

Politics



“Instead of listening to the experts and analyzing facts, the Speaker opted to slander the Postmaster General by using baseless accusations and attacking his character.”

— House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy, California Republican, in a letter accusing the chamber’s Democrats of engaging in a “conspiracy theory” about recent changes at the Postal Service

FBI

Former FBI lawyer pleads guilty to falsifying Page documents

Admits to altering email to continue surveillance of aide

By **JEFF MORDOCK**
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

Former FBI lawyer Kevin Clinesmith pleaded guilty Wednesday to making false statements, admitting he doctored the warrant application used to continue the surveillance of President Trump’s 2016 campaign aide Carter Page.

“Guilty,” Clinesmith said when asked by a federal judge for a plea.

Clinesmith admitted to altering an email in early 2017 to say Mr. Page was not a source for the CIA when in fact he was. He told a federal judge Wednesday that he believed at the time that the information he provided was accurate.

“At the time, I believed the information that I was providing in the email was accurate, but I am agreeing that the language that I entered into the email was

not originally there, and that I inserted it in there,” he told the court.

U.S. District Judge James Boasberg, who is overseeing the criminal case against Clinesmith, asked: “You intentionally altered the email to insert information that was not originally in the email?”

“Yes, your honor,” Clinesmith responded.

Clinesmith did not elaborate on why he pleaded guilty if he thought he was passing along accurate information. That parsing raised questions among conservatives last week after Clinesmith’s attorneys said the same thing in a statement.

Sidney Powell, attorney for former National Security Adviser Michael Flynn, called the nuanced plea, “highly suspicious” and a “huge problem.”

Judge Boasberg didn’t appear to have any concerns about the Clinesmith’s statement or the plea deal he had entered into with Justice Department prosecutors.

Clinesmith could face up to five years in prison and a fine of \$250,000 when he is sentenced on Dec. 10.

Judge Boasberg accepted the

government’s recommendation not to detain Clinesmith ahead of his sentencing, but did require him to surrender his passport and imposed travel restrictions.

The case against Clinesmith is the first brought by U.S. Attorney John Durham, who was appointed last year by Attorney General William Barr to review the origins of the FBI’s investigation into Russian meddling in the 2016 election.

That probe, dubbed Crossfire Hurricane, eventually morphed into former special counsel Robert Mueller’s investigation.

Clinesmith, who provided legal advice to agents working both the Russia probe and the Hillary Clinton email investigation, admitted to altering an email in 2017 so the FBI could continue to monitor Mr. Page. The assertion was used by the Justice Department to obtain the third Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act warrant for Mr. Page.

Clinesmith’s attorney said last week that his client regrets his actions and “understands what he did was wrong.”

Judge Boasberg, who is the presiding judge for the Foreign Intelligence

Court [FISC], which was defrauded by Clinesmith, is also overseeing the criminal case.

He asked attorneys on both sides if they wanted him to recuse himself because the FISC was a “victim” in this case. Neither the government nor the defense thought a recusal was warranted.

Clinesmith was first outed, although not directly named, in a report last year by Justice Department Inspector General Michael E. Horowitz. He is identified in the report as “Office of General Counsel attorney,” but the report makes it clear he is the one who changed the email.

An FBI supervisory special agent told Mr. Horowitz’s team that investigators wanted a “definitive answer” to whether Mr. Page had ever been a source for another U.S. government agency before he signed the renewal application.

While in contact with what appeared to be the FBI’s liaison to the CIA, Clinesmith was informed via email that Mr. Page was indeed a source for the CIA. Clinesmith then altered the email by inserting the word “not” next to “source,” making it appear as if Mr. Page had no

relationship with the CIA.

Clinesmith had served as an attorney with the FBI’s National Security and Cyber Law Branch. He worked under former FBI General Counsel James Baker and reported to disgraced anti-Trump FBI agent Peter Strzok during the Clinton email investigation.

In a July 2018 inspector general report on the FBI’s Clinton email investigation, Clinesmith appears again, but not directly identified, as one of the FBI officials who showed a possible bias against Mr. Trump, along with Mr. Strzok and his mistress, ex-FBI lawyer Lisa Page.

Just hours after Mr. Trump’s presidential victory, Clinesmith lamented the win, saying “I am so stressed about what I could have done differently.”

Weeks later, he texted “Viva la Resistance!” — a phrase used by anti-Trump activists.

The July 2018 report claims that Clinesmith’s anti-Trump messages only reflected his personal views, but did not affect his work. Mr. Horowitz did not rule on whether political bias influenced either investigation.



ASSOCIATED PRESS

“We are waiting on reckless Speaker [Nancy] Pelosi to get back and do her job,” White House press secretary Kayleigh McEnany said.

WHITE HOUSE

Trump open to \$25 billion for Postal Service in relief bill

By **ALEX SWOYER**
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

The White House is open to increasing the money it first proposed for the U.S. Postal Service in stimulus talks with congressional Democrats for the fifth round of coronavirus relief.

White House Press Secretary Kayleigh McEnany said President Trump doesn’t have a cap in his negotiations on the COVID-19 legislation.

Republicans had proposed \$10 billion for the Postal Service while Democrats are set to return to Washington on Saturday to pass a bill with \$25 billion in funding.

Negotiations between the White House and Democrats on Capitol Hill broke down earlier this month as the two sides blamed the other for an unwillingness to meet between a \$1 trillion GOP proposal and a nearly \$4 trillion package pushed by Democrats.

The White House wants to see unemployment benefits and a moratorium on evictions included in any skinny relief bill passed by Congress.

“We are waiting on reckless Speaker Pelosi to get back and do her job,” Ms. McEnany said.

She noted the Postal Service has \$25 billion on hand and is funded through 2021, calling Mrs. Pelosi’s suggestion that it can’t handle mail-in ballots for the November election a “farce.”

Mrs. Pelosi, meanwhile, spoke to U.S. Postmaster General Louis DeJoy on Wednesday and said changes he’s made including moving some of the blue mailbox drop boxes, limiting other critical infrastructure, and not planning for overtime deliveries have already done damage.

The California Democrat said she’s concerned veterans won’t get medicine delivered in a timely addition to concerns for mail-in ballots.

“The Postal Service is Election Central during the pandemic, and Democrats will not allow the president to force Americans to choose between their health and their vote,” Mrs. Pelosi said.

Additionally, Rep. Richard E. Neal, Massachusetts Democrat and House Ways and Means Committee chairman, requested Wednesday that the Internal Revenue Service pause with mailing notices on unpaid taxes to taxpayers who could be affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and a mail backlog.

“The IRS should not resume sending notices to taxpayers until the backlog has been reduced to pre-pandemic levels and taxpayer accounts have been updated,” Mr. Neal said.

An Open Letter to President Trump:



DON'T LISTEN TO CHEAP LABOR INTERESTS

Mr. President, you campaigned on behalf of American workers because you know that too much immigration harms them by suppressing their wages and job opportunities.

So Mr. President, please don’t fall for these myths pushed by corporate interests who want an uninterrupted flow of cheap foreign labor. Too often, it seems, they prioritize profits over patriotic concern for their fellow citizens.

Myth No. 1: We need mass immigration to fill a labor shortage.

Fact: There is no worker shortage. In the Covid-19 crisis we have an official unemployment rate of 11 percent. The end of the crisis is not in sight, and when it does end many of the jobs lost because of the crisis will not be coming back.¹

We aren’t facing a future worker shortage, either, because we are on the brink of a massive shift to automation. Within fifteen years, according to expert forecasts, as many as 40 percent of the jobs now done by people will be done by computers, robots, and other machines.² In that situation our problem will not be a shortage of workers but finding jobs for the workers we have.

Myth No. 2: There are many jobs that native-born American citizens refuse to do.

Fact: The Census Bureau reports native-born Americans are the majority of workers in almost every occupation.³ These Americans are forced to compete with foreign workers for lower wages than they would otherwise receive. Agriculture is an exception to the rule that natives are a majority of workers, but we can meet most of our agricultural needs with increasingly available mechanization of planting and harvesting.⁴

Myth No 3: We need large numbers of foreign workers through H-1B visas in STEM (science, technology, engineering, math) because we don’t have enough qualified Americans.

Fact: We don’t lack qualified citizens. Almost three-quarters of Americans with STEM degrees work in other fields because tech companies prefer to hire foreigners so they can get away with paying them less.⁵ These companies often require their American workers to train foreigners who will take the Americans’ jobs.⁶ In other words, the Americans are more skilled than the people they train. H-1B holders are just average, not the best and brightest.⁷

Years ago corporate spokesmen told us not to worry about the loss of our well-paying factory jobs to foreign countries. They said U.S. workers could retrain in computer science and related fields. Today H-1Bs are cutting off these sources of employment for Americans. With good jobs more difficult to get, our middle class is shrinking.⁸

Mr. President, please don’t yield to corporate cheap labor interests. Reducing immigration helps all workers in this country, native-born and naturalized citizens alike. Limiting immigration in the past resulted in upward mobility for our working people into a vibrant middle class. With your help, Mr. President, this flourishing of the American Dream can happen again.

Notes:

- <https://www.foxbusiness.com/money/nearly-half-of-us-jobs-lost-to-coronavirus-could-be-gone-permanently-poll-finds>
- <https://fortune.com/2019/01/10/automation-replace-jobs/> <https://www.vox.com/2017/3/25/15051308/us-uk-germany-japan-robot-job-automation>
- <https://cis.org/Report/There-Are-No-Jobs-Americans-Wont-Do>
- <https://www.aicfoundation.com/books/agmechPolicyBrief2.pdf>
- <http://heather.cs.ucdavis.edu/itaa.real.html>
- <https://www.axios.com/trump-att-outsourcing-h1b-visa-foreign-workers-1f26cd20-664a-4b5f-a2e3-361c8d2af502.html>
- <https://www.epi.org/publication/bp356-foreign-students-best-brightest-immigration-policy/>
- <https://www.investopedia.com/insights/americas-slowly-disappearing-middle-class>

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