

## Mueller's 'liar, liar pants on fire strategy'

It must really be nice to have an unlimited budget, a large staff, no fixed deadlines and no metrics for success. Such is the life of Special Counsel and former FBI Director, Robert Mueller as he walks the path of the 'Russia Collusion Probe.' America has seen (or rather not seen) his work in progress except for the occasional indictments his team has handed down. In case you haven't been paying attention, those indictments have been made against: eight Americans, thirteen Russian nationals, twelve Russian intelligence officers, three Russian companies and two other individuals.

On the surface, that would probably be considered as a resounding success especially since Mueller's organization has largely pursued what can be termed a "liar, liar pants on fire" strategy of getting especially jittery Americans caught in a web by his team of spidery lawyers in admitting they lied about something, sometime to somebody. To be sure, lying is never the right tactic when your feet are being roasted over a raging spit by no-nonsense lawyer on a mission OR when the threat of imprisonment is hanging over your head.

The Trump defenders are calling many of these crimes 'process crimes' - the kind that can trip up even the purest of the purest among us and should snare those with selective memory failure like ex-FBI Director James Comey when he said, "I don't recall" 249 times while being grilled by Congressional committees. Indeed, when one considers the non-prosecution of Comey and former Obama appointees John Brennan and James Clapper for their untruthful statements to Congress, it's hard not to acknowledge that there is a clear double-standard in Washington, D.C. when it comes to holding the anti-Trumpers accountable.

It reminds me of something I once heard from a political pundit, "If it weren't for the double-standard in D.C. there wouldn't be any standard at all." How far we have fallen from the tree of truth. That brings me to the recent arrest of a FOT (friend of Trump), Roger Stone last week. The scene was pre-dawn in Florida. At the home of Roger Stone, his deaf wife and their two dogs and three cats everything was normal until 27 FBI and other law enforcement vehicles blocked access roads to the house and were making their way to Mr. Stone's front door. Resplendent in the latest in SWAT-styled Kevlar body armor and sporting semi-automatic weapons, over two dozen 'officers of the law' awakened the family with "FBI, open up" while they encircled his property, ensuring that the 66-year old pajama-clad Stone wouldn't make a run for it.

This was a scene right out a third world country where the local dictator has just given word that his secret police should snatch a political opponent from his slumber or from a DEA operation where a drug lord was forcibly removed from his fortress. Regrettably, this was America or what passes for it these days, and Roger Stone was being treated like Butch Cassidy and The Sundance Kid while the authorities readied themselves for their annihilation. I had almost forgotten that we saw this kind of government-sanctioned thuggery in Florida once before. It was in April of 2000, when a contingent of Immigration Officers smashed their way into a house where a six-year old Cuban refugee boy, Elian Gonzalez, was sleeping. He was forcibly taken from the home in which he was living (on orders from Bill Clinton's AG Janet Reno) to be reunited with his father in Cuba. To read the whole story, log on to <https://www.nytimes.com/2000/04/23/us/elian-gonzalez-case-overview-cuban-boy-seized-us-agents-reunited-with-his-father.html>. It's a tragedy.

The Stone arrest is disturbing on many levels, not the least of which is the way it was done. The real question is why? Have we lost all semblance of reasonableness and thrown common sense and justice out the window by authorizing secret police tactics to be used against non-violent alleged 'process criminals'? I fear that Pogo may have been right after all. "We have met the enemy and he is us."

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