

TWO OF JIM JORDAN'S SO-CALLED WHISTLEBLOWERS ARE UNDER INVESTIGATION FOR IMPROPER TREATMENT OF FBI FILES

As a number of outlets have covered (Rolling Stone did a particularly good story), Democrats on the Insurrection Protection Committee released a report on the only three witnesses – whom Jim Jordan dubiously claims are whistleblowers – who have yet to be formally deposed by the committee. Not only does the report seriously question their claims to be whistleblowers (in part because they have little, if any, firsthand knowledge of the issues about which they claim to be reporting), but the report shows that all three are pro-insurrection conspiracy theorists.

I've already written about one, Stephen Friend, who balked that some Three Percenters with ties to the Oath Keepers and Kremers were being treated as a domestic terror threat.

The other two are George Hill, a recently retired Supervisory Intelligence Analyst whose embrace of false flag theories around January 6 should invite defendants in the Boston area to ask for discovery on his potential involvement in any cases, and Garret O'Boyle, an anti-vaxer who refused to take an investigative step against two apparent January 6 leads but suffered no consequences as a result.

I'd like to point out two functional details of the report: as the report describes, two witnesses are under investigation for mishandling FBI files, and those same two witnesses received payments from Trump-related

funds, funds that are likely part of the larger January 6 investigation.

Jim Jordan's witnesses are alleged to be accessing or sharing information not necessary for their job

First, the substance of this testimony involves records that were either improperly accessed or outside the witnesses' job description.

Friend, for example, admitted that he was suspended, in part, for improperly removing parts of the FBI's Domestic Investigations and Operations Guide and other internal documents from the FBI system.

Friend has publicly stated that his security clearance was suspended because he improperly accessed material on FBI computer systems, 220 and during his testimony, he admitted that while a Special Agent at the Daytona Beach Resident Agency, he accessed and removed documents marked "For Official Use Only" from a classified FBI system.²²¹ Specifically, he admitted that in September 2022, he accessed the classified system to get "information about the employee handbook and disciplinary processes," "a flow chart of the way the Inspection Division works and the OPR [Office of Professional Responsibility] process works," and "copies of the last five OPR quarterlies as a go by for precedent for punishment for my situation."²²² He also accessed and removed elements of the then-current version of the FBI Domestic Investigations and Operations Guide.²²³

Remember that Intercept source Terry Albury did

prison time, in part, for taking and leaking the DIOG; so any complaint that Friend is disciplined for this amounts to a complaint that he's being subjected to the same standard as Albury was.

Similarly, O'Boyle was suspended last year based on allegations he was leaking to the press.

He applied for and was accepted to a new unit in Virginia and was scheduled to begin work there on September 26, 2022.⁹⁰ His security clearance was suspended that day.⁹¹

O'Boyle told the Committee that his suspension notice stated that "an unidentified person ... made an allegation that [he] had been making unprotected disclosures to the media," and that because of this he was "no longer deemed fit to hold a security clearance."⁹² He denied having made such disclosures, and he explained that instead he believed that he had been retaliated against because he "had been coming to Congress... for nearly a year."⁹³ He described this as being a "weaponization of the [security] clearance" process.⁹⁴ He has appealed that suspension and, to his knowledge, the appeal process is still ongoing.⁹⁵

[snip]

O'Boyle did confirm that he corresponded with staff of both Rep. Ron Estes and then-Ranking Member Jim Jordan probably "more than 20" times in 2022 and produced "maybe around" 50 documents to them.¹⁰⁴ O'Boyle's attorney advised him "not to talk about specifics of any of his disclosures to Congress ... because those are confidential" and in fact prohibited him from describing the substance of any of his communications with the offices of Rep. Estes or then-

O'Boyle has some unspecified role in material that got forwarded from an eGuardian tip, possibly via Jim Jordan, to Project Veritas. PV's coverage falsely claimed that the FBI had labeled a group called American Contingency a Domestic Violent Extremism group. In reality, the FBI investigated the group's founder, Mike Glover, and concluded he did not present a threat.

Authorized Method:	Administrative note for informational purposes.
Description:	Glover is a decorated Veteran of the United States. His videos posted on Youtube.com and his military record attest to his patriotism for the United States. Glover desires to assist Americans in preparing themselves for catastrophic events and not to overthrow the United States Government. A background investigation and review of Glover's social media failed to support the allegation that Glover is a threat to the United States or its citizens. Therefore, it is requested captioned lead be closed for information only.
Status:	Completed
History:	08/26/2020 12:09:42 PM Created Note: Request lead be closed for information only

Nevertheless, Jordan cited PV's coverage in a complaint to Christopher Wray.

O'Boyle admitted that, even though he had no role in this investigation, he was involved somehow in the dissemination of information about it.

Q Did you know anything about the investigation or what has been described as an investigation into him [Mike Glover] prior to having this letter put in front of you today?

A I did.

Q And what did you know?

A Pretty much mostly what's in here.

Q And that – how did you learn that information?

BINNALL: Prior to our previous instructions, you can answer to the extent it's appropriate.

A This is one of the protected disclosures that I made.

Q Okay. And it involves Mr. Glover?

A Uh-huh.

Q But you ... were not personally involved in any matters involving Mr. Glover in your capacity as an FBI employee?

A Right. I never investigated him.

Q Okay. And what about American Contingency?

A Correct. No.

Q Okay. So you don't have firsthand knowledge of anything that the FBI may have – may or may not have done?

BINNALL: You can answer to the extent that it doesn't violate my previous instructions.

A I mean, I guess, in accordance with my work and my protected disclosure, I had some knowledge of what the FBI had done.

BINNALL: And don't go any further than that.135

It's unclear whether this is the leak investigation that led him to lose his security clearance. When asked about it, O'Boyle claimed he was set up by someone irked that he was feeding information to Congress for the prior year, but he did not take that complaint through proper channels, to the DOJ IG or Inspection Division. He refused to tell Democrats on the committee what the allegations about leaking pertain to.

Instead, he went to Donald Trump's lawyer, Jesse Binnell.

Among the claimed whistleblower complaints O'Boyle shared (the other involves vaccine denialism) is that a WFO Special Agent sent him two leads, one based on an anonymous tip, apparently of January 6 suspects.

But I received a lead about someone based on an anonymous tip, and in

law enforcement anonymous tips don't hold very much weight, especially without evidence that you can corroborate pretty easily.

I wasn't able to corroborate anything they said, even after speaking with the person they alleged potential criminal behavior of.

While I'm trying to figure all that out, I get another lead from the same agent who sent me that lead.108

He explained that he decided to call the agent who had sent him the lead:

Q [A]fter talking to her, my mind was blown that she was still trying to get me to do some legal process on the guy that I got the anonymous tip on. ... And so I ended up writing that all up and denying it. ...

When we got off the phone, I was like, "I'm just going to close this." She still wanted me to do what she wanted me to do in the lead, and I was like, no. I can't...

Q So, to your knowledge, that case was closed?

A To my knowledge, yeah.109

To suggest that anonymous tips related to January 6 were particular unreliable does not hold up against the record of the investigation. This exchange makes him sound just like Friend – someone who refused to investigate suspected perpetrators of January 6, and is trying to launch a career as a far right celebrity as a result.

Finally, there's Hill, the retired Supervisory Intelligence Analyst who adheres to conspiracy theories about Ray Epps. He reported to the

committee on matters he was not personally involved – what sounds like a tip or Suspicious Activity Report from a financial institution pertaining to January 6.

Hill claimed that a financial institution provided a self-generated customer list to the FBI of its own volition, that the Boston Field Office had been asked to conduct seven preliminary investigations based on that list, and that FBI field offices around the country were also asked to open preliminary investigations—according to Hill, the “least-intrusive method” of investigation—based on that list. 32

As noted, Hill explained that he himself did not handle any cases, so his knowledge of the investigations was limited by his role. Moreover, he revealed that he had no information about the origins of the list, he did not recall which entity uploaded the list to the FBI’s system, and, while he viewed an electronic communication referencing the list in the FBI’s case management system, he never opened or viewed the actual list itself. 33

To the committee, attempting to weigh whether there’s merit to Hill’s allegations, this simply reeks of someone reporting on an investigation he was not part of. But it raises real questions why he was monitoring an investigation he was not part of.

In all three cases, people tangentially involved with the January 6 investigation balked at pretty minor investigative steps. And all three at least accessed information outside their job to do so – and in two cases, there are allegations of improper access.

Trump-related organizations paid two of these witnesses

The allegations that at least some of these men may have improperly accessed investigative information to which they were not privy is all the more alarming given the detail that two of them – Friend and O’Boyle, the two under more formal investigation by the FBI – have received financial benefits from Trump-related organizations.

Witnesses Garret O’Boyle and Stephen Friend both testified that they have received financial support from Patel, with Friend explaining that Patel sent him \$5,000 almost immediately after they connected in November 2022. Patel has also promoted Friend’s forthcoming book on social media.

But Patel’s assistance has not just been financial. He arranged for attorney Jesse Binnall, who served as Donald Trump’s “top election-fraud lawyer” when Trump falsely claimed the 2020 election was stolen, to serve as counsel for Garret O’Boyle. When Committee Democrats asked O’Boyle about this financial connection, Binnall appeared to surprise his client with an announcement that he was now representing O’Boyle pro bono. Committee Democrats infer that Binnall hoped to distance his connection to Patel and others.

Patel also found Friend his next job. Friend now works as a fellow on domestic intelligence and security services with the Center for Renewing America, which is run by former Trump official Russell Vought and is largely funded by the Conservative Partnership Institute, which itself is run by former Trump chief of staff Mark Meadows and former

Senator Jim DeMint.

This is where the Insurrection Protection Committee more directly ties into Trump's own defense against charges for his coup attempt.

Jesse Binnall *is Trump's lawyer*; he was even interviewed as part of obstruction inquiry related to the stolen document investigation. His firm has been receiving hundreds of thousands in payments from Trump's two PACs, over \$130,000 in both November and December. This is some of the spending that Jack Smith is reportedly investigating for misuse of campaign funds. So there's the real prospect that O'Boyle, under investigation for leaking details of FBI investigations against January 6 and other right wing figures, is being paid from funds raised by lying about voter fraud.

Similarly, Trump's Save America PAC gave \$1 million to the Conservative Partnership Institute. Again, that payment is almost certainly part of the Jack Smith investigation. As the Democratic report notes, Vought's organization has been focusing on precisely this false weaponization claim.

CRA's President, former Trump administration official Russ Vought, has embraced many of the themes laid out by the witnesses George Hill, Garret O'Boyle, and Stephen Friend, and Vought reportedly pushed Republican leadership to establish the Weaponization Subcommittee at the start of the 118th Congress.³⁹⁷ In the forward to CRA's 2023 budget proposal for the federal government, entitled "A Commitment to End Woke and Weaponized Government," Vought wrote,

On the heels of this wrenching national experience is the growing awareness that the national security apparatus itself is arrayed against that half of the

country not willing to bend the knee to the people, institutions, and elite worldview that make up the current governing regime. Instead of fulfilling their intended purpose of keeping the American people safe, they are hard-wired now to keep the regime in power. And that includes the emergence of political prisoners, a weaponized, SWAT-swaggering FBI, the charges of “domestic terrorism” and “disinformation” in relation to adversaries’ exercise of free speech, and the reality that the NSA is running a surveillance state behind the protective curtain of “national security.” The immediate threat facing the nation is the fact that the people no longer govern the country; instead, the government itself is increasingly weaponized against the people it is meant to serve.³⁹⁸

Committee Democrats find the connections between Patel, CRA, and CPI deeply concerning. Evidence suggests that these entities were not just a driving force for creating the Weaponization Subcommittee, but are actively propelling its efforts to advance baseless, biased claims for political purposes. This evidence seriously discredits the work done by Committee Republicans and casts further doubt on the reliability of the witnesses they have put forth.

That suggests the prospect that Trump-related figures are violation campaign finance law to fund an NGO to, in turn, pay for FBI agents under investigation for improperly accessing FBI files to spread conspiracy theories about the investigation into Trump and his supporters.

Jordan's imaginary friends

The combination of alleged leaks with payments from funds raised using false claims of vote fraud makes me even more worried about the witnesses that Jordan won't let be questioned by the Democrats on the committee.

As the Democratic report notes, Jordan says he has spoken to – and received materials from – dozens of other people claiming to be whistleblowers.

This partisan investigation, such as it is, rests in large part on what Chairman Jordan has described as “dozens and dozens of whistleblowers... coming to us, talking about what is going on, the political nature at the Justice Department.”¹ To date, the House Judiciary Committee has held transcribed interviews with three of these individuals. Chairman Jordan has, of course, refused to name any of the other “dozens and dozens” who may have spoken with him. He has also refused to share any of the documents which these individuals may have provided to the Committee.

Jordan recently sent Christopher Wray a list of 16 Special Agents he demands to interview.

Our need to obtain testimony from FBI employees is vital for carrying out our oversight and for informing potential legislative reforms to the operations and activities of the FBI. From the documentary and testimonial information that we have obtained to date, we have identified several FBI employees who we believe possess information that is necessary for our oversight. Accordingly, we ask that you initially make the following FBI employees

available for transcribed interviews with the Committee in the near future:

[16 names redacted]

We anticipate that we may require testimony from additional FBI employees as our oversight continues, and we expect your cooperation in facilitating these future interviews as well.

We are aware that the Justice Department has preemptively indicated that it intends to limit the scope and nature of information available to the Committee as part of our oversight.³

You should know, however, that despite the Department's assertions to the contrary, congressional committees have regularly received testimony from non-Senate-confirmed and line-level Justice Department employees, including FBI employees [sic], in the past. We expect this past precedent to apply to our oversight as well.

Jordan's list includes 17 names, including Jack Smith. Eleven of those – including Lisa Page – appear to be related to Mark Meadows' own investigation of the Russian investigation. Jordan is effectively saying he has the right to interview line agents because Jeff Sessions and Bill Barr let him do so, to undermine the last investigation into Donald Trump.

Jordan provides no basis for needing to interview these people. He doesn't provide any explanation about how they might provide evidence of improper FBI activity.

According to Breitbart, which claimed to have seen transcripts of the Jordan witnesses interviews, said the 16 people "had been named by the three witnesses in the closed-door interviews." In other words, three disgruntled FBI agents, two under investigation for wrongdoing, are leading Jim Jordan by the nose to make life hell for their former colleagues.

But those two other details make this different.

These people are being given financial benefits from Trump-related sources, financial benefits that may themselves be part of the crime under investigation.

And at least two of these people – the same two on the grift train – are under investigation for inappropriately removing or leaking sensitive FBI documents.