



The DOJ Official Who Met with Trump at Mar-a-Lago Before FBI Raid Has Deep Russiagate Ties, Associate of Mueller's 'Pit Bull'

Description

USA: The FBI's raid on Donald Trump's Mar-a-Lago estate was directly approved and overseen by Justice Department officials with deep ties to Russiagate, as reported earlier. But there is surfacing evidence that those ties are more direct and extensive than previously believed.

A RealClearInvestigations review of the agents involved in the FBI's Trump raid has found that the anti-Trump operation was run primarily by the Washington Field Office and not the Miami Field Office. The Washington Field Office is deeply enmeshed in the FBI's Crossfire Hurricane operation from 2016-2017, which featured laundered Clinton oppo research and FISA surveillance warrant abuse in a scandal that its critics refer to as 'Spygate.'

The Washington Field Office was also remarkably lax in its prevention of the January 6 siege carried out by far-right extremists. It has since come out in court documents that the FBI had more agents embedded at the capitol during the Capitol riots than previously known. As FBI Director Wray conceded in an exchange with Sen. Ted Cruz (R-TX) during Senate testimony in August, the bureau [promoted Steven D'Antuono](#), the special agent in charge of the Detroit Field Office, to become the assistant director in charge of the Washington Field Office in October 2020. That was the same month the FBI had [announced](#) the Whitmer kidnapping plot.

The Washington Field Office has thus been highly involved in many of the most politically charged, high profile cases in recent U.S. history. The RealClearInvestigations piece raises some intriguing names involved in the recent, unprecedented raid on a former president that followers of the Russiagate scandal should be familiar with.

"An examination of the bureau agents involved in the Mar-a-Lago raid reveals other connections between them and FBI officials who played key roles in advancing the Russiagate hoax," Paul Sperry writes.

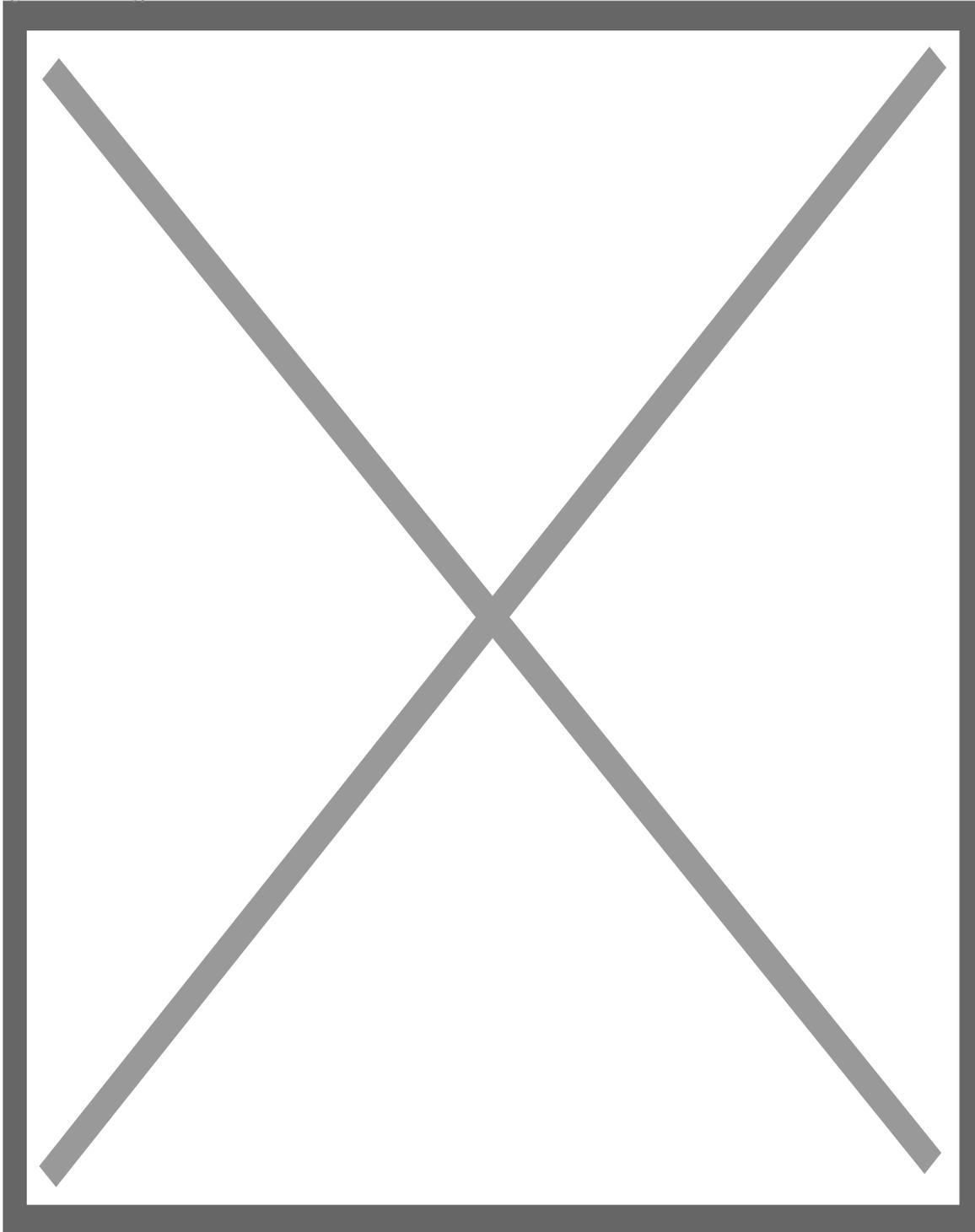
"Sources told RealClearInvestigations that Jay Bratt, the top counterintelligence official in Justice's national security division, who happens to be a Democratic National Committee donor, has been coordinating the Mar-a-Lago investigation with Alan Kohler, who heads the FBI's counterintelligence

division,” Sperry adds.

“*” indicates required fields

The critical thing to note about Bratt, as was noted in an [anonymous tip](#) from Truth Ninja, is that he was a [“resource](#) of the Mueller investigation and worked directly with Andrew Weissman.” Russiagate followers will recall Andrew Weissman, nicknamed as ‘Mueller’s pit bull.’”

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Jay Bratt played a critical role in preparing the terrain at Mar-a-Lago in June for the FBI raid in August.

“Bratt, the top counterintelligence official at Justice, traveled to Mar-a-Lago in early June and personally inspected the storage facility while interacting with both Trump and one of his lawyers,” Sperry notes. “Trump allowed the three FBI agents Bratt brought with him to open boxes in the storage room and look through them. They left with some documents. After leaving, Bratt made a request to Trump’s lawyer for increased security at the facility and asked to see surveillance footage from the

security cameras. The lawyer complied with the requests.”

“Months went by before the Justice Department took the politically explosive step of sending FBI agents unannounced to Trump’s home, seizing documents, photos, and other items not just from the storage facility but from multiple rooms on the property, including the former president’s office,” Sperry adds.

The RealClearInvestigations story draws parallels between the DOJ’s recent “weaponization” of the Foreign Agents Registration Act (FARA) against Trump officials and the invocation of the Presidential Records Act (PRA) as a pretext for the FBI raid, despite it being a civil act and not a criminal statute.

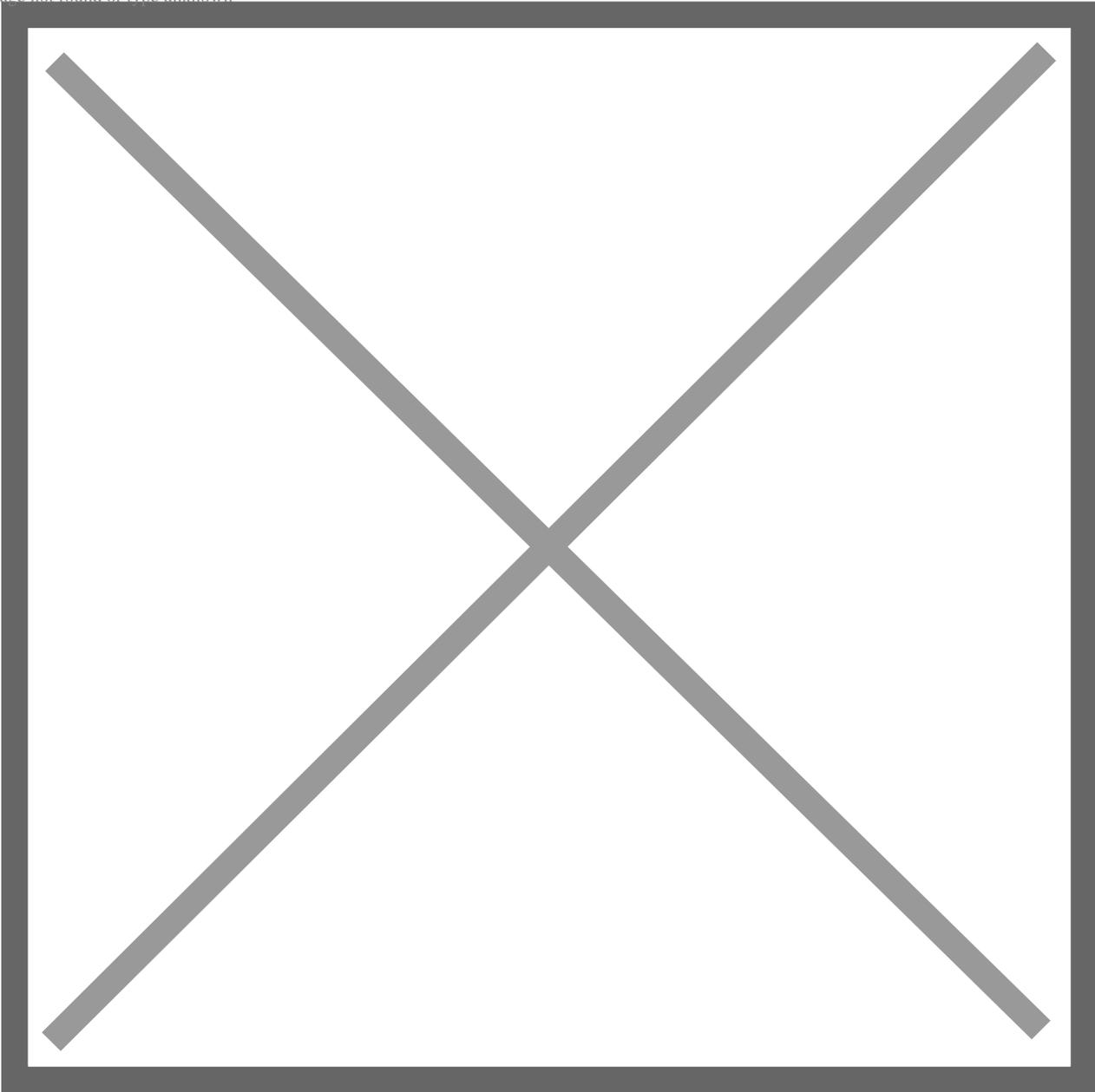
It turns out that Bratt is a close associate of David Laufman, who has been dubbed the ‘mastermind’ behind the legal strategy of using FARA to attack political enemies.

“According to Federal Election Commission records, Bratt has given exclusively to Democrats, including at least \$800 to the Democratic National Committee,” the report notes. “The sources said he is close to David Laufman, whom he replaced as the top counterintelligence official at Justice. An Obama donor, Laufman helped oversee the Russiagate probe, as well as the Clinton email case, which also involved classified information.”

Of course, it is no small coincidence that Bruce Reinhart, the Florida judge who signed off on the search warrant that authorized the FBI raid on Donald Trump, recused himself from Donald Trump’s lawsuit against Hillary Clinton for slanderous Russia collusion accusations. The judge never divulged what prevented him from handling the case.

On August 9th, Paul Sperry noted the “conflicted” DOJ officials who were briefed on the FBI’s raid of Mar-a-Lago.

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Conflicted DOJ officials briefed on the Mar-a-Lago raid:

NICHOLAS McQUAID: worked at same law firm with both Hunter Biden's criminal attorney and Michael Sussmann's criminal attorney

LISA MONACO: Obama aide implicated in Russiagate

MAGGIE GOODLANDER: wife of top Biden aide Jake Sullivan, implicated in Russiagate

In a review of conflicts of interest and political bias at the Department of Justice, Sen. Chuck Grassley (R-IA) and Sen. Ron Johnson (R-WI) explicitly [listed](#) **Nicholas McQuaid** as an official of concern.

Michael Sussmann, of course, was recently named by the Durham investigation as having allegedly misled the FBI about the infamous ‘backdoor server’ to Alfa Bank, which was a claim echoed by Hillary Clinton herself during the 2016 campaign. Sussman had approached the FBI’s general counsel James Baker in a September 2016 meeting with a tip provided in a personal fashion, as opposed to explicitly on behalf of the Clinton campaign that he worked for. The Washington D.C. federal jury acquitted Sussmann in part because it was presumed that some FBI agents knew he was working with the Clinton campaign.

Lisa Monaco, who was President Obama’s top homeland security and counterterrorism adviser, and former chief of staff for prior FBI director Robert Mueller, was [deeply aware of the Russiagate operations](#) during the 2016 campaign. She is implicated as one of the Justice Dept. officials to have given the go-ahead to carry out the FBI raid on Mar-a-Lago. It has not been independently corroborated what role **Maggie Goodlander** may have played in the Mar-a-Lago raid.

But more importantly, as reported earlier at Becker News, the direct involvement of **Alan Kohler** in the FBI investigation of Donald Trump is a red thread to the discredited Russiagate investigation.

The FBI’s current deputy director for counterintelligence Alan Kohler is a Russian area specialist who is believed by some as having been involved in deploying foreign nationals to spy on the Trump campaign during the 2016 election.

In May 2019, Mollie Hemingway of “The Federalist” tied Alan Kohler to a 2011 Cambridge conference with Stefan Halper, whom the New York Times reported was ‘handpicked by a seasoned FBI counterintelligence agent out of the New York office.’ Kohler’s [official FBI biography](#) places him with the New York field office until he was transferred to London in 2012, where he acted as a liaison with British intelligence.

“Following months of angry claims by journalists and Democratic operatives that the Obama administration never spied on Donald Trump’s 2016 presidential campaign, The New York Times admitted... that multiple overseas intelligence assets were deployed against associates of the Republican nominee,” Hemingway writes. “It is not the first time the Times has revealed widespread spying operations against the campaign.”

“The three agents [publicly identified](#) as speaking at that conference on the topic are George J. Ennis, Jr., Alan E. Kohler, Jr., and Stephen M. Somma. Ennis currently serves as the special agent in charge in the FBI’s New York office, according to [his LinkedIn profile](#), and [worked closely](#) with Preet Bharara, former U.S. attorney for the Southern District of New York, a virulent anti-Trump activist whom the president fired in 2017,” she continued.

“The public schedule for a 2014 conference led by Halper shows that Kohler also spoke to the same group about the same Russian case on May 9, 2014,” she added.

“Alan Kohler the FBI representative at the United States Embassy in London will talk about the challenges of modern counter espionage: including the case of Anna Chapman and other Russian illegals,” the schedule noted.

The RealClearInvestigations piece also notes the involvement of Supervisory Intelligence Analyst Brian Auten in the politically charged investigation of Hunter Biden’s laptop, despite his participation on a

Crossfire Hurricane team that is the subject of Special Counsel John Durham's probe.

The FBI's Washington Field Office is again deeply implicated in a politically charged investigation of Donald Trump ahead of a national election. It is another black mark on a troubling track record of partisan investigation of the Democratic Party's political opponents. One way or another, it needs to come to a stop.

Unfortunately for the Department of Justice, responsibility for the unprecedented raid on a former president rises to the very top. As Attorney General Merrick Garland said, he "personally approved" of the raid. It is one reason why there is already a resolution filed in Congress for his impeachment.

by Kyle Becker

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