

Durham report – the FBI had no grounds

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By Terry A. Hurlbut

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Special Counsel John Durham at last released the report of his investigation of an investigation. Then Attorney General Bill Barr, in 2020, tasked Durham with finding out why the FBI launched an investigation of Donald Trump following his victory in the Election of 2016. That second investigation produced the “Russia Hoax” and everything connected with it. Now Counsel Durham has definitively said: *the FBI had no business starting that investigation*. Worse, they ran a sloppy investigation, with some investigators literally making things up out of the whole cloth. Worst of all: that investigation started because the Hillary campaign said Donald Trump had made himself a Russian asset. The problem is: *even the investigators did not believe this themselves*.

Release of the Durham Report

John Durham handed in his 316-page report yesterday afternoon. Later that afternoon, the Justice Department made it publicly available, at [this link](#). Ben Shapiro tweeted out his resounding condemnation of the FBI, which he based on the report, to which he linked.

The Durham Report is insanely damning of the FBI, the Clinton campaign, the Obama administration, and everyone involved in the Russia-Trump smear. Absolutely shocking stuff. <https://t.co/qR0GEOU9x6>

— Ben Shapiro (@benshapiro) [May 15, 2023](#)

In response, Rep. Jim Jordan (R-Ohio), Chairman of the House Judiciary Committee, announced his intention to ask Durham to testify.

We’ve reached out to the Justice Department to have Special Counsel John Durham testify next week.

— Rep. Jim Jordan (@Jim_Jordan) [May 15, 2023](#)

The Twitter account US Burning left two tweets, each linking to articles in *The Federalist*, all using the report to criticize the FBI.

Here’s Everything The FBI Deliberately Ignored To Get Trump In Russian Collusion Hoax, According To Durham [#SocialMedia](#) [#News](#) [#BreakingNews](#)
<https://t.co/Jydfh9rv8y>

— US Burning (@UsBurning) [May 15, 2023](#)

Corporate Russia-Collusion Hoaxers Dismiss Bombshell Durham Report Exposing Media Disinformation Campaign [#SocialMedia](#) [#News](#) [#BreakingNews](#)
<https://t.co/Yocf8hAWDW>

— US Burning (@UsBurning) [May 15, 2023](#)

US Burning also linked to this article in *The Hill* that had President Trump's reaction:

Trump reacts to Durham FBI report: 'Scammed' <https://t.co/4CXfemh0nk>

— US Burning (@UsBurning) [May 15, 2023](#)

Durham did not recommend arresting anyone at this late date. But he did essentially charge the FBI with not doing its job – or rather, not doing its job properly. He *also* charged *The New York Times* with manipulating the news. That manipulation included publication of deliberate lies. Naturally the *Times* dismissed the report as of no consequence.

Reportage on the Durham Report comes from *Just the News*, *The Daily Caller*, *The Daily Signal*, and *Blaze News*. That's in addition to articles from *The Federalist*.

The details

The Report carries some level of detail in its Executive Summary. Durham and his team asked themselves five questions, namely, did the FBI:

- Have good reason to open an investigation (Crossfire Hurricane) when it did (July 31, 2016),
- Handle that investigation in a way consistent with how it handled “intelligence” it received *before* that date, and
- Think about whether the Clinton campaign was out to vilify Trump, and could be feeding the FBI phony intelligence?

Furthermore, did any evidence exist to prove, beyond a reasonable doubt, that the FBI, or any of its people, or any “third parties” relating to the investigation, break any federal criminal laws?

The answers they arrived at, in the order of asking, were: No, No, No, and Yes. In fact, the FBI had *no* good reason to believe that Trump or his campaign were colluding with the Russians. But Deputy Director Andrew McCabe gave the order, and Peter Strzok (Deputy Assistant Director for Counterintelligence) opened the investigation. They did so with *no* review of their own databases, which would *not* have substantiated whatever loose talk George Papadopoulos engaged in to that alleged effect.

In sharp contrast to this unseemly speed, the FBI treated with kid gloves the investigation into Hillary Clinton's emails. Nor did the FBI *ever* consider whether the Clinton campaign might be diddling them with false information to "get" Trump.

Withholding of evidence

Durham accuses Crossfire Hurricane investigators of repeatedly withholding exculpatory evidence from Justice Department attorneys and the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court. In fact, Durham did prosecute one FBI attorney for lying about Carter Page *in writing*. That trial resulted in a conviction.

The Steele Dossier

Christopher Steele's dossier played an outsized role in the investigation. It consists of a series of reports, all derogatory of Trump and accusing him of being a Russian asset. As for Steele himself, Durham seems to doubt Steele's self-description at "a former intelligence official for the British government." Steele *said* he was – in court, no less. But can we believe him, considering that he lied about so much else?

The Steele Dossier got to the Crossfire Hurricane team in mid-September. Within days the team was using the information in it to get Foreign Intelligence Surveillance (FISA) warrants against Carter Page. Here is what the Steele Dossier alleged against Page:

Speaking in confidence to a compatriot in late July 2016, Source E, an ethnic Russian close associate of Republican US presidential candidate Donald TRUMP, admitted that there was a well-developed conspiracy of co-operation between them and the Russian leadership. This was managed on the TRUMP side by the Republican candidate's campaign manager, Paul MANAFORT, who was using foreign policy advisor, Carter PAGE, and others as intermediaries. The two sides had a mutual interest in defeating Democratic presidential candidate Hillary CLINTON, whom President PUTIN apparently both hated and feared.

"Source E" was allegedly Sergei Millian, real-estate broker, president of the Russian-American Chamber of Commerce, and close confidant of the infamous Igor Danchenko. Danchenko, recall, came to trial last year in a Virginia courtroom. Testimony at that trial was damning enough: it showed the FBI paid Steele to lie. Witnesses also had to admit the FBI had *no* corroboration of the Steele Dossier as late as October 21, 2016.

As for Danchenko himself, he talked to the FBI many times and evidently never gave them a straight answer. At a minimum, any corroboration by Danchenko of the Steele Dossier was totally lacking.

Charles Dolan

Durham mentions another interesting person: Charles Dolan, a big Democratic Party wheel. But he *also* was a big PR pro with several Eastern European clients, especially in Russia. Charles Dolan admitted that he *fabricated* evidence against Trump campaign manager Paul Manafort. He also is the source of allegations – which we must doubt – that Trump had intimate contact with one or more women at Moscow’s Ritz-Carlton hotel, conduct that might or might not have been entirely appropriate (if it occurred at all).

The FBI never interviewed Mr. Dolan. Durham and his team did – and Dolan at first tried to deny being a Steele Dossier source. When the Durham team showed him supporting evidence, however, he admitted, not only his role, but also the fabrication.

Two more big names show up in the Durham Report:

- Michael Sussman, a lawyer for the Hillary Clinton campaign, and
- Jim Baker, former FBI General Counsel and then an attorney at Twitter.

That last relationship broke up when Elon Musk caught Jim Baker trying to sabotage the reporting on the Twitter Files. (Not long after that, Matt Taibbi released the “Russiagate Lies” part of the Twitter Files.) These two names show up in relation to allegations that the Trump Organization had an illicit back channel to Alfa Bank – a Russian bank. Like everything else, this turned out to be a non-starter.

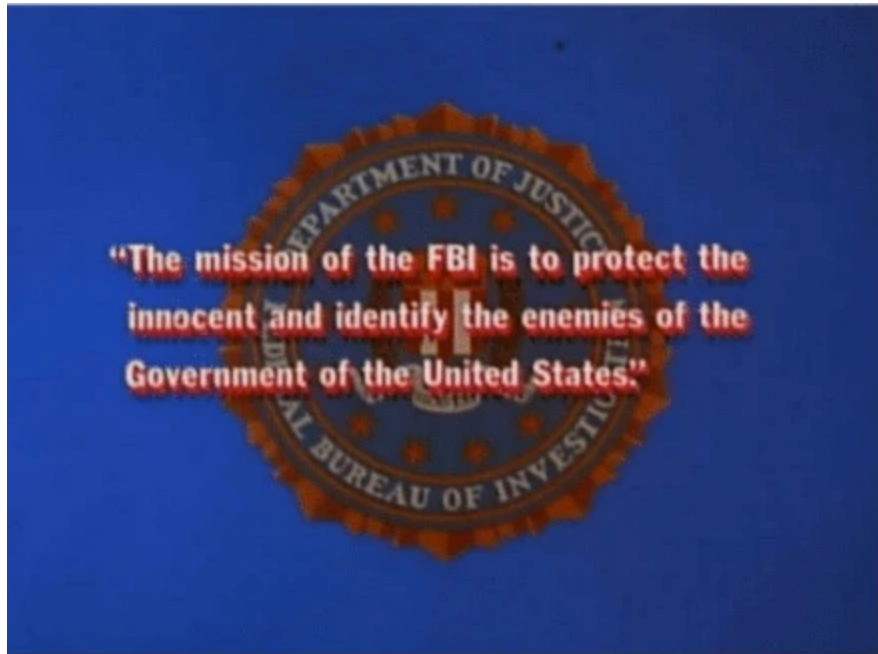
Durham indicts the FBI

John Durham says worse than that the FBI had no business investigating Trump. He accuses them of selective application of the law, and taking a political side. To the agents involved, “getting Trump” had both personal and ideological motives – which Durham considers conduct:

- Unbecoming government agents who are supposed to exemplify “Fidelity, Bravery and Integrity,” and
- To the prejudice of the FBI’s “important mission of strict fidelity to the law.”

He also faulted the FBI and its agents for lack of “analytical rigor.” That lack, together with confirmation bias and willingness to believe a subject’s political opponents, not only resulted in an investigation that should never have been, but also drove that investigation off the rails.

The FBI today states as its mission “to protect the American people and uphold the Constitution of the United States.” Tellingly, the Quinn Martin television series *The FBI* quoted, in its earliest seasons, a different mission statement. That was: “to protect the *innocent* and *identify the enemies of the Government* of the United States.”



Mission statement of the FBI, as shown to viewers on the Quinn Martin show *The FBI*, produced by Warner Bros./Seven Arts, 1965-74 on ABC-TV

If that was ever the mission statement of the FBI (in J. Edgar Hoover's day), they won't admit it today. But they *acted* as if they *conflated the Democratic Party with the Government of the United States*. As such they set themselves the mission to identify the enemies of *the Democratic Party*. Now even "protect[ing] the innocent" has fallen by the wayside. Surely that is the worst revelation of the Durham Report.