

The New York Times' Jihad on Walid Phares

by [Rebecca Bynum](#) (June 2020)



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On May 28, 2020, *The New York Times* reported that Dr. Walid Phares had been investigated in 2017 for acting “on behalf of Egypt to influence the Trump Administration” and subsequently cleared by the Mueller investigation. Of course, if true, the reason this was not revealed by the Mueller team is due to the long-standing practice of the Department of Justice of shielding the innocent. When someone has been investigated and cleared, the fact of the investigation is normally not

revealed as it could damage the reputation of the innocent person who was investigated. This is why the DOJ refused to comment for this article and also points to its libelous nature.

The intrepid reporters at *The New York Times* are still determined to damage President Trump by trying to defame anyone and everyone around him. Both Adam Goldman and Michael S. Schmidt were part of the team who (unbelievably) won a Pulitzer Prize for their role in perpetuating the false narrative of Trump-Russia collusion—a narrative since proven to have been entirely baseless. *The New York Times* has clearly not been held to account for their earlier lies, so they were emboldened to publish more untruths. From the article:

The F.B.I. and the special counsel's office investigated whether a former Trump campaign adviser secretly worked for the Egyptian government to influence the incoming administration in the months before President Trump took office, according to several people familiar with the inquiry. The former adviser, Walid Phares, was one of five Trump campaign aides investigated over their ties to foreign countries.

Dr. Walid Phares has contacts in dozens of countries around the world, including in the Middle East, Africa, Europe, Latin America and Asia. He knows heads of states, ministers, members of legislative branches, defense, and counter-terrorism officials in all NATO countries. He lists his meetings on his social media pages and appears across the world in international media on a consistent basis. His ties are open and ongoing and he is sought out by many for his decades-long and well-known expertise. The “several people” the *NYTimes*

cites are unnamed sources and thus have no value. Alleging that a prominent scholar and expert “worked for the Egyptian Government” is slander designed to persist. From now on, even though the alleged investigation cleared him, every hostile article about Dr. Phares will be tempted to carry the line: “was investigated for ties to Egypt.” It continues:

Robert S. Mueller III took over the investigations after he was appointed special counsel in May 2017. The decision to investigate Mr. Phares was based on highly classified information, the people said. Investigators examined the matter for months but ultimately brought no charges.

Though Mr. Mueller’s primary mandate was to examine Russia’s covert operation to sabotage the election and whether any Trump associates conspired, several Trump campaign advisers and transition team members elicited concerns at the F.B.I. because of their overseas contacts and the possibility that a variety of foreign governments might have been trying to secretly use the advisers to advance their agendas. Mr. Phares declined to comment, as did a Justice Department spokeswoman.

The C.I.A. director at the time, Mike Pompeo, was briefed on the investigation, suggesting that the agency might have obtained a tip from an Egyptian source that prompted the F.B.I. inquiry, people familiar with it said.

If this reporting is correct, it means that the CIA under John Brennan had allegedly received another “dirty dossier” from a foreign source, which, according to the *NYTimes*, is described

as “an Egyptian.” It is highly likely an Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood source planted the accusation that Dr. Phares was “working with the Egyptian government” precisely because the Brotherhood is at war with that Egyptian government, after having been ousted from power by a revolution of 33 million protesters and the Egyptian armed forces led by General *Abdel Fattah* El-Sisi in 2013. It is important to note that Muslim Brotherhood online operatives have been attacking Phares for years as “working for” UAE, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Libya, Israel, and a laundry list of opposition groups to the Jihadists, which essentially means all the enemies of the Muslim Brotherhood. This has been the modus operandi of their propaganda against Phares and any expert who criticizes them. *The New York Times* adopted the same slander.



It appears Dr. Phares has been targeted yet again because he openly supports the counter-terrorism and counter-extremism

campaign against the Jihadists and the Ikhwan in Egypt and around the globe—as his entire career will corroborate. That the CIA sent a dubiously sourced report to Special Council Mueller in order to justify conducting an investigation, is yet another questionable move made by an intelligence agency already under scrutiny. If true, this raises several more questions: Who is that “Egyptian source” and what is his or her motive? Does the CIA work with the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt? Who leaked the existence of this investigation? Is he or she still employed at the DOJ or other government agency? As it is a felony to leak “highly classified information,” will that person or persons be prosecuted?

Mr. Phares joined the foreign policy team that Mr. Trump assembled in the spring of 2016 as his surprise ascendance to the Republican nomination for president prompted the party establishment to openly question his lack of foreign policy experience. But the team was almost immediately derided as a collection of fringe thinkers and unknowns.

The New York Times always takes pleasure in depicting the first five foreign policy advisors for President Trump as a “collection of fringe thinkers and unknowns.” This certainly does not apply to Dr. Walid Phares, who had already served as a national security advisor to a previous presidential candidate, had authored 12 books, advised members of Congress and the European Parliament and given numerous lectures to intelligence agencies.

Perhaps the most prominent of the early Trump foreign advisers, Mr. Phares frequently appeared on Fox News to discuss the dangers of Islamic terrorism and Shariah law. A Lebanese-born Maronite Christian, he previously served as

an adviser to Senator Mitt Romney, Republican of Utah, when he ran for president in 2012.

Wrong: Dr. Phares discusses and teaches about Jihadist and Islamist terrorism and strategies, but he does not discuss Shariah law. He never has. That is an allegation that the pro-Muslim Brotherhood propagandists have been using since 2011 when Dr. Phares advised Governor Romney during his Presidential campaign. Bringing up the ethnic background of Dr. Phares, being from Lebanese Maronite descent, which has no link to his public stances, is another indication that the reporters are using the Brotherhood's talking points.

J.D Gordon, a former Pentagon official who worked for the Trump campaign as a national security adviser, told investigators that he hired Mr. Phares for the foreign policy team. He said that Mr. Phares quit the campaign in May and then went to work as a Trump surrogate.

Wrong again: Mr. Gordon did not "hire" Dr. Phares. He was asked to serve by Candidate Trump personally late in 2015, then asked to join the campaign by his daughter, Ivanka Trump, in February. He was announced as a foreign policy advisor by then-candidate Trump on March 21, 2016, at the *Washington Post*. Phares served his tenure officially as a foreign policy advisor from late February to November 10, 2016. To the media, all advisors are surrogates, regardless of their official role.

. . . adding that Jared Kushner, the president's son-in-law and senior adviser, would not let Mr. Phares have a job in

the administration. It was not clear why.

And how would Mr. Gordon be privy to how any such decisions were made when Gordon left the campaign after the Convention in July? The *NYTimes* has no interest in asking.

The Obama administration had been critical of the Egyptian government, accusing President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi's administration of arbitrary killings and politically motivated arrests in a crackdown on freedom of expression after he seized power in a military takeover. Forging new ties with Mr. Trump, who seemed less concerned with the country's human rights record, would have benefited Mr. el-Sisi both politically and militarily.

Here is a key paragraph revealing the *NYTimes'* goal behind the hit piece. The paper has been a vocal critic of the el-Sisi Government, after having praised the Muslim Brotherhood regime (supported by the Obama administration), for years. It also shows that the Obama administration may have ordered spying on Dr. Phares because he was an Ikhwan critic, anti-Iran deal, and yes, also a Trump advisor.

Hints of the investigation into Mr. Phares have emerged in redacted special counsel documents and in F.B.I. interview notes obtained by BuzzFeed News in an open records lawsuit.

If indeed Dr. Phares was targeted by the Mueller Probe, he was never informed of that fact. He was indeed interviewed by the Mueller team, as he has testified to Congress, but supposedly

only as a witness like many other advisors. We know Mueller and company were not above deception, but if Dr. Phares had indeed been a target, he and his attorney should have been notified. They weren't, so these speculations are doubtful.

CNN also sued for the records. Mr. Phares had high-level contacts in the Egyptian government and connections to a deputy minister for education, another Trump campaign official, Sam Clovis, told Mr. Mueller's investigators.

Of course Dr. Phares has high-level contacts in the Egyptian government. He had these contacts many years before joining the Trump campaign. He knows ministers, members of parliament, defense officials, counter terrorism officials, and has been giving lectures to Egyptian officers under the Defense Intelligence Agency for years. But he never knew a deputy minister for education.

Mr. Phares told Mr. Clovis that he had friends who could broker meetings between the campaign and the Egyptian government, but Mr. Clovis rejected that idea, he said. Mr. Clovis and Mr. Phares had met with an Egyptian official at a hotel in Georgetown, according to Mr. Clovis, who could not recall the man's name for investigators. Mr. Phares tried to set up another meeting with the official, but Mr. Clovis demurred.

Wrong yet again: There was no meeting between Clovis, Phares and an "Egyptian official." They had dinner with an Egyptian travel agent, and not in Georgetown, but Virginia. There was no need to broker a meeting between the campaign and Egyptian

officials as the campaign was meeting with the Egyptian ambassador and many other diplomats at their requests, as was the Clinton campaign. When President el-Sisi visited the UN in 2016, he met with both campaigns. Obviously, one of the primary functions of foreign policy advisors is to explain the platform of the campaign when sought out by diplomats.

Another campaign official, Rick Dearborn, told investigators that Mr. Phares was involved in reaching out to Egypt on behalf of the campaign and had an "existing relationship" with the Egyptians.

Of course Dr Phares has an "existing relationship with the Egyptians." He has been meeting with their MPs since 2013 and has appeared on Egyptian TV and been interviewed in their press for years. His analysis is very popular in Egypt – except among the Jihadists and the Muslim Brotherhood. Dr. Phares has met a large number of Egyptian MPs and politicians during the campaign, many of whom knew him from earlier years. The Brotherhood continues to be promoted by *NYTimes* writers who apparently fail to understand why it was rejected by the Egyptian people.

Then the Republican nominee for president, Mr. Trump met in September 2016 with Mr. el-Sisi. Mr. Phares took credit for that meeting, telling Mr. Trump's daughter Ivanka in an email shortly beforehand that he had traveled to "Egypt last week, worked with them on the meeting between President Sisi and your father." "Great that the meeting will take place tomorrow," Mr. Phares added in the email, according to congressional investigators. "This is a major victory in foreign policy. It will generate more votes."

Dr. Phares was in touch with Mrs. Ivanka Trump as well as with other officials throughout the campaign and gave them briefings and his assessments on many topics. But this portion of the article raises more pressing questions: Who stole Dr. Phares' personal emails to Ivanka Trump? Who was spying on him? Or were they spying on Mrs. Trump? And who leaked this email? Nevertheless, what is described is a very normal part of his portfolio.

The special counsel's report mentioned Mr. Phares by name more than a dozen times. At least one blacked-out portion of the report also makes reference to Mr. Phares, according to people familiar with the redacted text.

In March 2017, Senator Richard M. Burr, Republican of North Carolina and the chairman at the time of the powerful Senate Intelligence Committee, disclosed to the White House Counsel's Office that Mr. Phares was being investigated, according to notes taken by an official at the time.

It is unsurprising that Special Council Mueller was investigating Dr. Phares for no cause, as we now know the entire investigation was not properly predicated. The truth is, they never had a reason to open any of their investigations on Trump campaign officials, but they did it anyway.

According to Lee Smith, the