

POSTOPINION

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Unfit To Probe

Don't trust the FBI to investigate Secret Service

PRESIDENT Biden on Sunday announced an FBI investigation into the Secret Service's astounding failure to protect Donald Trump at the rally in Butler, Pa., promising the probe would be "thorough and swift."

But it's folly to trust a federal law enforcement agency to obliterate interagency niceties by exposing all the foibles and flubs of fellow G-men.

Instead, we'll likely see a vintage DC investigation along these lines: Please tell us if you screwed up. Also, is there someone else we can blame?

Congress is jumping on the Secret Service's Butler debacle, asserting its right to investigate.

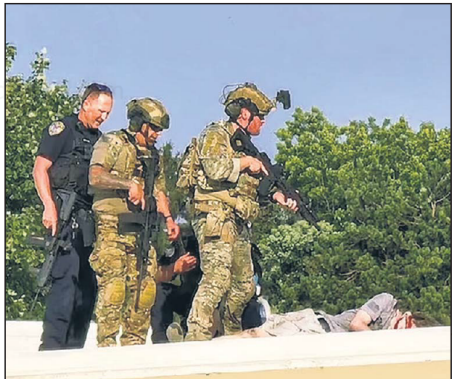
House Oversight Committee Chairman James Comer has requested Secret Service chief Kimberly Cheatle to "preserve all documents" tied to the Trump shooting, and Cheatle could take a high-profile hammering before the committee next week.

Meanwhile, Rep. Lance Gooden (R-Texas), citing a lack of "faith in the current FBI leadership," joined Rep. Jim Banks (R-In.) to call for a select House committee, while Sens. Rand Paul (R-Ky.) and Gary Peters (D-Mich.) announced plans for a bipartisan Senate investigation.

Yet the White House is telling Americans to blindly trust an agency whose acronym is now widely presumed to stand for Following Biden's Instructions.

This is the same FBI that kowtowed when Team Biden wanted parents who protested school closures and mask mandates at school board meetings to be categorized as terrorist threats. An FBI analysis in 2021 recommended targeting conservative Catholics — and claimed the Bureau could "distinguish the bad Catholics from the good ones" based on their "preference for the Traditional Latin Mass and pre-Vatican teachings."

The agency knew early on that Hunter Biden's laptop was bona fide, but did nothing to debunk the claims by CIA officials and others that it was Russian disinformation prior to the 2020 election. FBI officials also browbeat Twitter and other social media companies to suppress The Post's bombshell laptop revelations.



Bloody aftermath: Law enforcement agents killed Trump's would-be assassin, but critics question the FBI's inquiry into the security breach.

Will the FBI treat the Secret Service like it did Hillary Clinton's 2016 presidential campaign? The agency shrugged off the destruction of tens of thousands of subpoenaed emails tied to her breach of federal classified data laws.

Actually, the Secret Service has already been caught destroying far more evidence.

In January 2021, a Secret Service sweep missed a pipe bomb planted outside the Democratic National Committee headquarters shortly before Kamala Harris, then the Vice President-elect, arrived there. Months later, the agency admitted it had erased the cellphone records of dozens of officials and agents — after they were requested by the department's inspector general.

No Secret Service official faced any penalty for that. Is the routine destruction of self-incriminating evidence a perk of federal law enforcement?

Biden declared on Sunday, "We don't yet have any information about the motive of the shooter... Let the FBI do their job."

Like the job done by the FBI after the 2016 Pulse nightclub massacre in Orlando, perhaps? Police repeatedly spoke with shooter Omar Mateen via cellphone as he was killing 49 people while pledging allegiance to the Islamic State. But the FBI initially

expunged the comments from the phone transcripts, enabling President Barack Obama to falsely portray the attack as having been spurred by anti-gay bias.

More recently, the FBI fought to suppress the crazed writings of Audrey Hale, the transgender mass killer who attacked the Covenant Christian School in Nashville last year. One leaked excerpt purportedly revealed that Hale loathed the children for their "white privilege."

Perhaps the best recent example of an independent Biden administration "investigation" is Attorney General Merrick Garland's willingness to risk jail rather than reveal the audiotape of his boss' interview with Special Counsel Robert Hur. Team Biden will stonewall a congressional subpoena for clearly political reasons — what might they suppress regarding the assassination attempt on Trump?

If Biden's rhetoric dubbing Trump a neo-Nazi influenced Secret Service decisions on the level of protection the Republican deserved, for example, don't expect the FBI to reveal it.

So congressional investigations and whistleblower leaks are the best chance to get at the truth of the matter.

Biden said Sunday that "nothing is more important than [unity] right now."

But a façade of unity is no substitute for truth.

FAST TAKES

Conservative: Hey, Jack Smith — You're Fired!

Monday, "special counsel Jack Smith heard the line Donald Trump made famous in 'The Apprentice': You're fired!" quips The Wall Street Journal's William McGurn. The line was from federal judge Aileen Cannon, as she dismissed Smith's classified-documents case against Trump. Cannon ruled that no statute authorizes Smith's appointment, nor was he confirmed by the Senate. As Justice Clarence Thomas has noted, this is no "trifling technicality." The need for a statute and for the Senate's "advice and consent" stems from the Constitution's Appointments Clause, a reaction to the Founders' experience with the British monarchy. Cannon's dismissal of the case, notes McGurn, is a "win" for Trump. But if she and Thomas are right, "it's a bigger victory for the Constitution, the American people and all future presidents."

From the left: Welcome to a 'New Political Era'

After "the attempted assassination of Donald Trump, a series of reversals may mark the beginning of a new political era," marvels Matt Taibbi at Racket News. The White House OK'd Secret Service protection for RFK Jr., essentially admitting it had previously been denied "for political reasons" or "spite." MSNBC pulled "Morning Joe," an admission the show's "format only holds up under something less than maximum scrutiny." Meta lifted restrictions of Trump's Facebook and Instagram accounts. Dems' lawfare games are failing. And Axios quoted a "senior House Democrat" saying, "We've all resigned ourselves to a second Trump presidency." All this might signal the "collapse" of the notion Trump is such an "existential" threat he can't be treated as any other politician. "We appear headed for a new world."

Election watch: GOP Gets Behind Trump's No. 2

"Donald Trump once privately told associates that... the field of possible [veeps] did not include a no-brainer," i.e., "a candidate whose appeal was so strong, so obvious, and so broad that he or she would have been a consensus pick," recalls Byron York at the Washington Examiner. On Monday, Trump "announced his choice: Sen. J.D. Vance." Some GOPers would've preferred someone with more "executive experience." Yet "everybody supports Trump," so "now everybody supports Vance, too." And "Vance's Appalachian background and Marine experience" will benefit Trump, who believes he'd "help the ticket win the crucial states of Pennsylvania, Michigan, and Wisconsin." If Vance helps capture even one state, he'll "very likely be the next vice president of the United States."

Liberal: Vance Gives Dems a Shot

"A fully functional Democratic campaign might be able to make some hay" of Trump's VP pick Sen. J.D. Vance, muses Nate Silver at the Silver Bulletin. They might treat him "as a cipher about whom little is known but who has been endorsed by right-wing groups like the authors of Project 2025." They "had success in running against these sorts of candidates in 2022." "The question is whether the Democratic campaign is firing on anything resembling all cylinders right now," given that it's "spending much of its time in a defensive posture stage-managing Biden's appearances and fending off the intraparty revolt against him." Yet another reason "a new Democratic ticket, with more ideological balance than the Republican one, could perhaps offer a fresher spin."



J.D. Vance

From the right: Don's 'Triply Smart' Veep Pick

"A new bogeyman has emerged in US politics": "James David 'JD' Vance," snarks Daniel McCarthy at Spiked. Vance, 39 and now Donald Trump's running mate, "is only half Trump's age" and poised to be "more Trumpian than Trump — more of a populist, more right-wing and more disciplined and effective." He's "not a dull 'movement' man" and is deeply involved in "questions of the role of religion, and particularly the Catholic Church, in public life." Vance has "attracted the most attention," of course, as a "critic of US involvement in the war between Russia and Ukraine." But he's "a triply smart pick for vice-president," because he's "young, populist and gives the Trump movement a future." — Compiled by The Post Editorial Board

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