

# WHY DEMOCRATS MAY EMBRACE JIM COMEY'S SELF-RIGHTEOUSNESS IN 12 MONTHS

Some Democrats are already blaming Jim Comey for Hillary's loss last night. It will be some time before we know for sure whether that is true. Certainly polling (to the extent that it can be regarded as a fair read of the electorate, which I'm not sure it can) didn't show Hillary losing a lot of support, net, over the course of Comey's head fake. Instead, polls showed Gary Johnson voters coming home to the GOP, which closed Trump's polling gap. I do think it likely that Comey's head fake had an effect on Democratic turnout.

So we will see whether Comey is to blame or something else (that said, by the time we really know that, a narrative will be set).

But I also want to talk about Comey's position going forward.

Had Hillary won, I think President Obama might have fired Comey in the lame duck. But I don't see that happening now. Partly, because it would be seen as vindictive, and Obama has his legacy to cement. More importantly, there's no chance Obama could get someone else confirmed.

So Comey will be FBI Director on January 20, with six plus years of a ten year term in front of him.

Trump has already floated Rudy Giuliani as Attorney General.

I have no idea what their relationship is like now, but recall that Comey worked for (presumably was hired by) Giuliani when the latter was US Attorney in the 1980s. Giuliani is the guy that launched Comey on his self-righteous career of federal prosecution.

For that reason – and because of Comey's behavior in the last month – I expect Trump will keep him.

That means Comey's self-righteous rule is one of the few things that will prevent Trump, in the near term, from politicizing the FBI more than it already is. Today's FBI is already bad, but Comey may limit how badly Trump's FBI targets Muslims and others Trump targeted during the campaign.

Ultimately, Comey's tenure may end where it has before, in standing up to some legalistic abuse (even while sanctioning the underlying behavior, as Comey did with both torture and mass surveillance), and resigning or getting fired.

But in the short term, at least, the Democrats who are blaming Comey today may welcome his self-righteousness tomorrow. Me, I think the reasons that self-righteousness is a problem now will remain a problem. But probably less problematic than having Joe Arpaio run the FBI.