



Retired FBI boss says agency has lost independence, been co-opted by liberal DOJ ideologues

Description

USA: Former Assistant Director Chris Swecker says bureau has been pressured into improper domestic spying, censorship.

In a stunning rebuke, the FBI's retired chief of criminal investigations says his old agency has yielded the independence Congress gave it under the law and is now subservient to a group of liberal ideologues inside the Justice Department who have pressured agents to stray into unwarranted domestic spying and censorship.

Ex-FBI Assistant Director Chris Swecker on Tuesday became the latest law enforcement or political figure to support creating an independent commission modeled after the U.S. Senate's 1970s Church Committee to investigate the FBI's practices and impose reforms on the storied law enforcement agency.

He told *Just the News* that the bureau's problems start with the politicization of its ranks by DOJ.

"What I see is that it's basically a wholesale takeover by the Department of Justice, which is filled with political appointees in every top position, and then by extension, right into the administration," Swecker said in a wide-ranging interview on the *John Solomon Reports* podcast.

"You see DOJ people — and many of the top executive positions inside the FBI now — you see people that have made a career out of bouncing in and out of silk-stocking law firms between the Department of Justice and then these law firms. And I have to say they are incredibly liberal in their politics. And that has now sort of taken over the FBI, and they are inserting that ideology into their high-profile investigations."

Swecker, a lawyer himself, said one of the many tell-tale signs that the FBI has lost its independence is the bureau's relationship with Big Tech firms, as exposed by recent internal file releases by Twitter and a lawsuit filed by the attorneys general of Louisiana and Missouri.

The original partnerships, he said, were designed to legitimately counter foreign influence operations

on U.S. social media but have since evolved into spying and censorship operations impacting Americans.

“The FBI has an industry outreach program to help exchange information with industry, helping in the counterintelligence efforts of the FBI. This has gone well beyond that,” he said. “This is nothing but domestic spying, and this is nothing but suppression of First Amendment rights and ideas.”

He said the bureau’s role in pressuring Twitter and other social media and search sites to censor Americans “needs to be the first line of inquiry” in a new Congress.

A growing number of prominent figures — including House Republican Leader Kevin McCarthy, incoming House Judiciary Committee Chairman Jim Jordan and retired FBI intelligence chief Kevin Brock — have embraced the idea that Congress should create a blue-ribbon panel modeled after the 1970s Church Committee to probe where the FBI has gone astray and to craft meaningful reforms.

Swecker said he believes that is a good approach, noting that while he remains friends with Christopher Wray, the current FBI director has allowed his agency to lose significant public trust.

“The Church Committee was a full inquiry into what were perceived to be some very serious abuses by the FBI in the domestic surveillance area, in terms of watching U.S. citizens doing things involving U.S. citizens that were considered to be abuses of their power,” he said. “And I think we’ve come full circle here.”

Swecker said the FBI’s involvement in labeling school parents “domestic terrorists,” and its “bare-knuckles” pursuit of Donald Trump contrasted with its “kid gloves cases” against Hillary Clinton, Andrew McCabe and Hunter Biden have not only shaken public trust but also the internal confidence of the FBI.

“I’m telling you the retired agent community and many agents inside the FBI on active duty are saying this needs to be looked at,” he said. “I’m not big fan of congressional inquiries, but they need to shine some light on this.”

Swecker has some experience in independent inquiries: he chaired the independent commission that investigated the culture at the U.S. Army Fort Hood that led to the murder of a female soldier.

Swecker, who retired as the assistant director for criminal investigations after 24 years inside the FBI, said the bureau’s problems have been long in the making, beginning near the end of Director Robert Mueller’s term and accelerating under his successors, James Comey and Christopher Wray.

“I think there’s a cultural shift that started late in Mueller’s term and then we got into sort of full stride in Comey’s term, and is now being sort of perpetuated under Chris Way’s term, and that is that DOJ has basically taken over the FBI,” he said. “They were supposed to have some independence despite being a Bureau under the Department of Justice.”

by John Solomon

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Date Created

01/07/2023