

Substantial Disruption



Brokeback White House

By Mike Tully

“I wish I knew how to quit you.” That’s what Donald said to Michael, if not in so many words, then certainly in deed. How else do you explain the President’s clinging to his former National Security Advisor like goose down to Velcro? Every sentient being on the planet knew that retired General Michael Flynn had been a very naughty boy. On December 29, 2016, still-President Barack Obama imposed sanctions on Russia in retaliation for hacking and other actions intended to influence the outcome of the Presidential election. General Flynn subsequently [discussed the sanctions](#) with Russian Ambassador Sergey Kislyak five times, including the day the sanctions were announced. American intelligence officials recorded all of it. Then, to make things worse, Flynn lied to the [media](#) about the conversations and was not totally forthcoming [with the FBI](#) when they asked him about them. Worst of all, the General lied to the [other Michael](#), Vice President Mike Pence. The President knew Flynn had lied to the other Michael, but didn’t say anything to the Vice President for [at least two weeks](#). Why should he? Pence is such a prig, always looking like he has an icicle up his posterior. When the spooks leaked the story to the *Washington Post*, the Veep learned he had been getting the mushroom treatment, and the President had no choice. He had to keep Veep happy and General Flynn was caught with his Pence down. The President had to say those three magic words, the ones he values more than any others: “You are fired.” But his heart wasn’t in it. He’d grown accustomed to his Flynn.

Michael Flynn tendered his [forced resignation](#) on the eve of Valentine’s Day. The day after Valentine’s Day the President called the retired General a “[wonderful man](#).” “I think he’s been treated very, very unfairly by the media,” said the man who fired him. “(A)nd I think it’s really a sad thing that he was treated so badly.” Then, a day later in [a psychotic episode masquerading as a news conference](#), the President insisted Michael had done nothing wrong by discussing the Obama sanctions with the Russians. “He was doing his job and his counterparts, so it certainly would have been okay with me if he did it,” [said the President](#), adding, “I would have directed him to do it if I thought he wasn’t doing it.” “I didn’t direct him,” he stated, “but I would’ve directed him because that’s his job. And it came out that way...” Yes, it came out that way, exactly that way. The President did not know General Flynn had spoken to the Russians, so he can’t be blamed for it, but he would have told him to talk to the Russians if he thought Flynn wasn’t talking to them, because it’s really okay, but he didn’t direct Flynn to talk to the Russians because Flynn did talk to the Russians, so therefore he didn’t have to direct Flynn to talk to the Russians, but didn’t know what he didn’t know so he didn’t have to act on what he didn’t know, but Flynn lied to Mike Pence about talking to the Russians, even though it’s okay, and The President would have told him to talk to the Russians, but it’s not okay to lie to Mike Pence even though what he lied about is totally okay and The President would have told him to talk to the Russians if he didn’t think he was talking to the Russians, but he didn’t because he was, so the President didn’t do anything wrong, but neither did Flynn, but Flynn lied to Pence and

sometimes a man has to do what a man has to do, so Comrade President fired General Flynn even though he is a “wonderful man.” It makes total sense if you drink enough Mescal.

During the same news conference, the President [disputed reports](#) that his administration was besieged by chaos, insisting that it was, in fact, a “fine-tuned machine.” Presumably that means the [deck chairs](#) have been carefully rearranged. Claiming that the Trump administration is a “fine-tuned machine” is like praising Ralph Kramden and Ed Norton’s “[Chef of the Future](#)” commercial as worthy of a [Clio Award](#).

Perhaps that is why it was a challenge to [replace](#) Flynn. Or maybe there was no other candidate who embraced the President’s [hatred of Muslims](#), or who, like [Flynn](#), shares Comrade President’s affection for fruit loop [conspiracy theories](#) from the Internet’s belfry, or who also suffers from [Putin envy](#). How could the President settle for warmed-over Petraeus when he’s had General Wonderful? Can he really quit him?