

Comey: Trump administration spread 'lies, plain and simple'

By ERICA WERNER and ERIC TUCKER
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Former FBI Director James Comey asserted today that President Donald Trump fired him to interfere with his investigation of Russia's role in the 2016 election and its ties to the Trump campaign.

"It's my judgment that I was fired because of the Russia investigation," Comey told the Senate intelligence committee in explosive testimony that threatened to undermine Trump's presidency.

"I was fired in some way to change, or the endeavor was to change, the way the Russia investigation was being conducted," Comey testified under oath. "That is a very big deal, and not just because it involves me."

Comey also accused the Trump administration of spreading "lies, plain and simple" about him and the FBI in the aftermath of his abrupt firing last month, declaring that the administration "defamed him and more importantly the FBI" by claiming the bureau was in disorder under his leadership.



James Comey

And in testimony that exposed deep distrust between the president and the veteran lawyer, Comey described intense discomfort about their one-on-one conversations, saying he decided he immediately needed to document the discussions in memos.

"I was honestly concerned that he might lie about the nature of our meeting, so I thought it really important to document," Comey said. "I knew there might come a day when I might need a record of what happened not only to defend myself but to protect the FBI."

The revelations came as Comey delivered his much anticipated first public telling of his relationship with Trump, speaking at a packed Senate intelligence committee hearing that brought Washington and parts of the country to a standstill as all eyes were glued to television screens showing the testimony. The former director immediately dove into the heart of the fraught political controversy around his firing and whether Trump interfered in the bureau's Russia investigation, as he elaborated on written testimony delivered

Wednesday. In that testimony he had already disclosed that Trump demanded his "loyalty" and directly pushed him to "lift the cloud" of investigation by declaring publicly the president was not the target of the FBI probe into his campaign's Russia ties.

Comey said that he declined to do so in large part because of the "duty to correct" that would be created if that situation changed. Comey also said in his written testimony that Trump, in a strange private encounter near the grandfather clock in the Oval Office, pushed him to end his investigation into former National Security Adviser Michael Flynn.

Democratic Sen. Joe Manchin of West Virginia asked Comey the key question: "Do you believe this arises to obstruction of justice?"

"I don't know. That's Bob Mueller's job to sort that out," Comey responded, referring to the newly appointed special counsel who has taken over the Justice Department's Russia investigation.

In a startling disclosure, Comey revealed that after his firing he had actually tried to spur the special counsel's appointment by giving one of his memos about Trump to a friend of his to leak to the press.

"My judgment was I need to get that out into the public square," Comey said.

The Republican National Committee and other White House allies worked feverishly to lessen any damage from the hearing, trying to undermine Comey's credibility by issuing press releases and even ads pointing to a past instance where the FBI had had to clean up the director's testimony to Congress. Republicans and Trump's own lawyer seized on Comey's confirmation, in his written testimony, of Trump's claim that Comey had told him three times the president was not directly under investigation.

Trump himself was expected to dispute Comey's claims that the president demanded loyalty and asked the FBI director to drop the investigation into Flynn, according to a person close to the president's legal team who demanded anonymity because of not being authorized to discuss legal strategy.

Pyrosomes: They're hard to avoid right now

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'All you see'

Sam Zeman, an Oregon State University research associate, said as the survey boats went farther away from shore, they saw bigger and bigger pyrosomes, some roughly 2 feet long.

One researcher fixed a GoPro camera to a net and dropped it over the side. It was a glimpse into a familiar world that had become very odd. They saw pyrosomes down to a depth of 100 meters, as far as their equipment could go.

"Watching that footage was eerie," said Jennifer Fisher, a research assistant with Oregon State's Cooperative Institute for Marine Resources Studies that work closely with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, who was on a survey cruise in May. There's blue water in all directions, shaded turquoise to dark cerulean, "and all you see is pyrosomes." They seem to hang in the water, like an army. At night, they drifted near the water's surface. Fisher is pretty sure cockroaches will survive the apocalypse. After this most recent cruise, she added pyrosomes to the list.

"It's very eerie," Zeman said. "There's nothing else. It's just them, and it kind of never stops."

"They could just keep going," Brodeur said. "We have no idea where they end offshore."

Fire body

Though it looks like a single creature, a pyrosome is made up of individual clones. Hence the Borg reference, though in the case of the pyrosome, the organism is physically linked unlike the TV characters who are mentally connected. A single pyrosome might contain hundreds, if not thousands of individual animals, said Caren Braby, marine resources program manager with the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife. They don't sting and they can't bite. They are essentially hollow tubes, filter feeders, and very little is known about them.

They are chordates, Braby said, lacking actual vertebrae — bones that form the backbone — but with the begin-



Submitted Photo

Pyrosomes can be massive. Some can glow.

ning of a spinal chord, Braby said. If you were to compare an octopus or a pyrosome to people, "we'd be more closely related to a pyrosome."

Elsewhere, pyrosomes can be massive and even display bioluminescence. They glow. This is likely how they got the name "pyrosome," a combination of the Greek words "pyro" and "soma": fire body. The organisms off Oregon aren't quite so magical, possibly because they aren't consuming the right bacteria, one researcher theorized.

Salmon trollers from Newport to Alaska reported pyrosomes ending up on the end of their hooks. In fisheries, like the pink shrimp fishery where the gear itself is designed to exclude other fish, pyrosomes are the right size and shape to jam up the works.

Shrimper Steve Davis, who runs several boats out of Warrenton, said the pyrosomes can be so thick on the gear that nothing else can get past them. At the very least, they make it so he's catching less than he should be.

"There's just so many of them, it's hard to pick them out," he said. They range from the size of a pinkie finger to almost a foot long, and they seem to float in packs. If a boat is unlucky enough to hit a patch of them, "you go somewhere else and hope that they're not that thick," Davis said.

It can be frustrating, he said, "especially when you know people are catching shrimp around you."

But the pyrosomes are hard to avoid right now.

For trawlers like Warrenton-based Paul Kujala, the organisms are more of a nuisance than a hindrance to fishing. They'll clog nets a bit, and when they're pulled up with the rest of the haul, invariably some will end up in the fish hold.

"And that's one more thing you don't want," Kujala said.

At night, he and his crew have hit patches of water where all they can see, in any direction, are pyrosomes.

"You always see one or two, but never in the numbers that we're seeing now," Davis said.

Why?

The question right now is, "Why?" Why are they here? What changed? The ocean has been unusually warm for the past two years with weak upwelling winds this year, both factors that could have brought pyrosomes, which seem to favor warmer water, closer to shore. Researchers noted that the change in temperature coincided with an apparent increase in pyrosomes here. But now the Oregon Coast is seeing strong upwelling winds again, and the water is cooling.

"Will they stick around?" Fisher said. She thinks it's a window of time, a sort of natural experiment that will end soon. The pyrosomes' absence could almost be more revealing than their presence, said Fisher. This makes the data collected on the survey cruises this spring even more important. Combined with data from previous years, researchers might be able to

tell a story. "At least a short story," Fisher said.

Brodeur, Zeman and other researchers don't know if the pyrosomes are affecting other animals in the ecosystem. These are organisms that filter very small particles; it's hard to know if they are competing with other animals for food. But, having them in such high numbers could have important ecological consequences.

"How important are these to the ecosystem?" Brodeur wondered. "How much food are they eating and are they a trophic dead end?" In other words: Where are they on the food chain? His lab is in the middle of analyzing samples collected on survey cruises, looking at links between current environmental conditions and their population boom here as well as their role in the food chain.

"We're learning on our feet," Brodeur said.

What is missing

At the same time researchers are seeing masses of pyrosomes, they are not seeing other creatures.

"If there's a positive side to this, the normal jellies that we get, that tend to be a nuisance, we don't know if they will be here this year," Brodeur said.

And there are no veleva veleva, or by-the-wind-sailors, drifting jellyfish-like creatures that sail over the surface of the water. They often wash up in piles on Oregon's and Washington's beaches, crisping and turning white in the sun. In recent years, veleva veleva were so dense out on the ocean that passing boats several times mistook them for sheens of oil and radioed the U.S. Coast Guard thinking a boat had sunk nearby. This year, they are nowhere. A wave of them showed up in February, but since then they haven't really been seen. Veleva veleva is a species with ebbs and flows, but in hindsight, Fisher said, their absence is a little odd. "Everything else seems like it's getting back to normal," she said. "We have cold, nutrient-rich water, we have upwelling, we're starting to see krill again. All of these things that have been absent over the last few years, but now we have pyrosomes."

Fees: Bill needs only Gov. Brown's signature

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according to the Legislative Fiscal Office. State parks officials said they want to use the proceeds to beef up maintenance and repairs at parks facilities.

State Rep. David Brock Smith, R-Port Orford, testified last month the tactic

could help stimulate tourism in parts of his district on the southern Oregon Coast.

"We know that for just a little bit more in some of our places that are very special and loved, that we might be able to drive more folks (to other parks)," Sumption said. "For example, on the south coast, we could get folks to

go from a larger campground that's full and maybe use price and other amenities to drive folks to Humbug Mountain, which is at 17 percent capacity."

The goal is to find "a way to disperse people and create greater access and opportunity through price as one tool," she said.

The Senate voted 27-1 to pass the bill. The state House passed the legislation unanimously in May. The bill needs only a signature from Gov. Kate Brown to become law.

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TV LISTINGS

THE DAILY ASTORIAN Evening listings THURSDAY

THURSDAY EVENING												JUNE 8	
A	L	6 PM	6:30	7 PM	7:30	8 PM	8:30	9 PM	9:30	10 PM	10:30	11 PM	11:30
2	KATU	(2) KATU News at 6		Jeopardy!	Wheel of Fortune	Grey's Anatomy		Scandal		The Catch		KATU News at 11	(35) Jimmy Kimmel
3	KOMO	(4) KOMO 4 News		Wheel of Fortune	Jeopardy!	Grey's Anatomy		Scandal		The Catch		KOMO 4 News	(35) Jimmy Kimmel
5	KING	(5) (5:00) NHL Hockey Stanley Cup Playoffs Nashville vs Pittsburgh (L)				Evening	Evening	Xterra Adventures	Xterra Adventures	Dateline NBC		KING 5 News	(35) Tonight Show
6	KOIN	(6) KOIN 6 News at 6	CBS Evening News	Extra	Ent. Tonight	Big Bang Theory	Superior Donuts	Mom	Life in Pieces	Bull		KOIN 6 News @ 11	(35) Colbert
7	KIRO	(7) KIRO 7 News	CBS Evening News	The Insider	Ent. Tonight	Big Bang Theory	Superior Donuts	Mom	Life in Pieces	Bull		KIRO News	(35) Colbert
8	KGW	(8) (5:00) NHL Hockey Stanley Cup Playoffs Nashville vs Pittsburgh (L)				Paid Program	Paid Program	Grant's Getaways	Inside Edition	Dateline		KGW News at 11	(35) Tonight Show
9	KRCW	(9) Last Man Standing	Last Man Standing	Modern Family	Modern Family	Supernatural		Super. "Celebrating the Life of Asa Fox"		KGW News at 10	Two and a Half	Two and a Half	Met Your Mother
10	KOPB	(10) Born to Expl (N)	Business (N)	PBS NewsHour		Art Beat "Oregon's Animation Magic"		Brit Floyd A show celebrating the musical legacy of Pink Floyd.		Roy Orbison: Black & White	Night 30		
12	KPTV	(12) 6 O'Clock News		Family Feud	Family Feud	Beat Shazam (N)		Love Connection (N)		10 O'Clock News		11 O'Clock News	2 Broke Girls
13	KPDx	(13) Mike & Molly	Mike & Molly	Big Bang Theory	Big Bang Theory	FOX 12's 8 O'Clock News on PDX-TV		FOX 12's 9 O'Clock News on PDX-TV		Family Guy	Family Guy	American Dad	Cleveland Show
14	KCPQ	(14) Modern Family	Modern Family	Big Bang Theory	Big Bang Theory	Beat Shazam (N)		Love Connection (N)		Q13 News at 10		Q13 News	The Simpsons
20	TBS	(20) Seinfeld Pt. 1 of 2	Seinfeld Pt. 2 of 2	Seinfeld	Seinfeld	Seinfeld	Seinfeld	Big Bang Theory	Big Bang Theory	Big Bang Theory	Big Bang Theory	Conan (N)	
22	KZJQ	(22) Two and a Half	Two and a Half	Last Man Standing	Last Man Standing	Modern Family	Modern Family	Q13 News at 9		Big Bang Theory	Big Bang Theory	Friends	Friends
29	ESPN2	(29) (4:00) MLB Baseball Bos./N.Y. Y. (L)		Baseball Tonight (L)		SportsCenter		SportsCenter With Scott Van Pelt		SportsCenter		SportsCenter	
30	ESPN2	(30) (4:30) NCAA Track & Field Division I Tournament (L)				NFL Live		Mike & Mike: ICYMI (N)		SportsCenter Featured	Jalen & Jacoby (N)	NFL Live	
31	NICK	(31) Henry Danger	Henry Danger	Game Shakers	The Thundermans	*** Ice Age (02) Voices of John Leguizamo, Ray Romano.		Full House		Nashville		Friends	Friends
32	DISN	(32) Pat the Dog	K.C. Undercover	K.C. Undercover	Bizaardvark	Stuck in Middle	Andi Mack	Liv and Maddie	Liv and Maddie	K.C. Undercover	K.C. Undercover	Bunk'd	Jessie
34	FAM	(34) (3:30) Harry Potter & the Goblet of Fire...		(15) *** Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince (2009, Adventure) Michael Gambon, Bonnie Wright, Daniel Radcliffe.		*** Rush Hour 2 (2001, Action) Chris Tucker, Zhang Ziyi, Jackie Chan.		*** American Sniper (2014, War) Sienna Miller, Luke Grimes, Bradley Cooper.		Devil's Due (2014, Horror) Zach Gilford.		The 700 Club	
35	FMC	(35) (5:20) The Purge: Anarchy Frank Grillo.		(15) *** The Purge (2013, Horror) Lena Headey, Max Burkholder, Ethan Hawke.		(15) *** The Purge: Anarchy (14) Kiele Sanchez, Frank Grillo.		(15) FXM Presents		Devil's Due (2014, Horror) Zach Gilford.		Devil's Due (2014, Horror) Zach Gilford.	
36	LIFE	(36) Grey's Anatomy		Married (N) / (05) Married	Married (N) / (05) Married	Married at First Sight "Trust" (N)		Married at First Sight "Trust" (N)		(15) Married Sight Second "I Want You Back"		(15) Married	(15) Married
38	ROOF	(38) Mariners Access	MarinersPre-game	MLB Baseball Minnesota Twins at Seattle Mariners Site: Safeco Field -- Seattle, Wash. (L)		Post-game		MLB Baseball Minnesota Twins at Seattle Mariners		Post-game		MLB Baseball Minnesota Twins at Seattle Mariners	
39	FS1	(39) (5:00) FIFA Soccer World Cup Qualifier (L)		FIFA Soccer World Cup Qualifier Honduras vs. Mexico (L)		MLB Whiparound (L)				Speak for Yourself		Skip and Shannon: Undisputed	
43	COKE	(43) (4:00) The Mummy Returns		*** The Mummy (1999, Adventure) Rachel Weisz, John Hannah, Brendan Fraser.		*** The Mummy Returns (01, Adv) Rachel Weisz, John Hannah, Brendan Fraser.				Tosh.0	Tosh.0	The Daily Show (N)	Pres. Show (N)
44	SP1M	(44) (15) Futurama	(15) Futurama	The Butterjerk Effect" (15) South Park	South Park	South Park	South Park	Tosh.0	Tosh.0	Tosh.0	Tosh.0	The Daily Show (N)	Pres. Show (N)
45	HIST	(45) Mountain "I'll Go Down Fighting" (N)		Mountain Men: Fully "Generations" (N)	Mountain "Season Six Pre-Show" (N)	Mountain Men (N)		Mountain Men (N)		(05) Alone: Making the Cut (N)		(05) Mountain Men	
46	A&E	(46) The First 48 "Graveyard Love"		The First 48 "Blood Lust"		The First 48 "Deadly Lies/ Stay Down"		Cold Case Files "Circle of Friends" (N)		Cold Case Files "Circle of Friends" (N)		(05) The First 48 "1000 Cuts/ Draw"	
47	TLC	(47) Say Yes-Dress	Say Yes-Dress	My 600-lb Life "Tracy's Story"		My 600-lb Life "Brandi and Kandi's Story"		My 600-lb Life "Da Boss' comes to OKC to host a huge race.		My 600-lb Life "Tracy's Story"		My 600-lb Life "Tracy's Story"	
48	DNV	(48) Street Outlaws	Street Outlaws	Street Outlaws "\$50K, All the Way!"		Street Outlaws "\$50K, All the Way!"		Street Outlaws "\$50K, All the Way!"		Street Outlaws "Gatekeeper Gate"		Street Outlaws "Gatekeeper Gate"	
49	NGEO	(49) Wild New Zealand "Paradise Found"		Wild New Zealand "The Lost World"		Wild New Zealand "Middle Earth"		Wild Australia "Realm of the Wombat"		Wild "Desert of the Red Kangaroo"		Wild Australia "Jurassic Jungle"	
50	TNT	(50) (5:30) *** The A-Team (2010, Action) Bradley Cooper, Jessica Biel, Liam Neeson.		*** Rush Hour 2 (2001, Action) Chris Tucker, Zhang Ziyi, Jackie Chan.		*** American Sniper (2014, War) Sienna Miller, Luke Grimes, Bradley Cooper.							
51	ANT	(51) (5:30) *** Young Guns II (90) Kiefer Sutherland, Emilio Estevez.		Fury (2014, War) Logan Lerman, Shia LaBeouf, Brad Pitt.									
52	USA	(52) Law & Order: S.V.U. "Bully"		Law & Order: S.V.U. "Military Justice"		Law & Order: SVU "Spring Awakening"		Law & Order: SVU "Girls Disappeared"		Queen "El Cuerpo de Cristo" (SP) (N)		Law & Order: S.V.U. "Trophy"	
53	FOOD	(53) Chopped "Liver And Learn"		Chopped "Worst Cooks Challenge"		Chopped "An Ugly Turn"		Chopped "Bizarre Baskets!"		Beat Bobby Flay		Beat Bobby Flay	Beat Bobby Flay
54	HGTV	(54) House Hunters Renovation	House Hunters Renovation	House Hunters Renovation		Flip or Flop	Flip or Flop	FlipFloVegas (N)	Flip or Flop Vegas	House Hunters (N)	House Hunters (N)	Vintage Flip (N)	Vintage Flip
55	FX	(55) (5:30) *** The Internship (2013, Comedy) Owen Wilson, Rose Byrne, Vince Vaughn.		CNN Tonight With Don Lemon		Paul Blart: Mall Cop 2 (15) Raini Rodriguez, Eduardo Verastegui, Kevin James.		Paul Blart: Mall Cop 2 (15) Raini Rodriguez, Eduardo Verastegui, Kevin James.		Paul Blart: Mall Cop 2 (15) Raini Rodriguez, Eduardo Verastegui, Kevin James.		CNN Tonight With Don Lemon	
56	CNN	(56) Anderson Cooper 360		CNN Tonight With Don Lemon		Anderson Cooper 360		Anderson Cooper 360		Anderson Cooper 360		CNN Tonight With Don Lemon	
58	FNC	(58) The Five		Hannity		Tucker Carlson Tonight		The Five		Hannity		Tucker Carlson Tonight	
61	CNN	(61) Shark Tank		The Profit "Swim by Chuck Handy"		The Profit "Honest Foods"		The Profit "Los Gemelos"		The Profit "Tonnie's Minis"		Paid Program	Paid Program
63	BRVA	(63) Million Dollar Listing New York		Million Dollar List "Good as Gold"		Million Dollar "The Kids Aren't Alright"		Million Dollar "Frankel-y Speaking" (N)		Cyrus vs. Cyrus (N)	Cyrus vs. Cyrus	WatchWhat	Million Dollar List
64	TCM	(64) (5:00) *** Night and Day (46, Bio) Alexis Smith, Cary Grant.		*** Words and Music (1948, Musical) Tom Drake, Judy Garland, Mickey Rooney.									
65	SYFY	(65) (5:30) The November Man (14, Act) Olga Kurylenko, Eliza Taylor, Pierce Brosnan.		*** The Scorpion King (02) Kelly Hu, Steven Brand, Dwayne "The Rock" Johnson.		*** Troy (2004, Action) Orlando Bloom, Eric Bana, Brad Pitt.							
69	RFD	(69) SF Machinery (N)	Small Town	Rural America "Tarter Farm and Ranch"		Steve Lantvit	Rural Eve. News	Market Journal	GA Farm Monitor	SF Machinery	Small Town	Time Life Library	