

Unsurprisingly, Mueller Comes Up Empty

The 'Russian collusion' farce limps to an anticlimactic ending.

by Conrad Black



Robert Mueller during a Senate Judiciary Committee oversight hearing on Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C., June 19, 2013.

(Larry Downing/Reuters File Photo)

No reader of my previous comments on the subject would expect surprise from me about the verdict of the Mueller report. No one nominated by a major political party to the presidency of the U.S. would have dreamed of cooperating with any foreign power to influence a U.S. presidential election. Aaron Burr, who was thought to be running for vice president but ended by opportunistically challenging Jefferson for president, requiring that the House of Representatives determine the victor, and who was later accused but acquitted of serious crimes, would not have done that. Millard Fillmore, who

succeeded to the presidency on the death of President Zachary Taylor and later ran as a third-party candidate in 1856 for the American Party, nicknamed the "Know Nothings," which opposed immigration and the eligibility of Roman Catholics to hold public office, would not have dreamt of it. The Russian-collusion argument was always an absurd, a practically insane proposition. The fact that it enjoyed the currency it did as long as it did illustrates the cognitive incapacity of the Obama-Clinton majority to accept that they were honestly defeated in 2016. Worse than that, while it was just mad partisanship by most Democrats and most of the political media, the collusion fraud was a crime, of extreme gravity, by its perpetrators.

Even today, mainline Democrats do not understand the country's reservations about Obama's flatlined new normal of no growth in family purchasing power, evaporating "red lines" in foreign policy, approval of Iranian and North Korean development of nuclear weapons with which to blackmail America and, in Iran's case, threaten to exterminate Israel, and generally to blame white male Americans for every evil under heaven. Donald Trump is like a circus actor who excites laughter, and only as he exits at the end of the program is his full talent recognized. He ran against the Bushes as much as the Clintons, and the congressional Republicans gave him no assistance at all for six months. There is very little Never Trump and RINO sentiment left in Congress. But the Democrats signed on almost unanimously to some variant of the Russian-collusion fable and stuck with it to the bitter end, to the point of not realizing that the end has come. The Democrats said Trump was protesting too much and was acting as if he was guilty.

When the hapless Jeff Sessions was replaced by the former Bush attorney general William Barr, conveniently bringing the Bush Republicans largely on board, Barr sagely retained Rod Rosenstein as deputy attorney general, although Rosenstein had supposedly canvassed the possibility of removing Trump from

office for mental incompetence two years ago. Rosenstein had approved the firing of James Comey as FBI director and then engaged Robert Mueller as special counsel, as Comey had hoped when he illegally leaked to the *New York Times* a self-serving memo to himself (that was probably both false and government property). Barr was confirmed by the Senate after promising to get to the bottom of the false FISA surveillance-warrant applications and other skullduggery that had gone officially almost unnoticed as the Trump-impeachment bandwagon careened out of control for two years. Barr attracted three Democratic votes in the Senate confirmation vote, a rare occurrence in this administration, and six weeks later, he finally strangled the mutant monster of fraudulent impeachment. Yet in febrile Democratic minds, it still lives. Much of America's political and media community no longer knows the difference between truth and lies and political life and death.

Mueller identified Russian efforts to meddle in the 2016 election but declared the nonexistence of any evidence that any American of any political persuasion had in any way collaborated with it. The president, in the unanimous company of his fellow citizens, was exonerated. Mueller did not find adequate evidence of obstruction of justice by the president to recommend prosecution. That was the extent of his mandate – to recommend prosecution or not. It is Barr's decision whether to prosecute, and he explained in his report to the bipartisan Judiciary Committee leaders that laying a charge of obstruction of justice would require proof beyond a reasonable doubt that the president had committed an obstructive act, with corrupt intent, and in contemplation of a real or apprehended legal proceeding, and that in his and Rosenstein's opinion, that threshold was not met on any of the three required criteria. It was genius to keep Mueller's old sidekick and benefactor, Deputy Attorney General Rosenstein, up to this point, as he was responsible for setting up this absurd special investigation at the behest of Comey, whose firing Rosenstein had recommended.

Of all the audible Democrats on Sunday evening, the only one who had the intelligence to try to extricate his party from the cul-de-sac was Senator Chris Coons of Delaware (who two years ago assured us that Trump's tax returns would prove the Russian collusion). He saw that the game was up and said it was time to change the subject. All the rest are, in terms of Tennysonian grandeur they do not deserve, "riding into the valley of death." Their flabby, Trump-hating House Judiciary Committee chairman Jerry Nadler said it was "a lie" that Trump had been exonerated: "No surprise that these people lie." Only a few weeks ago, Rosenstein was being toasted and feted by the Democrats for having allegedly contemplated trying to evict Trump by spurious recourse to the 25th Amendment, meant to deal with mental incapacity. This flushed the depressing spectacle of the ghost of Watergate, Carl Bernstein, out onto our television screens claiming there was a "constitutional crisis" over the president's mental fitness to hold his office. The other prominent Democrats, including many of the announced presidential candidates along with Schumer, Pelosi, Feinstein, and Schiff, implicitly attacked Mueller, their former hero, in whose behalf they kept presenting infantile congressional bills to protect him from the president, and Barr. Nadler claimed that Barr had "auditioned" for the role of attorney general with legal articles approving the constitutional powers of the president, as if he had not served [with distinction](#) as attorney general before, and as if upholding the Constitution were reprehensible.

It is now confirmed, as many of us have been alleging for many months, that the original counterintelligence investigation was set up on the basis of information that former intelligence and FBI chiefs John Brennan, James Clapper, James Comey, and Andrew McCabe knew to be false. The entire collusion claim was a political smear funded by the Democratic National Committee and the Clinton campaign. And all of those just mentioned as well as Mrs. Clinton, former attorney general Loretta Lynch, her deputy Sally Yates, others who made

false FISA-warrant applications, and a large group of smaller fry, are up to their eyeballs in criminal abuse of high offices and betrayal of the nation's trust.

The Democratic cries for immediate release of the entire Mueller report is nonsense, as Barr informed them Sunday that he will release everything he can as soon as his and Mueller's staff have redacted what is statutorily required to be withheld – basically grand-jury and national-security-sensitive material. With a pause to avoid illegal indiscretions, the attorney general has promised to comply with the wishes of Congress and the president to make the report public. Allegations of spuriously invoked secrecy won't fly. Collusion and obstruction are dead, bad, pigeons.

The president and his family have endured merciless torment by the intellectually corrupt national media and the lawless opposition. His restraint at the end of the story has shown more taste than his enemies would have thought him capable of; he is owed an apology. All those who said there was clear evidence of Trump-Russia collusion, including dozens of congressional Democrats and scores of prominent political-media figures, should be shamed and ashamed. And the ringleaders in confecting this monstrous aggregation of defamatory lies should be legally punished, with the due process they tried to deny the nation's leader. Attempts to drive a president from office on the basis of allegations of betrayal of the country that they knew to be false is as close as the United States has ever been to an attempted coup d'état. It is time for the legal system, which has ground slowly to a just verdict, to do the same to those responsible for this disgraceful episode. This must never happen again; not in America.

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