

# Trump tried to seize control of Mueller probe

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Public at last, special counsel Robert Mueller's report revealed to a waiting nation today that President Donald Trump tried to seize control of the Russia probe and force Mueller's removal to stop him from investigating potential obstruction of justice by the president.

Mueller laid out multiple episodes in which Trump directed people around him to try to influence or curtail the Russia investigation after the special counsel's appointment in May 2017. Those efforts "were mostly unsuccessful, but that is largely because the persons who surrounded the President declined to carry out orders or accede to his requests," Mueller wrote.

After nearly two years, the two-volume, 448-page redacted report made for riveting reading.

In one particularly dramatic moment, Mueller reported that Trump was so agitated at the special counsel's appointment on May 17, 2017, that he slumped back in his chair and declared: "Oh my God. This is terrible. This is the end of my presidency. I'm f---ed."

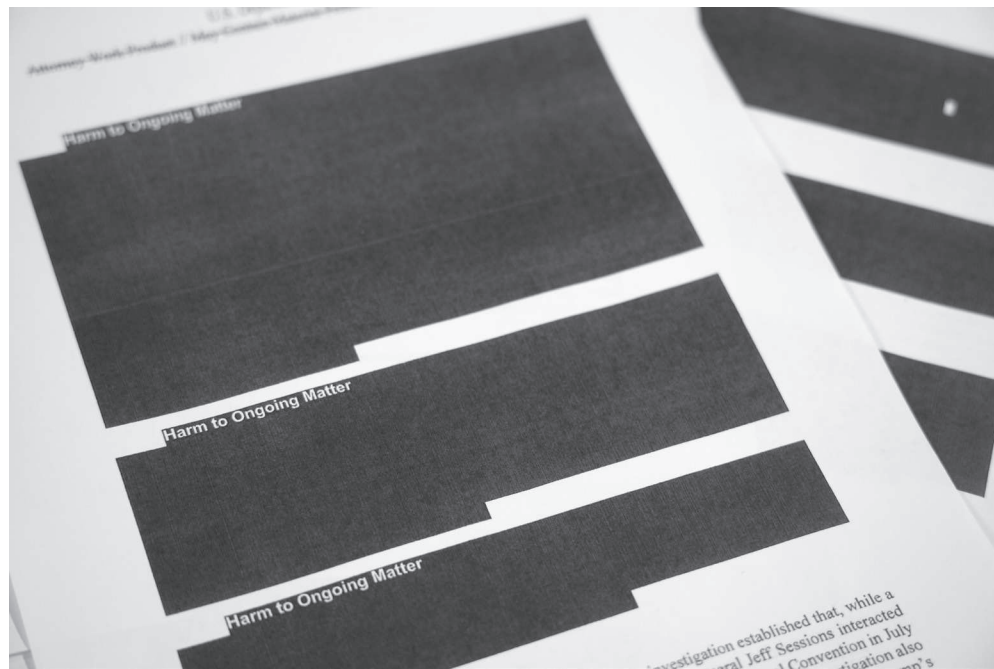
In June of that year, Mueller wrote, Trump directed White House Counsel Don McGahn to call Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein, who oversaw the probe, and

say that Mueller must be ousted because he had conflicts of interest. McGahn refused — deciding he would rather resign than trigger a potential crisis akin to the Saturday Night Massacre of Watergate firings fame.

Two days later, the president made another attempt to alter the course of the investigation, meeting with former campaign manager Corey Lewandowski and dictating a message for him to relay to then-Attorney General Jeff Sessions. The message: Sessions would publicly call the investigation "very unfair" to the president and say that Mueller should limit his probe to "investigating election meddling for future elections." Sessions didn't do so.

Flash forward to today, and Trump celebrated the report's release, telling the audience at an unrelated White House event that he was having "a good day, too. It was called no collusion, no obstruction." He also renewed his calls for an investigation into the origins of the inquiry, saying, "We do have to get to the bottom of these things, I will say."

The Justice Department



AP Photo/Jon Elswick

Special counsel Robert Mueller's report, with redactions.

posted a redacted version of the report online, 90 minutes after Attorney General William Barr offered his own final assessment of the findings.

The release represented a moment of closure nearly two years in the making and at the same time the starting bell for a new round of partisan warfare.

Democrats cried foul as Barr held a press conference just before the release — "spinning the report" in the words of Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer. They sent up a chorus of calls for Mueller himself to testify

before Congress, and Barr said he wouldn't object.

Moments after Barr finished speaking, House Judiciary Chairman Nadler sent a letter requesting that Mueller himself testify before his panel "no later than May 23."

Mueller evaluated 10 episodes for possible obstruction of justice, and said he could not conclusively determine that Trump had committed criminal obstruction. The episodes included Trump's firing of FBI Director James Comey, the president's directive to subordinates to have Mueller fired and efforts to encourage witnesses not to

cooperate.

The president's lawyers have said Trump's conduct fell within his constitutional powers, but Mueller's team deemed the episodes deserving of criminal scrutiny.

As for the question of whether the Trump campaign had colluded with Russia during the 2016 presidential campaign, Mueller wrote, "While the investigation identified numerous links between individuals with ties to the Russian government and individuals associated with the Trump Campaign, the evidence was not sufficient to support criminal charges."

Mueller also said there wasn't sufficient evidence to charge any campaign official with working as an unregistered foreign agent of Russia.

The report included an appendix that contained 12 pages of Trump's written responses to the special counsel. They included no questions about obstruction of justice, as was part of an agreement with Trump's legal team.

Trump told Mueller he had "no recollection" of learning in advance about the much-scrutinized Trump Tower meeting between campaign officials and a Russian lawyer. He also said he had no recollection of knowledge about emails setting up the meeting that promised dirt on Hillary Clinton's campaign.

He broadly denied knowing of any foreign government trying to help his campaign, including the Russian government. He said he was aware of some reports that Russian President Vladimir Putin had made "complimentary statements" about him.

Trump said that his comment during a 2016 political rally asking Russian hackers to help find emails scrubbed from Clinton's private server was made "in jest and sarcastically" and that he did not recall being told during the campaign of any Russian effort to infiltrate or hack computer systems.

## Artist: Mural could be finished in June

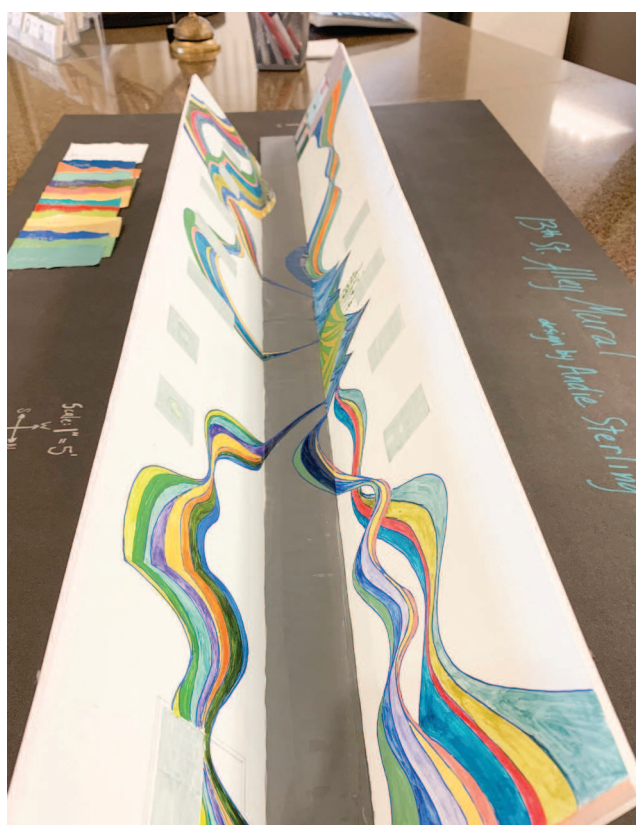
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a mural to increase pedestrian traffic and improve safety in the corridor connecting Duane and Commercial streets.

Sterling's design was chosen from three finalists by a review panel of building owners, a representative from Astoria Visual Arts, a gallery owner and the chairman of the downtown association's design committee.

"We really liked the narrative that was involved in her thought process," Sarah Lu Heath, the executive director of the downtown association, said of Sterling's design. "One of the goals of the project was bringing people through the alley, and we thought that her ribbons of color were so dynamic, with the focal point of the mountain scape."

For the second phase of the mural, Sterling proposes a cobblestone ground cover and colored tile mosaic continuing the lines through the space, encouraging healthy moss growth for a softer, finished green



Astoria Downtown Historic District Association

Local artist Andie Sterling's design for the 13th Street Alley mural includes organic lines leading to the scene of a mountain and farmland valley.

space walkway.

The design goes before the city's Historic Landmarks Commission in May. The project also needs a

right-of-way variance to paint on the sidewalk. If all goes well, the downtown association anticipates the mural to be finished in June.

## Name: 'It's simple, yet it's complicated'

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"At that time we decided to stick with Scandinavian but then we kept hearing more and more input and before we carved any stone or granite we decided we should have another discussion about the name," she said.

It was hard for some people to give up the name — the term is commonly used in Astoria to include all the countries, said Loren Mathews, the president of the heritage association.

But the park's name will be carved into granite at the entrance.

"It is just one change on the name," he said. "We wanted to make sure we were getting it right before we started construction."

"We also don't want to offend anybody and we want to be inclusive," Bowler said.

Communities in Seattle and Portland have already had similar discussions over the years for local groups and heritage centers, landing on "Nordic" as the preferred term. The Astoria Scandinavian Heritage Association



Astoria Scandinavian Heritage Association

The Scandinavian Heritage Park will get a new name.

started to face pressure to use the term "Nordic" when seeking grants and donations for the park project.

"This is not a debate that will go away," Sara Mathews, who owns FinnWare in Astoria and Nordic FinnWare in Portland, had told the heritage association. "Being culturally sensitive is important, especially when building a million-dollar park to honor the people that came from these countries and made Astoria what it is."

"It's simple, yet it's complicated," she told The Daily Astorian. "But really,

truly based on culture and language, Finns are not Scandinavian."

With her own store, she has begun to change some of her advertising, switching from descriptors like "Scandinavian store" to "Nordic gift shop."

The Finns' different language, customs and, often, their politics set them apart in Astoria. Finns who immigrated to the region were known for their radicalism and Finnish socialist clubs were involved in the national socialist movement, according to the Clatsop County Historical Society.

THE DAILY ASTORIAN



# TV SCHEDULE

Evening listings THURSDAY

Table with columns for channels (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) and rows of program listings for Thursday Evening.