



Heavily Redacted Affidavit Reveals Little

When the highly-anticipated [affidavit](#) that was used by the Biden Justice Department to secure a warrant to raid the private residence of former President Donald Trump at Mar-a-Lago was released on Friday, it was so heavily redacted that it revealed almost no underlying evidence to justify the issuance of the warrant by a federal judge. In the words of George Washington University law professor Jonathan Turley, “Having read the redacted affidavit, it leaves most questions unanswered.”

Turley added that what was not redacted in the affidavit released to the public was already leaked or known. Of the 38-page document, more than 20 pages were either entirely or significantly redacted, in addition to other redactions interspersed throughout the affidavit.

Left unredacted is that the “criminal investigation” began when the National Archives made a referral to the Department of Justice on February 9 of this year. The National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) told the Biden Justice Department that “highly classified documents [were] intermingled with other records.” The unredacted portion of the affidavit states that the search warrant was needed to determine whether storage locations on the Trump premises were authorized locations for the storage of classified information, and whether these documents were still at any unauthorized location. The affidavit argues that the warrant was also needed to “identify any person(s) who may have removed or retained classified information without authorization.”

The redacted affidavit informs Bruce Reinhart, a federal judge in Florida, that some of the documents among the materials in 15 boxes “appear to contain National Defense Information (NDI).” This assertion is followed by several lines of redaction, then the claim that there is “probable cause” to believe that additional NDI is present among the said materials. But, of course, with the heavy redactions, no evidence is presented for such “probable cause.”

An FBI agent — whose identity is redacted — offers that the facts set forth in the affidavit “are based on my personal knowledge.” In other words, we need to trust an unnamed FBI agent.

A federal statute is quoted in the affidavit, stating, “Whoever, having the custody of any such record, proceeding, map, book, document, paper, or other thing, willfully and unlawfully conceals, removes, mutilates, obliterates, falsifies, or destroys the same, shall be fined under this title or imprisonment not more than three years, or both; and shall forfeit his office and be disqualified from holding any office under the United States.” Perhaps this sheds some light on why President Biden’s attorney general, Merrick Garland, admits to having personally approved of seeking the warrant to raid the private residence of a potential opponent to Joe Biden in 2024 — he wants to keep Trump off the ballot in the

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF FLORIDA

IN THE MATTER OF THE SEARCH OF:)
) Case No.
LOCATIONS WITHIN THE PREMISES)
TO BE SEARCHED IN ATTACHMENT A) **Filed Under Seal**

**AFFIDAVIT IN SUPPORT OF AN
APPLICATION UNDER RULE 41 FOR A
WARRANT TO SEARCH AND SEIZE**

I, [REDACTED], being first duly sworn, hereby depose and state as follows:

INTRODUCTION AND AGENT BACKGROUND

1. The government is conducting a criminal investigation concerning the improper removal and storage of classified information in unauthorized spaces, as well as the unlawful concealment or removal of government records. The investigation began as a result of a referral the United States National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) sent to the United

[Click here to see the redacted affidavit](#)



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next presidential election (although many constitutional scholars have argued that this statute cannot be used to keep someone from running for president).

The affidavit also notes that after NARA communicated with representatives of Trump in 2021, it resulted in the transfer of 15 boxes of materials to NARA in June. Indeed, Trump has publicly asserted that presidential records “were given upon request, in an ordinary and routine process to ensure the preservation of my legacy and in accordance with the Presidential Records Act.”

This is followed by several lines of redaction. Following that, the judge is informed that CBS had reported that there were “at least two moving trucks spotted at Mar-a-Lago on Monday, January 2021.” Though curious as to why this is important, we are not told, as this statement is followed by several more lines of redaction. Then, the affidavit states that NARA made a request, and 12 boxes were found and ready for retrieval in December 2021. This is followed by several more redactions.

We read that on May 16-18, 2022, FBI agents looked through 15 boxes of material provided to NARA and found 25 top secret documents, 92 secret documents, and 67 confidential documents. Several documents are “what appears to be FPOTUS’ handwritten notes.” (FPOTUS stands for former president of the United States.) This non-startling revelation is then followed by even more redactions.

The unnamed FBI agent then concludes, “Based upon this investigation, I believe that the STORAGE ROOM, FPOTUS’ residential suite, Pine Hall, the 45 Office, and other spaces within the premises are not currently authorized locations for the storage of classified information or NDI.” After yet additional redactions, the agent continues, “This affidavit seeks authorization to search the ‘45 Office’ and all storage rooms and any other rooms or locations where boxes or records may be stored within the premises.”

Nothing is mentioned anywhere in the unredacted portion of the affidavit that the FBI wanted to search for and take a folder pertaining to the pardon that Trump granted political operative Roger Stone. That could hardly contain national defense information, or be in any way “Top Secret,” or secret at all. There was certainly nothing in the warrant authorizing the seizure of that folder.

In fact, we know little about why the Biden Justice Department desired to raid the home of a former president, something that has never happened in the history of the American Republic. As many have commented, it is more reminiscent of what is done in “banana republics” — in which those in power abuse their criminal justice system to persecute the previous president.

“While the Justice Department has been demanding absolute secrecy,” Jonathan Turley said recently to Fox News, “the media has been reporting all of these leaks from the government that are clearly meant to put the Trump team on the defense.”

There have even been rumors circulated — without evidence — that Trump “has the nuclear codes.” This is particularly absurd, as the nuclear codes are routinely changed at the time a new president is sworn in. It would be like saying someone has a password you used last year, but you no longer use. Hardly concerning.

Trump lawyer Evan Corcoran wrote to the Biden Justice Department about the investigation, noting that former President Trump “is a leader of the Republican Party. The Department of Justice, as part of the Executive Branch, is under the control of a President from the opposite party.”

He added that some documents were “unknowingly included among the boxes brought to Mar-a-Lago by the movers. It is important to emphasize that when a request was made for the documents by the



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National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), President Trump readily and voluntarily agreed to their transfer to NARA.”

Corcoran continued, recalling that the transfer of the boxes to NARA was “friendly, open, and straightforward,” and that “no concerns were raised about the contents of the boxes.”

Yet, the Biden Justice Department, now run by a strongly partisan Democrat, Merrick Garland, sees it differently.

Before the affidavit was released, we wondered what justified the unprecedented raid on the home of a former president. We are still waiting to hear how the raid could be possibly be justified.



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