

CARLOS DE OLIVEIRA ADDED A LOCK TO THE STORAGE FACILITY THEN (CLAIMED HE) GAVE AWAY THE KEY

My second favorite bullshit spin of the entire stolen documents investigation (the first being claims about Walt Nauta's cooperation) is the way, in the days after the search of Mar-a-Lago, Trump got journalists to repeat his claim that the fact he replaced the lock on the storage room at Mar-a-Lago proved he was entirely cooperative with DOJ before the search.

Here's how WSJ presented the claim in one of its first instances:

Aides to Mr. Trump have said they had been cooperating with the department to get the matter settled. The former president even popped into the June 3 meeting at Mar-a-Lago, shaking hands. "I appreciate the job you're doing," he said, according to a person familiar with the exchange. "Anything you need, let us know."

Five days later, Trump attorney Evan Corcoran received an email from Mr. Bratt, the chief of the Justice Department's counterintelligence and export control section, who oversees investigations involving classified information.

"We ask that the room at Mar-a-Lago where the documents had been stored be secured and that all the boxes that were moved from the White House to Mar-a-Lago (along with any other items in that room) be preserved in that room in their current condition until further notice," according to what was read to The Wall

Street Journal over the phone.

Mr. Corcoran wrote back, "Jay, thank you. I write to acknowledge receipt of this letter. With best regards, Evan."

By the next day, according to a person familiar with the events, a larger lock was placed on the door. It was the last communication between the men until Monday's search of Mar-a-Lago, according to the person.

[snip]

Mr. Trump and his lawyers contend they have cooperated with a monthslong effort by the government to retrieve some of the material he took from the White House and expressed outrage with Monday's unannounced visit to Mar-a-Lago. A timeline of events, they say, demonstrates this cooperation, down to quickly fulfilling the June request to place a new lock on the storage door.

Here's how John Solomon presented the claim in a post that first broke the news of the surveillance video subpoena.

Trump signaled his full cooperation, telling the agents and prosecutor, "Look, whatever you need let us know," according to two eyewitnesses. The federal team was surprised by the president's invitation and asked for an immediate favor: to see the 6-foot-by-10-foot storage locker where his clothes, shoes, documents and mementos from his presidency were stored at the compound.

Given Trump's instruction, the president's lawyers complied and allowed the search by the FBI before the entourage left cordially. Five days later, DOJ officials sent a letter to Trump's lawyers asking them to secure the storage locker with more than the

lock they had seen. The Secret Service installed a more robust security lock to comply.

Around the same time, the Trump Organization, which owns Mar-a-Lago, received a request for surveillance video footage covering the locker and volunteered the footage to federal authorities, sources disclosed.

It was always clear this was bullshit, not least because CFR guidelines about storing classified documents are really strict. But journalists repeated it credulously for several weeks, until the affidavit was unsealed, showing that in Jay Bratt's request that Trump secure the storage room, he never mentioned a lock.

On June 8, 2022, DOJ COUNSEL sent FPOTUS COUNSEL 1 a letter, which reiterated that the PREMISES are not authorized to store classified information and requested the preservation of the STORAGE ROOM and boxes that had been moved from the White House to the PREMISES. Specifically, the letter stated in relevant part:

As I previously indicated to you, Mar-a-Lago does not include a secure location authorized for the storage of classified information. As such, it appears that since the time classified documents (the ones recently provided and any and all others) were removed from the secure facilities at the White House and moved to Mar-a-Lago on or around January 20, 2021, they have not been handled in an appropriate manner or stored in an appropriate location. Accordingly, we ask that the room at Mar-a-Lago where the documents had been stored be secured and that all of the boxes that were moved from the White

House to Mar-a-Lago (along with any other items in that room) be preserved in that room in their current condition until further notice.

On June 9, 2022, FPOTUS COUNSEL 1 sent an email to DOJ COUNSEL, stating, "I write to acknowledge receipt of this letter."

But buried in this Devlin Barrett story about how prosecutors warned Carlos De Oliveira's attorney, John Irving, that they believed he was lying way back in April is the BREAKING NEWS that after De Oliveira put a new lock on the door – the thing that Trump bragged about for a month, and a tale that Barrett repeats here – he gave away the key.

Or at least that's the excuse he gave to the FBI when they showed up in August to seize the documents inside and he refused to let them into the storage closet.

Agents had another concern: The lock on the door to the storage room was flimsy. The officials urged staff to put a better lock on the door, which De Oliveira did – using a hasp and a padlock to keep it secure, the people said. If there were still highly sensitive classified documents in the room, such a lock was far from sufficient, but it was better than nothing.

[snip]

When FBI agents arrived at Mar-a-Lago the morning of Aug. 8 with a court-issued search warrant, De Oliveira was one of the first people they turned to. They asked him to unlock a storage room where boxes of documents were kept, people familiar with what happened said. **De Oliveira said he wasn't sure where the key was, because he'd given it to**

either the Secret Service agents guarding the former president or staffers for Trump's post-presidency office, the people said.

Frustrated, the agents simply cut the lock on the gold-colored door. [snip]

Imagine how outraged investigators must have been last August when Trump was publicly bragging about the new lock when the currently operative story at the time – one that may still be operative – is that within weeks, Oliveira had given away the key.

To whom, he did not know.

I've got a lot of guesses about who may really have gotten that key.

But the stunning news from this story is that Trump put a new lock on the storage facility and promptly gave away the key.