

Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND REFORM

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August 30, 2019

The Honorable Elijah E. Cummings
Chairman
Committee on Oversight and Reform
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Mr. Chairman:

We request that you convene a hearing as soon as possible with Department of Justice Inspector General Michael Horowitz to examine the Office of Inspector General's (OIG) recent report about former Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) Director James Comey. The OIG found Comey leaked sensitive FBI materials to numerous individuals after he was fired. Comey made one "unauthorized disclosure of sensitive investigative information" involving the President specifically in the hopes of "achiev[ing] a personally desired outcome"—the appointment of a Special Counsel.¹ Because Comey's compilation and dissemination of sensitive FBI information led directly to two-plus years of political turmoil and vitriolic partisan attacks on the President, the OIG's report demands congressional attention.

Inspector General Horowitz found that Comey's conduct "set a dangerous example for over 35,000 current FBI employees—and the many thousands more former FBI employees—who similarly have access to or knowledge of non-public information."² Comey's own closest FBI advisors admitted to the OIG they found Comey's conduct incredulous. Horowitz reported that Comey's senior FBI staff used the words "surprised," "stunned," "shocked", and "disappointment" when they learned Comey leaked sensitive FBI materials to the media.³ The OIG found Comey's conduct so troubling that it referred the case to the Justice Department for criminal prosecution. We can think of no other FBI Director who has been criminally referred for federal prosecution.

¹ INSPECTOR GEN., DEP'T OF JUSTICE, *A Report of Investigation of Former Federal Bureau of Investigation Director James Comey's Disclosure of Sensitive Investigative Information and Handling of Certain Memoranda*, 61 (2019).

² *Id.* at 60.

³ *Id.* at 57, 61.

In July 2016, you publicly praised Comey and his public service. You told Comey that you were “proud” of him and his effort to always “do the right thing.” You said to Comey:

And I don’t know whether your family’s watching this, ***but I hope that they are as proud of you as I am, because you are the epitome of what a public servant is all about, sacrificing over and over and over again, trying to do the right thing, sometimes coming under ridicule, but yet still doing the right thing.*** And so I hope that they are proud of you.⁴

When Inspector General Horowitz appeared before the Committee in June 2018, you lauded his integrity and promised to examine his work whether you agreed with the findings or not. You told him then:

I think what you [Inspector General Horowitz] have done here today, that is examining – first of all, bringing to the table integrity, bringing to the table integrity and honesty, and just calling it like it is. ***You may have come out with a report that I didn’t like.*** I mean, there are certain things I saw in the report that didn't sit well with me. But you know what? I'm able to walk away from here believing that you all ***upheld your oath and your principles for honesty and integrity. Not about party. Not about gender. None of that. Not pro-Trump, against Trump, Republican, whatever. But integrity.***⁵

Comey’s compilation and dissemination of sensitive FBI information had its intended effect—the initiation of a prolonged and expensive Special Counsel investigation that ultimately failed to substantiate any of the allegations he was appointed to investigate.⁶ After investigating for nearly two years and spending \$32 million taxpayer dollars, the Special Counsel did not find any coordination or conspiracy between the Trump campaign and the Russian government to interfere in the presidential election.⁷ In light of the great costs to our country stemming from Comey’s reckless conduct, we respectfully request that you immediately schedule a hearing with Inspector General Horowitz to examine the OIG report about Comey’s misconduct.

⁴ *Oversight of the State Department: Hearing of the H. Comm. on Oversight & Gov’t Reform*, 114th Cong. (2016) (statement of Elijah E. Cummings, Ranking Member, H. Comm. on Oversight & Gov’t Reform) (emphasis added).

⁵ *Oversight of the FBI and DOJ Actions In Advance of the 2016 Election: Hearing Before the H. Comms. on Oversight & Reform and Judiciary*, 115th Cong. 222 (2018) (statement of Elijah E. Cummings, Ranking Member, H. Comm. on Oversight & Gov’t Reform) (emphasis added).

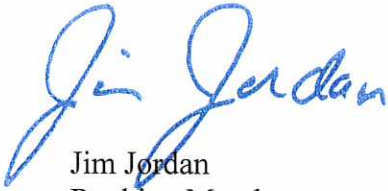
⁶ SPECIAL COUNSEL ROBERT S. MUELLER, III, *Report On The Investigation Into Russian Interference In The 2016 Presidential Election*, Vol. 1 (2019).

⁷ *Id.*; see also Katelyn Polantz, *Mueller investigation cost \$32 million, Justice Department says*, CNN (Aug. 2, 2019).

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We look forward to hearing back from you expeditiously.

Sincerely,



Jim Jordan
Ranking Member



Mark Meadows
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Government Operations

cc: The Honorable Michael E. Horowitz, Inspector General, Department of Justice