

Report: Mueller gives list of questions to Trump’s lawyers

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Special counsel Robert Mueller has given a list of almost four dozen questions to lawyers for President Donald Trump as part of his investigation into Russian meddling in the 2016 election and whether Trump obstructed justice, according to a report published in *The New York Times*.

The *Times* obtained a list of the questions, which range from Trump’s motivations for firing FBI Director James Comey a year ago to contacts Trump’s campaign had with Russians.

Although Mueller’s team has indicated to Trump’s lawyers that he’s not considered a target, investigators remain interested in whether the president’s actions constitute obstruction of justice and want to interview him about several episodes in office. The lawyers want to resolve the investigation as quickly as possible, but there’s no agreement on how to do that.

Many of the questions obtained by the *Times* center on the obstruction issue, including his reaction to Attorney General Jeff Sessions’ recusal from the Russia investigation, a decision Trump has angrily criticized.

Trump lawyer Jay Sekulow declined to comment to The Associated Press on Monday night, as did White House lawyer Ty Cobb.

The questions also touch on the Russian meddling and whether the Trump campaign coordinated with the Kremlin in any way. In one question obtained by the *Times*, Mueller asks what Trump knew about campaign staff, including his former campaign chairman Paul Manafort, reaching out to Moscow.

Mueller has brought several charges against Manafort, but none are for any crimes related to Russian election interference during the 2016 campaign. And he has denied having anything to do with such an effort.

The queries also touch on Trump’s businesses and his discussions with his personal lawyer, Michael Cohen, about a possible Moscow real estate deal. Cohen’s business dealings are part of a separate FBI investigation.

One question asks what discussions Trump may have had regarding “any meeting with Mr. Putin,” referring to Russian President Vladimir Putin. Another question asks what the presi-



President Donald Trump pauses during a during a news conference with Nigerian President Muhammadu Buhari in the Rose Garden of the White House in Washingtonon Monday.

Kelly calls ‘BS’ on report he called Trump an ‘idiot’

WASHINGTON (AP) — New details emerged on the rift between White House chief of staff John Kelly and President Donald Trump, with one former administration official saying Kelly privately called Trump “an idiot” last year.

Kelly’s insult to the president’s intelligence, confirmed to The Associated Press by the former official, came as his clashes with Trump over policy and personnel grew louder and more frequent. Kelly, who has cast himself as safe-guarding the public from the president, has also threatened to quit the White House on several occasions.

Kelly’s disparaging remark was first reported Monday by NBC News. In a statement Monday, Kelly called the report “total BS,” and characterized his relationship with Trump as “incredibly candid and strong.” He added of the president, “He always knows where I stand and he and I both know this story is total BS.”

In recent months, Trump has chafed at Kelly’s management style, and has occasionally talked with friends about replacing him.

dent may have known about a possible attempt by his son-in-law, Jared Kushner, to set up a back channel with Russia before Trump’s inauguration.

Additional questions center on Michael Flynn, Trump’s former national security adviser, who has pleaded guilty to lying to the FBI about his discussions on sanctions against Russia with Russian Ambassador Sergey Kislyak during the presidential transition. Flynn is now cooperating with Mueller’s investigators.

“What did you know about phone calls that Mr. Flynn made with the

Russian ambassador, Sergey I. Kislyak, in late December 2016?” reads one question. Another asks if there were any efforts to reach out to Flynn “about seeking immunity or possible pardon.”

Flynn was fired Feb. 13, 2017, after White House officials said he had misled them about his Russian contacts during the transition period by saying that he had not discussed sanctions.

The following day, according to memos written by Comey, Trump cleared the Oval Office of other officials and encouraged Comey to drop the investigation into Flynn.

BRIEFLY

No guns at NRA convention when Trump, Pence speak

DALLAS (AP) — Attendees at the National Rifle Association’s annual meeting in Dallas can carry their firearms — except during the forum where President Donald Trump and Vice President Mike Pence speak Friday.

A White House official said Monday that Trump will attend Friday. Pence had already been slated to speak at Friday’s leadership forum.

The NRA posted a notice on its website saying that the arena will be under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Secret Service during the leadership forum. It’s standard for the Secret Service to bar firearms from being carried into places visited by the people they protect. Other prohibited items include toy guns, selfie sticks and knives, according to the NRA.

NRA spokeswoman Jennifer Baker said the group’s policy is that firearms are permitted in accordance with local law. She referred questions about Secret Service policies to that agency.

Porn star Daniels sues Trump for defamation

WASHINGTON — The porn actress alleging a sexual encounter with President Donald Trump is escalating her legal fight, suing the president for defamation.

Stormy Daniels filed the complaint in federal court in New York on Monday. At issue is a tweet Trump made in which he dismissed a composite sketch that Daniels says depicted a man who threatened her to stay quiet about her alleged relationship with Trump.

In the tweet earlier in April, Trump said: “A sketch years later about a

nonexistent man. A total con job, playing the Fake News Media for Fools (but they know it!)”

The filing says the tweet was “false and defamatory,” arguing that Trump was speaking about Daniels and that he “knew that his false, disparaging statement would be read by people around the world, as well as widely reported.” It also says Daniels has been “exposed to death threats and other threats of physical violence.”

Next up: Most expensive driving season in years

LOS ANGELES — Get ready for a little bit more pain at the pump this summer.

Crude oil prices are at the highest level in more than three years and are expected to keep climbing, pushing up gasoline prices along the way.

The U.S. daily national average for regular gasoline is now \$2.81 per gallon. That’s up from about \$2.38 per gallon a year ago, according to Oil Price Information Service. And across the U.S., 16 percent of gas stations are charging more than \$3 per gallon, according to AAA.

The price of U.S. crude oil has been on a mostly steady incline since last June, last week hitting \$68.64, the highest since December 2014. Benchmark U.S. crude closed Monday at \$68.57.

Several factors have helped drive oil prices higher. A wave of global economic growth has driven up demand for oil. At the same time, production cutbacks initiated by OPEC last year have helped whittle down oil supplies.

Drivers in states such as, Oregon and Washington are paying the most at the pump, according to AAA. The average retail price in those states ranges from \$3.19 to \$3.61 per gallon.

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