



Is Obama's New Home the "Nerve Center" for Anti-Trump Resistance?

Is former president Barack Obama's new home (shown) in D.C.'s posh Kalorama neighborhood the "nerve center" for the anti-Trump resistance? Leon Wagener thinks so, and his story, originally published by the British tabloid the *Daily Mail* on March 1, gained national attention. Quoting "a family friend" of the Obamas, Wagener wrote that "Obama's goal is to oust Trump from the presidency either by forcing his resignation or through his impeachment," splicing together a series of quotes elicited from this "friend":



No longer the most powerful man in the world, [Obama] was just observing Trump and not liking what he saw. He was weary and burned out after eight years in office. But Valerie [Jarrett] convinced him that he didn't have any choice if he wanted to save his legacy. And, as usual, he bowed to Valerie's political wisdom and advice.

The unnamed FOO — friend of Obama — expanded on the plan to push back against Trump:

There was never any doubt that Valerie would have a suite of rooms in the house that the Obamas are renting. Obama trusts her judgment more than any other person on the planet, as does Michelle. Obama doesn't make a decision without her.

Obama still has support and loyalty among a large part of the American electorate, an asset that Jarrett plans to put to good use, said the FOO:

[Obama] is going to use his immense popularity with the half of the country that identifies as liberals and progressives. Millions of Americans are energized and ready to take to the streets to oppose Trump, but they need to be organized and have their anger focused and directed.... Obama is dismayed at the way Trump is tearing down his legacy — ObamaCare, the social safety net and the welcome mat for refugees he put in place.

This new effort was not part of Obama's original plan, according to the source:

He had hoped to write his memoirs, golf to his heart's content, and bask in the glory of his eight years in power and the progressive achievements he brought about. Instead, he is going to be leading the fight and strategy to topple Trump.

The credibility of the story was immediately questioned. First, the source was never named, and none of



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the other news outlets that picked it up could verify or confirm the story. Second, the *Daily Mail* is the same British tabloid that Melania Trump, the First Lady, is suing for \$150 million over an article it published last year that “discussed” allegations that she had worked as an escort in the 1990s.

Thirdly, the *Guardian*, the highly respected British newspaper (which has been named Newspaper of the Year four times at the annual British Press Awards), reported in February that the *Daily Mail* was banned by the Wikipedia Foundation because of its “poor fact checking, sensationalism and flat-out fabrication.” It added that the volunteer editors on English Wikipedia concluded that the tabloid is “generally unreliable and its use as a reference is to be generally prohibited, especially when other more reliable sources exist.”

Two days after Wagener’s story was published, Snopes concluded that the story was highly dubious because it “cited nothing more than an unverifiable ‘source’ for all that it reported.” Snopes, itself suffering occasional credibility and political bias problems of its own, added:

The report played heavily on suspicions propagated by conspiracy theory web sites such as InfoWars that Barack Obama is directing an “army” of protesters from his home (a “shadow White House” located in the Kalorama neighborhood of Washington, D.C.), dispatching minions to crowd demonstrations and town hall meetings ever since President Trump took office.

Snopes assured its readers that nothing so devious was underway, calling the *Daily Mail* report “absurd” and devoid of facts, and then adding that Jarett was neither moving in with the Obamas nor launching a political movement intended to oust President Trump from office.

However, Paul Sperry, who served as a media fellow at the Hoover Institution and Washington Bureau Chief at Investor’s Business Daily and WorldNetDaily, wrote in the *New York Post* on February 11 that former president Obama did have “an army of agitators” numbering more than 30,000 who “will fight the Republican success at every turn ... and Obama will command them from a bunker less than two miles from the White House.” Wrote Sperry:

He’s doing it through a network of leftist nonprofits led by Organizing for Action (OFA). Normally you’d expect an organization set up to support a politician and his agenda to close up shop after the candidate leaves off, but not Obama’s OFA. Rather, it’s gearing up for battle, with a growing war chest and more than 250 offices across the country.... OFA activists helped organize anti-Trump marches across U.S. cities, some of which turned into riots.... Obama will be overseeing it all from a shadow White House located within two miles of Trump. It features a mansion, which he’s fortifying with construction of a tall brick perimeter, and a nearby taxpayer-funded office with his own chief of staff and press secretary. Michelle Obama will also open an office there, along with the Obama Foundation.

Asked Snopes: “Is Obama ‘commanding’ an Army of 30,000 Anti-Trump Activists From His Home?”

Answered Snopes: “We found no credible evidence of an ‘army’ or ‘shadow government’ being formed by the former president. Rating: FALSE.”

As usual, it depended upon feedback from OFA officials who denied any such behavior or purpose:

Organizing for Action officials told us that Obama does not currently have any formal relationship with the group. Meantime the Obamas have reportedly decided to stay in Washington D.C. temporarily to allow their youngest daughter to finish high school. They made no mention of remaining near the White House to act as a shadow administration.

Snopes did however suggest 1) Obama might engage in some political activity in the future, and 2) OFA



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was in fact actively engaged in anti-Trump activities:

The former president may well engage in civic activity or political activism in his post-presidential life, and the non-profit group that has been aligned with him for years is engaged in political opposition activity during the term of a president with vastly different policies. Neither of these items is particularly surprising, but neither do they mean that President Obama is hunkered in Washington in a “shadow White House” from which he sends forth armies to thwart President Trump.

Translation: Obama isn't involved at the moment, but he could later on.

OFA is certainly active, linking up with a newly formed group called Indivisible Project, which has, among other things, published an online “training” manual entitled “A Practical Guide for Resisting The Trump Agenda.” The manual smacks of Saul Alinsky's *Rules for Radicals* and has already been downloaded more than a million times. NBC News reported that OFA has just hired 14 new field “organizers” in states that are home to key senators as part of a campaign to defend ObamaCare. In addition, NBC News reported that more than 1,800 people have already applied to attend a six-week training program to learn how to apply pressure to legislators.

Some of those tactics are already bearing fruit. Just ask the 71-year-old staffer for Representative Dana Rohrabacher (R-Calif.), who was injured during a scuffle with some of those individuals last week. And there's more to come. Indivisible Project and OFA are putting together plans for a massive anti-Trump Tax March in Washington (and at least 60 other locations) on April 15.

Obviously this is being coordinated by someone and financed by someone else operating somewhere. Absent further confirmation, it's probably not being run from Obama's new home. But it could be.

Photo: AP Images

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