

Trump lashes out at Cohen, Manafort news

Defendants played prominent roles in Trump's political rise

By ZEKE MILLER, JONATHAN LEMIRE and DARLENE SUPERVILLE
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Facing a growing threat to his presidency, President Donald Trump lashed out today at his former personal lawyer Michael Cohen, a day after the onetime “fixer” implicated Trump in a campaign cover-up to buy the silence of women who said they had sexual relationships with him.

Trump on accused Cohen of making up “stories in order to get a ‘deal’” from federal prosecutors. Cohen pleaded guilty to campaign finance violations that the lawyer said he carried out in coordination with Trump.

“If anyone is looking for a good lawyer, I would strongly suggest that you don’t retain the services of Michael Cohen!” Trump tweeted today.

In a split television screen for the history books, Cohen’s admission to the crimes in federal court in New York on Tuesday came at nearly the same moment that Trump’s onetime campaign chairman, Paul Manafort, was convicted by a jury in Virginia of financial misdeeds. Manafort faces separate charges in September in the District of Columbia that include acting as a foreign agent.

The back-to-back blows resulted from the work of special counsel Robert Mueller, who is investigating Russia’s attempts to sway voters in the 2016 election, including hacking Democrats’ emails, whether the Trump campaign may have cooperated, and if the president himself obstructed justice in investigating both.

Trump denounced the probe again today on Twitter as a “witch hunt.”

Cohen’s lawyer, Lanny Davis, said today that Cohen has information “that would be of interest” to the special counsel. Davis said Cohen is not looking for a presidential pardon.

“My observation is that the topics relating to hacking and the crime of hacking ... that there are subjects that Michael Cohen could address that would be of interest to the special counsel,” Davis said in a series of television interviews.

Trump soon weighed in on Twitter, taking his shot at Cohen and praising Manafort, saying he has “such respect for a brave man!”

Manafort, Trump wrote, had “tremendous pressure on him and, unlike Michael Cohen, he refused to ‘break.’”

But there was no doubt that Cohen’s acknowledgement of a coordinated payoff scheme puts Trump’s presidency on the defensive.

“It’s going to be hard for the president to try to discredit all this. It’s circling him,” said David Weinstein, a former federal prosecutor who is not involved in the case.

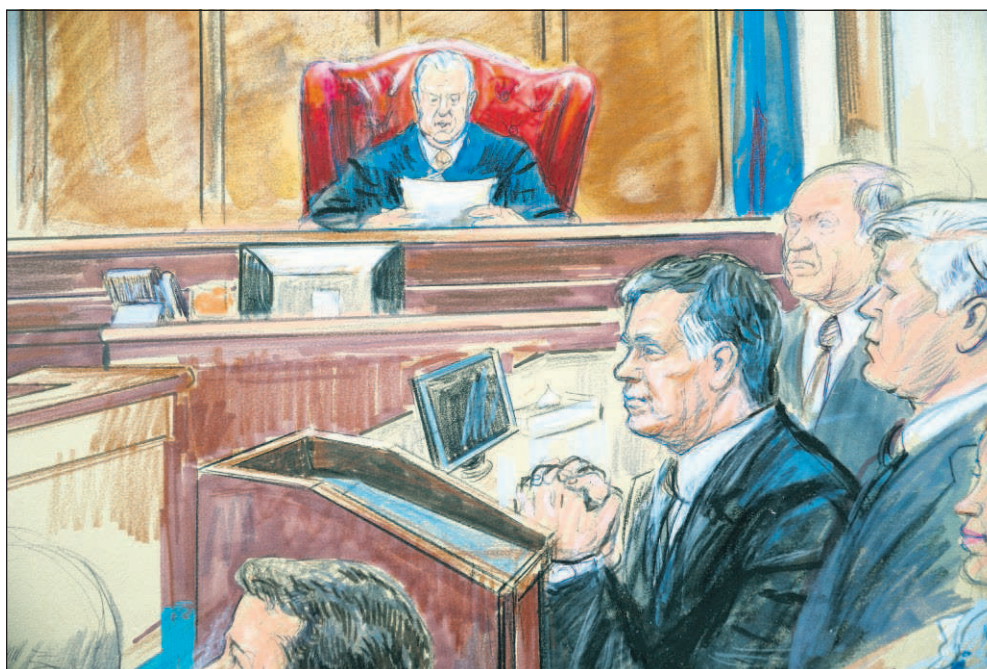
Cohen and Manafort played prominent roles in Trump’s political rise in 2016.

Cohen said once he’d take a bullet for Trump, and was intimately familiar with Trump’s personal, business and political dealing for more than a decade. Cohen released a secretly recorded audio of Trump discussing a payout made via a third party to model Karen McDougal who says she had a sexual relationship with Trump in 2006.

Cohen initially denied making the payments



Michael Cohen, former personal lawyer to President Donald Trump, leaves federal court Tuesday after reaching a plea agreement.



This courtroom sketch shows Paul Manafort listening to Judge T.S. Ellis III in federal court Tuesday in Alexandria, Va.

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David Weinstein

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to the women — McDougal and adult film actress Stormy Daniels — or that Trump had any knowledge of them. But he changed his story as prosecutors closed in. Davis, his attorney, told CNN today of Cohen, “There has been an evolution in his loyalty toward Donald Trump.”

The payments to the women could be regarded as an illegal campaign expenditure if the money was clearly meant to influence the 2016 election.

Trump, on Twitter, maintained otherwise, saying, “Michael Cohen plead (sic) guilty to two counts of campaign finance violations that are not a crime.”

He also complained that “President Obama had a big campaign finance violation and it was easily settled!” Trump was apparently referring to a fine levied on the former president’s 2008 campaign over missing and delayed disclosure of high-dollar donors in the final days of that race.

In a deal with federal prosecutors, Cohen pleaded guilty to eight counts, including tax evasion. He could get about four to five years in prison at sentencing Dec. 12.

Manafort was convicted of eight felony counts, including charges of filing false tax returns and failing to report foreign bank

accounts. Prosecutors will decide whether to retry him on 10 other charges.

Manafort was a well-connected Republican consultant and lobbyist who prosecutors say made \$60 million in foreign money working for Russia-backed politicians in Ukraine. He was campaign chairman for months during the GOP nomination battle in 2016.

Trump said Tuesday the legal developments had nothing to do with Russian election interference and that he felt “badly for both” men. At the West Virginia rally, he focused on developments on trade, taxes, North Korea and his plans for a space force.

“Where is the collusion?” he asked.

His supporters chanted Trump’s campaign staples “Drain the swamp!” and “Lock her up!”

The White House is trying to keep the focus on the November election, when control of Congress is at stake. Trump allies such as former strategist Steve Bannon seek to frame the election as a referendum on the potential impeachment of the president. Trump confidants have long argued that the president’s fate in such a scenario would ultimately be more a matter of politics than law.

Also Tuesday, prosecutors and defense attorneys for former Trump national security adviser Michael Flynn agreed to postpone his sentencing after he pleaded guilty to lying to the FBI about his contacts with a Russian official, in a sign his cooperation was still needed in the Mueller probe.

Trump confidants are reasserting that it is the White House position that a sitting president cannot be indicted. They are citing a 2000 opinion of the Justice Department’s Office of Legal Counsel, which provides legal advice and guidance to executive branch agencies.

Trump’s lawyers have said Mueller plans to adhere to that guidance, though Mueller’s office has never independently confirmed that. There would presumably be no bar against charging a president after he or she departs the White House.

For many around Trump, Cohen has represented a greater threat than even the Russia investigation, drawing from Cohen’s decade of working as the then-celebrity real estate developer’s fixer.

An FBI raid on Cohen’s New York office and hotel room in April rattled the president, who has complained publicly about what he felt was government overreach while privately worrying about what material Cohen may have had after working for the Trump Organization for a decade.

Those in Trump’s orbit, including his lawyer Rudy Giuliani, have steadily ratcheted up attacks on Cohen, suggesting he was untrustworthy and lying about what he knew about Trump’s business dealings. When Cohen’s team produced a recording that the former fixer had made of Trump discussing a payment to silence a woman about an alleged affair, Giuliani sought to impugn Cohen’s credibility and question his loyalty.

Trump stewed for weeks over the media coverage of the Manafort trial. Though the proceedings were not connected to Russian election interference, Trump has seethed to confidants that he views the Manafort charges as “a warning shot” from Mueller.

“What matters is that a jury found that the facts presented to them by the special prosecutor warranted a conviction of someone who surrounds the president,” Weinstein said.

THE DAILY ASTORIAN

TV SCHEDULE

Evening listings
WEDNESDAY

WEDNESDAY EVENING		A - Charter Astoria/ Seaside - L - Charter Long Beach										AUGUST 22	
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 (N)		Jeopardy!	Wheel of Fortune	The Goldbergs	Amer. Housewife	The Royals	Explores the pivotal moments in the crown's history. Pt. 1 of 2 (N)			KATU News (N)	(3:5) Jimmy Kimmel
4	KOMO	(4) KOMO 4 News (N)		Wheel of Fortune	Jeopardy!	The Goldbergs	Amer. Housewife	The Royals	Explores the pivotal moments in the crown's history. Pt. 1 of 2 (N)			KOMO 4 News (N)	(3:5) Jimmy Kimmel
5	KING	(5) NBC News (N)	KING 5 Special (N)	KING 5 News	Evening	America-Talent "Live Results 2" (N)		World of Dance "The Cut 1" Judges send the top acts on to divisional finals. (N)				KING 5 News (N)	(3:5) Tonight Show
6	KOIN	(6) KOIN Local 6 (N)	Evening News (N)	Extra	Ent. Tonight	Big Brother (N)		SEAL Team "Credible Threat"	Criminal Minds "Submerged"			News (N)	(3:5) Colbert
7	KIRO	(7) KIRO 7 News (N)	Evening News (N)	KIRO 7 News (N)	Ent. Tonight	Big Brother (N)		SEAL Team "Credible Threat"	Criminal Minds "Submerged"			KIRO News (N)	(3:5) Colbert
8	KGW	(8) KGW News at 6:00 p.m. (N)		Tonight Cassidy	Inside Edition	America-Talent "Live Results 2" (N)		World of Dance "The Cut 1" Judges send the top acts on to divisional finals. (N)				KGW News (N)	(3:5) Tonight Show
9	KRCW	(9) Modern Family	Modern Family	The Goldbergs	The Goldbergs	Burden of Truth "Witch Hunt" (N)		Supergirl "The Faithful"				News at 10 (N)	[Friends] Two and a Half
10	KOPB	(10) Journeys in Japan	Business (N)	PBS NewsHour (N)		Nature "Raising the Dinosaur Giant"		Nova "Bigger Than T.Rex"				Independent Lens "No Man's Land"	Nova
12	KPTV	(12) 6 O'Clock News (N)		Family Feud	Family Feud	MasterChef "Sky's the Limit" (N)		MasterChef "Tag Team" (N)				10 O'Clock News (N)	News (N) Page Six TV
13	KPDx	(13) Mike & Molly	Mike & Molly	Big Bang Theory	Big Bang Theory	MasterChef "Sky's the Limit" (N)		Prime News (N)				Family Guy	American Dad! The Game
13	KCPQ	(13) Modern Family	Modern Family	Big Bang Theory	Big Bang Theory	MasterChef "Sky's the Limit" (N)		MasterChef "Tag Team" (N)				Q13 NEWS AT 10 (N)	News (N) The Simpsons
20	TBS	(20) Family Guy	Family Guy	Big Bang Theory	Big Bang Theory	Big Bang Theory	Big Bang Theory	Big Bang Theory	Big Bang Theory			Big Bang Theory	[Full Frontal] Conan (N)
22	KZJL	(22) Friends	Friends	Mom	Modern Family	Mom	Modern Family	Q13 News at 9 (N)				Big Bang Theory	[Big Bang Theory] Two and a Half
29	ESPN	(29) 4:30 Baseball	Baseball Tonight	MLB Baseball St. Louis Cardinals at Los Angeles Dodgers Site: Dodger Stadium -- Los Angeles, Calif. (L)				SportsCenter (N)				SportsCenter (N)	SportsCenter (N)
30	ESPN2	(30) Champ Drive "Path to the Playoff"		College Football Live		SportsCenter (N)		SportsCenter (N)				First Take	The hottest topics in sports are debated.
31	NICK	(31) The Loud House	The Loud House	The Loud House	Henry Danger	Henry Danger	SpongeBob	The SpongeBob Movie: Sponge Out of Water (15) Antonio Banderas.				Friends	(3:5) Friends
32	DISN	(32) Stuck in Middle	Stuck in Middle	Stuck in Middle	Stuck in Middle	Stuck in Middle	Stuck in Middle	Stuck in Middle	Stuck in Middle			Andi Mack	Raven's Home
34	FAM	(34) *** Despicable Me (10, Ani)	Voices of Jason Segel, Russell Brand, Steve Carell.			Alone Together (N) Alone Together (N)		*** A Walk to Remember (02, Rom)	Shane West, Daryl Hannah, Mandy Moore.			The 700 Club	
35	FMC	(35) (5:00) *** Captain Phillips (13)	Tom Hanks.			(4:45) * After Earth		(2013, Adventure) Jaden Smith, David Denman, Will Smith.	(4:0) FXM Presents			*** Selma (2014, History)	Tom Wilkinson, Tim Roth, David Oyelowo.
36	LIFE	(36) Grey's A. "I Am Not Waiting Anymore"		Grey's A. "When It Hurts So Bad"		Esc. Polygamy "Confronting the Faith"		Esc. Polygamy "A Daughter's Revolt"				(05) Escaping Polygamy	(05) Escaping Polygamy
39	ROOT	(39) Mariners Access	MarinersPre-game	MLB Baseball Houston Astros at Seattle Mariners Site: Safeco Field -- Seattle, Wash.				MLB Whiparound (L)				Post-game	[BIG3 Basketball Playoffs]
39	FS1	(39) (4:00) MLS Soccer	Phenoms	MFL Soccer Santos Laguna at Tijuana (L)				MLB Whiparound (L)				UFC Tonight	UFC Tonight
43	SPIKE	(43) Mom	Mom	Mom	*** John Wick	(2014, Action) Adrianne Palicki, Bridget Moynahan, Keanu Reeves.						Yellowstone "The Unravelling Pt. 2" (N)	Ink Master "Revenge Live"
44	COM	(44) (4:15) South Park	(5:0) South Park	"Erection Day"	(25) South Park	South Park	South Park	South Park	South Park			South Park	[The Daily Show (N)] The Office
45	HIST	(45) American Pickers	"Full Speedo Ahead"	American Pickers "High Energy Crisis"		American Pickers "The Mother Load"		A. Pickers "Cross Country Pickin'" (N)				(05) Pickers "Big Tennessee Welcome"	(05) Amer. Pickers "Frank's Speed Shop"
46	A&E	(46) Hoarders	"Stacey/ Roi"	Hoarders "Phyllis/ Janet"		Born This Way "Don't Limit Kitty" (N)		Born This Way "Home Alone" (N)				(05) Born This "Til Death Do Us Part"	
47	TLC	(47) Say Yes-Dress	Say Yes-Dress	My 600-lb Life "Ashley D's Story"		My 600-lb Life "Nicole's Story"						Dr. Pimple Popper "This Is Zit" (N)	My 600-lb Life "Nicole's Story"
48	DISC	(48) Exp. Unkn. "Kalahari Desert's Lost City"		Exp. Unkn. "Origins of Stonehenge"		Exp. Unkn. "Inmates vs. Officers"		Exp. Unkn. "Lost City of El Mirador"				Exp. Unkn. "Secrets of Shangri-La"	(05) Exp. Unkn. "Temple of Doom"
49	NGEO	(49) Hard Time "Stress Box"		Hard Time "Inmates vs. Officers"				Drugs, Inc. "Wasted in Seattle"				Drugs, Inc. "Cocaine White Gold"	(05) Drugs, Inc. "Wasted in Seattle"
50	TNT	(50) (5:30) *** Green Lantern (11, Action)	Blake Lively, Peter Sarsgaard, Ryan Reynolds.	*** Alice Through the Looking Glass (16) Johnny Depp, Mia Wasikowska.		*** Lethal Weapon (1987, Action) Danny Glover, Gary Busey, Mel Gibson.		*** Lethal Weapon 2 (89, Act) Danny Glover, Mel Gibson.				(15) *** McFarland, USA (2015, Drama)	Maria Bello, Morgan Saylor, Kevin Costner.
51	AMC	(51) (5:30) *** XXX: State of the Union (05) Samuel L. Jackson, Ice Cube.		NCIS "Something Blue"		NCIS "Ready or Not"		Suits "Cats, Ballet, Harvey Specter" (N)				*** The Sinner "Part IV" (N)	(05) Law & Order: S.V.U. "Strain"
52	USA	(52) NCIS "M.I.A."		NCIS "Something Blue"		NCIS "Ready or Not"		Suits "Cats, Ballet, Harvey Specter" (N)				*** The Sinner "Part IV" (N)	(05) Law & Order: S.V.U. "Strain"
53	FOOD	(53) Guy's Game "DDD Returns To Gggl"		Guy's Game "Big Burger Battle"		Guy's Grocery Games "Noodle Games"		Suits "Cats, Ballet, Harvey Specter" (N)				Guy's Grocery Games "Team Games"	Guy's Game "Grill Or Be Grilled"
54	HGTV	(54) Property "Floored by the Renovation"		Property Brothers "Big City Move"		Property Brothers		Property Brothers (N)				House Hunters (N)	House Hunters (N)
56	FX	(56) (5:00) *** The Wolverine (2013, Action)	Will Yun Lee, Tao Okamoto, Hugh Jackman.	*** X-Men: Days of Future Past (2014, Adventure) Ian McKellen, Patrick Stewart, Hugh Jackman.				Cuomo Prime Time				Hannity	The Inghram Angle
57	CNN	(57) Cuomo Prime Time		CNN Tonight With Don Lemon		CNN Tonight With Don Lemon		Anderson Cooper 360				Cuomo Prime Time	CNN Tonight With Don Lemon
58	FNC	(58) Hannity		CNN Tonight With Don Lemon		CNN Tonight With Don Lemon		Anderson Cooper 360				Hannity	The Inghram Angle
61	CNBC	(61) Shark Tank		Shark Tank		Shark Tank		Tucker Carlson Tonight				Shark Tank	Paid Program
63	BRVM	(63) Wives "There's No Place Like Home"		Real Housewives "Life Is a Cabaret"		Real Housewives "Reunion, Part 1" (N)		Wives Dallas "Bubble and Brooding" (N)				Real Housewives "Reunion, Part 1" 1/2	Watch What [Real Wives Dallas]
64	TCM	(64) Movie	*** Where the Sidewalk Ends (50) Gene Tierney, Karl Malden, Dana Andrews.	*** Fallen Angel (1945, Mystery) Dana Andrews, Linda Darnell, Alice Faye.				*** A Walk in the Sun (45) Lloyd Bridges, Dana Andrews.				Watch What [Real Wives Dallas]	Watch What [Real Wives Dallas]
65	SYFY	(65) (5:10) *** Iron Man (08, Act) Gwyneth Paltrow, Jeff Bridges, Robert Downey Jr..		*** Iron Man 3 (2013, Action) Gwyneth Paltrow, Guy Pearce, Robert Downey Jr..				*** Iron Man 3 (2013, Action) Gwyneth Paltrow, Guy Pearce, Robert Downey Jr..				(55) Harry Potter & the Deathly Hal...	
162	RFD	(162) Dude Ranch	Cowboy (N)	Women's Rodeo	Equestrian Nation	Total Team Roping	Rural Eve. News	ReMastered	Cowboy TV	Dude Ranch	Cowboy Moments	Product Showcase	

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