

CURIOSER: THE BLINDSIDING OF SALLY YATES

Remember back in early May I noted the curious timing of events leading up to former Lt. General Michael Flynn's departure from the Trump administration and the launch of Trump's 'travel ban'?

It looks like former Deputy Attorney General Sally Yates was completely blindsided by the travel ban, according to *The New Yorker*.

Yates told McGahn that she would have the Flynn materials for him by Monday morning. She left the White House, stopped at the Justice Department to pick up some documents, and continued on to the airport. She was returning to Atlanta for a dinner honoring a camp for children with serious illnesses and disabilities, which her husband has supported for years. On the way to the airport, she received a call from her deputy, Matt Axelrod. "You're not going to believe this, but I just read online that the President has executed this travel ban," he said.

It was the first Yates had heard of the order. "I had been sitting in Don McGahn's office an hour before that," she said. "He didn't tell me." She later learned that lawyers in the Office of Legal Counsel, at the Justice Department, had reviewed the order, and that they had been instructed not to share it with her. A source familiar with the process said that even the most senior Trump aide assigned to Yates's office didn't know about the order until he saw the news on CNN.

Yates was in the White House meeting with the

White House Counsel and the administration couldn't bother to flag her and tell her, "By the way, we have something new for you to enforce"?

They couldn't brief her on the order in advance?

The Office of Legal Counsel was "instructed not to share it with her"?

They couldn't call her directly and tell her about the order even after they signed and implemented it?

She had to look up the text of the order on the internet and read it. It doesn't look as if the Trump administration ever bothered to contact Yates directly about the order, yet they expected her and the rest of federal law enforcement to blindly defend it.

Come Monday evening – after she told the Justice Department that afternoon it cannot enforce the travel ban – she was summarily fired. Trump called her "weak on borders and very weak on illegal immigration" in her dismissal letter.

Either this administration was (is) completely out of its depth, unable to read organizational charts, understand how to administer operations changes, and muster basic team management skills, relying instead on media across the internet and television to disseminate information about executive orders throughout the executive branch...

Or they wanted to completely derail and swamp Yates from pulling together "underlying evidence" describing Flynn's conduct for the following Monday morning after she left the White House on Friday evening, January 27.

Nor did they have any intention of successfully rolling out a legitimate ban on travel to thwart credible terrorist threats.

Curiouser and curioser.