

# MAYBE PETRAEUS' PLEA DEAL IS MORE INTERESTING TO THE BENGHAZI REPORT THAN HILLARY'S EMAILS?

There is an exception to every rule, standard operating procedure, and policy; it is up to leaders to determine when exceptions should be made and to explain why they made them.

– *David Petraeus' Rules for Living*, as presented by Paula Broadwell as they were being caught in an FBI investigation

Predictably, Trey Gowdy has subpoenaed more information about Hillary Clinton's email personal email revealed this week.

But it seems he also ought to call David Petraeus in for another chat about Benghazi in light of details in the former CIA Director's plea deal.

That's because the Plea Documents show that the investigation into Petraeus and Paula Broadwell intersects with the Benghazi investigation in ways that are even more interesting than was already clear. Consider what those two timelines look like when you add in the fact that Petraeus lied to the FBI about leaking information to his mistress on October 26, 2012, which has been updated from this post (note that contemporaneous reporting dated Petraeus' FBI interview to October 29).

From the sex and leaking standpoint, the revised timeline is interesting because it shows Petraeus and Broadwell together at – of all places! – the annual celebration for old-style

subterfuge, the OSS dinner, between the time Petraeus lied to the FBI and the time Broadwell was interviewed a second time.

But from a Benghazi perspective, it shows that *on the same day Petraeus lied to the FBI*, Paula Broadwell made the accusation that the attack was really about freeing militia members held at the CIA annex. The next day Petraeus and Broadwell hobnobbed together among the old style spooks. and then days later – even as an FBI whistleblower was forcing the investigation into the public, without which it might have been dropped – Petraeus went on a “fact-finding” mission to Cairo, in part to consult with some of the people involved in the Benghazi response.

Petraeus did a report on that trip, but Dianne Feinstein was complaining that her committee had not received a copy of it on November 12 (Petraeus was resisting, in part, because he no longer worked at CIA).

There’s no evidence that the House Intelligence Committee consulted Petraeus’ trip report when they did their report on the attack. (Indeed, the report shows remarkable lack of interest in Petraeus’ role altogether, in spite of the fact that he watched the later parts of the attack develop via the drone surveillance camera feed piped to the SCIF at his home.)

Did either of the Intelligence Committees ever get the report on the trip Petraeus did after he knew he was in trouble with the FBI, at a time when his ex-girlfriend was claiming the reason behind the attack was entirely different from what we’ve been told?

As I’ve noted, more than anyone else, current HPSCI Chair Devin Nunes showed significant interest in that claim about detainees, as reflected in the backup to a report that Mike Rogers made sure to get done before he left Nunes in charge. In response to his question (as well as some questions about arms-running) Nunes got non-denials denials.

In a related detail, in the earlier session Nunes also elicited a non-denial denial about detainees (and **accusation first leveled by David Petraeus' mistress Paula Broadwell**), the other alleged reason for the attack on US entities in Benghazi.

Mr. Nunes: Okay. To the detainees, were there ever any detainees at either of these locations in the last year of any kind?

Mr. Morell: Not with regard to the CIA facility, sir.

Mr. Kennedy: And the State Department does not engage in detentions overseas.

Rather than just answering no, between them Morell and Kennedy carved out a space where it might be possible the CIA (or someone else, possibly JSOC) were holding detainees at the TMF or elsewhere in Benghazi.

Maybe Petraeus' last minute trip to do a personal investigation of the aftermath of Benghazi – the results of which Petraeus resisted sharing with the Committees investigating the attack – is just a coinkydink.

But given the timing – and Petraeus' sweetheart plea deal – it'd be nice if the Benghazi Committee asked a few more questions about that coinkydink.

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[Week of, possibly day of] October 21  
[**alternately reported as September**]: Paula Broadwell first interviewed by FBI. She agrees to turn over her computer, which will lead to the FBI finding classified information on it.

October 24 (written the day before):

Petraeus **applauds** the guilty plea of John Kiriakou, who passed the identity of torturers to lawyers representing Gitmo detainees who have been tortured. Those lawyers have clearance, and they did not publicly reveal the most sensitive name. In his second-to-last statement as CIA Director, he writes,

This case yielded the first IIPA successful prosecution in 27 years, and it marks an important victory for our Agency, for our Intelligence Community, and for our country. Oaths do matter, and there are indeed consequences for those who believe they are above the laws that protect our fellow officers and enable American intelligence agencies to operate with the requisite degree of secrecy.

October 24: Benghazi suspect **killed** in Cairo.

October 26: Fox **reports** that CIA security in annex were twice told to stand down by "CIA chain of command."

October 26: In an interview with the FBI, Petraeus denies sharing classified information with Broadwell.

October 26: At an appearance at DU, Paula Broadwell **says**,

Now, I don't know if a lot of you heard this, but the CIA annex had actually, um, had taken a couple of Libyan militia members prisoner and they think that the attack on the consulate was an effort to try to get these prisoners back. So that's still being vetted.

The challenging thing for General Petraeus is that in his new position, he's not allowed to communicate with the press. So he's known all of this – they had correspondence with the CIA station chief in, in Libya. Within 24 hours they kind of knew what was happening.

Update: **See this post**, which makes it clear Fox had the detail about prisoners but then took it out.

October 27: Petraeus and Broadwell **hobnobbing** Office of Strategic Services annual awards dinner.

October 31: Acting after speaking to FBI “whistleblower,” Eric Cantor’s Chief of Staff calls Robert Mueller about investigation.

October 31- November 1: Petraeus **in Cairo** for security discussions.

November 2 [based on a briefing held November 1 while Petraeus was still in Cairo]: CIA releases timeline rebutting Fox report—mentioned by Broadwell—that CIA chain of command told security to stand down.

November 2: FBI interviews Broadwell a second time.

November 2: Scott Shane writes **odd article** on demise of Petraeus’ image, blaming his absence from media for Benghazi blowback.

November 5: Based on second interview with Broadwell, FBI “**tentatively**” rules out charges.

November 5: Broadwell publishes **General David Petraeus Rules for Living**, including these.

4. There is an exception to every rule, standard operating procedure, and policy; it is up to leaders to determine when exceptions should be made and to explain why they made them.

5. We all will make mistakes. The key is to recognize them and admit them, to learn from them, and to take off the rear view mirrors—drive on and avoid making them again.

6. Be humble. The people you’ll be leading already have on-the-ground conflict experience. “Listen and learn.”

7. Be a team player. “Your team’s

triumphs and failures will, obviously, be yours." Take ownership of both.

November 6: Having reportedly determined the facts of the case, FBI informs James Clapper of the investigation. Clapper talks to Petraeus, urges him to resign. (Note that public integrity investigations allow for the resignation of a public figure in lieu of charges.)

November 7: Clapper again urges Petraeus to resign. Clapper informs Obama.

November 8: Petraeus meets with Obama, reportedly asks to be allowed to resign.

November 9: Obama accepts Petraeus' resignation.

November 12: Dianne Feinstein complains that CIA won't share trip report from Petraeus' fact-finding trip to Cairo. FBI searches Broadwell's house.