



Is Trump's Wiretapping Claim Credible?

Almost as soon as President Trump accused former President Obama of wiretapping Trump Tower during the elections, Obama not only denied it, but also denied that he had ever “ordered surveillance on any U.S. citizen.” The statement — issued by Obama spokesman Kevin Lewis — is, of course, false.



The recent kerfuffle first came to light on Saturday, when President Trump took to his favorite social media platform with a series of tweets:

- “Terrible! Just found out that Obama had my ‘wires tapped’ in Trump Tower just before the victory. Nothing found. This is McCarthyism!”
- “Is it legal for a sitting President to be ‘wire tapping’ a race for president prior to an election? Turned down by court earlier. A NEW LOW!”
- “I’d bet a good lawyer could make a great case out of the fact that President Obama was tapping my phones in October, just prior to Election!”
- “How low has President Obama gone to tapp my phones during the very sacred election process. This is Nixon/Watergate. Bad (or sick) guy!”

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As *The New American* [reported](#) Saturday:

The tweet storm began at 3:35 a.m. E.T., not surprising with a high-energy president known for little sleep and impulsive tweets. And while Trump hasn’t yet cited any evidence to back up his claims, he seemed to be referring to “a Thursday evening radio show hosted by Mark Levin that claimed Obama executed a ‘silent coup’ of Trump via ‘police state’ tactics, according to ... Breitbart News,” [reports](#) the *Daily Mail*.

Team Obama and the liberal mainstream media pounced on Trump’s accusations calling them “sensational” and “false.” Lewis’ statement — released Saturday afternoon — is typical of the form:

A cardinal rule of the Obama administration was that no White House official ever interfered with any independent investigation led by the Department of Justice. As part of that practice, neither President Obama nor any White House official ever ordered surveillance on any U.S. citizen. Any suggestion otherwise is simply false.”

Obama’s former policy advisor, Ben Rhodes, replied to Trump via Twitter, saying, “No President can order a wiretap. Those restrictions were put in place to protect citizens from people like you.” Former Mexican President Vicente Fox seized the opportunity to play the “not a real president” card, tweeting, “A ‘so-called’ President is calling a real President and true leader: bad and sick guy. What a shame, America you need to do something now!” But then, Fox is probably just still upset about the Trump administration’s efforts to curtail the flow of illegal aliens coming into the United States from Mexico.



Written by [C. Mitchell Shaw](#) on March 7, 2017

On Sunday, the *New York Times* [reported](#):

Mr. Trump's demand for a congressional investigation appears to be based, at least in part, on [unproven claims by Breitbart News and conservative talk radio hosts](#) that secret warrants were issued authorizing the tapping of the phones of Mr. Trump and his aides at Trump Tower in New York.

And on Saturday, under the headline, "Trump, Offering No Evidence, Says Obama Tapped His Phones," the *Times* [wrote](#):

The president's decision on Saturday to lend the power of his office to accusations against his predecessor of politically motivated wiretapping — without offering any proof — was remarkable, even for a leader who has repeatedly shown himself willing to make assertions that are false or based on dubious sources.

Of course, what the *Times* left out of those reports is that the *Times* itself reported about this in January. That article, published on January 19th (online under the headline, "[Intercepted Russian Communications Part of Inquiry Into Trump Associates](#)") and January 20th (in print under the headline, "Wiretapped Data Used In Inquiry Of Trump Aides") included a reference to "some of the wiretapped communications [that] had been provided to the White House." Apparently the folks at the *Times* don't bother to read the *Times* — though that is probably just as well. But what is really noteworthy is that Michael D. Shear and Michael S. Schmidt were two of the four writers of the article in January reporting about "some of the wiretapped communications [that] had been provided to the White House" and each of them were also involved in the two articles from this past weekend pretending that Trump is just making this all up.

Consistency and journalistic integrity, it would appear, are not prerequisites for writing for the *Times*.

But what about the claims of the Obama camp that "no president can order a wiretap" and that "neither President Obama nor any White House official ever ordered surveillance on any U.S. citizen"?

For anyone who has not been asleep for the past few years, those claims would be laughable if the subject matter weren't so serious. In fact, they are so demonstrably false that it is almost embarrassing to dignify them with an answer. It's more than a little like pointing out that the toddler with chocolate on his face and crumbs on his shirt is being less than honest when he promises he did not eat the cookies. But answer them we must; the toddler has to be exposed.

As the *Gateway Pundit* [reported](#), it is well-known that "Obama's Justice Department targeted journalists with wiretaps in 2013." The *Gateway Pundit* listed the following examples:

- * In 2013 the liberal Washington Post expressed outrage after the revelation that the Justice Department had investigated the newsgathering activities of a Fox News reporter as a potential crime in a probe of classified leaks. The reporter, Fox News' James Rosen and his family, were part of an investigation into government officials anonymously leaking information to journalists. Rosen was not charged but his movements and actions were tracked.
- * Also in 2013, members of the Associated Press were also a target of the surveillance. The ultra liberal New Yorker even noted that "In moderate and liberal circles, at least, the phone-records scandal, partly because it involves the dear old A.P. and partly because it raises anew the specter of Big Brother, may well present the most serious threat to Obama's reputation."
- * Reporter Sharyl Attkisson said in 2014 that her personal computer and CBS laptop were hacked



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after she began filing stories about Benghazi that were unflattering to the Obama administration. A source who checked her laptop said the hacker used spyware “proprietary to a government agency,” according to an article in the New York Post.

So much for not having “ever ordered surveillance on any U.S. citizen.” Of course, the liberal mainstream media’s hatred of President Trump seems to take precedence over any outrage of having journalists targeted for surveillance by the Obama administration. If the liberal mainstream media didn’t have double standards, they would have no standards at all.

The real question here is not whether Obama directly ordered the surveillance on Trump and his associates; it is whether — as president — he was aware of, and therefore responsible for, the surveillance. The obvious answer is that he not only knew about it, he attempted to use it for political purposes. And now he and his ilk are scrambling to pretend it never happened.

The comparison between the way the liberal mainstream media is treating this story and the way they treated the story about Sessions’ answer in regards to “[communications with the Russians](#)” is telling. The very news organizations that are willing to accept the claims of Team Obama that “neither President Obama nor any White House official ever ordered surveillance on any U.S. citizen” despite ample evidence to the contrary were the same ones calling Sessions a perjurer and reporting on calls from equally hypocritical Democrats calling for his resignation. The chief difference is that Sessions gave an honest answer to a very specific question and Team Obama is lying.



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