

had asked Director Comey to pledge his loyalty to the President. This is news report of the memo that Director Comey wrote after meeting with the President. We find that the FBI Director is not going to be loyal to anyone but Lady Justice.

The President had the audacity to publicly threaten Director Comey after firing him. “James Comey,” said the President, “better hope there are no ‘tapes’ of our conversations before he starts leaking to the press!”

Attempting to intimidate future statements and possible statements in an investigation after a person has been fired is another factor that is totally inappropriate. Everyone with any shred of common sense knows such intimidation is inappropriate, but in the context of a criminal investigation, it may be more than inappropriate.

We don’t know if there actually were tapes. Our Intelligence Committee has requested the memos Director Comey wrote on his various conversations with the President. Remember, this is an experienced, seasoned FBI agent-turned-Director who has spent his life documenting conversations. It is considered to be a high level of integrity when such information is recorded in this fashion. Those memos carry a lot of weight. Some are classified, some are unclassified. They need to be provided immediately to the Senate Intelligence Committee, and if they aren’t provided, then the Intelligence Committee needs to subpoena them and needs to subpoena the tapes. If they exist, they need to be delivered. If they are not tapes but they are transcripts, they need to be delivered. If they are not tapes but a thumb drive or they exist on a piece of hardware, they need to be delivered, and our special prosecutor, Mr. Mueller, needs to have them as well.

I think that as one steps back from this incredible amount of information—the information about how Russia hacked the campaign, not just hacking into the DNC and Hillary Clinton’s campaign but then releasing that information in strategic moments; hiring a thousand individuals to comment in social media as if they were American citizens; establishing a botnet of computers to weigh in as if they were people to amplify this false social media, to get it trending and to get it into the mainstream news—when we consider all of this, we know how terribly wrong it was, and we have to learn every piece about what went on in order to make sure we are in the best prepared way to stop it from ever happening again.

We need to make sure we are in the best possible place to ensure that we can assist other democratic republics in making sure they are not victims of the Russians. We need to make sure that if any American, no matter who he or she is, collaborated or coordinated with the Russians in this effort to hack our campaigns, that they are prosecuted to the full extent of the law.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

NATIONAL POLICE WEEK

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, our law enforcement officers and the families who support them give so much in service to our communities. As we were tragically reminded again last week—and this happens in far too many places, in far too many States—some make the ultimate sacrifice to keep us safe.

Last Friday in Kirkersville, OH, Police Chief Steve DiSario responded to a report of a man with a gun at a nursing home. Chief DiSario did what so many first responders do when most of us in the public run away from danger: He ran toward it. He arrived at the Pine Kirk Care Center to protect his community and was killed in the line of duty by a gunman who also took the lives of two nursing home employees. Chief DiSario was 36. He had six children and a seventh on the way.

Our thoughts and our prayers are with Chief DiSario’s family and the families of all of our first responders, who worry each day that their loved ones may not return home. Think about that. For soldiers, marines, sailors, police officers, and firefighters, so often when they kiss their spouse goodbye and go to work, there is always the anxiety at home. It is not just the sacrifice that our soldiers and our military personnel and our police officers make; it is the sacrifice their families make too.

Sadly, Police Chief DiSario wasn’t the only Ohio officer to lay down his life this year. In January, Officer David J. Fahey of the Cleveland Police Department was working the scene of an accident on I-90 and was struck and killed in a despicable act of hit-and-run.

This week in Washington, we honor the five Ohio officers killed in the line of duty last year. Aaron Christian of the Chesapeake Police Department was killed in a car accident while on patrol. While conducting traffic, Trooper Kenneth Velez of Elyria was killed by a driver under the influence of drugs. Officer Sean Johnson was the first officer to be killed in the line of duty in the town of Hilliard when he succumbed to injuries from a motorcycle accident during a training exercise. Officer Steven Smith was shot and killed during a SWAT standoff in Columbus. Officer Thomas Cottrell, Jr., of Danville was killed in a heinous and cowardly ambush. Each of these losses is a tragedy for a family, for a community, and for fellow police officers.

As we honor the work and sacrifices made by law enforcement throughout Police Week, we need to offer more than kind words; we need action to support law enforcement as they work to keep our communities safe.

Yesterday, I was talking to Police Chief Richard Biehl of Dayton and Youngstown Police Chief Robert Lees about what more we should do to support officers and their families. This

week, we have unanimously passed several pieces of bipartisan legislation that will provide new support to the officers who protect us and the families who sacrifice alongside them.

The Public Safety Officers’ Benefits Improvement Act, which Senator GRASSLEY introduced, will put pressure on the Bureau of Justice Assistance at the DOJ to speed up claims processing so families of disabled officers or fallen officers get their benefits more quickly.

We passed the Law Enforcement Mental Health and Wellness Act, introduced by Indiana Senators DONNELLY and YOUNG, to help law enforcement agencies establish or enhance mental health services, like peer monitoring pilot programs and crisis hotlines, for their officers. I learned about this bill from my friend Jay McDonald from Marion, OH, whose advocacy for police officers and their families makes a huge difference for Ohio’s law enforcement communities. He has been the president of the Ohio Fraternal Order of Police for some time.

We approved Senator CORNYN’s American Law Enforcement Heroes Act of 2017, which would allow local police departments to use Federal grant money to hire veterans as law enforcement officers. It is a bipartisan, commonsense idea that would open new doors for those who served our communities and our Nation in the military and who have accrued and developed skills that will serve well their communities in police work.

We have a solemn obligation to the children of fallen officers whose lives are forever changed because of the heroism of their mother or father. The bipartisan Children of Fallen Heroes Scholarship Act—which I have introduced with Senators CASEY and DONNELLY, two Democrats, as well as two Republican Senators, TOOMEY and COLLINS—would increase access to Pell grants for the surviving children of law enforcement who lay down their lives for their communities. It would ensure that all children of fallen officers are eligible for the maximum Federal Pell grant. Of course, we can’t repay the debt we owe these families, but we can ease the burden on their children as they prepare for their future.

We need to do everything we can to ensure that officers and family members get the benefits and help they deserve. We also need to do more to give officers the tools they need to protect themselves. This week, I joined a group of Senators calling for full funding of the Bulletproof Vest Partnership.

I have written to the Department of Justice thanking them for their work so far and urging them to speed up distributing funding we passed as part of the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act. The bipartisan bill created the Comprehensive Opioid Abuse Grant Program to provide funding to police departments to train first responders as they deal with opioid-related incidents.

More and more officers are being exposed to fentanyl out in the field. Just this week in Eastern Ohio, an officer in East Liverpool was the victim of an accidental fentanyl overdose. He survived, but the situation was perilous. We need to make sure officers have the equipment they need to handle this deadly opioid look-alike—only more toxic—safely.

Our law enforcement officers put their lives on the line each day to protect us. This Police Week, we owe them more than gratitude; we must show support to the selfless men and women who serve our communities and country every single day, and we must support their actions, their lives, and their families.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. PERDUE). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

RUSSIA INVESTIGATION

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, I rise this afternoon to talk about the Russia questions that are on the minds of so many Americans. We had—I think, in the midst of all of the debate and controversy and genuine concern across the country—some good news yesterday when it was announced that Deputy Attorney General Rosenstein had made the decision to appoint a special counsel and, in this case, former FBI Director Mueller. That was good news because, No. 1, there was a special counsel who would undertake a review of these questions and in an independent fashion. I think people across not just Washington but even across the country were heartened by the fact that it was someone of the caliber, the experience, and the dedicated law enforcement commitment that Director Mueller demonstrated in his years with the FBI as Director, as a prosecutor. That was good news.

We are grateful for that. I know we will have a chance in a little while to talk to the Deputy Attorney General about these issues. I think we have to examine a couple more questions that arise.

So to review, on January 26, Acting Attorney General Sally Yates informed the Trump administration that General Flynn had apparently lied about having conversations with the Russian Ambassador, warning that it could open him up to blackmail. On May 8, Yates testified before the Senate Judiciary Committee and stated, contrary to claims by White House officials, that Flynn had discussed Russian sanc-

tions in his those conversations with the Russian Ambassador.

On January 27, President Trump hosted Director Comey at the White House, where the New York Times reported he asked Director Comey to pledge his loyalty. Director Comey reportedly promised only honesty.

On January 30, President Trump fired Acting Attorney General Yates, claiming her dismissal was over a matter unrelated to Russia.

On February 13, fully 18 days after the White House was originally informed by Yates of General Flynn's misconduct, General Flynn was relieved of his job after it became public that he lied about his conversations with the Russian Ambassador.

The day after General Flynn was pushed out, the President reportedly summoned Director Comey to a private meeting in which he took the extraordinary step of asking him to drop the FBI investigation into Flynn.

In March and again in May, Director Comey publicly confirmed that Trump associates were under investigation for possible coordination with Russia to interfere in the election. On May 9, President Trump fired Director Comey. His administration initially said it was based on a recommendation from Attorney General Sessions, who was supposed to be recused from anything to do with the Russia investigation, and Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein, who reportedly had been asked by Director Comey just days earlier for additional funding for the Russia investigation. But then the President himself revealed he fired Director Comey explicitly because of the Russia investigation.

The day after, the President tweeted a veiled threat that Director Comey "better hope that there are no 'tapes'" of their conversation, raising the question of whether the President was surreptitiously recording his Oval Office meetings and whether tapes exist.

While it may be unrelated, it also bears mentioning that, this week, it was also reported that President Trump revealed highly classified information to Russian officials in a private Oval Office meeting—information that could jeopardize critical intelligence assets and risk undermining relationships with allies.

I think there are some serious questions, even with the special counsel who has been named, even with two Intelligence Committees reviewing these matters. I would hope that, in addition to those reviews that are being undertaken—those investigations—that we also have an independent commission to get all of the answers we need so that we can ensure the American people that this will never happen again—that no foreign government, in this case, a foreign adversary, can interfere in an election at any time in our future.

That guarantee will not be ironclad unless we know exactly what happened and why it happened, and then we take

a series of steps to prevent it from happening. We should be very clear with the Russian Federation that if they do this again, they will be sanctioned, and there will be a consequence in response to their actions. We won't be able to do any of that unless we find the answers.

Here are a couple of basic questions I hope would be a part of the deliberations, not just of the two committees or other committees that might review this but also the deliberations and work of the special counsel and his team.

The first question is, Why does the President believe that the Russian election interference investigation is baseless, which is contrary to the unanimous finding of 17 U.S. intelligence agencies? These agencies issued a "high confidence" assessment of the determination they made. That is a technical term in the intelligence circles that they don't use lightly.

Based upon the findings of those intelligence agencies and that finding being of high confidence, why does the President continue to question or even undermine that determination?

Question No. 2 is, Why did Attorney General Sessions, who had to recuse himself from the Russian investigation, weigh in on the firing of the FBI Director responsible for that very investigation? That is a question, I think, a number of people are asking.

Question No. 3 is, Can the Justice Department's political leaders—individuals who have just come in with this administration and officials in the Justice Department—be trusted not to interfere in the ongoing FBI investigation? That is a question.

Question No. 4 is, Why, immediately after firing Director Comey and amid the uproar about interference in the Russian investigation that it created, did the President convene a private meeting with the Russian Foreign Minister and the Russian Ambassador in the Oval Office and allow the Russian state media—the Soviet-era state media entity—to cover that meeting while keeping out the U.S. media? I think that is a question that a lot of people have.

Question No. 5 is, Why did the President reveal highly classified information to the Russian Federation, according to the reporting by the Washington Post and others, during this meeting with the Russian Foreign Minister and the Russian Ambassador, and what are the implications of that disclosure? That is something that we need to have answers to.

At least these five questions—you could add many more—are critically important questions. In some respects, there are even more urgent questions in front of us, and I will focus a little bit on those today—basically, three, I guess.

No. 1, did the President intentionally interfere with the ongoing FBI investigation into his associates, people that were on his campaign or on the campaign or working in the government now? The interference question