

Special counsel's Trump investigation includes Manafort case

WASHINGTON (AP) — The special counsel investigating possible ties between President Donald Trump's campaign and Russia's government has taken over a separate criminal probe involving former Trump campaign chairman Paul Manafort, and may expand his inquiry to investigate the roles of the attorney general and deputy attorney general in the firing of FBI Director James Comey, The Associated Press has learned.

The Justice Department's criminal investigation into Manafort, who was forced to resign as Trump campaign chairman in August amid questions over his business dealings years ago in Ukraine, predated the 2016 election and the counterintelligence probe that in July began investigating possible collusion between Moscow and associates of Trump.

The move to consolidate the matters, involving allegations of misuse of Ukrainian government funds, indicates that Special Counsel Robert Mueller is assuming a broad mandate in his new role running the sensational investigation. The expansiveness of Mueller's investigation was described to the AP. No one familiar with the matter has been willing to discuss the scope of his investigation on the record because it is just getting underway and because revealing details could complicate its progress.

In an interview separately Friday with the AP, Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein acknowledged that Mueller could expand his inquiry to include Attorney General Jeff Sessions' and Rosenstein's own roles in the decision to fire Comey, who was investigating the Trump campaign. Rosenstein, who appointed Mueller as special counsel to take over the investigation, wrote the memorandum intended to justify Trump's decision to fire Comey. Sessions met with Trump and Rosenstein to discuss Trump's decision to fire him despite Sessions' pledge not to become involved in the Russia case.

Chicago, Trump administration have draft police reform deal

CHICAGO (AP) — The city of Chicago and the U.S. Justice Department have negotiated a draft agreement that calls for an independent monitor to oversee police department reforms, though it is unclear if there will be court oversight at some stage in the future, an official in the administration of Mayor Rahm Emanuel



AP Photo/Ariana Cubillos
Demonstrators use shields decorated with religious motifs and the colors of Venezuela's national flag prior clashing with government forces on a highway during a march against the government of President Nicolas Maduro in Caracas, Venezuela, Wednesday. Protests have left dozens dead in the last two months as the opposition demands immediate presidential elections and the liberation of political prisoners.

said Friday.

The appointment of a monitor would occur if the Justice Department gives final approval to the "memorandum of agreement," which includes a framework for adopting and implementing reforms federal officials said were needed in the Chicago Police Department, according to a person in Mayor Rahm Emanuel's administration familiar with the agreement who spoke on condition of anonymity because the person wasn't authorized to speak on the record.

The Justice Department is currently giving a final review of the draft. "We are hopeful that it will be executed soon and the process of selecting an independent monitor can begin shortly thereafter," the source said in an email to The Associated Press. "Of all the reform actions we have taken, this is undoubtedly the most significant to date and it will guide future reforms for years to come."

The Justice Department in January — just before Donald Trump's inauguration as president — issued a scathing report on civil rights abuses by Chicago's police department over the years. It found that institutional problems had led to serious civil rights violations, including a tendency to use excessive force. The investigation began in 2015 after the release of dashcam video showing a white officer shooting a black teenager, Laquan McDonald, 16 times.

Mattis: North Korea a 'clear and present danger' to world

SINGAPORE (AP) — North Korea is accelerating its push to acquire a nuclear-armed missile capable of threatening the United States and other nations, and the U.S. regards this as a "clear and present danger," U.S. Defense Secretary Jim Mattis said Saturday.

Speaking at an international security conference in Singapore, Mattis said the Trump administration is encouraged by China's renewed commitment to working with the U.S. and others to rid North Korea of its nuclear weapons. He also said he thinks China, which is North Korea's closest ally, ultimately will see it as a liability.

China blocked tough new sanctions against North Korea that the United States pushed in the U.N. Security Council on Friday. However, the Security Council did vote unanimously to add 15 individuals and four entities linked to the North's nuclear and missile programs to a U.N. sanctions blacklist.

In his speech to the Shangri-La Dialogue, sponsored by the International Institute for Strategic Studies, Mattis sought to balance his hopeful comments on China with sharp criticism of what he called Beijing's disregard for international law by its "indisputable militarization" of artificial islands in disputed areas of the South China Sea.

Three ex-Penn State officials sent to jail in Sandusky scandal

HARRISBURG, Pa. (AP) — Penn State's former president and two other ex-administrators were sentenced Friday to at least two months in jail for failing to report a child sexual abuse allegation against Jerry Sandusky a decade before his arrest engulfed the university in scandal and brought down football coach Joe Paterno.

"They ignored the opportunity to put an end to his crimes when they had a chance to do so," Judge John Boccabella said as he lambasted the three defendants and the Hall of Fame coach over a delay that prosecutors say enabled Sandusky to molest four more boys.

Boccabella said he was "appalled that the common sense to make a phone call did not occur," a transgression that "sort of robs my faith of who we are as adults and where we are going."

Former President Graham Spanier, 68, was sentenced to four to 12 months, with the first two in jail and the rest under house arrest. He was convicted of child endangerment.

Former athletic director Tim Curley, 63, received a sentence of seven to 23 months, with three in jail. Former vice president Gary Schultz, 67, was given six to 23 months, with two months behind bars. They pleaded guilty to child endangerment.

Leaders pledge to boost climate efforts after Trump decision

PARIS (AP) — A Malian cattle herder, German environmental activists, leaders from Mexico to China — they're among millions on Friday denouncing President Donald Trump's decision to pull the United States out of the Paris climate accord. Many nations pledged to ramp up their efforts to curb global warming instead.

Some allies pointedly refrained from criticism, however, and Russian President Vladimir Putin even joked that Trump's move made him a convenient scapegoat for any bad weather.

While Trump argued the landmark 2015 accord hurts U.S. jobs and business, others took a more global view. The French president's call to #MakeOurPlanetGreatAgain went viral online, and German Chancellor Angela Merkel said it's time to look ahead.

"This decision can't and won't stop all those of us who feel obliged to protect the planet," she said. "On the contrary. We in Germany, Europe and the world will combine our forces more resolutely than ever to address and successfully tackle challenges for humanity such as climate change."

Merkel, whose country hosts this year's international climate summit, called Trump's decision "extremely regrettable, and that's putting it very mildly."

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