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 **TODAY'S "QUICK HIT":**  
**FBI'S COMEY:**  
**WALKING A**  
**TIGHTROPE!**

By Stephen L. Bakke  October 29, 2016



*Here's what provoked me:*

*FBI Director Comey finds himself with nowhere to turn given his original decision not to prosecute Clinton for her e-mail indiscretions. More information is now available and he has little choice but to continue his disclosure policies. I'm not so sure I wouldn't have made some of the same mistakes, so I decided to give my thoughts in the midst of the current furor about his conduct.*

*Here's my response:*

**FBI's Comey: Walking a Tightrope!**

FBI Director Comey is in the middle of an unwinnable situation. Why has it come to this? Consider:

- Comey didn't originally insert himself into the political process. Under considerable scrutiny as to her independence in the Clinton e-mails matter, Attorney General Loretta Lynch deferred to Comey the decision whether to prosecute. But that's not his job!
- Comey's most unfortunate mistake was accepting this "hot potato" from Lynch. He then made important choices that didn't turn out well. I believe he thought he was preserving his independence when he chose to disclose Clinton's gross carelessness in handling e-mails while Secretary of State.
- While making public disclosure of Clintons culpability, he chose not to seek prosecution. His excuse was essentially that there would ultimately be no conviction. Perhaps he was right.
- Comey probably thought he would "take the heat," "weather the storm," and get on with life.
- Now he finds himself with more information about emails, and he's in a major political squabble.
- First he angered the Trump supporters by trying to walk a tightrope by disclosing information but not recommending prosecution. Now he may feel he has no choice but to continue his policy of disclosure by announcing the new investigation. Given the context, that's a reasonable conclusion for him to reach.
- What if he waited until after the election to make this disclosure? How would that have resulted in a better overall result? He's a "culprit" either way, so he's probably going with his instincts.

Comey is now making choices, and not taking orders, because he has no alternative. Lynch backed him into a corner, and he's going to finish doing things his way. But once again there are no "comfortable" alternatives available. Maybe he deserves less blame and more understanding. Considering there have been no good choices to choose from, I'm "humbly" acknowledging that I could easily have made many of the same "mistakes" – if they actually are mistakes. Stay tuned!