

# WILBUR ROSS LETS HIS INNER TRUMPIAN GEORGE WALLACE BIGOT FREAK FLAG FLY

There is one thing consistent with the Trump Administration and America's past. Rank bigotry propagated by old white men in power.

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## STORMY WEATHER AHEAD

As you  
may  
have  
heard,  
there  
is an  
interv  
iew on  
CBS 60  
Minute



s tonight of former Trump paramour Stormy Daniels. In the last 48 hours, there have been a slew of Stormy biographies. From the New York Times, the Washington Post, and CNN. All worth a check if you are interested, but all paint a similar picture.

It is a picture of a modern empowered and self assured woman. She is no slouch, she is bright and ready. It was been all too casual for the press to early on slough her off and characterize her as a "porn star" like that automatically makes some throw away bimbo. Clearly, nothing is further from the case.

The picture that emerges on closer inspection is far different. She is an informed and savvy

woman in full. She is a mother and businesswoman, and one who understands and worries about the conflicts between the two. Karen McDougal, in her Thursday interview on CNN came off as genuine and honest, even if somewhat lost in why she is here with all of the public now. Daniels has none of that. And her story is, within the salacious category Trump brings us to consider, far more compelling.

The stories of Daniels and McDougall were literally concurrent, starting with a golf tournament tete a tete at the Tahoe Pro Am. But McDougall presents as a jilted woman once in love, Daniels is flat out a smarter woman who knew then, and knows now, what was up, then and now, and just isn't going to stand for the rank hypocrisy and lying by Trump and his goons like Michael Cohen.

The rushed out bios linked above largely track each other, but to my eye, the New York Times is the best:

Those who know her well have registered the moment differently. Ms. Clifford has subsisted amid the seamier elements of a business often rife with exploitation and unruly fare; more than a few of her film titles are unprintable. But for most of her professional life, Ms. Clifford has been a woman in control of her own narrative in a field where that can be uncommon. With an instinct for self-promotion, she evolved from "kindergarten circuit" stripper to star actress and director, and occasional mainstream success, by her late 20s. Why would a piece of paper and an executive legal team set her back?

...

"She was a very serious businesswoman and a filmmaker and had taken the reins of her career," said Judd Apatow, who directed her cameos in the R-rated comedies "Knocked Up" and "The 40-Year-Old Virgin." "She is not someone to be

underestimated.”

...

She has a daughter, a third husband and an expensive hobby: equestrian shows.

“She blends right in,” said Packy McGaughan, a trainer on the competition circuit.

...

“Just as these misguided arbiters of the mainstream view an adult entertainment star as an anathema to the political process,” she said, when she eventually decided against a bid, “so too do they view the dishwasher, the cashier or the bus driver.”

This woman is real. Please go read at least the NY Times story, if not the others linked. She is everything you think she is, and far, far, more. And she has no fear. Not of her career, and not of Trump. That has to terrify Trump.

Here is the other thing that is different: Stormy Daniels has Michael Avenatti as her lawyer. Never met or talked to Avenatti before, but I have heard of him in cases (and from auto racing things), and from friends, for several years. He is good.

After three years at O’Melveny, he joined Greene Broillet & Wheeler, a Los Angeles boutique litigation firm. While there, Michael spearheaded many high-profile cases, including a \$10 million defamation case against Paris Hilton; a successful idea theft lawsuit involving the reality show The Apprentice and its producer, Mark Burnett, as well as Donald Trump; and a large corporate multi-national embezzlement case involving in excess of \$42,000,000.

In 2007, Michael formed the law firm Eagan Avenatti, LLP (fka Eagan O’Malley & Avenatti, LLP), with offices in Newport Beach, Los Angeles and San Francisco. Since co-founding the firm,

Michael has been responsible for securing a number of large verdicts and settlements as lead counsel, including an April 2017 \$454 Million verdict after a jury trial in Federal Court in Los Angeles in a fraud case against Kimberly-Clark (NYSE: KMB) and Halyard Health (NYSE: HYH) that was featured on 60 Minutes (won every jury question as to every defendant); a \$80.5 million class action settlement against Service Corporation International (NYSE: SCI) in another case featured on 60 Minutes and in the international press (settlement reached in the middle of trial); a \$41 million jury verdict after a nearly five-week trial in New Jersey; a \$39 million settlement in a case involving the alleged theft of trade secrets; and a \$13 million plus verdict after a six week jury trial in Palm Beach, Florida (won every jury question as to every defendant). In 2015, Michael prevailed against the National Football League after a two-week jury trial in Federal District Court in Dallas, Texas after obtaining a court order requiring Jerry Jones to attend trial and be cross-examined.

I had heard of him before, but really first watched Avenatti when he took on the National Football League and Jerry Jones. Because of some sports law friends, some of whom were closer to that story, I paid attention. Avenatti is seriously that good, and he has the extra bonus of knowing how to be a good trial lawyer AND play the PR game, personally, well. There are not many such lawyers, and ones tending to the PR more than the law are routinely panned mercilessly here at this blog. For good reason.

If you don't have a winning strategy with the press, don't talk to the press. Even if you think you do, think twice and thrice before doing so. Or, by my book, just don't do it. But

Avenatti has a really special combination of savvy, and has proven it long before Stormy Daniels.

Nobody knows how it all ends up, and playing the press is a risky game even for those genuinely good at it. But, so far, Avenatti and Stormy have played Trump and the press like a Stradivarius.

And, if as Trump is reportedly contemplating, Trump decides to get personally aggressive, watch out. He may well have met his match with Ms. Daniels and Michael Avenatti. By my guess, they are almost making bank Trump will try that ill advised tact. Let it be. Please, let it be.

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## DOWD AND OUT

John  
Dowd  
is not  
just a  
bull  
in a  
china  
shop,  
he is  
a



raging

bull in a china shop. He blows things up. Still, he is a longtime, and big time, defense lawyer. He can be more than abrasive, but, unlike Jay Sekulow, he is a serious lawyer. And now he is gone.

From the New York Times:

The president's lead lawyer for the special counsel investigation, John Dowd, resigned on Thursday, according to two people briefed on the matter, days after the president called for an end to the inquiry.

Mr. Dowd, who took over the president's legal team last summer, had considered leaving several times in recent months and ultimately concluded that Mr. Trump was increasingly ignoring his advice, one of the people said. Under Mr. Dowd's leadership, Mr. Trump's lawyers had advised him to cooperate with the special counsel, Robert S. Mueller III, who is investigating Russia's election interference and possible ties to Trump associates as well as whether the president obstructed the inquiry.

Mr. Dowd's departure comes as the president has made clear he is seeking a more aggressive response to Mr. Mueller's investigation. The president has in recent days begun publicly assailing Mr. Mueller, a shift in tone that appears to be born of Mr. Trump's concern that the investigation is bearing down on him more directly. He has also privately insisted he should sit for an interview with the special counsel's office, even though Mr. Dowd believed it was a bad idea.

Mr. Trump now is veering toward the combative approach supported by his longtime personal lawyer, Marc E. Kasowitz, who stepped back last summer but was still in contact with the president occasionally over the past several months.

There are bulls in china shops, like Dowd, and then there is bullshit in the house. In this case, the White House. That would be Donald J. Trump.

When a client is so full of shit and uncontrollable that even John Dowd has had enough and gives up.....then what?

What if that client is the President of the United States? Then what? And who is the real

raging bull in the china shop? I always had a question as to how much Dowd was Trump's "lead lawyer". From the start.

But, if not Dowd, then who? Joe DiGenova?? Sekulow? Ty Cobb that was supposed to walk even before Dowd? Who do they got? And, you know, this question matters. Even "dream teams" need leaders. Johnnie Cochran could do that. Several others could too. But who does Trump have?

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## **THREE THINGS: FLYING MOOCHIN' MNUCHIN AIR**

This time these three things are related and I can't write an individual post on each one because my blood pressure won't handle it, thanks to Moochin' Mnuchin. This is an open thread.

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## **SHORTING THE US-DPRK MEETING [UPDATED]**

Call me cynical, but I think this anticipated US-North Korea meeting is just another means for making somebody cash.

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## **OPEN THREAD: ALL IN THE FAMILIES?**

This is an open thread dedicated to this morning's news – Team Mueller's charged Alex van

der Zwaan with false statements, a 17th name pops up, and look, a father-in-law in the mix, too!

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## **NOTHING HAPPENS IN A VACUUM: DIPLOMATIC SCUFFLES AND ACADEMIC SPEECHES IN MOSCOW**

A 2016 scuffle in Moscow between an American diplomat and a FSB guard didn't occur in complete isolation. Rather, an academic speech by an erstwhile foreign policy adviser to the Trump campaign didn't happen completely independent of other political events in Russia.

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## **RUIN A MOVIE WITH A NAME: GET CARTER (PAGE)**

Erstwhile Trump campaign adviser Carter Page comes off looking sketchier than ever after TIME reported last evening that Page characterized himself as an informal adviser to the Kremlin back in 2013. Let's take a step or two back and take a look at the bigger picture surrounding Page.

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# **ANOTHER KIND OF RECOVERY: POST-MARIA PUERTO RICO AND HEALTH CARE CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE**

Hope you don't need an IV soon. I'll be thinking of people who do while Trump bloviates tonight about the state of our disunion.

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## **A BIT ABOUT DOSSIERS: YOU'VE BEEN EATING THIS FUD FOR YEARS**

Some thoughts about dossiers from a former dossier writer.