

TRUMP'S LAWYERS RAISED CONCERNS WITH MUELLER'S OFFICE ABOUT TESTIMONY THEY SHOULDN'T KNOW WHETHER IS PHONY OR NOT

In the day since I noted Rudy Giuliani taking credit for the Peter Carr statement Friday night, multiple outlets have confirmed that Trump's lawyers (the reports have not specified which lawyers) contacted Mueller's office Friday morning about BuzzFeed's report that Trump had directed Michael Cohen to lie to Congress. NBC describes that Trump's team "'raised concerns' in a letter to Mueller's office." Meanwhile, CNN has a report that seems to back off WaPo's report that "In the advanced stages of [Mueller's discussion about the story Friday], the deputy attorney general's office called to inquire if the special counsel planned any kind of response, and was informed a statement was being prepared." Instead, CNN describes Rosenstein's office getting just a "heads up," not calling to check in if Mueller was releasing a statement.

The statement was drafted internally within the special counsel's office, which made the decision to release it, according to two sources with direct knowledge of the situation. The deputy attorney general's office, which oversees the special counsel, was only given a heads up it was coming Friday evening.

Whatever happened, Friday was the first time Mueller's office has issued a statement on a specific story and the first time Trump has

offered such positive comments about Mueller's team.

It was a total phony story, and I appreciate the special counsel coming out with a statement last night. I think it was very appropriate that they did so. I very much appreciate that."

So even if Trump has bitched before (WSJ says they have not; NYT Maggie says they have) – this has been the only time it worked.

The thing is – Trump shouldn't know one way or another whether BuzzFeed's was a phony story. They should have zero idea how Michael Cohen testified (though I note, again, that Mueller has a real incentive to be very modest about how they claim Cohen has testified). Trump's lawyers may know what Trump Organization employees testified through a joint defense agreement. But *Trump's own lawyer* said yesterday that it's possible Trump spoke to Cohen about his testimony to Congress (he's now trying to walk that back). If Rudy doesn't know whether Trump told Cohen to "make it happen" or not, as BuzzFeed alleges, then he can't know whether the story is phony.

As I disclosed last July, I provided information to the FBI on issues related to the Mueller investigation, so I'm going to include disclosure statements on Mueller investigation posts from here on out. I will include the disclosure whether or not the stuff I shared with the FBI pertains to the subject of the post.