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Trump Sues WaPo in Second Defamation Claim Against Major Media

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The Trump campaign [has filed](#) what will likely be another losing defamation claim, this one against the *Washington Post*.

Like the [lawsuit filed](#) last week against the *New York Times*, this one says the *Post* tried to wreck the Trump campaign by publishing claims it knew were false: that the campaign colluded with Russians in 2016 and has solicited foreign interference to win reelection.

And again, like the lawsuit against the *Times*, the campaign will not likely prevail, the merits of its case regardless.

Two Weeks, Two Lies

The latest salvo against the hate-Trump leftist media targets two opinion pieces published a week apart, June 13 and June 20 of last year.

[“Trump just invited another Russian attack,”](#) as the first is partly headlined, “contained the defamatory claim that Special Counsel Robert Mueller concluded that the Campaign ‘tried to conspire with’ a ‘sweeping and systematic’ attack by Russia against the 2016 United States presidential election,” the lawsuit alleges.

A week later, the *Post* published [“Trump: I can win reelection with just my base.”](#) That piece “contains the defamatory statement ‘who knows what sort of aid Russia and North Korea will give to the Trump campaign, now that he has invited them to offer their assistance?’”

Both statements are false and defamatory, the [lawsuit avers](#), because the report from Special Counsel Robert Mueller, published about two months before the first piece, concluded that Trump did not collude with the Russians. As well, the Trump campaign has not invited foreign interference from Russia or North Korea to win in 2020.

As to the false claims of June 13:

The Mueller Report is a public record, and repeatedly finds that there was no conspiracy between the Campaign and the Russian government. For instance, the Executive Summary of the Mueller Report concludes that “the evidence was not sufficient to charge that any member of the Trump Campaign conspired with representatives of the Russian government to interfere in the 2016 election.”



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Though Russians tried to interfere with the election, “The investigation did not identify evidence that any U.S. persons knowingly or intentionally coordinated with the IRA’s interference operation,” the [lawsuit continues](#).

Regarding the false claims of June 20, “the Campaign has repeatedly and openly disclaimed any intention to seek Russia’s help in the 2020 election.”

The examples of this are too numerous to fully enumerate.... “The President has made it clear that his administration will not tolerate foreign interference in our elections from any nation-state or other dangerous actor”; (b) on September 12, 2018, while signing an executive order imposing sanctions on foreign countries who interfere in United States elections, the White House issued a statement that “the United States will not tolerate any form of foreign meddling in our elections”; and (c) on May 13, 2019, the White House stated it would “certainly” agree not to use any information hacked or stolen by foreign adversaries in the 2020 election.

As for *The Post*’s statement that the Campaign is seeking North Korea’s help in the 2020 election, this has been made up out of whole cloth. Not only has nobody affiliated with the Campaign made such a statement, but there has been no reporting by any reputable news outlet that the Campaign has sought or will seek North Korea’s assistance, or has had any contact with North Korea regarding the 2020 election.

Like the lawsuit against the *Times*, this one alleges that the *Post*’s political bias, and the bias of the authors, motivated the defamatory claims.

“The *Post* clearly had a malicious motive, but more importantly acted with reckless disregard for the truth. The Mueller Report and its conclusions are a matter of widely disseminated public record,” [the lawsuit alleges](#):

Extensive public information, known to and available to *The Post*, confirms that the Campaign has not sought Russian help in the 2020 election and has disavowed such assistance, and that there have been no reported contacts between the Campaign and North Korea relating to any United States election. The *Post* knowingly disregarded all of this information when it decided to publish the Defamatory Articles.

Times Lawsuit

The claims against the *Post* are almost identical to [those against the Times](#); i.e., the lawsuit alleges that both newspapers knew the statements were false and published them with malice and disregard for the truth.

Those are the two criteria required for a public figure, as the campaign will be designated, to prevail in a defamation claim.

Still, the campaign is unlikely to prevail given the legal protection afforded the media when it smears public figures, particularly under the guise of “opinion.”

Photo: AP Images

R. Cort Kirkwood is a long-time contributor to The New American and a former newspaper editor.



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