

SHORTER THE NEOCONS: LET OUR GENERAL GO!

Neocon scribes Eli Lake and Josh Rogin published a piece asserting that the man whose COIN theories failed in 3 different war theaters is making a comeback undermined only by his extramarital affair.

By all outward appearances, David Petraeus appears to be mounting a comeback. The former general landed a job at powerhouse private-equity firm KKR, has academic perches at Harvard and the University of Southern California and, according to White House sources, was even asked by the President Barack Obama's administration for advice on the fight against Islamic State. Yet it turns out that the extramarital affair that forced him to resign as director of the Central Intelligence Agency is still hanging over him.

Yet that's not actually what their article describes. Instead, it explores why it is that the FBI investigation into David Petraeus for *leaking information* to his mistress, not fucking her, is ongoing.

Curiously, these two journalists exhibit no shred of curiosity about why the GOP Congress continues to investigate the Benghazi attack, an investigation that started exactly contemporaneously with the Petraeus leak investigation – or, for that matter, why all the investigations have avoided questions about Petraeus' training failures in Libya.

Instead, they see in this particular 2 year counterintelligence investigation a conspiracy to silence the fine General.

[Retired General Jack] Keane questions

whether the Petraeus FBI probe lasting this long may be driven by something other than a desire to investigate a potential crime. “It makes you wonder if there is another motivation to drag an investigation out this long,” he said.

[snip]

Petraeus allies both inside and outside the U.S. intelligence community and the military express a concern that goes beyond a criminal probe: that the investigation has caused Petraeus to trim his sails – that one of the most informed and experienced voices on combating terrorism and Islamic extremism is afraid to say what he really thinks, a sharp juxtaposition to Bob Gates and Leon Panetta, two former defense secretaries who have not been shy about criticizing Obama’s national security team.

[snip]

But what does seem surprising, to many who know and have worked with him, is that the views he has been expressing are so at odds with what he has said and implied in the past.

For example, when Petraeus was inside Obama’s administration in his first term, he advocated for more troops inside Afghanistan and made the case for arming Syrian moderate forces. But when asked [this summer](#) about that effort, Petraeus demurred and focused on Obama’s new \$500 million initiative in 2014 to train Syrian rebels. “I strongly support what’s being done now,” he said. “Half a billion dollars is a substantial amount of resourcing to train and equip.”

Petraeus’s rhetoric on Iraq and Syria differs sharply not only from his past positions, but from that of many retired generals of his generation and of his

biggest supporters.

To support their conspiracy theory, they not only cite noted leaker Pete Hoekstra, but Lake and Rogin ignore a whole load of other details, such as how long leak investigations normally take. Even the investigation into and punishment of Sandy Berger – which they cite – took 18 months from leak to guilty plea, plus another two years until he relinquished his license. The investigation into Donald Sachtleben – or rather, the UndieBomb 2.0 leak that Sachtleben was singularly held responsible for – took 15 months, even with his computer in custody and Sachtleben on bond most of that time. John Kiriakou was charged almost 4 years after his leaks, and two after Pat Fitzgerald was appointed to find a head for the CIA. Thomas Drake was indicted over 4 years after the investigation into Stellar Wind leaks started and almost 3 years after the FBI raided the homes of those associated with Drake's whistleblowing. Jeffrey Sterling was indicted 7 years after FBI first started looking into leaks to James Risen.

Leak investigations can take a long time. That's not a good thing, as they leave the targets of those investigations in limbo through that entire time. Petraeus is, comparatively, doing better off than most of the others I named above. Indeed, in paragraph 7, Lake and Rogin reveal that Petraeus, in fact, has gotten preferential treatment, in that his security clearance hasn't been stripped.

To wit: Petraeus is ostensibly being investigated for mishandling classified material and yet he retains his security clearance.

Even Hoss Cartwright had his security clearance stripped for allegedly leaking details of StuxNet to the press. Heck, based on this detail, one has just as much evidence to support a counter-conspiracy theory that

Petraeus is getting lax treatment because he's got damning information on Obama (not one I'm adopting, mind you, but it does illustrate what one can do with an absence of evidence).

If warmongers like Jack Keane want to make drawn out leak investigations a cause, they would do well to make it a principle, not a singular conspiracy theory used to explain why David Petraeus isn't being more critical of Obama's efforts not to escalate into another failed counterinsurgency.

Is it possible, after all, that Petraeus is silent because he realizes what a hash he has made of the Middle East?