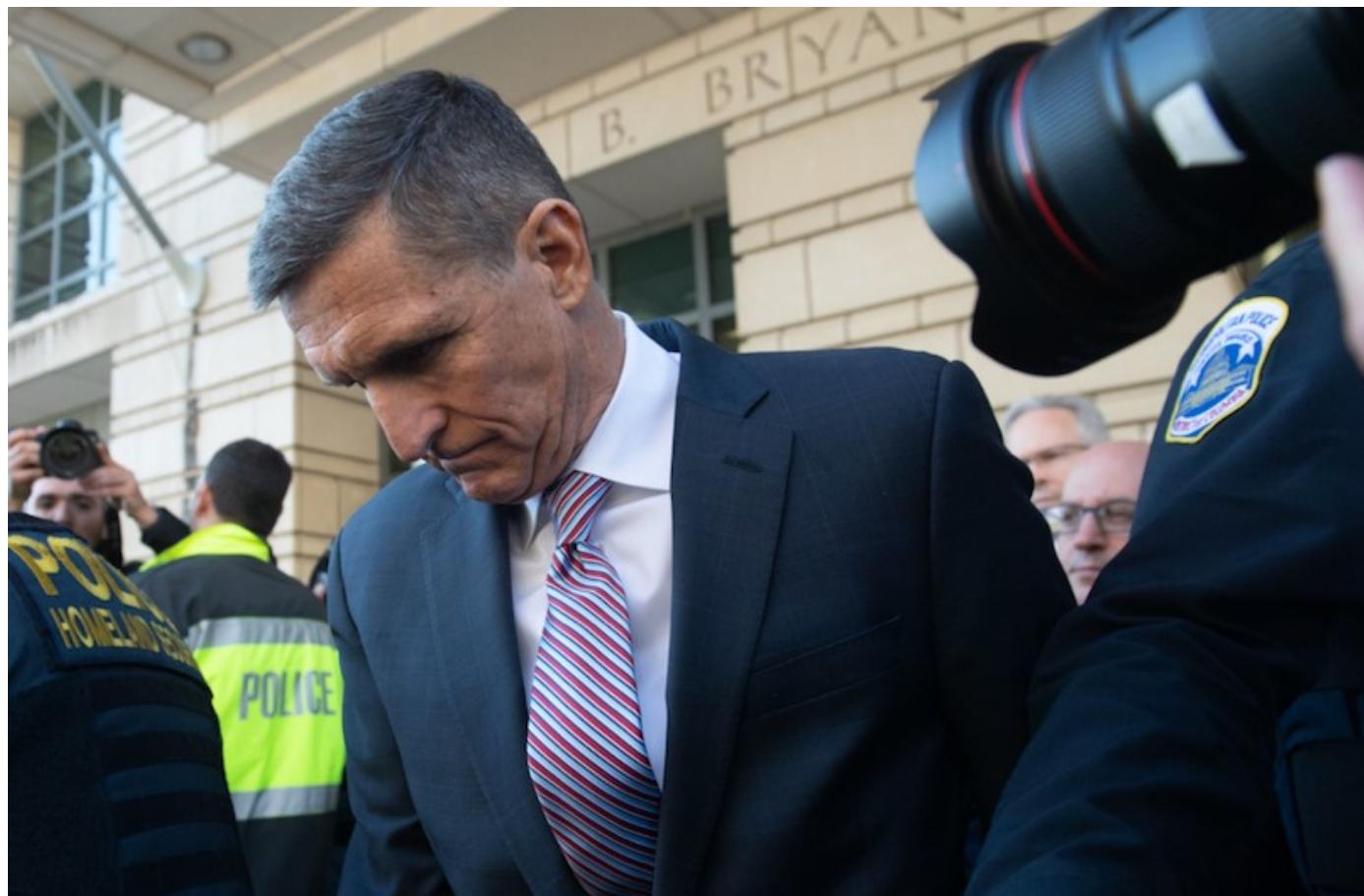


The Spies Who Hijacked America

As a doctoral candidate at Cambridge working under "FBI Informant" Stefan Halper, I had a front-row seat for Russiagate

Steven P. Schrage, PhD 19 hr  392  59 



Global scandals now labeled Russiagate, Spygate, and what President Trump calls “Obamagate” shook the political world, but hit me closer to home. I’m the reason the so-called FBI “spy” at the center of Spygate, Stefan Halper met Carter Page, the

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academic career and leave DC's politics behind, only to have my PhD supervisor throw me back into the most outrageous political firestorms I could imagine. Just my luck. Then an even worse question began nagging at me. Did I unintentionally light the match that started it all?

As I started to piece together what happened over the next few months, I realized something. The stories that *The New York Times*, *Washington Post*, and others were pushing didn't add up. Many seemed planted to cover up or advance the agendas of several individuals whose tentacles secretly ran through these scandals, and who each had longstanding ties to intelligence services like the FBI, CIA, and MI6. I call these individuals the Cambridge Four.

Strangely, all four were linked through that sleepy British academic town thousands of miles from the alleged "ground zeroes" of Russiagate's conspiracies, Moscow and DC. In addition to the central "Spygate" figure Halper, they include the central source of "Russiagate's" fake conspiracy theories, Christopher Steele; former MI6 Director Sir Richard Dearlove; and Halper's and Dearlove's partner in a Cambridge Intelligence Seminar linked to titillating — but false — tales of a "Russian spy" seducing Trump's top national security advisor. My years of work with Halper provided an inside view of how their four networks interconnected.

The more I dug up new pieces of this puzzle, the more I saw how these individuals' seemingly separate acts might fit together in an absurd picture of how these scandals really started.

Armed with first-hand knowledge and evidence, I quietly sought to help federal investigators uncover these scandals' mysteries. It wasn't my first rodeo. After witnessing the plane that hit the Pentagon on 9/11, I led G8 and State Department international crime and terrorism efforts with Department of Justice (DOJ), FBI, and intelligence officials and had worked for decades in White House, Congressional, and presidential campaign roles.

This helped me keep a stiff upper lip when I was falsely accused in 2019 by the House Intelligence Committee's Ranking Republican and others on television as being part of a secret anti-Trump cabal. As much as I wanted to defend myself, I knew our best shot of exposing the real forces behind these scandals was for me to remain publicly silent and not

let those under investigation know what I knew or was willing to say.

Yet a few weeks ago, I asked to speak to the DOJ lead investigator John Durham to give his team a heads up. I would continue to offer help, but my time for waiting for government to act was over. Recently, I had discovered and flagged for Durham disturbing recordings. One involved one of the Cambridge Four, Halper, and raised serious questions about the origins of what has been called the “kill shot” against Trump’s first national security advisor, General Michael Flynn.

On January 12, 2017 a felony leak about phone calls between the Russian Ambassador and General Flynn was published by *The Washington Post*. This led to Flynn’s downfall and reignited the Trump-Russia investigations still tearing our nation apart. 48 hours before the leak was published, my former supervisor Halper eerily laid out what was about to happen to Flynn, something he had no independent reason to know. Halper described how Flynn’s “so called enemies” would make Flynn “blow up...he’s really fucked.”

The next legal hearing on Flynn’s prosecution is this Tuesday. Yet for four years government officials have withheld key materials and blocked individuals like Halper from testifying about the real genesis of these scandals and the felony leak on Flynn. While I once worked in Republican politics, I know Americans of every affiliation believe citizens deserve a fair trial without the government concealing evidence.

The remaining mysteries of Russiagate are too important to be turned into a game of political football, or buried until after the election when unsubstantiated allegations could be dug up to sabotage Vice President Biden if he is elected president — as I believe was done to President Trump.

Nor should they be used as a cynical, last-minute Republican “October Surprise” to disrupt the election. Nothing excuses foreign meddling in U.S. elections. Yet it is hypocritical and absurd to use that as an excuse to hide abuses by U.S. intelligence, law enforcement, and political officials against our own citizens.

I know the consequences of my speaking out. America is now in a political “UnCivil War” where individuals—even at outlets like *The New York Times* and *Washington Post* that profess objective journalism—are personally attacked if their facts don’t fit entrenched narratives.

Key politicians and intelligence figures would like the facts surrounding Russiagate’s origins classified and buried for decades, as with past U.S./MI6 intelligence scandals. I can’t

let that happen. After all, I inadvertently helped jump-start it. Even if this story is hidden now, it will ultimately impact Trump, Biden, the 2020 election, and our country for years.

There is far too much to tell in a single article. In the next several weeks I plan to reveal what I know, including: the comedy of errors leading to a Cambridge Four member meeting and targeting the FBI's main surveillance excuse Carter Page; the information given to an FBI source in August 2016 should have immediately ended their investigation alleging Page was a master spy linking top Trump officials to Putin; how a secret anti-Trump source sought one of the world's most powerful positions that could undermine the president; and how official statements by FBI's *Crossfire Hurricane* officials to the DOJ Inspector General were factually inaccurate or wildly inconsistent with other evidence, raising the question of if those officials risked criminal prosecution to conceal their acts.

This is not a position I ever sought. As I worked with government investigators it seemed inconceivable that key facts could be covered up until now. Yet with both Flynn's hearing and the election approaching, whatever the consequences, everyone impacted deserves to know the truth.

Conspiracy of Dunces

People who convince themselves that they're really smart often do the dumbest things. I've fallen prey to this dynamic myself in the past. Yet perhaps no one in history is a better example of this than the Cambridge Four. Their story is both a tragedy and a farce—think *Jason Bourne* meets *Austin Powers* — with larger-than-life characters that might be equally at home in a *Saturday Night Live* skit or a John Le Carré spy thriller. Yet the damage they did is deadly serious.

The Cambridge Four's most mythical, larger-than-life character — both literally and figuratively — is my former advisor, Halper. Codenamed “the Walrus,” in person he appears well over 300 pounds, and carries himself with grandiose airs, evoking fictional anti-heroes like Ignatius O'Reilly of *Confederacy of Dunces* or Shakespeare's Falstaff.

At first, I was drawn to and respected him for his bold books opposing brain-dead Republican orthodoxies on the Iraq War and China policy. It seemed his real-world government experience eerily mirrored my own. I had yet to discover his checkered past, including: his reported role in organizing ex-CIA operatives to steal Jimmy Carter's 1980 debate materials; 1990's crack cocaine arrest; and FBI firing in 2011 for “mercurial”

behavior, demanding more “compensation” and “questionable allegiance to [intelligence] targets.”

By the time I organized a major 2016 conference to serve as a capstone of my years of research at Harvard and Cambridge — ironically focused on the national security risks of U.S. presidential campaigns — Halper was a gregarious, opinionated eccentric who struggled to use Cambridge’s basic internet system without help.

He appeared slightly more “mercurial” and rattled after losing his politics professorship in the months before my conference. Yet the idea that any competent FBI or government official would rely on him as a linchpin for world-changing Trump-Russia conspiracy investigations was and is preposterous.

Halper might have faded into retirement — and Spygate likely never would have happened — without my driving forward with the 2016 conference, one that Halper, again ironically, had repeatedly urged me to cancel. An all-star cast of international academics and officials would be there, headlined by Presidential Candidate Hillary Clinton’s confidante Madeleine Albright.

But after a 20-something Cambridge administrative official smugly told me “there’s no way Trump can win” and cut our travel funding, it sent me on a mad scramble. I had to find someone, anyone, to fly over on a last-minute economy ticket to represent the Trump campaign. This is the *only* reason Spygate’s “FBI Spy” Halper and Russiagate’s “Russian Spy” Carter Page ever met, with consequences still shaking politics today. For most of the conference, Halper couldn’t be bothered with Page, about whom he made snarky comments about behind Page’s back, while focusing on Albright. That all changed when another one of the Cambridge Four arrived.

Sir Richard Dearlove is a former director of MI6 and Halper’s long-time collaborator. He arrived at the last minute from a billionaire’s Rocky Mountain soiree called the Allen Conference, whose other attendees reportedly included Oprah, Obama confidants, and Hollywood sexual predator Harvey Weinstein. Dearlove was under the cloud of an official UK investigation into the Iraq war rationale, called the Chilcot Report that were serious even by the Walrus’s or Weinstein’s standards, given the geopolitical consequences.

Among other things, it involved Dearlove’s MI6 allegedly withholding the fact that a key piece of “intelligence” George W. Bush used to launch the attacks – the idea that chemical

munitions were kept in “glass beads or spheres” – suspiciously mirrored an erroneous factoid from the plot of the 1996 WMD-heist movie *The Rock*, starring Nicholas Cage.

At my conference’s last session, Dearlove went far off the script I had discussed with his assistant, lambasting Trump as a national security threat in front of a Trump advisor, and our official guest, Page. My jaw hit the floor in embarrassment, but that, and his discussion with Dearlove, seemed to cause Halper to do a 180-degree shift. Suddenly, he seemed desperately interested in isolating, cornering, and ingratiating himself to Page and promoting himself to the Trump campaign.

Dearlove’s former MI6 agent and the third Cambridge Four member, Christopher Steele, is now as famous as his old boss. According to multiple reports, Steele had been hired by a Clinton campaign contractor a few weeks earlier to compile the infamous “Steele Dossier.” Steele filled his “intelligence” reports with obviously non-intelligent assertions, including that Trump-Russia conspiracies were run out of Russia’s Miami consulate — a consulate an average high schooler with internet access could instantly show did not exist.

Similarly, Steele’s famous allegations that notorious germaphobe Trump paid prostitutes to urinate while Putin recorded him seemed like a teenage boy’s dream after watching too many *Austin Powers* movies — and with recent news revealing Steele’s highly suspect sub-source, Igor Dyachenko, his story appears just about as based on reality.

The Cambridge’s Four’s final member, Christopher Andrew, seemed the least likely to become involved. He initially called some of Halper’s Russia conspiracy theories “absurd.” Yet by early 2017 he published an article that helped legitimize false allegations against Trump’s team and even implicated his own student.

I call them — Halper, Steele, Dearlove, and Andrew — the Cambridge Four because of parallels to another British spy story of yore, perhaps the most notorious intelligence scandal in history. That earlier “Cambridge Five” spy ring, including infamous names like Kim Philby and Guy Burgess, became the basis for John LeCarre’s famous spy thriller and film *Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Spy*. The Five were Cold War Soviet spies who escaped virtually unpunished after embarrassed British and American officials essentially covered up the extent of their betrayals. One, Anthony Blunt, was even knighted and served as art curator to the Queen.

Cambridge Five spy Guy Burgess interview unearthed by CBC



These Cambridge men undermined democracy and the U.S.-UK relationship, while making fools of politicians, the media, and officials linked to the FBI, CIA and MI6 for years. The same can be said of our new Cambridge Four.

I have no indication that any of the Cambridge Four were ever on Russia's payroll or were actual spies for Russia, like their Cambridge Five namesakes. Yet the Cambridge Four, and their media and political enablers, did a miraculous job in pushing fake Trump-Russia conspiracy stories that undermined America's democratically-elected government and sparked investigations still ripping us apart today. In this regard, the Cambridge Four were probably the most effective tools for Russia's disinformation campaign to divide America that Putin could have ever dreamed of.

Flynn's Tag Team Take Down

Perhaps nothing better illustrates the Cambridge Four's roles — or is more urgent given Flynn's legal hearing August 11 — than the takedown of Trump's national security advisor. Starting in 2016, Halper made odd requests for me to brief him and others on Trump's team. He even had me research Trump, allegedly as part of my thesis work, even though my thesis was focused on past, not present, presidents.

In these discussions I stressed that Flynn was indispensable. He was perhaps the only

campaign advisor who both had Trump's personal trust and the deep intelligence experience necessary to expose hidden problems in the intelligence community. At one point, I even recall telling Halper that taking Flynn out would be like "beheading" Trump's team. I had no idea I had been unintentionally aiding a spy preparing the guillotine and helping lead Flynn to exactly such a beheading.

Whether and to what degree the Cambridge Four's individual acts were formally coordinated can likely only be proven by testimony under oath and reviewing phone records, emails, and documents — things government officials seem to have blocked the Cambridge Four and Halper's FBI handler, Steve Somma, from for four years. Yet it would seem odd if four, interconnected individuals linked to a town thousands of miles from Moscow or DC, randomly took acts that fit together so perfectly to take down Flynn.

My conference ended on July 12, 2016 with a closing session where Halper, Dearlove, and Page had their strange interactions. Almost immediately after that, the sparks of international intelligence interest surrounding Trump-Russia connections caught fire. Seven days after the conference, Steele provided a new report for the Clinton Campaign. In it, for the first time, Steele made Page central to his Trump-Russia conspiracies.

Eleven days after that, the Crossfire Hurricane investigation officially launched, allegedly due to a tip (based on a casual London wine bar conversation two months earlier) by an Australian diplomat named Alexander Downer linked to the Clinton Foundation and to the Cambridge Four through the tight-knit London/Cambridge Five Eyes intelligence community (involving the CIA, FBI, and MI6). Current CIA Director Gina Haspel was the CIA station chief in London when Downer reportedly broke typical protocol by giving his tip directly to that Embassy's team.

Halper's long-time FBI handler Steve Somma, who personally saved Halper's FBI career after Halper's firing in 2011, was quickly reassigned to *Crossfire Hurricane* despite Somma telling the DOJ's Inspector General that he "lacked a basic understanding of simple [campaign] issues." Shortly after his reassignment, Somma claimed he "couldn't believe [their] luck" as he "kind of stumbled upon" Halper's ties to *Crossfire Hurricane*'s top targets, including from his recently meeting Page at my conference.

Halper quickly agreed to highly questionable, if not illegal, FBI requests to secretly record his own party's presidential campaign advisers. Two business days after Somma held his meetings with Halper, the *Crossfire Razor* investigation of Flynn launched on August 16.

In the weeks after my Summer 2016 conference, Halper and Dearlove quit an academic entity, the Cambridge Intelligence Seminar (CIS), they'd put together with Andrew. After these resignations, rumors circulated that Trump's national security advisor, General Michael Flynn, was seduced by a young blonde "Russian spy" in Cambridge years earlier. This "seduction" allegedly occurred after three of the Cambridge Four — Halper, Dearlove, and Andrew — hosted Flynn for CIS events in 2014. I attended part of their program and found nothing untoward, just typical academic fare. Neither apparently did any of the Cambridge Four find anything wrong, until years later after two of them crossed paths with Page at my conference.

Steele's role pushing anti-Flynn stories was revealed in his dossier and the testimony of an aide to Republican Senator John McCain. Steele met the aide in London during the fall of 2016, telling him that "Flynn had an extramarital affair with a Russian woman in the U.K." and using details mirroring the other Cambridge Four stories. The *Washington Post* also reports Steele and Dearlove discussed how his anti-Trump work might integrate with UK government actions from at least "early fall" 2016.

Yet by winter 2016, these efforts were imploding. After Trump's election, FBI agents texted about "a lot of scared MFers" at headquarters who needed to "[s]tart looking for new jobs fellas." Yet doubling down on questionable investigations might have been some of the FBI Keystone Cops' only escape route.

Before the election, Halper and the FBI made several wired-up spying attempts: secretly recording and questioning Page and Papadopoulos to try and catch them in statements supporting Steele's Trump-Russia conspiracies. Their clown car operation backfired spectacularly, often contradicting Steele. Halper at one point awkwardly put a phone down as if to record Papadopoulos while spewing questions about Russia. On an FBI recording, Halper apparently admitted he was "three sheets to the wind" drunk.

The supposedly "confidential" source Halper seemingly made a public, last-ditch attempt to try and legitimize allegations of a Russian conspiracy at Cambridge through a December 16 Financial Times newspaper article. Halper claimed he and Dearlove quit the seminar that hosted Flynn due to "unacceptable Russian influence." Halper's partner Andrew initially called Halper's assertions "absurd." Another professor added that "Cambridge is a wonderful place for conspiracy theories, but the idea there is a Machiavellian plot here is ridiculous...it's real Reds under the Bed stuff—the whole thing is ludicrous."

But Andrew later seemed to flip, giving legs to his Cambridge Four comrades' smears by authoring an 2017 article implying their falsely accused "Russian spy" behaved seductively towards Flynn. That this fake "spy" was a new mother — and Andrew's own student mentee for years — made this more disturbing.

Despite Halper's article, a few weeks later these efforts were dead. A memo to terminate the Flynn investigation was on its way to FBI director on January 4, finding "no derogatory evidence." Flynn would soon lead the NSC, where he would be empowered to expose the Cambridge Four and could bring them to their own career guillotines. They would likely be joined by Director Comey, McCabe, and FBI officials whom Democrats had widely derided earlier for botching the Hillary Clinton email investigation before they staked what remained of their credibility to Steele's falsehoods. Then everything changed.

A General, a Walrus, and a "Kill Shot"

McCabe's FBI subordinate Peter Strzok — who earlier texted that the FBI's *Crossfire Hurricane* investigation was like an "insurance policy" in case of Trump's election which "[w]e'll stop" and he could "SMELL the Trump support" at a Walmart — intervened on January 4 to pull the memo terminating Flynn's investigation.

The next day, January 5, Strzok attended an Oval Office Meeting with President Obama, National Security Adviser Rice, Acting Attorney General Sally Yates and FBI Director Comey. Among the topics were intercepted calls between Flynn and Russia's Ambassador discussing sanctions. Strzok's notes indicate Vice President Biden suggested that Flynn somehow violated a 216-year-old, possibly unconstitutional, and never successfully prosecuted, law called the Logan Act.

All of this — White House discussions, the taping of Flynn, Flynn-Russia conversations — were highly classified. They were never supposed to go public. If no one commits a felony by leaking them, this whole situation likely disappears. It is hard to believe anyone in Trump's White House, or even in the last days of Obama's presidency, would try to prosecute Flynn for a "Logan Act" violation of a possibly unconstitutional law he probably didn't even violate, and that hasn't been successfully prosecuted in its over two centuries of existence.

If this law — created to stop private citizens from intervening in foreign affairs — applied to incoming presidential teams, likely Joe Biden, Susan Rice, and most of the incoming international teams of Presidents Obama, Bush, Reagan, and Clinton would be guilty. Under

our Constitution, it is the job of presidential campaigns to announce how they will change policy. So, unless someone commits the leak against Flynn, this all would be resolved internally. It is never transformed into a public Russia-Trump conspiracy tearing our country apart. But as we all now know, and history recorded, that is not what happened.

Five days after that the January 5 Oval Office meeting, I met Halper in Virginia. I didn't think much about that meeting until Durham's team requested I review my records. Because Halper had seemed increasingly erratic in our dealings, making it difficult to advance my doctoral work, I requested to start recording our conversations back in 2015 to document his guidance.

When I listened to my January 10, 2017 recording a few weeks ago, I expected to find boring academic discussions. Instead I found something else.

In the recording Halper laid out what was about to happen to Flynn, something he had no independent reason to know. "I don't think Flynn's going to be around long," he said, adding, "the way these things work" was that "opponents... so-called enemies" of Flynn would be "looking for ways of exerting pressure...that's how it builds."

Flynn, he said, would be "squeezed pretty hard," and Flynn's "reaction to that is to blow up and get angry. He's really fucked. I don't where he goes from there. But that is his reaction. That's why he's so unsuitable."

The full audio of his Flynn discussion is linked here:

A SoundCloud player interface. At the top left is a red play button icon. To its right is the text 'taibbisubstack' and 'Halper + Schr...'. Above the waveform is the SoundCloud logo. A timestamp '1:03' is at the bottom right of the waveform. At the bottom left of the player is a link 'Cookie policy'.

Those still defending the *Crossfire Hurricane* investigation will say there is no smoking gun here. There is no confession that individuals lied to ensnare Flynn, leaked classified information, or illegally undermined and sabotaged America's government.

As someone experienced in crime and terrorism efforts, I can assure you of a hard truth: there almost never is. That is why we have jury trials, congressional investigations, and adversarial processes to uncover the truth.

That is why the most disturbing thing is that the Cambridge Four, their FBI/intelligence handlers, and others have been hidden from critical public and government inquiries for over four years. Context (including my background and materials) is vital, as is the chance for Halper, myself, Carter Page, and others involved to publicly testify, defend themselves, and answer questions. Yet for now, the context I can add makes this more troubling.

Halper would not have independently known Flynn, Trump's most trusted security advisor, was about to go down. Halper knew the Cambridge Four's Flynn affair allegations were, at best, unsubstantiated speculations, if not intentional lies. The FBI sought to close Flynn's investigation and had mounting evidence undermining Steele's Page and Papadopoulos allegations.

Even if Halper knew about Flynn's "Logan Act violation" calls, it wouldn't have mattered. Trump's Administration would not prosecute this. It was, as Obama's Acting Attorney General Sally Yates even admitted, "certainly unlikely" Obama's Administration would either — it would expose their *Crossfire* investigation and spark bipartisan ridicule over a legally and politically suspect "Logan Act" prosecution in Obama's last 10 days.

Halper was often unhinged and "mercurial," as FBI described him in his 2011 firing. Months earlier he exploded screaming to block my long-planned outreach to the Trump campaign, likely fearing I would expose him and the Cambridge Four. Now Halper's efforts were collapsing like a house of cards, likely leading to the Cambridge Four's actual exposure, possibly even prosecution, once Flynn came to power. He should have been at wits' end. Yet in the recording he was as eerily calm, almost cocky, as I've ever heard him.

One of the remaining tasks of investigators is determining the precise source of the leaks about Flynn to the *Washington Post*. These leaks were a critical inflection point. They revived the Trump-Russia investigations that were about to die and stopped Flynn before he could expose the fabrications and incompetence behind it all.

This is not a classic whistleblowing situation, wherein the confidentiality of the leaker should ideally remain sacrosanct in light of an important, socially-beneficial disclosure. This is the opposite: a leak seemingly manufactured with the intent of creating a media firestorm around a figure the FBI had already investigated, to no effect. The FBI's key "confidential" source was already naming himself in a major global newspaper as he openly pushed Russia conspiracy theories.

Fairness demands individuals have a chance to testify under oath and defend themselves, yet members of the Cambridge Four, once again, have links that should be explored. It is demonstrably true that Halper knew Ignatius for decades, and he also bragged to me Ignatius was his press contact. Ignatius' *Post* colleague, Robert Costa, was also Halper's former student, and has described Halper as a "friend" he "had dinner with on many occasions."

When Halper was outed as an FBI informant in 2018, Ignatius quickly filed a story calling Halper a "bit player" and a "middle man," in what may have been an attempt to turn attention away from his long-time source. It is also worth noting that Flynn's lawyer, Sydney Powell, has accused Pentagon official James Baker of making the leak — a charge a Pentagon official denied — and of coordinating with Obama's Director of National Intelligence, James Clapper, on what she called a "kill shot" on Flynn.

Baker leads the Pentagon's Office of Net Assessment (ONA), which reported paying Halper \$411,575 while he surveilled Trump's team. ONA claims this enormous sum —more than the annual salary of the President of the United States — was paid to Halper for fairly normal, largely publicly-sourced, reports to this office. I always found it strange that Halper profusely thanked me for introducing him to Carter Page, even after Page was accused of being a "Russian spy." The disclosure that some of these payments started around the time Halper met Page, provided me with a theory on why he was so grateful.

According to a former *Washington Post* reporter, numerous sources were checked before the January 12, 2017 Ignatius story was published. While Flynn's lawyer Powell suggested Baker leaked to Ignatius, it might be safer for Halper, rather than highly monitored government officials like Baker or Clapper, to provide information to his long-time media contact Ignatius, former student Costa, or one of their *Post* colleagues. Halper's confidential FBI source role could be used to hide him from Congressional or public scrutiny. Halper's FBI handler Somma could be hidden by a DOJ policy shielding lower-level employees, while foreign members of the Cambridge Four can selectively dodge U.S. investigations.

This exactly corresponds to what has happened so far.

The Getaway

My former supervisor, using his booming voice and bold ideas, likes to be the center of attention. Yet for two years his allies with powerful intelligence, political, and media ties

seem to have done the impossible. They made this massive figure almost completely disappear.

The Mueller and DOJ IG investigations of these scandals relied in large part on input from DOJ and FBI officials linked to potential abuses — including the FBI's Comey, McCabe, Strzok, Lisa Page and DOJ's Andrew Weisman. When Congress grilled long-time FBI leader Mueller about why he didn't interview "Steven Schrage" or others who might expose DOJ or FBI improprieties, he stammered: "[i]n those areas, I am going to stay away from...I stand by that which is in the report and not so necessarily with that, which is - which is not in the report."

Given Mueller's stated preference to "stay away" from those with information that might implicate members of his team and the DOJ IG's reliance on DOJ insiders, it's not surprising that people like me who were in a position to expose the Russiagate narrative were not interviewed.

What is surprising for anyone valuing journalistic standards, is that those under government investigation for abuses of power have so easily avoided hard questions. Some have even been given media contracts to spin their own actions. Imagine if Nixon's allies appointed the Watergate burglars to investigate themselves, then placed them in nightly news positions where they could attack anyone questioning them. Politics shouldn't destroy our principles.

There is too much to fully detail here, but further revelations – and they are forthcoming – will make these moves even more damning. How Cambridge Four members and Carter Page came together is a comedy of errors rivaling *Dumb and Dumber*. An FBI source had information that should have stopped Carter Page's invasive surveillance in August 2016 before it started. A covert anti-Trump operative sought to be appointed to one of the world's most powerful positions that could be used to undermine the president.

Evidence suggests undisclosed famous officials, including Republicans, tried to cover up their links to Steele's smears. The IG report contains statements by *Crossfire* officials that appear factual inaccurate, inherently inconsistent, or highly improbable, raising questions about whether they risked prosecution to conceal their acts.

"I don't remember." That should be the official, trademarked motto of the government officials involved in these events. It is what former Acting Attorney General Sally Yates responded under oath this past Wednesday.

She had been asked if Vice President Biden raised the Logan Act in their Oval Office discussion of Flynn on January 5, 2017, seven days before the felony leak on Flynn's alleged "Logan Act" violation was published. Flynn's appeals hearing is on Tuesday, and Vice President Biden and President Trump are on the ballot in less than 90 days. These issues should be beyond politics. They should have been dealt with before now. They would have, if Washington insiders could "remember" things, like how to provide legally-mandated documents under our Constitution or their duties to the public.

This is also beyond the pervasive, often subconscious, partisanship that now blinds us. The intelligence leak claiming Russia supported Bernie Sanders over Vice President Biden in 2020's critical Nevada Democratic caucuses, shows how our national security powers could just as easily be deployed against Democrats as against Republicans.

In my work after 9/11, I saw how those national security powers combined with unaccountable government officials could do things George Orwell never dreamed over. Russia and foreign interference in elections should be taken seriously. Yet pushing the threat of Russia—now a country with a GDP the CIA publicly estimates is far closer to Indonesia's than our own—like we are in the middle of a 1950's Red Scare push by Senator Joseph McCarthy, should not be used as a political weapon to cover up or excuse our own government officials' abuses.

For years, political and intelligence officials have concealed key documents — and even my former supervisor the Walrus — in ways that have divided America and derailed our government's work. If Biden, Trump, or members of their teams grossly abused national security powers to upset democracy, we deserve to know as soon as possible before the election.

This should not be turned into an "October surprise" or later used to throw any new presidential administration into chaos. Allowing politicians and national security officials to cover up or even profit from abuses of power, puts us on course for even greater disasters. America can't afford another government and media strike out, after four years of too much denial, incompetence, and coverup.



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romanmoment 14 hr

Thank you, thank you, thank you to Mr. Schrage and to Matt. What happened to our country? When did second-rate, wanna-be hacks become central players in a coup attempt against a Democratically elected POTUS? How and why did our FBI and other alphabet agencies become so corrupt and biased? Better yet, who corrupted them and why?

And maybe the most profound question is where - aside from this site and very, very few others - has true journalism gone? Where has unbiased, apolitical, "just the facts ma'am", un-spun journalism gone?

As an American - not a Republican or Democrat - I beg you to keep digging at the truth and let's let Mother Justice decide.

41 Reply

1 reply



Poldark 15 hr

I never expected a credible insider'd ever get to put their history of what-all happened as this debacle went down out for general viewing. Glad to see it getting aired!

Matt I hope you have a trustworthy, solid and capable network of supporters watching your back (front, sides, top and bottom)... I'll be looking forward to reading the next installments before 11/3/2020.

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