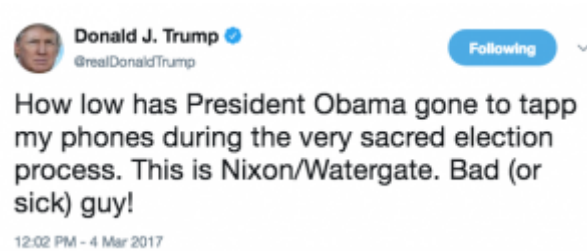
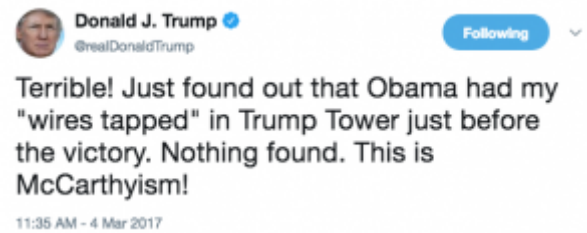


# TRUMP REPEATS THE “TAPP” STORY LINE FROM SEASON ONE

Last March 4, as it became clear the FBI was investigating him, President Trump wrote a bunch of tweets that claimed, *falsely*, that he had been wiretapped.



He even called for a “good lawyer” to make a case out of the “fact” that Obama was tapping his phone.



Today, Day Two of the Don and Rudy show, NBC has an exclusive story reporting that Michael Cohen’s phones were tapped before he was raided by the FBI a few weeks ago.

It’s certainly *possible* that the story is true. After all, prosecutors already revealed that “the USA0-SDNY has already obtained search warrants – covert until this point – on multiple different email accounts maintained by Cohen.” They also referred to some [redacted] reason to

be concerned that Cohen was destroying evidence. So it's certainly feasible SDNY had probable cause and reason to want to wiretap mob lawyer Michael Cohen.

But within minutes of the story breaking, Rudy was on the phone with Robert Costa, making false claims that if the wiretap picked up a conversation between Trump and Cohen, as the NBC report claims based off a single source, the FBI would need to notify Trump.

Giuliani tells me he can't confirm there were wiretaps, hasn't been informed. But when read NBC report, he was furious. "If they picked up the president, they would have had to notify him." Said if true, wld be a "mockery" of attorney-client privilege and "gov't misconduct"

And Giuliani's concerns echo advice he gave Trump as the Cohen story was breaking, to stay off the phones with Cohen because they might be tapped. something the story itself describes, attributed to "sources close to" Rudy.

After the raid, members of Trump's legal team advised the president not to speak to Cohen, according to a person familiar with the discussion.

Two sources close to Trump's newest attorney, Rudolph Giuliani, say he learned that days after the raid the president had made a call to Cohen, and told Trump never to call again out of concern the call was being recorded by prosecutors.

Why would this detail be included in this NBC story? It's like a Chekhov suicide pill, unnecessary to the story in chief but useful for giving a story additional dramatic meaning [yes, I made that term up, but I've got a PhD in literature, so am taking license to do so].

Incidentally, Corey Lewandowski was dining with

Rudy last night before he went on Hannity.

As to the report about the wiretap itself, the NBC story is sourced to:

" two people with knowledge of the legal proceedings involving Cohen" [a kind of code often used to describe defense lawyers, though there are so many involved in this wiretap that it could be any of many]

"one person with direct knowledge"

"the person " [that is, with direct knowledge – this is the confirmation that a call to the White House got picked up]

Nowhere does the story explain why someone with knowledge of a wiretap would want to burn it.

Certainly, there are explanations that given the people involved might explain the story. Michael Avenatti has claimed to know quite a bit about the surveillance of Michael Cohen; certainly, he has had communications with prosecutors involved, not least about whether he can intervene in the case. Alternately, Rudy is still quite close to some of NY's more unethical FBI Agents, and it's certainly possible one of them leaked the news.

By all means, let's entertain the distinct possibility that the President's personal lawyer, with all his mob ties, got treated like a mob lawyer. But let's remember that Rudy appears to have made promises he can end the investigations into the President in the short term. He's a liar. And Trump has specifically lied about being wiretapped before. So even if Cohen was wiretapped, beware serial liars making claims about the impact of such wiretaps on the President himself.

The President who cried "wiretap" once too often should be treated with a great deal of skepticism, particularly given the way Rudy immediately used this story to attack the

investigation into Cohen.

Update: And now Rudy is using the alleged wiretap to call for Sessions to investigate those who were investigating Cohen.

Rudy Giuliani called for Attorney General Jeff Sessions to intervene in the Michael Cohen case and put the people behind the probe “under investigation” in a phone call with The Hill on Thursday.

“I am waiting for the Attorney General to step in, in his role as defender of justice, and put these people under investigation,” Giuliani said, reacting to an NBC News report that phones belonging to Cohen, President Trump’s longtime personal attorney, had been tapped by investigators.

He gives up the game when he complains that FBI didn’t inform “us” of the alleged wiretap.

But Giuliani said that a wiretapping of Cohen would amount to “gross misconduct” by the government. He further alleged that “this case has been surrounded by numerous acts” that fit that description.

Giuliani added sarcastically, “And they don’t even notify us? I mean, he’s only the president of the United States.”

Rudy wasn’t representing Trump when the raid occurred.

Update: Rudy again gives up the game when he suggests only the FBI, *the independent counsel*, or DOJ would know about this wiretap.

Giuliani said that he found out about the wiretap news from NBC News’ report, which cited “two people with knowledge of the legal proceedings,” and not from Cohen himself. He believed someone in

the Justice Department was behind the leak.

“Nobody else would know about it,” Giuliani said. “Cohen didn’t know about it, so it has to be the FBI, the independent counsel, or the Justice Department.”

“Anybody who says that I’m exaggerating when I say that this is an out-of-control investigation and they’re acting like storm troopers—give me a break, baby! They prove it every day.”

As I’ve already suggested, Avenatti is one other outsider who might have a whiff of this, if true. But in any case, the raid, and therefore the wiretap, is understood to have involved an independent investigation conducted by SDNY, not Mueller’s team. If true, there’s no way Mueller would know about it either. And yet Rudy uses it to suggest the Mueller investigation is out of control.

Update: ... and NBC has retracted the story. FBI had a pen register on Cohen, not a wiretap. Which of course they would, because that’s one thing they use to decide which emails – which we know they collected – to read.