of Eisenhower;* Galambos, *Eisenhower*; Johnson, *Eisenhower*; Smith, *Eisenhower;* Newton, *Eisenhower*.

2. Oshinsky, *A Conspiracy So Immense,* 250-2.

3. "Cabinet Trio," *WTH*, December 5, 1953, B112, JEHS; "Ike's Family," *Minneapolis Star*, January 20, 1953; Elson, *America's Spiritual Recovery*, 53–6, 10.

4. "Ike and Wife Join," *ChiT*, February 2, 1953.

5. Kruse, *One Nation under God*, 73–4, xii-xiii; Elson, *America's Spiritual Recovery*, 58–9, 168, 170, 9–11.

6. "Application for Appointment," April 23, 1937, FBI FOIA 67-102459 (Nixon); Hanson to Director, "Report of Interview," July 17, 1937, FBI FOIA 67-102459 (Nixon); Hoover to Keenan, July 24, 1937, FBI FOIA 67-102459-10 (Nixon); Glavin to Director, "Richard M. Nixon," March 18, 1954, FBI FOIA 67-102459 (Nixon); Hoover, "Introduction of Vice President," June 11, 1954, FBI FOIA 67-102459 (Nixon); Adams to Callahan, "[Redacted], Former

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Special Agent," June 9, 1969, FBI FOIA 67-102459 (Nixon); Gellman, *Contender*, 5–8.

7. Hoover, "Introduction of Vice President"; Untitled, *CR*, February 18, 1947, B96, JEHS.

8. Nellor, "Nixon Assails Strategy," *WTH*, June 13, 1949, B101, JEHS; "H. Res. 262," June 22, 1949, S5C, FBI V 67-561 (Hoover); Nixon, "The Hiss Case," January 26, 1950, in Perlstein, *Richard Nixon*, 19–59.

9. Hoover to Nixon, January 31, 1950, F2, B19, PPS 320.103, RN; Hoover, "Introduction of Vice President"; O'Neill to Nixon, June 23, 1949, F1, B19, PPS 320.103, RN.

10. Hoover to Nixon, November 5, 1952, F3, B19, PPS 320.103, RN.

11. "FBI Director Hoover Recalls," *WS*, January 26, 1958, B125, JEHS; McHugh, "Hoover Boost All-America," *San Diego Union*, March 31, 1963, B135, JEHS.

12. Burrough, *Big Rich*, 219. Where not otherwise cited, background details on Murchison and Richardson can be found in this source.

13. Burrough, *Big Rich*, 204, 190–1, 225–8; "Hotel Del Charro" clipping, F30, S-JEHC.

14. Ribbel, "FBI Chief, Nixon," *San Diego Tribune*, August 10, 1955, B118, JEHS; Phleger, "Director of FBI," *San Diego Union*, August 11, 1955, B118, JEHS; Photo, PB54, NLEM; Nixon to Hoover, September 1, 1955, F6, B19, PPS 320.103, RN.

15. Anderson, "Millionaire Picked Up," *WP*, December 31, 1970, B150, JEHS; Burrough, *Big Rich*, 227; "Would Buy Half-Dozen," *Detroit Free Press*, July 13, 1954, B115, JEHS; "2 Texans," *NYT*, July 13, 1954, B115, JEHS; "Bing's Baby," *San Diego*, August 1967, B142, JEHS; Connally, *In History's Shadow*, 137.

16. Burrough, *Big Rich*, 242–3.

17. Pearson, "Washington Merry-Go-Round," *Louisville Courier Journal*, July 27, 1950, B105, JEHS; Weiner, *Legacy of Ashes*, 26-8.

18. Knebel, "How Hoover Rules," *Look*, June 14, 1955, B118, JEHS; Riebling, *Wedge*, 125–6, 100; Weiner, *Enemies*, 153.

19. Waller, *Wild Bill Donovan*, 361.

20. Weiner, *Legacy of Ashes*, 23-38; Riebling, *Wedge*, 94–5, 119-21; "Director's Notation," undated (ca. 1948), S14, FBI FOIA 62-80750-866 (CIA). On Dulles, also see Talbot, *Devil's Chessboard*; Waller, *Disciples*; Kinzer, *The Brothers*.

21. Ladd to Director, "Allen W. Dulles," March 5, 1953, S1, FBI IA 62-83338-10 (Dulles); Weiner, *Enemies*, 188-9.

22. Lucey, "No One Has," *WN*, January 7, 1953, B110, JEHS; Cover, *Time*, February 16, 1953. For Brownell's recollections, see Brownell, *Advising Ike*.

23. Brownell and Flanigan, interview re: Hoover, August 24, 1988, B270, HB.

24. Theoharis, *Boss*, 371–5; Stockham, *Lack of Oversight*, 23–4; "Executive Order 10450," April 27, 1953, National Archives, https://www.archives.gov/federal-register/codification/executive-order/10450.html.

25. Charles, *Hoover's War on Gays*, 124–6; Oshinsky, *A Conspiracy So Immense*, 264; Leviero, "1,456 Ousted," *NYT*, October 24, 1953; "Brownell Denounces," *WS*, June 12, 1953, B110, JEHS.

26. Fleeson, "The Last Chapter," *WS*, November 18, 1953, B112, JEHS; "Brownell on White Case," *NYHT*, November 17, 1953, B111, JEHS.

27. Weinstein, *Perjury*, 255-8; Ladd to Director, "[Redacted]-Espionage," October 16, 1950, FBI V (Venona).

28. Jonas, "Truman Promoted 'Spy,'" *WS*, November 6, 1953, B111, JEHS; Roper, "Senate Group Probes," *WS*, November 7, 1953, B111, JEHS; "Eisenhower's Remarks," *NYHT*, November 12, 1953, B111, JEHS; Reston, "A Prophetic Omission," *NYT*, November 17, 1953, B111, JEHS; "Text of Truman's Speech," *NYHT*, November 17, 1953, B111, JEHS; Walsh, "U.S. Response," *WS*, November 17, 1953, B111, JEHS.

29. "Hoover to be Called," *WS*, November 17, 1953, B111, JEHS; Lawrence, "Hoover Says," *NYT*, Nov. 18, 1953, B112, JEHS; Knowles, "New White Serial," *NYT*, November 18, 1953, B111, JEHS; Reston, "Hoover Star," *NYT*, November 17, 1953, B111, JEHS; Fleeson, "The Last Chapter," *WS*, November 18, 1953, B112, JEHS; "Nick Kenny Speaking," *NYM*, November 19, 1953, B112, JEHS.

30. "Hoover's Statement," *NYHT*, November 18, 1953, B112, JEHS; "Nick Kenny Speaking"; Reston, "Hoover Star."

31. "Behind the News," WFAA, November 17, 1953, B111, JEHS; O'Donnell, "Capitol Stuff," *NYM*, November 18, 1953, B112, JEHS.

32. Gallup, "Public Gives J. Edgar Hoover," *WP*, December 26, 1953, B112, JEHS.

33. Shumaker, "White House Fetes," *WTH*, November 18, 1953, B112, JEHS; McNair, "Supposed They Talked," *WP*, November 18, 1953, B112, JEHS; Catling, "Hoover Forgets Furor," *BS*, November 19, 1953, B112, JEHS.

### Chapter 36: No Sense of Decency (1953–1954)

1. Sampson, "Ike Backs Right," *WP*, November 24, 1953, B112, JEHS; "Face-to-Face Justice," *WTH*, November 24, 1953, B112, JEHS.

2. Oshinsky, *A Conspiracy So Immense*, 349; "Behind the News," WFAA, November 17, 1953, B111, JEHS.

3. "Text of Senator McCarthy's Speech," *NYT*, November 25, 1953.

4. Sokolsky, "These Days," *WTH*, December 3, 1953, B112, JEHS; Oshinsky, *A Conspiracy So Immense*, 472.

5. Morgan, *Reds*, 423; Oshinsky, *A Conspiracy So Immense*, 237.

6. SAC WFO to Director, "U.S. Senator Joseph R. McCarthy," November 2[8], 1952, S6B, FBI FOIA 94-37708-76X (McCarthy).

7. Davis, "'Joe Is Doing the Job,'" *NYP*, July 7, 1953, S3, FBI FOIA 62-96332 (McCarthy); Oshinsky, *A Conspiracy So Immense*, 303.

8. Rushmore, "FBI Battling," *NYJA*, October 7, 1951, B107, JEHS; Oshinsky, *A Conspiracy So Immense*, 250-5, 318-21.

9. On Cohn, see especially Hoffman, *Citizen Cohn*; Elias, *Gossip Men*; Zion, *Autobiography of Roy Cohn*. For a recent documentary see Tyrnauer, *Where's My Roy Cohn?* For Cohn's account of his time on the McCarthy committee, see Cohn, *McCarthy*.

10. Hoffman, *Citizen Cohn*, 142-7; Summers, *Official and Confidential*, 190; Schine, "Definition of Communism," 1952, FBI FOIA 62-98588 (Schine); Hoover to Schine, December 10, 1952, FBI FOIA 62-98588 (Schine).

11. Demaris, *Director*, 155; Olmsted, *Red Spy Queen*, 174–7; Hoffman, *Citizen Cohn*, 134-8; Cohn, *McCarthy*, 47–8.

12. Oshinsky, *A Conspiracy So Immense*, 266–9, 282, 326; McCarthy, "Can FBI Do It Alone?" *WS*, September 25, 1953, B111, JEHS.

13. Hoover, "Memorandum for Mr. Tolson," May 13 [illegible], 1953, S3, FBI FOIA 62-96332 (McCarthy).

14. Charles, *Hoover's War on Gays*, 91; Nichols to Tolson, July 23, 1953, Miscellaneous AZ Folders, NO&C; Hoover,

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# EXHIBIT 2

(Declaration of Beverly Gage)

had continued not just unscathed but strengthened by the trials of the Kennedy and Johnson years. Their correspondence throughout the 1960s displayed affection and openness, qualities rare for either man. "It is such a real pleasure to be able to relax and not have to guard every word and to know that one is with real, understanding friends," Hoover wrote to Nixon's wife, Pat, after an especially meaningful gathering. During the darkest days of the Kennedy administration, Hoover had spent hours complaining of his predicament. "I remember sitting with Hoover in his house during a visit to Washington in 1961," Nixon recalled, "listening to him go on about 'that sneaky little son of a bitch,' who happened to be the President's brother and Hoover's boss." Nixon provided what Hoover needed most during those years. He was knowledgeable and discreet, happy to strategize, and eager to listen.[1]

Hoover did the same for Nixon. Though they no longer lived in the same city or shared the same church, Nixon continued to consult Hoover about major life decisions. After the loss in California, he asked Hoover whether he should stay out west or venture east and start a new life. "It was just like old times to enjoy superb food, good hospitality and stimulating conversation with friends with whom you feel you can safely let down your hair," he wrote after a dinner at Hoover's house, as he wrestled with the choice. Once he decided to settle in New York, joining a well-connected corporate law firm, they visited regularly, keeping up with holiday greetings and gift exchanges and treating each other more or less as family. When Nixon's thirteen-year-old daughter, Julie, performed a water ballet for Hoover and Tolson during one of their California vacations, Hoover took the time to write a note of thanks. "It was a most beautiful exhibition and I could understand that you girls had worked hard on both the decorations and the ballet in order to make it so perfect."[2]

When crisis struck during those years, Hoover and Nixon came back together almost instinctively, rushing to provide the same mutual support that had gotten them through earlier times of trial. In November 1963, it was Hoover who provided Nixon with the first solid details about Kennedy's death, taking the time to brief Nixon by phone even in the midst of the post-assassination chaos. During the King controversy of late 1964, Nixon expressed his private outrage at the news coverage, identifying with Hoover as a victim of the pseudo-liberal press. "As I look at the cartoons and read of the vitriolic comments in the columns and editorials," he wrote in a personal letter, "I am reminded of some of the things I went through during the years I was in Washington. I just wanted you to know that you can number me among the legion of friends who are standing with you during these attacks." Now that shared sense of embattlement was bringing them together once again.[3]

THE TRUTH WAS THAT NIXON AND HOOVER DIDN'T JUST LIKE EACH OTHER. In 1968, they needed each other more than ever. At the age of seventy-three, Hoover

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could no longer survive in office without a sympathetic man in the White House. For Nixon, matters were more complicated but no less urgent. Everyone agreed that his greatest challenge for the Republican nomination would come from the party's conservative wing, where true believers and inside operatives had nominated Goldwater in 1964. Despite the landslide loss to Johnson, most of them still felt it was the best thing they had ever done. While liberals painted Nixon as a far-right reactionary, conservatives viewed him as an Eisenhower moderate, all too ready to compromise. Nixon needed to convince conservatives that he was on their side. So Hoover's status as a "patron saint" of the far right was valuable.[4]

Despite his collaborations with Johnson, most conservatives still expressed admiration for Hoover, viewing him as one of the last holdouts in a federal government lurching toward the left. Almost alone among members of the Johnson administration, he seemed to be willing to speak out in favor of conservative verities on crime, religious faith, anticommunism, and, in more coded terms, race and segregation. His open hostility toward King, the New Left, civil disobedience, Stokely Carmichael, anti-war protesters, and the muddle-headed liberals who supported them only added to his luster. After all, Hoover controlled an institution that could inflict real damage on those groups. For any conservative seeking a role model within the Johnson administration, Hoover was as good as it got. "I'd a lot rather have my own kids grow up hero-worshipping J. Edgar Hoover than Mario Savio or Stokeley [*sic*] Carmichael," explained California superintendent of public instruction Max Rafferty, famous for his own diatribes against out-of-control teens and the national turn toward lawlessness.[5]

Conservatives throughout the country agreed. Between 1964 and 1968, Hoover received national awards from right-wing groups including the American Educational League, a self-proclaimed promoter of "Southland" values; the American Security Council, an anticommunist research agency staffed by former FBI employees; Young Life, an umbrella organization for teenage evangelicals; and We the People!, a political group affiliated with the far-right Christian Crusade. At the same time, he retained overwhelming popularity among mainstream Republicans. In a 1965 Gallup poll, 84 percent of Republicans gave the FBI a "highly favorable" rating, making Hoover's Bureau by far the most popular institution in the survey. By comparison, 50 percent of Republicans expressed "highly favorable" views of the American Medical Association, making it a distant second. Just 3 percent admired the John Birch Society and 1 percent supported the Ku Klux Klan.[6]

Nixon's popularity—among Republicans but especially among conservatives—was not nearly as secure as Hoover's. "I know my positions on civil rights and foreign aid and reciprocal trade haven't changed," he told a *New York Times* reporter during an exploratory interview in 1966, "and the conservatives—the real conservatives—don't like that." To drive the problem home, he rummaged around his desk and pro-

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duced a recent poll of subscribers to right-leaning magazines. Asked to name the nation's "most trusted" conservatives, readers came up with a list that included Barry Goldwater, Ronald Reagan, William F. Buckley, and J. Edgar Hoover—but excluded Nixon. Upon declaring his candidacy, Nixon had set out to woo these other men, meeting with Goldwater and his fellow conservative Republicans, hosting elaborate gatherings for the *National Review* crowd and their acolytes at Young Americans for Freedom. Their support turned out to be grudging and uneven, though, especially once Reagan declared his own primary campaign. Only Hoover was an unequivocal Nixon man.[7]

And of them all, Hoover was arguably the most valuable. Despite his growing disconnect with the younger generation, many of his views—especially on crime and policing—seemed ready-made for the 1968 campaign. According to a Gallup poll released in February, crime now ranked as the number one domestic concern for most Americans. Hoover remained the nation's most prominent exponent of the "law-and-order" approach. Under the pressures of the campaign, Nixon now chose to adopt it as his own signature issue.[8]

Nixon published his first major statement on the subject in an October 1967 article in *Reader's Digest*, the dependable old warhorse of American conservatism. The title—"What Has Happened to America?"—echoed Hoover's jeremiads, with their laments over the nation's moral and political decline. The language that followed was pure Hoover as well: race riots as harbingers of "urban anarchy"; "permissiveness," "indulgence," and misplaced "sympathy" for criminals as the liberal rot at the heart of the system. Following a script Hoover had helped to write, Nixon argued that racial discrimination and poverty could never fully explain the alarming rise in urban violence. Instead, Americans should look to something far more "virulent," such as the "decline in respect for public authority and the rule of law in America." Nixon shared Hoover's militancy on the question. "We should make no mistake," he wrote. "This country cannot temporize or equivocate in this showdown with anarchy; to do so is to risk our freedoms first and then our society and nation as we know it." On the campaign trail, Nixon presented himself as the last hope of a society headed toward chaos and moral breakdown. By early 1968, the campaign had distilled these proclamations down to a handily vague slogan: "Nixon's the One."[9]

The intended audience was that subset of citizens Hoover had long courted as his base: the Sons and Daughters of the American Revolution, American Legion members, small-town editors and policemen, white citizens wary of civil rights. Nixon would experiment with catchy new names for this group—"the silent center," "the silent majority," "the forgotten Americans"—but there was nothing new in thinking about them as a coherent network of support. Hoover had been doing it for decades. Now the Republican Party was beginning to strategize about how to combine them into its political base, with Nixon as their standard-bearer. In 1968, it seemed as if the white

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# EXHIBIT 3

(Declaration of Beverly Gage)

The New York Times | https://www.nytimes.com/1966/09/04/archives/nixon-on-nixon-and-other-issues.html

1

# *Nixon on Nixon and Other Issues*

**By Terence Smith**

Sept. 4, 1966


Nixon on Nixon and Other Issues

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The President's Club Is Too Clubby, Says the G.O.P.

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Richard Milhous Nixon had been talking for nearly an hour before the inevitable question was asked. When it finally came up, he stiffened slightly, moved forward in his chair and cupped his hands primly on one knee. "No, I mustn't talk about 1968," he said, coughing his throat clear. "Romney isn't talking about it, Reagan isn't talking about it and I shouldn't either. It doesn't do any good, because the Republican party's problem isn't 1968, it's right now, 1966. We lost 47 House seats in the Johnson landslide in '64. If we don't pick up 30 of those an absolute minimum of 30-then it's all over. It's Armageddon, "I know how tough it is to rally a group of people after a defeat. You can't do it very often. If we don't have a significant win this fall, you can forget about the Republican party. You won't be able to rally the young people in the party for a generation. You'll have to get a new party, a new name. It's that important to us." And because it's that important to him, Mr. Nixon is planning a grueling, nation-wide campaign tour this fall. Beginning this week, he will spend 16 hours a day shaking hands, speaking and raising funds on behalf of the Republican candidates in the 50 Congressional districts he considers "marginal." A Durable Figure With only a two-week break in October to prepare a case for argument before the Supreme Court, he will maintain the pace until Nov. 8. Although the schedule is demanding, it's not unusual for Richard Nixon. He's been going at the same breathless rate since 1964. He's hit 30 states since then, and he'll be in the rest before the first snow. All of which makes the inevitable questions about 1968 superfluous. If ever a man was running for the Presidency, it's the senior partner of Nixon, Mudge, Rose, Guthrie and Alexander. He operates out of a comforta- ble, handsomely appointed corner office on the 24th floor of 20 Broad Street, hard by the New York Stock Exchange. Mr. Nixon is clearly the most durable political figure on the American scene, and his office looks it. The walls are covered with keys to European and Asian cities—the lagniappe of his innumerable "good will" tours of the world. Commemorative gavels abound. His polished walnut desk is suitable for the signing of major treaties. To the rear of his executive armchair is a long walnut cabinet laden with the framed, signed photographs of perhaps a score of heads of state, including Elizabeth II, the Shah of Iran and Haile Selassie. A graceful Vietnamese lacquer dominates one wall, on another hang the photographs of three notable Republicans: Dwight D. Eisenhower, Herbert Hoover

and Abraham Lincoln. When a visitor entered his office one morning last week, Mr. Nixon came around the corner of the huge desk with one hand outstretched. He gestured with the other towards a brown leather chair. Mr. Candidate The general, he explained, had been on the phone from Gettysburg, and that's why he had asked his visitor to wait. After two golf stories, the conversation turned to politics. What did he think, in all candor, was the effect of one of his flying visits to a Congressional district? What was the benefit to the candidate? "Three things," he said. "Publicity, enthusiasm and money. A candidate lives on publicity, and a visit by a national figure gets him massive publicity for that one day. And any national figure has a certain mystique-it stirs up the enthusiasm of his workers, makes them think that this particular election has a national importance beyond the local. Finally, it generates funds, whether at a $100-a-plate dinner, or just a reception after a parade." Toting up the take from the political bashes he has attended around the country since 1964, Mr. Nixon guessed that his name on the programs had attracted somewhere between $4 million and $5 million. "We'll probably raise another million at the things coming up between now and the election," he said. What did he plan to talk about on the Congressional stump this fall? Planning Ahead "No, that won't be the major issue. A week ago it might have been, but now it's clear that it's going to be domestic policies-the affect on the average people of the Administration's mishandling of the price increases. A 5 per cent increase in prices breaks the back of families in the $4,000 to $6,000 per year range, and that's the category most American families . . ." Mr. Nixon was cut off in mid-sentence by a buzz from the beige telephone to the left of his desk. Alerted by his secretary, Rose Mary Woods, he stood up to greet a tall, blonde Marine Corps colonel who came in to present him with a sheet of stamps commemorating the 50th anniversary of the Marine Reserve. Small talk about the war in the Pacific, smiles for the Marine sergeant with the camera, handshakes all around and then back to his chair. "Where were we? Oh yes. Well, actually there'll be three big issues this year. High prices is the first. Along with the high interest rates and the shortage of money. "Then the problem of crime in the streets. This issue is even more real than it was in '64. And not just racial violence but all crime. There's been a 48 per cent increase in crime over the last six years, compared with an 8 per cent increase in

population. In other words, crime has increased at a rate six times faster than the population. Right of Center "And then the labor-management issue. This is the real sleeper. People are afraid of the labor unions, but they're fed up with the strikes." The buzzer sounded again and Mr. Nixon picked up the phone to speak for several minutes with a man who was arranging to get him a house for the Labor Day weekend. Should he bring golf clubs? Was it near the water? “Okay, thanks very much, good. . . good goodbye." Did he expect that the conservatives in the party would have the same grip on the national convention in 1968 that they did in 1964? "I would expect the sentiment in the convention to be to the right of center, but not on the far right. The initial reaction to the Johnson victory was for the party to swing to the left of Johnson, to out-Johnson Johnson. "But that's not so any longer. The conservative position has become respectable again, particularly in economic theory. What gave conservatism a bad name were the bomb throwers, the nuts, the racists." Did he consider himself more conservative now than he was, say, 20 years ago, when he was first elected to office? "It's hard for me to see much change. I don't know, I don't think so. I know my positions on civil rights and foreign aid and reciprocal trade haven't changed, and the conservatives-the real conservatives don't like that." Unlisted Conservative To emphasize his point, Mr. Nixon dug through a pile of papers in his "in" box until he found a poll of readers of conservative publications. The readers were asked to list their favorite, "most trusted" conservatives in public life. Barry Goldwater was at the top of a list that included William F. Buckley Jr., Ronald Reagan, J. Edgar Hoover and Senator Everett M. Dirksen, but not, Mr. Nixon pointed out, Richard Nixon. "I guess I'm not a conservative if I can't make that list," he said. With quick answers to quick questions, he said he thought Governor Rockefeller would win re-election, and that Mr. Reagan and Charles Percy would win their battles. Would Senator Robert F. Kennedy actually attempt to snatch the 1968 Presidential nomination from President Johnson? "If Johnson wants to run again, he'll get the nomination. Any incumbent President can always get renominated. Look at Truman in 1948. If he could then, anyone could, anytime. "But if Lyndon thinks he's in trouble, if Lyndon thinks he needs Bobby on the ticket to win, he'll sugar-coat him, swallow him and regurgitate him later.”

The New York Times (by Tim Kantor)

PARTY MAN: Former Vice President Richard Nixon, shown in his Wall Street law office, is off and running to help Republican candidates this fall-and perhaps his 1968 Presidential chances.

# EXHIBIT 4

(Declaration of Beverly Gage)

birthday and he appeared to be just where he wanted: surrounded by friends and well-wishers, welcomed at the innermost sanctum of presidential power.[1]

The impression did not last. The bureaucratic struggles of the past few years had been too bitter, and Hoover's interests too much at odds with those of the White House, to make for any permanent reconciliation. Though Hoover had won most of those bruising battles, the victories had damaged his relationships not just in the White House, but in Congress, the media, and the Bureau itself.

ON JANUARY 1, HOOVER'S ACTUAL BIRTHDAY, ANTI-WAR PROTESTERS KICKED off the year with a picket line outside the White House. Many wore flak jackets and blue jeans—the "usual anti-war garb," in one reporter's scornful words—but others came dressed in suits, ties, and dresses to mark the dawn of the new year. Around two p.m., as the picket line broke up, they gathered for a bonfire on the White House Ellipse. In the bright cold of the afternoon, they shared wishes for peace, then launched into a series of "anti-war Christmas carols." One was dedicated to Hoover. "Sing choirs of agents, sing in adoration," they belted to the tune of "O Come All Ye Faithful." "Sing ye, o sing ye, to J.E.H."[2]

Around the FBI, though, few people remained to sing Hoover's praises. DeLoach and Sullivan were gone. Hoover's own generation, the men and women who had been at his side since the beginning, was barely hanging on. Tolson was sicker than ever, shuffling into the office for just a few hours each day. Sam Noisette retired in 1968 and chauffeur James Crawford stepped down after hospitalization for brain surgery. Helen Gandy went on medical leave in March 1972, a rare concession to human frailty. Hoover kept up a jokey front. "If I did not know you better," he wrote to Gandy as she lay ill at home, "I might think you were just taking advantage of this beautiful spring weather we are having."[3]

But there was no avoiding the basic math, or the ongoing string of personal losses. Frank Baughman, Hoover's dashing comrade from Kappa Alpha, died in the fall of 1971 after what the papers described as a "short illness." When Hoover appeared in Daytona Beach to attend Baughman's funeral, reporters were shocked at what they saw. "He quite obviously had difficulty maintaining his balance on his arthritic-torn legs," one wrote, describing Hoover as "grim-faced" and "tired-looking" behind his dark sunglasses. Several agents swarmed Hoover as an official escort but, perhaps afraid to touch the great man, they could not prevent him from stumbling on the stairs between the funeral home and the sidewalk. When Hoover reached his white limousine, he was forced to reach down and lift his deadened legs into the seat by hand. He "now appears to be a man silently suffering great physical pain," one observer concluded.[4]

Not long after returning from Daytona, Hoover learned that Walter Winchell was in the hospital, suffering from the excruciating final stages of testicular cancer that had

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metastasized to his bones. Winchell's life had been one long saga of misery in recent years: the suicide of his only son in 1968, followed by the death of his long-time partner in 1970 and the loss of his beloved newspaper column. Press coverage now said that Winchell was in "serious but not critical condition," and Hoover dispatched an upbeat note bidding him "a quick and complete recovery." After four decades of friendship, this was their last correspondence. Winchell died three weeks later, a shrunken wraith at just 110 pounds.[5]

Hoover conceded nothing about his own state. "I am indeed fortunate in being blessed with excellent health," he told *The New York Times* in December 1971. But even his tried-and-true allies were no longer persuaded by the false front. In January, the *Star*'s Jeremiah O'Leary, long one of Hoover's greatest Washington acolytes, wrote an article hinting that the time had come for the director to step down. "The last year was a rough one for Hoover and the FBI," O'Leary wrote. "The brusque and thin-skinned director at times seemed cast in the role of a man besieged." The article included hurtful comments from an array of anonymous FBI officials (most likely including Sullivan and DeLoach), who attributed Hoover's decline to the fact that "he no longer has around him the kind of take-charge guys who used to save him from snap decisions and the hip-shooting that have been getting him into the headlines lately." Even they expressed a certain mournfulness about watching him falter. "Nobody wants to see him humbled after all these years," an anonymous agent told O'Leary. "But he ought to leave of his own accord and with honor instead of while wolves are tearing at him."[6]

While Hoover remained in office, though, the wolves kept coming, as fierce and fast as ever. In April, Congressman Cornelius Gallagher charged the Bureau with "corruption at its worst," and with planting "innuendo" about Hoover's political enemies—Gallagher included—in national magazines. (In private conversation, he threatened to reveal on the House floor that "the director of the FBI and the Deputy Director of the FBI have been living as man and wife for some 28 years," a charge that he never dared utter in public.) From the ranks of ex-agents, a dissenter named Robert Wall emerged to renounce the FBI as "a repressive organization, seeking to suppress organizations which it thinks deviates from the orthodoxy." From the world of publishing, not one but two biographical exposés promised to reveal his innermost secrets. "Unlike God, John Edgar Hoover admits to no mistakes," one of them began, followed by more than two hundred pages dissecting and dismissing the most treasured myths of Hoover's half century in office.[7]

By all accounts Hoover appeared to be annoyed but unbowed by the attacks, unwilling even now to give in and step down. In late April, he traveled to New York for the annual lunch of the Banshees, an ingathering of the most powerful publishers in the news industry, where his host William Randolph Hearst Jr. found him cheerful and "in the pink of health." Upon his return to Washington, he plunged back into

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business as usual. On the night of May 1, he went to dinner at Tolson's apartment, then returned home to Thirtieth Place and ventured upstairs to bed. Sometime over the next few hours, his heart stopped. He died alone, but with the world still watching.[8]

THE OFFICIAL STORY, RECORDED IN A MEDICAL EXAMINER'S "DEATH REPORT," is that Annie Fields ("female, Negro, 59 years") found Hoover's body. She had prepared Hoover's breakfast, but grew concerned around eight thirty when he didn't appear on time. She waited a few minutes, then went up to his bedroom, where she found him in "an unconscious condition in bed." Another version (and perhaps the more likely one) suggests that it was actually James Crawford who found Hoover. Though he had retired from the Bureau in January, Crawford had come to Thirtieth Place to supervise the installation of some rose plants, one of the few people Hoover trusted to do work around the house. When Fields noticed that Hoover hadn't come down for breakfast, she asked Crawford to go upstairs, since Hoover was known to sleep in the nude. In that version of the story, Hoover was found not peacefully in bed, but sprawled on the floor, as if he had fallen while returning from the bathroom.[9]

In any case, it was either Fields or Crawford who called Tolson, who called Gandy, who called Assistant to the Director John Mohr, the highest-ranking official on the Bureau's administrative side. Mohr later estimated that Gandy phoned "a few minutes after 9 o'clock," at which point Hoover's death became a political event. Mohr notified Acting Attorney General Richard Kleindienst, who instructed him to make sure that Hoover's office was "secure" before the news leaked out too widely. Back at Thirtieth Place, Hoover's personal physician arrived to examine the body and proclaimed the cause of death to be "hypertensive cardiovascular disease." At the Bureau, word spread quickly among Felt and other top officials.[10]

Nixon, too, soon learned of the morning's events. Upon hearing from Haldeman that Hoover had died overnight, after forty-eight years as FBI director, Nixon burst out with an expression that was one part surprise, one part grudging admiration. "That old cocksucker!" he supposedly exclaimed, before turning to the question of what, exactly, was supposed to happen next.[11]

NIXON SEEMS TO HAVE EXPERIENCED HOOVER'S DEATH AS AN AUTHENTIC blow, the loss of a man who had been part of his inner circle since his first rough-and-tumble years in Washington. "He was my best personal friend in government," Nixon told his special counsel, a claim that he would repeat countless times in the subsequent days. In conversations with aides, speechwriters, and cabinet members, Nixon described Hoover over and over again as a friend "in a very close and intimate sense," with

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# EXHIBIT 5

(Declaration of Beverly Gage)

# *Trump Unveils Plans for ‘Golden Dome’ Missile Defense System*

The project has been a priority for President Trump since he took office, having promised during the campaign to build a defense system against foreign threats similar to Israel’s Iron Dome.

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**By Erica L. Green**
Erica L. Green is a White House correspondent. She reported from Washington.

May 20, 2025

President Donald Trump unveiled plans for his “Golden Dome” missile defense shield on Tuesday, predicting that the ambitious plan to expand the country’s air defense system would be completed by the end of his term.

U.S. officials have said the Golden Dome is necessary to protect against “catastrophic attacks,” but experts say it faces logistical and financial hurdles.

The project has been a priority for Mr. Trump since he took office. He promised during the campaign to build a defense system against foreign attacks similar to Israel’s Iron Dome, with air defense capabilities that intercept rockets and missiles.

The United States is more than 400 times larger than Israel.

Mr. Trump has said the project will cost $175 billion, although the Congressional Budget Office said it would likely cost far more, as much as $542 billion. The president said on Tuesday that the Golden Dome would get $25 billion in funding from his tax cut and spending bill, which has yet to pass Congress, and that Canada had expressed interest in taking part in the program, and could share in some of its cost.

Mr. Trump said he was confident that the United States could complete the project in about three years and be "fully operational before the end of my term." He called it "as close to perfect as you can have, in terms of real production."

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"Once fully constructed, the Golden Dome will be capable of intercepting missiles even if they are launched from other sides of the world, and even if they are launched from space, and we will have the best system ever built," Mr. Trump said.

In a January executive order titled "Iron Dome of America," Mr. Trump gave the Pentagon 60 days to submit details for the plan, which included accelerating development of U.S. hypersonic missiles and "space-based interceptors."

Administration officials said that Mr. Trump's project, which the Pentagon named the Golden Dome in a nod to Mr. Trump's favorite color and metal, would be a next-generation military system designed to guard against a variety of ballistic, hypersonic and cruise missiles, which have been successfully deployed by adversaries such as Russia.

Mr. Trump's order said that the possibility of those and other advanced aerial attacks "remains the most catastrophic threat facing the United States."

Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth, who joined Mr. Trump in the Oval Office on Tuesday, called the project a "game changer" and "a generational investment in the security of America and America."

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Mr. Trump also announced that Gen. Michael Guetlein, the vice chief of space operations at the Space Force, would be overseeing the project.

Mr. Guetlein said during the Oval Office announcement that while the United States has been focusing on peace overseas, adversaries had been modernizing their nuclear forces, and building their ballistic capabilities — including hypersonic missiles capable of attacking the United States within an hour and traveling at 6,000 miles an hour.

“It is time that we change that equation and start doubling down on the protection of the homeland,” Mr. Guetlein said.

But shielding the United States from such attacks presents technical challenges. The physics of defending America’s vast territory against an incoming intercontinental missile is wildly more complicated than protecting Israel against the smaller rocket attacks it faces.

Experts also said that the cost of building one for the United States could prove a heavy financial burden. While Mr. Trump stands a chance at getting the $25 billion in the spending bill under consideration in Congress, estimates from the Congressional Budget Office found that it could cost $161 billion to $542 billion to build the system.

The project gives Mr. Trump a chance to realize a vision of former President Ronald Reagan’s. In the 1980s, Reagan spent billions to build a defense system, known as “Star Wars,” against potential nuclear attack. The initiative ultimately failed because of technological and budget challenges.

Mr. Trump said that he didn’t think his Golden Dome would suffer the same fate.

“Ronald Reagan wanted it many years ago, but they didn’t have the technology,” he said. “But it’s something we’re going to have. We’re going to have it at the highest level.”

David E. Sanger contributed reporting.

**Erica L. Green** is a White House correspondent for The Times, covering President Trump and his administration.

# EXHIBIT 6

(Declaration of Beverly Gage)

# Opinion | In Firing Comey, Did Trump Unleash the Next Deep Throat?

*Beverly Gage*

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Op-Ed Contributor

By Beverly Gage

May 10, 2017



*President Richard Nixon and F.B.I. Director J. Edgar Hoover in Washington in 1969.Credit...Bettmann Archive/Getty Images*

Once again, Donald Trump has done something that no president before him dared to do. This time, he has fired an F.B.I. director engaged in an active and continuing investigation of his own campaign. The decision reflects President Trump's most autocratic instincts, showcasing his contempt for the independence of federal investigators as well as for the basic search for truth.

Given his frequent calls to prosecute Hillary Clinton for using a private email server, the anger he directed at the F.B.I. director, James Comey, for giving her a "free pass," and reports that he directed Attorney General Jeff Sessions to find a reason to fire Mr. Comey, it's hard to believe the president's claim that he made his decision out of concern for Mr. Comey's harsh treatment of Mrs. Clinton during the campaign.

But if Mr. Trump actually hopes to shut down or limit the F.B.I. investigation into his campaign's ties to Russia,

he may well be disappointed. History suggests that his decision is likely to backfire, producing new leaks and heightened inquiries that will be more difficult to control than he imagines.

President Trump may think he has sent a stern warning to leakers and independent bureaucrats unwilling to toe the White House line. Instead, he may well have incited an internal rebellion.

That's what happened in 1972, when President Richard Nixon suddenly found himself in a position to replace J. Edgar Hoover, the long-serving and infamous F.B.I. director. Suspicious of the F.B.I.'s independence, Nixon tried to appoint a successor who would bring the bureau under White House influence. To his surprise, he set in motion the events that led to the Watergate scandal — and ultimately to his own resignation.

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Nixon did not fire Hoover. Indeed, no president had the chutzpah to fire Hoover, who took office in 1924 under Calvin Coolidge and went on to serve seven other presidents — four Democrats and three more Republicans. According to popular myth, Hoover achieved this astonishingly long tenure by blackmailing politicians with tidbits from his secret files. In truth, though he was hardly above arm-twisting and gossip-mongering, much of his power came from more mundane sources, including his skill at promoting the F.B.I.'s nonpartisan image.

Nixon knew Hoover's political talents well. He had been working with Hoover since 1948, when the two men collaborated to expose the alleged Communist spy Alger Hiss. Over the years, they had become fast friends and allies, swapping secrets, spending time outside Washington together and exchanging holiday presents. Hoover quietly supported Nixon during the 1968 campaign; one of Hoover's former deputies, Louis Nichols, served as chief of Nixon campaign security. When Nixon won the election, he vowed to keep Hoover on, despite the fact that the F.B.I. director was well over the mandatory retirement age of 70.

Once in office, however, Nixon discovered that Hoover was not nearly as pliable as he might have hoped. In 1970, when Nixon sought a more aggressive surveillance campaign against antiwar protesters, Hoover put up resistance, arguing that the program was illegal and likely to result in public backlash.

The following year, Hoover and Nixon came into conflict over the investigation of the Pentagon Papers leaker Daniel Ellsberg. Nixon discussed the possibility of firing Hoover, convinced that the director was too old and cautious — and too independent of White House influence. But Nixon worried that Hoover knew too much, and he recognized the political dangers inherent in firing an F.B.I. director.

Then Hoover died, of a heart attack, on May 2, 1972. The event made front-page news, and all three television networks carried Hoover's funeral live. For Nixon, it appeared to be a moment of serendipity — a chance to do what he had long wanted to do. Instead, it turned out to be the beginning of a long national nightmare.

Nixon made his first mistake almost immediately. Faced with the solemn duty of replacing Hoover, he chose L. Patrick Gray, an assistant attorney general and former Navy man with no F.B.I. experience, to serve as acting director. The Nixon adviser John Ehrlichman articulated the reasons behind the decision in a "talking points" memo for the president soon after Hoover's death. "Gray's primary assignment is to consolidate control of the F.B.I.," Ehrlichman wrote, "making such changes as are necessary to assure its complete loyalty to the administration." Critics did not need access to such documents to label Gray a White House stooge, put in place to undermine the F.B.I.'s vaunted independence.

The F.B.I.'s Watergate investigation was not yet underway. But Nixon already believed that control of the F.B.I. would be critical for his political future. He hoped especially that a newly cooperative bureau would help to dam the fast-flowing stream of leaks from the executive branch. Instead, he inspired one of the great leakers of all time: the F.B.I. associate director W. Mark Felt.

As the historian Max Holland has shown, Felt hoped to become director himself and took Nixon's decision as a personal affront. Like many career F.B.I. men, Felt also believed in the value of bureau autonomy and resented the president's attempt to manipulate an independent bureaucracy. In June 1972, when Washington police arrested five men connected to the Nixon campaign during a break-in at Democratic National Committee headquarters in the Watergate office complex, Felt recognized an opportunity. As the journalist Bob Woodward admitted more than a decade ago, Felt turned on Nixon in the summer of 1972, feeding information to The Washington Post as the legendary informer Deep Throat.

Felt's leaks served in part to counter intense pressure from the White House, which sought to end the F.B.I. investigation. As early as June 23, 1972, Nixon conspired with Chief of Staff H. R. Haldeman to close the F.B.I.'s inquiry — a recorded conversation later known as the "smoking gun tape," which forced Nixon's resignation. The F.B.I. proceeded nonetheless, painstakingly digging into Nixon's campaign and its ties to the Watergate burglars. Felt leaked some of those discoveries to the press, keeping the story alive at a moment when Republicans hoped it would simply disappear.

Nixon won re-election in a landslide later that year. Still, the F.B.I. problem refused to go away. In 1973, Nixon nominated Gray to be permanent F.B.I. director, but the confirmation hearings turned into a debacle, fueling rather than calming suspicions of a Watergate cover-up. Gray resigned in disgrace that April, after it was revealed that he'd destroyed Watergate-related files, and was temporarily replaced by yet another acting director. Over the next several months, things got steadily worse for Nixon, as congressional investigations gained momentum and a newly appointed independent prosecutor, Archibald Cox, demanded the release of White House tapes. In October 1973, Nixon had Cox fired in an attempt to shut down that investigation — but this, too, failed to stop the rolling disaster of Watergate.

Many commentators have pointed to Cox's dismissal as the closest precedent for Mr. Comey's firing: the last time a president tried to use his executive power to stop an investigation — and failed to get what he wanted. The story of the F.B.I.'s succession crisis raises still more troubling prospects for Mr. Trump in the months ahead. Despite having political skills far superior to President Trump's, Nixon never managed to "consolidate control of the F.B.I." in 1972, at the peak of his popularity. To the contrary, his attempts to do so fatally undermined his presidency, setting in motion a political and bureaucratic backlash from which Nixon — indeed, the presidency itself — never fully recovered.

Beverly Gage is a professor of American political history at Yale. She is the author of "The Day Wall Street Exploded: A Story of America in Its First Age of Terror" and is writing a biography of the former F.B.I. director J. Edgar Hoover.

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headline: Did Trump Unleash The Next Deep Throat?. Order Reprints | Today's Paper | Subscribe

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# EXHIBIT 7

(Declaration of Beverly Gage)

# *F.B.I. Director James Comey Is Fired by Trump*

**By Michael D. Shear and Matt Apuzzo**
May 9, 2017

WASHINGTON — President Trump on Tuesday fired the director of the F.B.I., James B. Comey, abruptly terminating the top official leading a criminal investigation into whether Mr. Trump's advisers colluded with the Russian government to steer the outcome of the 2016 presidential election.

The stunning development in Mr. Trump's presidency raised the specter of political interference by a sitting president into an existing investigation by the nation's leading law enforcement agency. It immediately ignited Democratic calls for a special counsel to lead the Russia inquiry.

Mr. Trump explained the firing by citing Mr. Comey's handling of the investigation into Hillary Clinton's use of a private email server, even though the president was widely seen to have benefited politically from that inquiry and had once praised Mr. Comey for his "guts" in his pursuit of Mrs. Clinton during the campaign.

But in his letter to Mr. Comey, released to reporters by the White House, the president betrayed his focus on the continuing inquiry into Russia and his aides.

"While I greatly appreciate you informing me, on three separate occasions, that I am not under investigation, I nevertheless concur with the judgment of the Department of Justice that you are not able to effectively lead the bureau," Mr. Trump said in a letter to Mr. Comey dated Tuesday. White House officials refused to say anything more about the three occasions Mr. Trump cited.

The officials said that Attorney General Jeff Sessions and the deputy attorney general, Rod J. Rosenstein, pushed for Mr. Comey's dismissal. But many in Washington, including veteran F.B.I. officers, saw a carefully choreographed effort



by the president to create a pretense for a takedown of the president's F.B.I. tormentor.

"I cannot defend the director's handling of the conclusion of the investigation of Secretary Clinton's emails," Mr. Rosenstein wrote in another letter that was released by the White House, "and I do not understand his refusal to accept the nearly universal judgment that he was mistaken."

Reaction in Washington was swift and fierce. Senator Chuck Schumer of New York, the Democratic leader, said the firing could make Americans suspect a cover-up. Mr. Trump lashed back later Tuesday night in a Twitter post: "Cryin' Chuck Schumer stated recently, 'I do not have confidence in him (James Comey) any longer.' Then acts so indignant."

Many Republicans assailed the president for making a rash decision that could have deep implications for their party. Representative Justin Amash, Republican of Michigan, said on Twitter that he now supports an independent commission to investigate the Russia links to Mr. Trump. He called Mr. Trump's claim that Mr. Comey had cleared him three times "bizarre."

"I've spent the last several hours trying to find an acceptable rationale for the timing of Comey's firing," Senator Jeff Flake, Republican of Arizona, said on Twitter. "I just can't do it."

In a sign of the F.B.I.'s intense interest in Mr. Trump's advisers, a grand jury in Virginia issued subpoenas in recent weeks for records related to the former White House national security adviser, Michael T. Flynn, according to an American official familiar with the case. Mr. Flynn is under investigation for his financial ties to Russia and Turkey. Grand jury subpoenas are a routine part of federal investigations and are not a sign that charges are imminent. It was not clear that the subpoenas, which were first reported by CNN, were related to Mr. Comey's firing.

The dismissal ended the long-deteriorating relationship of Mr. Trump and Mr. Comey, who repeatedly collided publicly and privately. For Mr. Trump, a president who puts a premium on loyalty, Mr. Comey represented an independent and unpredictable director with enormous power to disrupt his administration.

Mr. Comey learned from news reports that he had been fired while addressing bureau employees in Los Angeles. While Mr. Comey spoke, television screens in the background began flashing the news. In response to the reports, Mr. Comey laughed, saying that he thought it was a fairly funny prank. Shortly after, Mr. Trump's letter was delivered to F.B.I. Headquarters in Washington.

Mr. Comey was four years into a 10-year term, an unusually long tenure that Congress established to insulate the director from political pressure. Though the president has the authority to fire the F.B.I. director for any reason, Mr. Comey is only the second director to be fired in bureau history. President Bill Clinton fired William S. Sessions in 1993.

Mr. Trump had already fired his acting attorney general for insubordination and his national security adviser for lying to Vice President Mike Pence about contacts with Russians. But firing Mr. Comey raises much deeper questions about the independence of the F.B.I. and the future of its investigations under Mr. Trump.

In an instance of bizarre timing and optics, the White House announced late Tuesday night that Mr. Trump would meet on Wednesday in the Oval Office with Sergey V. Lavrov, Russia's foreign minister.

F.B.I. agents were enraged by the firing and worried openly that Mr. Trump would appoint a White House ally to lead them. Mr. Comey was widely liked in the F.B.I., even by those who criticized his handling of the Clinton investigation. Agents regarded him as a good manager and an independent director.



Kellyanne Conway, a senior White House adviser, spoke to reporters outside the White House on Tuesday. Ms. Conway said the firing was not related to Russia. Doug Mills/The New York Times

"It is essential that we find new leadership for the F.B.I. that restores public trust and confidence in its vital law enforcement mission," Mr. Trump wrote, a remark that particularly upset agents who saw it as an insult to them.

The White House has not said what precipitated the firing, a significant question because the Justice Department's stated reasons were well known even when Mr. Trump decided in January to keep Mr. Comey on the job. Mr. Trump watched last week as Mr. Comey testified on Capitol Hill, offering his first public explanation of his handling of the Clinton email case. There, Mr. Comey said that he had no regrets about his decisions but that he felt "mildly nauseous" that his actions might have tipped the election to Mr. Trump.

The Clinton controversy centers on a news conference Mr. Comey held last July, when he broke with longstanding tradition and policies by publicly discussing the Clinton case and chastising Mrs. Clinton's "careless" handling of classified information. Then, in the campaign's final days, Mr. Comey announced that the F.B.I. was reopening the investigation, a move that earned him widespread

criticism. At the time, though, Mr. Trump and his attorney general, Mr. Sessions, praised Mr. Comey for actions that are now at the heart of the F.B.I. director's firing.

Mr. Trump "saw an opening" to fire Mr. Comey after the testimony, a White House official said. Reince Priebus, the White House chief of staff, argued against it, delaying — but not overruling — the decision. Mr. Trump received the documents from the Justice Department on Tuesday. Aides also compiled a stack of news clips criticizing Mr. Comey.

Mr. Comey's firing came hours after the F.B.I. corrected his testimony last week about how classified information ended up on the laptop of the disgraced former congressman Anthony D. Weiner.

Mr. Comey had told the Senate Judiciary Committee that during the F.B.I.'s investigation into Mrs. Clinton's use of a private email server while secretary of state, officers uncovered evidence that her aide, Huma Abedin, had "forwarded hundreds and thousands of emails, some of which contain classified information" to Mr. Weiner, her husband.

But the F.B.I. told Congress that only a few of the emails had been forwarded and that the vast majority were simply backed up to Mr. Weiner's laptop.

Mr. Comey's deputy, Andrew G. McCabe, a career F.B.I. officer, became acting director, the Justice Department said. The White House said the search for a director will begin immediately.

The firing puts Democrats in a difficult position. Many had hoped that Mrs. Clinton would fire Mr. Comey soon after taking office, and blamed him as costing her the election. But under Mr. Trump, Mr. Comey was seen as an important check on the new administration.

Kellyanne Conway, a senior White House adviser, said the firing was not related to Russia. "Today's actions had zero to do with that," she said in a contentious interview on CNN. Democrats were unconvinced.

“Any attempt to stop or undermine this F.B.I. investigation would raise grave constitutional issues,” said Senator Richard J. Durbin, Democrat of Illinois.

Mr. Trump’s decision to fire Mr. Comey marks the president’s latest law enforcement purge. In late January, Mr. Trump fired Sally Q. Yates, who had worked in the Obama administration but was serving as acting attorney general. In March, he fired Preet Bharara, the United States attorney in Manhattan, after assuring the prosecutor months earlier that he could stay on. But the president’s firing of Mr. Comey was far more consequential, as Ms. Yates and Mr. Bharara both were holdovers, and might only have served in the Trump administration for a matter of days or weeks.

A longtime prosecutor who served as the deputy attorney general during the George W. Bush administration, Mr. Comey came into office in 2013 with widespread bipartisan support. The defining moment in Mr. Comey’s career — until Tuesday night — came in 2004 during a hospital room standoff with White House officials who wanted to pressure the Justice Department to reauthorize a secret wiretapping program. Mr. Comey stood his ground.

Mr. Trump has been furious with news stories about his campaign’s ties to Russia. The White House has been critical of the leaks at the heart of those stories and tried unsuccessfully to enlist Mr. Comey in an effort to rebut the stories.

In a Twitter message last week, Mr. Trump accused Mr. Comey of being “the best thing that ever happened to Hillary Clinton,” and said he gave her “a free pass for many bad deeds.” After the president accused former President Barack Obama of wiretapping his office, Mr. Comey publicly declared those claims untrue.

Senator Ron Wyden, Democrat of Oregon and a member of the Senate Intelligence Committee, said in a post on Twitter that Mr. Comey “should be immediately called to testify in an open hearing about the status of Russia/Trump investigation at the time he was fired.”

Before announcing the firing, Mr. Trump called leaders on Capitol Hill to tell them of his decision. Mr. Schumer told Mr. Trump that he was making a "big mistake." Mr. Trump paused.

"O.K.," he said. "We'll see."

**Corrected on May 11, 2017**: An article on Wednesday about President Trump's dismissal of James B. Comey as director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation misstated Mr. Comey's tenure in that position. He was in his fourth year when he was fired, not in his third. The error was repeated in an accompanying picture caption. The error was also repeated on Wednesday in an article about the historical context of the dismissal.

We acknowledge mistakes in our reporting with corrections. If you spot an error, please let us know at corrections@nytimes.com. Learn more.

Reporting was contributed by Michael S. Schmidt, Maggie Haberman, Glenn Thrush, Julie Hirschfeld Davis and Matthew Rosenberg.

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A version of this article appears in print on , Section A, Page 1 of the New York edition with the headline: Trump Fires Comey Amid Russia Inquiry

# EXHIBIT 8

(Declaration of Beverly Gage)

# 16

# "Nut Job," "Scumbag," and "Fool"

## HOW TRUMP TRIED TO DECONSTRUCT THE FBI AND THE ADMINISTRATIVE STATE—AND ALMOST SUCCEEDED

*Beverly Gage*

In late January 2017, a week after his inauguration, President Donald Trump invited FBI director James Comey to the White House for dinner. Comey thought—hoped, really—that it would be a group event, perhaps a gathering of law-enforcement or intelligence officials. Instead, he showed up to a table set for two: just the president and the FBI director, their names rendered in calligraphy on place cards. They dined on shrimp scampi. But as Comey later reflected, it was really "my job security" that was "on the menu." Within minutes, Trump asked whether Comey wanted to stay on as FBI director, then laid out the conditions for doing so. "I need loyalty," the president said. "I expect loyalty."[1]

If Comey had been a political appointee—one of the thousands who move in and out of the White House at moments of presidential

transition—the demand might have been merely tacky, more mafioso than statesman. The FBI director occupies an unusual place in the federal system, however. Though appointed by the president, the head of the FBI is tasked with standing apart from politics, a civil servant loyal to the truth and the law rather than to any individual politician. The director's term of office lasts for ten years, longer than any single presidency. The reason is simple: as the country's leading federal law enforcement agency, the FBI is frequently called on to conduct politically sensitive inquiries. In order for such investigations to be credible, the bureau must be seen as a nonpartisan force composed of objective fact-finders and trained professionals, not as the tool of any party or president.

Trump gave little credence to that idea, just as he hated the idea that government experts—from health officials to diplomats to military leaders—might be in a position to render judgments and affirm truths at odds with his political priorities. His efforts to denigrate, undermine, ignore, and weaken the so-called administrative state began long before his dinner with Comey and lasted well beyond his final day in office. As a term, the "administrative state" encompasses most of the federal bureaucracy, shorthand for the two million career public servants who work for the government but whose jobs persist outside of election cycles.[2] In February 2017, just weeks after Comey's awkward dinner at the White House, Trump aide and chief strategist Stephen Bannon identified "the deconstruction of the administrative state" as one of the top priorities of the Trump White House.[3] According to Trump, federal employees acted as a drag on American capitalism—part of "the steady creep of government bureaucracy that drains the vitality and wealth of the people," as he complained during a speech in Warsaw, Poland, in the summer of 2017.[4] Nonpartisan government employees also posed a more direct threat to his political power: charged with uncovering facts and enforcing the law, they had the ability to challenge Trump's claims about the state of the world—and about the questionable activities of his own administration.

National security agencies, especially the FBI, bore the brunt of Trump's hostilities. Trump launched an open and unabashed political war against his own intelligence agencies, railing against them as "Deep State" conspirators out to undermine the public good and destroy his presidency. In doing so, he radically altered their status within American

political culture. Before Trump, most Republicans and conservatives professed great admiration for the FBI, CIA, and other intelligence agencies, describing them as patriotic bulwarks vital to national security. Democrats and progressives tended to view them with greater skepticism, cognizant of national security imperatives but also aware of the potential for excessive secrecy and abuse of civil liberties. Trump flipped that equation, sending Republicans scrambling to condemn a disloyal and invasive "Deep State" while Democrats looked to the FBI and other intelligence services to hold the White House accountable.[5]

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Trump's fear that career federal employees did not especially like him had at least some grounding in truth. According to an October 2016 poll by *Government Executive* magazine, a slim majority of federal employees said they were likely to vote for Democratic candidate Hillary Clinton, while just 34 percent favored Trump.[6] This was hardly a surprising finding, given Trump's open contempt for government work. But such partisan preferences should have been irrelevant. As members of the "administrative state," federal employees are supposed to set aside their political views when carrying out their official duties—to be as objective, nonpartisan, and professional as possible.

Congress codified this idea in law in 1883, spurred to action by a national crisis. Two years earlier, a deranged federal office-seeker had shot and killed President James Garfield, claiming that the president denied him the diplomatic job he deserved in exchange for supporting Garfield in the 1880 election. Congress soon passed the Pendleton Act, the nation's first major civil-service law, creating a system of exams to award federal jobs by merit rather than party patronage and establishing protections to prevent employees from being fired during shifts in administration. Since that moment, the federal bureaucracy has expanded far beyond anything imagined in the nineteenth century. The FBI alone—not even a figment of the imagination in the 1880s—now employs thirty-five thousand people. But the principles of that original vision still apply. In its modern incarnation, the federal civil service is supposed to be guided by merit, expertise, and professionalism rather than by partisan politics.

Things have never been so simple in practice, however—especially in the case of the FBI. In 1907, when the attorney general Charles Bonaparte first proposed an investigative bureau within the Justice Department, Congress resisted for fear that the detective force would be used for partisan ends. Bonaparte went ahead and created his bureau, but soon ran into accusations that he was deploying his new employees to spy on his political enemies.[7] Such accusations continued under longtime FBI director J. Edgar Hoover, who ran the bureau from 1924 through 1972. Throughout his career, Hoover insisted that the FBI was a bastion of professionalism and objectivity, a model of administrative expertise. At the same time, he was a deft political operator, sometimes supporting and sometimes undermining the current occupant of the White House and other politicians.

Hoover benefited from being in the right place at the right time. The FBI's most significant growth occurred during the New Deal and World War II, periods that gave birth to both the modern welfare state and the modern security state. As political scientists Stephen Skowronek, John A. Dearborn, and Desmond King point out, the bureaus and agencies created during that era were meant to be "deep"—to have roots and structures that would extend beyond the life of any presidency, thus giving the government forms of continuity and expertise that election-driven appointments could not. Trump's definition of the Deep State was far more negative: a conspiratorial vision in which career bureaucrats and intelligence officials were actively colluding with his political enemies to bring down the presidency.[8]

Republicans and Democrats alike participated in the expansion of the administrative state, voting for new laws and programs and agencies (most of them situated in the executive branch) that required the employment of an ever-growing number of Americans. Still, the two parties never saw eye to eye on the desirability of this expansion. In 1964, speaking on behalf of Republican candidate Barry Goldwater, the budding conservative star Ronald Reagan complained that a "little intellectual elite," embedded within agencies "in a far-distant capital," was abusing its authority to undermine individual citizens' autonomy.[9] Since that moment, attacking the federal bureaucracy and its allegedly arrogant, out-of-touch experts has been a staple of Republican politics. In his 1981 inaugural address as president, Reagan declared that

"government is not the solution to our problem; government is the problem," perhaps the most famous indictment of the administrative state ever uttered.[10] Two decades later, President George W. Bush carried on the tradition of "politicizing and terrorizing the bureaucracy," in the words of one critic, attacking the federal civil service in both word and deed.[11]

Even the most conservative Republicans usually carved out a key exception to this critique, however. While they railed against the "do-gooders" of the welfare state and the diplomatic corps, they usually championed the men and women of the security state, the realm of government composed of the intelligence agencies, military branches, and related national-defense services. The FBI fell into this category. Its employees are bound by many of the same rules that govern other parts of the federal bureaucracy: distance from politics, hiring by merit, the cultivation of impartial expertise. But Republican presidents have traditionally viewed them as a far more congenial constituency than, say, the employees of the Social Security Administration. Even as a lifetime federal bureaucrat, FBI director Hoover became known as a "patron saint" of modern conservatives, who admired him for his outspoken right-wing views on race and religion and for his hostility to the American Left.[12] Hoover built the FBI in his image, giving it a reputation as both a professional law-enforcement agency and a bastion of conservatism.

This basic sympathy of outlook did not always prevent clashes between the FBI and Republican occupants of the White House. Though close friends with Hoover, Richard Nixon came to office in 1969 determined to bring the federal bureaucracy under White House control and to use agencies such as the FBI to serve his political interests. Within months, he found himself embroiled in clashes with Hoover, who sometimes accommodated and sometimes resisted Nixon's requests that the FBI surveil and investigate the president's political enemies. At one point, Nixon thought about firing Hoover but backed off for fear of a national scandal. When Hoover died conveniently in May 1972, Nixon appointed a political loyalist to head the FBI. That move exacerbated rather than contained the growing tensions, however. After the Watergate burglary that June, the FBI's second-in-command, a career civil servant named Mark Felt, began

leaking to the press about the progress of the investigation as the top-secret source "Deep Throat"—the beginning of the end for Nixon.[13]

But even Nixon rarely denounced the FBI in public, preferring backroom maneuvering to any sort of open clash. Trump broke decisively from this tradition. Over the course of his presidency, Trump accused the FBI of collusion, corruption, incompetence, and even criminal activity, depicting the agency as the leading edge of a Deep State conspiracy out to discredit his administration. He attacked the FBI's leadership with demeaning names: "nut job," "phony," "ignorant fool," "major sleazebag."[14] His most aggressive assaults often came in response to specific investigations, acts of retaliation and intimidation aimed at undermining FBI inquiries into his administration's ties to Russia. To Trump, anyone who was not with him was against him, including a vast array of government employees who were supposed to be loyal to the facts and the truth and the law—and not to the Trump White House.

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Comey was no stranger to political controversy when he showed up for dinner with Trump in January 2017. A lifelong Republican, Comey had spent much of his career as a federal prosecutor, first as a U.S. attorney in New York, then as a top official in the Department of Justice, followed by stints at two major defense contractors. Despite his partisan affiliations, Comey prided himself on his professional independence throughout his government employment. In 2004, as acting attorney general, he opposed renewal of a controversial domestic surveillance program initiated by President George W. Bush, arguing that it was unconstitutional. When Bush administration officials showed up at the hospital bedside of Attorney General John Ashcroft, hoping for a quick sign-off to renew the program, Comey rushed to the hospital as well, threatening to resign if the renewal went through. This reputation for independence made him appealing to President Barack Obama, who, unlike Trump, believed in the FBI's nonpartisan mission. Obama appointed Comey for a ten-year term as FBI director in May 2013.[15]

For his first few years, Comey focused on keeping the FBI humming along, attempting to expand the numbers of women and people of color in the bureau's ranks while steering clear of partisan politics.

Before 2016, his most controversial public statement concerned crime and policing. In response to the emerging Black Lives Matter movement, Comey argued that criticism of the police led to higher crime rates and more gun violence in embattled urban neighborhoods. "I don't know whether that explains it entirely," he told an audience at the University of Chicago Law School, "but I do have a strong sense that some part of the explanation is a chill wind blowing through American law enforcement over the last year." The statement sparked pushback among criminal-justice activists and even some members of his own Justice Department, who rejected the so-called Ferguson effect as a racist myth. But Comey's remarks had few repercussions in the rest of Washington, where most Republicans agreed with him and most Democrats seemed inclined to steer clear of the issue.[16]

Partisan politics caught up with him in March 2015. That month, as part of a fractious Republican-led inquiry into a fatal attack on U.S. diplomatic facilities in Benghazi, Libya, congressional investigators discovered that Hillary Clinton had used a private email server during her time as secretary of state. Over the summer, the FBI opened "Midyear Exam," an investigation into whether Clinton had transmitted classified information on her private server—and, if so, whether she had ill intent. The investigation hung over Clinton's presidential campaign throughout 2015 and into 2016, as she jousted with socialist rival Bernie Sanders for the Democratic nomination. Then, on July 5, 2016, Comey announced in a press conference that the FBI had found no evidence of criminal wrongdoing. Though Clinton had been "extremely careless" in handling classified information, he explained, she showed no malevolent purpose and therefore should not be subject to prosecution.

Comey praised FBI employees for their "remarkable work in this case," emphasizing that it had been careful, thorough, and above all objective. The press conference itself was hopelessly enmeshed in politics nonetheless. The previous week, Attorney General Loretta Lynch had met with former president Bill Clinton (Hillary's husband) aboard a plane on the Phoenix airport tarmac. Ostensibly just a meet-and-greet, the encounter had provoked a furor, since Lynch, as attorney general, was supervising the investigation into Hillary Clinton's email server. It was at that point that Comey made the unusual decision to release the results of the investigation during a press conference—without

consulting Lynch or coordinating with the Department of Justice. He argued that his go-it-alone strategy stood the best chance of preserving the FBI's reputation as a nonpartisan, professional investigative agency in the midst of so much political turmoil.

It did anything but. Trump ran a "law and order" campaign, championing the police while vilifying immigrants and people of color as criminals out to undermine public safety and the American way of life. His message should have placed him in sympathy with the FBI, especially given Comey's statements about policing and crime. Instead, Trump seized on Comey's exoneration of Clinton as evidence that the FBI, like the Democratic Party, was scheming to destroy his candidacy. On the campaign trail, Trump had already called for Clinton to be thrown in jail for supposedly undermining national security, going so far as to lead chants of "Lock Her Up" at campaign rallies. After Comey's press conference, he transferred some of that fury onto Comey and the FBI. "FBI director said Crooked Hillary compromised our national security," Trump tweeted on July 5. "No charges. Wow! #RiggedSystem."[17]

Trump's attacks continued over the next several months as he and Clinton secured their parties' nominations and entered into the most divisive campaign in modern political history. On October 17, Trump retweeted an article from the far-right Daily Caller hinting that Comey deliberately "stood in the way" of the Clinton email investigation. "Crooked Hillary colluded w/FBI and DOJ and media is covering up to protect her," he declared in a follow-up tweet. "It's a #RiggedSystem!"[18] According to Trump, the FBI conspired to obscure massive criminal wrongdoing by Clinton in order to aid her election and thus provide a congenial environment for future machinations by the secretive and manipulative Deep State.

So Trump was as surprised as anyone by what happened on October 28, twelve days before the election, when Comey suddenly reversed course and announced that the FBI was reopening the Clinton email investigation. The impetus for this turn of events came from an unrelated inquiry into former Democratic congressman Anthony Weiner, who had been accused of inappropriate online sexual exchanges with an underage girl. In the course of that investigation, the FBI came across a laptop shared by Weiner and his wife Huma Abedin, a close adviser to Clinton. On the

laptop were tens of thousands of "emails that appear to be pertinent" to the Clinton investigation, as Comey explained in a letter to Congress.[19]

Comey once again framed his decision to reopen the investigation—and to reveal the fact publicly—as the fulfillment of his duty as a federal civil servant. In truth, political pressures from within the FBI played a significant role in his decision-making. As Comey later acknowledged, the powerful New York field office contained a group of current and former officials who harbored a "deep and visceral hatred of Secretary Clinton"—the twenty-first-century extension of Hoover's conservative institutional culture. Under the circumstances, Comey feared that news of the Weiner email cache would be leaked to the press. He concluded that the FBI's reputation would be better served by a voluntary disclosure of the information, in keeping with its mission to follow the facts and to disregard politics.[20]

His announcement set off a political firestorm. Democrats were appalled at his decision to reveal inconclusive developments in an ongoing investigation—a highly unusual move in any case, much less in one involving a major-party candidate just days before a presidential election. Trump was delighted, tossing aside his previous grumbling about FBI collusion in favor of unmitigated praise. "I respect the fact that Director Comey was able to come back after what he did," Trump told a rally in Phoenix, absolving Comey of the earlier charge that the FBI had gone soft on Clinton. "I respect that very much."[21]

The admiration proved to be short-lived. On November 3, three days before the election, Comey sent another letter to Congress—this time declaring that the email investigation was closed once again, the FBI having found nothing of interest on the Weiner laptop. At that point, Trump resumed his attacks, going back to his old themes of FBI collusion with "Crooked Hillary." He could have saved his breath. Three days later, he won the election in a squeaker, with Democrats—including Clinton herself—convinced that he owed his margin of victory to Comey's October letter.

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Had Clinton's email server been the only political investigation of significance that fall, Trump's struggle with the "Deep State" might

have ended there, with the FBI receding in importance for Trump and Democrats resuming their traditional suspicions of the bureau. But another inquiry was also under way—one that Comey had failed to mention during the election. In July 2016, around the same time that Comey was closing the Clinton email investigation for the first time, the FBI received notice of strange contacts between Trump campaign operatives and representatives of the Russian government. Around the same time, the website WikiLeaks published thousands of private emails stolen from Democratic National Committee (DNC) servers. The FBI suspected that the two might be linked—that the Russians were attempting to influence the U.S. election in favor of Trump, largely through techniques of social media manipulation. In mid-July, Comey launched an investigation into Russian interference in the 2016 election and the Trump campaign's possible ties to Russia, code-named Crossfire Hurricane.

That inquiry continued from the summer into the fall, as Comey closed the Clinton email investigation, then reopened it, then closed it again. He said nothing in public about the Russia angle, on the logic that Crossfire Hurricane was a secret counterintelligence investigation and thus entirely different from the criminal inquiry into Clinton's email server. Not until December, several weeks after the election, did federal intelligence agencies publicly confirm that the Russian government was likely behind the DNC hack.

This was the context in which Trump made his bid for Comey's "loyalty" over dinner—not merely an attempt to secure the director's friendship but an overt bid to disrupt and interfere with the ongoing Russia investigation. Comey responded uneasily, explaining that he would give the president "honesty," in accordance with the FBI director's status as an independent, nonpartisan government employee. Trump wanted more, proposing the category of "honest loyalty" as a wink-and-nod alternative. Still concerned, Comey agreed that "you will get that from me," then retreated to make a written record of their disturbing conversation.[22]

What he got from Trump in return was an unceasing pressure campaign, fueled in part by advice from the president's top aides. Trump came to office surrounded by advisers suspicious of the Deep State machinations—not only Bannon but also Roger Stone, a longtime

Republican dirty-tricks operative whose 2013 book accused Lyndon Johnson of colluding with the FBI and other shadowy forces to murder JFK.[23] Right-wing publications similarly fed Trump's anxieties. In December 2016, a writer identified as "Virgil" published a four-thousand-word article on the right-wing *Breitbart* news site, warning that the "military-industrial complex" and the "establishment" were already out to get Trump. "The term 'Deep State' refers to the complex of bureaucrats, technocrats, and plutocrats that likes things just the way they are and wants to keep them like that—elections be damned," Virgil wrote. *Breitbart* titled the article "The Deep State vs. Donald Trump," a handy summary of the narrative that would guide the Trump administration's actions over the next four years.[24]

Comey continued to be a focus of Trump's ire and of White House efforts to shut down the Russia investigation. In mid-February, Trump asked Comey to stay behind after a group meeting with intelligence officials, in the hopes of persuading the FBI to go easy on National Security Advisor Michael Flynn, under investigation for lying about his conversations with Russian officials. The following day, Comey asked Attorney General Jeff Sessions to ensure that the FBI director and the president would never again be left alone together, fearing that Trump would continue to escalate his partisan demands and intimidation tactics. Deprived of direct occasions for influencing the FBI investigation, Trump once again turned to Twitter, accusing the FBI of leaking classified information and of harboring a vendetta against his fledgling administration. On May 9, in an act that stunned even his most diehard supporters, he took the aggressive step of firing Comey.

The firing occurred in true Trumpian fashion: it was sudden, personal, and calculated to be as embarrassing to Comey as possible. Rather than contact Comey directly, Trump released his letter of dismissal to the press, leaving Comey to discover what had happened when he heard it on the television news. At the time, Comey was in Los Angeles, preparing to deliver a speech at an FBI diversity-in-recruiting event. Upon learning that he had been fired, he wondered if he would have to drive back across the country or if he would be allowed to return on a government plane. Eventually acting FBI director Andrew McCabe approved one last flight, and Comey ventured back to Washington in

both glory and disgrace, the first major casualty of Trump's war on the intelligence agencies and the administrative state.

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By firing Comey, Trump hoped to shut down the Russia investigation. Instead, the opposite happened: what had been a routine counterintelligence investigation became a constitutional crisis, with much of the nation horrified at Trump's attempt to strong-arm an independent investigative agency into political submission. Concerned at the prospect of allowing a president to act with such impunity, Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein appointed a special counsel to carry on the Russia investigation. For the position, he chose a man known around Washington as a paragon of the administrative state's by-the-books, nonpartisan ethos: former FBI director Robert Mueller.

Liberals and Democrats flocked to Mueller's side, predicting a report that would finally expose Trump's double-dealing with Russia as well as his attempts to obstruct investigators at home. So did at least a few Republicans, impressed with Mueller's reputation for probity and thoughtful public service (as well as his status as a lifelong Republican). Trump himself expressed outrage, not least because Mueller had worked closely for years with Comey. Trump labeled the Russia probe a "totally conflicted and discredited Mueller Witch Hunt" and boasted that "if I wanted to fire Robert Mueller . . . , as reported by the Failing New York Times, I would have fired him" (though most legal experts agree that the president does not have the authority to fire a special counsel).[25] Privately, though, Trump was worried about the consequences of the Mueller probe. "This is terrible," he fumed upon hearing of Mueller's appointment. "This is the end of my presidency."[26]

In the end, the Mueller report, like Comey's press conferences, satisfied almost nobody. The report showed that Russian operatives had interfered with the 2016 election in order to help Trump, and that Trump campaign staffers provided information to them that may have helped with the effort. It also showed that Trump repeatedly attempted to interfere with the Mueller investigation, an effort that proved "unsuccessful" mostly "because the persons who surrounded the President declined to carry out orders or accede to his requests."[27]

The report stopped short of accusing the president of direct collusion or obstruction of justice, however, in part because Mueller did not believe that criminal charges could be pursued against a sitting president. "While this report does not conclude that the President committed a crime, it also does not exonerate him," Mueller wrote, a wishy-washy statement that clarified nothing.[28]

Attorney General Bill Barr quickly spun the results to Trump's benefit, arguing that Mueller's inconclusive conclusions showed that Trump had been right to suspect a witch hunt. "President Trump faced an unprecedented situation," Barr declared two days after receiving the report. He explained that the president was justifiably "frustrated and angered by a sincere belief" that his "political opponents" were conspiring with career government officials to undermine his presidency.[29] By the time Barr released the report to the public three weeks later, the official White House narrative was set: just as Trump had suspected, a group of partisan Deep State officials had conspired to undo the will of the American people, only to find themselves thwarted by lack of evidence.

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Trump himself wasted no time in declaring the report a "Complete and Total EXONERATION."[30] Despite the alleged victory, he did not let up on his campaign against Mueller and Comey or against the other federal civil servants who spoke out against him. In the fall of 2019, the Democratic-controlled House began impeachment inquiries on charges that Trump solicited foreign interference in the 2020 election during conversations with the president of Ukraine, a serious abuse of presidential power. The preliminary hearings brought an array of career diplomats and public servants to the witness table, many of them hailed by the press for their deep knowledge and seriousness of purpose. Among them was Lieutenant Colonel Alexander Vindman, a Ukrainian-born career army officer and Eurasia specialist. Vindman testified not only about his knowledge of Ukraine but also about his love for the United States, where government employees could tell the truth—even about the president—without fear of retaliation. Several months later, he was forced out of the army after more than two

decades of service because of "bullying, intimidation and retaliation" from the Trump White House, in the words of his lawyer.[31]

Such stories of an angry and contemptuous president wreaking vengeance on career government employees resonated well beyond the impeachment hearings. Morale at the State Department fell precipitously under Trump, as the White House ignored, dismissed, and actively mocked diplomatic advice. "In my three and a half decades as a U.S. Foreign Service officer, proudly serving five presidents and ten secretaries of state from both parties, I've never seen an attack on diplomacy as damaging, to both the State Department as an institution and our international influence, as the one now underway," retired diplomat William Burns wrote in *Foreign Affairs* magazine in 2019.[32] By neglect as well as intent, Trump allowed key positions at State to go unfulfilled, gumming up the work of the bureaucracy. Meanwhile, many high-ranking career employees resigned, while an untold number of prospective recruits never bothered to apply, loath to serve under a president who evinced so little use for their work.

Those who stayed found that their advice often went unheeded—indeed, that they were not consulted in even basic matters of policy. When Trump announced a ban on travelers from predominantly Muslim countries in early 2017, he did so with little input from top Defense or Justice officials.[33] After the COVID-19 pandemic took hold in the spring of 2020, he was quick to dismiss public-health advice and to denounce infectious-disease expert Anthony Fauci as a "disaster" surrounded by "idiots."[34] When a hurricane failed to strike Alabama, in defiance of Trump's predictions, he pressured the National Weather Service to alter its maps to make his claims seem more plausible. "He is demoralizing and undermining one government department after another," *Washington Post* columnist Max Boot wrote in 2019, citing a state of dismay not only at the State Department and the National Weather Service but at the Department of Homeland Security, the National Security Council, the CIA, and the Defense Department.[35]

Some agencies went out of their way to anticipate possible objections from the White House. In preparation for an exhibit on women's suffrage, the National Archives altered photographs of the 2017 Women's March to obscure signs critical of Trump, explaining that

"as a non-partisan, non-political federal agency, we blurred references to the President's name on some posters, so as not to engage in current political controversy."[36] Others held firm under pressure. In 2020, after Trump threatened to call out the army to suppress protests for racial justice, military leaders objected vociferously, citing the dangers of deploying the army on domestic soil.

One Trump appointee went so far as to compose an anonymous editorial in the *New York Times* assuring the country that there were still "adults" within the White House orbit prepared to stand up for the higher virtues of fact, truth, law, and democracy. "This isn't the work of the so-called deep state," wrote Homeland Security chief of staff Miles Taylor, later revealed to be the author of the essay. "It's the work of the steady state."[37]

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Taylor's essay highlighted the conflicted loyalties of some Trump appointees, who believed in the political mission but also admired the work of career government employees. In popular politics, by contrast, the response to Trump's attacks fell mostly along partisan lines. As recently as 2003, the FBI's approval rating among Republicans had exceeded that of Democrats by a wide margin: 63 percent to 44 percent, respectively.[38] Under Trump, that equation was reversed. By the middle of 2018, according to a Pew survey, 77 percent of Democrats approved of the FBI, while only 49 percent of Republicans did. And the Republican decline came almost exclusively during the Trump presidency, with the FBI's approval rating falling from 65 to 49 percent in little more than a year.[39] The conservative magazine *National Review* noted the change, labeling the Democrats' "newfound faith" in the intelligence establishment "every bit as partisan as Republicans' newfound skepticism."[40]

The FBI remained a special target for Trump even as the focus on Midyear Exam and Crossfire Hurricane receded. By 2019 nearly every high-ranking official who had worked on those investigations had either been fired or stepped down. A few created their own scandals as they left, amid charges of political corruption, incompetence, and sexual indiscretions. The most dramatic was the revelation of August 2016 text

exchanges between FBI officials Peter Strzok and Lisa Page (who were engaged in an extramarital affair at the time), who assured each other that Trump was never "going to become president" because "we'll stop it."[41] Trump made the most of those discoveries, attacking Strzok as a "sick loser" and both officials as "corrupt FBI lovers" riddled with bias and lack of professionalism.[42]

The ongoing tensions with the Trump White House left Comey's successor in a difficult situation. To replace Comey, Trump appointed a low-key Republican lawyer and Yale Law graduate named Christopher Wray, who promised at his nomination hearing that "I will never allow the FBI's work to be driven by anything other than the facts, the law, and the impartial pursuit of justice."[43] Perhaps for that reason, Trump soon turned on his own appointee. Among Trump's complaints was the fact that Wray failed to denounce Hunter Biden, son of Democratic presidential candidate Joe Biden. He also disliked that Wray considered the left-wing activist group Antifa more of an "ideology" than a concerted terrorist organization. As the 2020 election approached, Trump threatened to fire Wray just as he had fired Comey.[44]

On the campaign trail, Trump doubled down on his "law and order" politics, alleging that "Biden stands with the riots & looters" while "I stand with the HEROES of law enforcement."[45] That fondness for law enforcement still did not extend to the FBI or other federal agencies, however. Throughout the campaign, Trump accused the "Comey/Mueller inspired FBI" of going soft on the "ANARCHISTS & THUGS" protesting in support of racial justice and police reform. He blamed other members of "the deep state, or whoever" for a variety of ills, including the obstruction of COVID vaccine development.[46] After losing the election, Trump excoriated the "'Justice' Department and the FBI" for doing "nothing about the 2020 President Election Voter Fraud, the biggest SCAM in our nation's history," falsely claiming that he had actually won the election. In that same tweet, he called on those who agreed with him to assemble "in D.C. on January 6th."[47]

When January 6 came, hundreds of Trump supporters stormed the Capitol as Congress attempted to certify the Electoral College count. They terrorized members of Congress and rampaged through the building, causing extensive property damage. A police officer and several protesters died as a result of the confrontation. It fell to the FBI to

investigate what many Democrats characterized as a vicious terrorist attack, putting its agents at the center of one last partisan controversy. Many Republicans responded by blaming the FBI for failing to anticipate the riot.[48]

On January 20, 2021, Trump left office. Meanwhile, the people he had spent years attacking—the career officials of the government—stayed behind to assess the damage and pick up the pieces. Large swaths of the administrative state remained unscathed, its employees still employed, its ethos of nonpartisan professional work powerfully resistant to "deconstruction." But as political scientists Lisa K. Parshall and Jim Twombly have noted, there are many ways to measure Trump's impact on administrative governance, most of which go beyond questions of budgetary size or mere survival.[49] Rhetorically, Trump's attacks on public servants were unsurpassed among American presidents for their denigrating and dismissive tone. And his policy agenda, whether in diplomacy or health policy or immigration, changed the inner workings of many government bureaucracies. As President Joseph Biden's new secretary of state Anthony Blinken remarked upon taking up his appointment, "The State Department I'm walking into today is not the same one I left four years ago." According to Blinken, its employees were demoralized, its career service hollowed out, and its mission under question throughout the world.

The FBI was not the same either. Thanks to support in Congress, its budget actually grew slightly under Trump, from $8.76 billion in 2017 to $9.25 billion in 2020, as did its number of employees.[50] But few would say that the FBI came out of the Trump era better off. Four years of battling the president left the bureau reeling from high executive turnover, internal scandals, and damage to its reputation, especially among the Republicans, who had once been its greatest supporters.

Attempting to set a new tone, President Biden signaled early on that he would seek stability and cooperation rather than an ongoing war with the intelligence community. On January 21, the president's first full day in office, the White House announced that Wray would be staying on as FBI director and that Biden "has confidence in the job he is doing."[51] They currently have no plans to meet for dinner.

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# EXHIBIT 9

(Declaration of Beverly Gage)

# *Trump Told Russians That Firing 'Nut Job' Comey Eased Pressure From Investigation*

**By Matt Apuzzo, Maggie Haberman and Matthew Rosenberg**

May 19, 2017

WASHINGTON — President Trump told Russian officials in the Oval Office this month that firing the F.B.I. director, James B. Comey, had relieved "great pressure" on him, according to a document summarizing the meeting.

"I just fired the head of the F.B.I. He was crazy, a real nut job," Mr. Trump said, according to the document, which was read to The New York Times by an American official. "I faced great pressure because of Russia. That's taken off."

Mr. Trump added, "I'm not under investigation."

The conversation, during a May 10 meeting — the day after he fired Mr. Comey — reinforces the notion that the president dismissed him primarily because of the bureau's investigation into possible collusion between Mr. Trump's campaign and Russian operatives. Mr. Trump said as much in one televised interview, but the White House has offered changing justifications for the firing.

The comments represented an extraordinary moment in the investigation, which centers in part on the administration's contacts with Russian officials: A day after firing the man leading that inquiry, Mr. Trump disparaged him — to Russian officials.

The White House document that contained Mr. Trump's comments was based on notes taken from inside the Oval Office and has been circulated as the official account of the meeting. One official read quotations to The Times, and a second official confirmed the broad outlines of the discussion.

Sean Spicer, the White House press secretary, did not dispute the account.

In a statement, he said that Mr. Comey had behaved politically and put unnecessary pressure on the president's ability to conduct diplomacy with Russia on matters such as Syria, Ukraine and the Islamic State.

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"By grandstanding and politicizing the investigation into Russia's actions, James Comey created unnecessary pressure on our ability to engage and negotiate with Russia," Mr. Spicer said. "The investigation would have always continued, and obviously, the termination of Comey would not have ended it. Once again, the real story is that our national security has been undermined by the leaking of private and highly classified conversations."

The day after firing Mr. Comey, Mr. Trump hosted Russia's foreign minister, Sergey V. Lavrov, in the Oval Office, along with the Russian ambassador to the United States, Sergey I. Kislyak. The meeting ignited controversy this week when it was revealed that Mr. Trump had disclosed intelligence from an Israeli counterterrorism operation.

A third government official briefed on the meeting defended the president, saying that Mr. Trump, whose discursive speaking style has hindered him in office, was using a negotiating tactic when he told Mr. Lavrov about the "pressure" he was under. The idea, the official suggested, was to create a sense of obligation with Russian officials and to coax concessions out of Mr. Lavrov — on Syria, Ukraine and other issues — by saying that Russian meddling in last year's election had created enormous political problems for Mr. Trump.

The president has been adamant that the meddling did not alter the outcome of the presidential race, but it has become a political cudgel for his opponents.

Many Democrats, and some Republicans, have said that the president may have tried to obstruct justice by firing Mr. Comey. The Justice Department's newly appointed special counsel, Robert S. Mueller III, was given the authority to investigate not only potential collusion, but also related allegations, which would include obstruction of justice.

Representative Elijah E. Cummings, a Maryland Democrat and a member of the House Oversight Committee, called on Republicans to subpoena White House documents related to the meeting.

The F.B.I.'s investigation has bedeviled the Trump administration, and the president personally. Mr. Comey publicly confirmed the existence of the inquiry in March, telling Congress that his agents were investigating Russian attempts to influence the outcome of the presidential election and whether anyone in the Trump campaign had assisted in the Russian efforts. Mr. Trump has denied any collusion and called the case a waste of money and time. Former officials have testified that they have so far seen no evidence of collusion.

The acting F.B.I. director, Andrew G. McCabe, has called the case "highly significant" but said there had been no effort by the White House to impede the inquiry.

At first, the White House said Mr. Trump had fired Mr. Comey based on the recommendation of the Justice Department, and because of Mr. Comey's handling of the F.B.I. investigation into Hillary Clinton last year. Officials said the move had nothing to do with the Russia investigation.

But the president undercut that argument a day later, telling NBC News, "When I decided to just do it, I said to myself — I said, you know, this Russia thing with Trump and Russia is a made-up story."

The Oval Office comment about Mr. Comey's sanity echoed what Mr. Trump has said privately at other times. The Times reported the day after Mr. Comey was fired that the president had told aides there was "something wrong with" Mr. Comey.

American intelligence agencies have concluded that Russia engaged in widespread computer hacking and propaganda intended to tip the election toward Mr. Trump. Against that backdrop, the president has faced repeated questions about his links to Russia. During his candidacy, Mr. Trump's spokeswoman declared that "there was no communication" with foreign entities during the campaign.

Journalists have since revealed several instances of undisclosed meetings between Mr. Trump's associates and Russians, or contacts that the White House initially mischaracterized. Mr. Trump's first national security adviser, Michael T. Flynn, was forced to resign over misstatements about his conversations with the Russian ambassador.

In the Oval Office on May 10, Mr. Trump joked that he seemed to be the only person who had not met Mr. Kislyak, according to the American official reading the document. And while Mr. Trump played down his personal concern about the fighting in Ukraine, according to the official, the president said American critics cared about the issue and asked the Russians to help resolve the dispute. Russian-backed separatists in Ukraine are clashing with the country's military.

The meeting, Mr. Trump's first face-to-face encounter with Russian officials since becoming president, has been a distraction from the beginning. While American reporters were prohibited from attending, the Russian news agency Tass distributed photographs of the meeting.

After the meeting, Mr. Lavrov dismissed questions about the investigation into Russian meddling in the election and said the matter had not come up in the Oval Office. "We spoke with President Trump about concrete things and did not touch on this bacchanalia," he said.

Behind closed doors, according to the document read by the official, Mr. Trump said that news stories about possible Russian collusion were fake, a comment he has repeatedly made in public. He told the Russians that his poll numbers remained strong and that Americans wanted the government to have a healthy relationship with Russia.

At one point, Mr. Trump jokingly asked whether there were reporters in the room.

"No," Mr. Lavrov said. "No fake media."

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