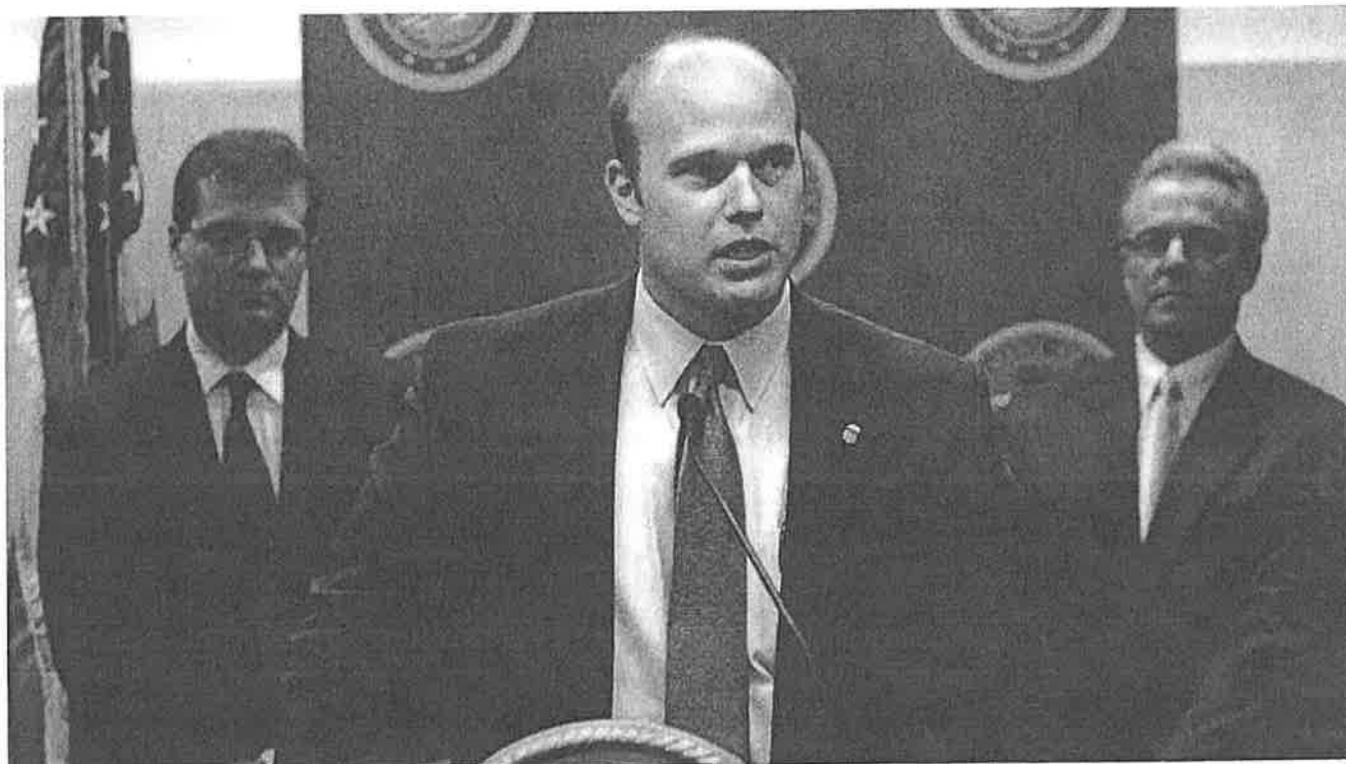


"LYNCH MOB"

All the times Robert Mueller's new boss railed against the Russia probe

By Max de Haldevang & Adam Pasick • November 7, 2018



AP PHOTO/CHARLIE NEIBERGALL

Matthew Whitaker has a long history of criticizing the Mueller probe into Trump-Russia

Donald Trump wasted no time ousting attorney general Jeff Sessions, a longtime thorn in his side, after the midterm elections. His replacement, Matthew Whitaker has said he has “a lot of respect” for special counsel Robert Mueller, but he also has a long history of criticizing Mueller’s investigation into the Trump campaign’s ties to Russia.

Here is a collection of Whitaker’s long list of writings, tweets, and statements criticizing the probe.

Opposing Mueller before he was appointed



QUARTZ



After Trump fired FBI director James Comey, Whitaker wrote an May 2017 op-ed in the Hill calling the move “the right decision.” He took a firm stance against appointing a special counsel to investigate Trump’s campaign ties to Russia, writing, “Hollow calls for independent prosecutors are just craven attempts to score cheap political points and serve the public in no measurable way.”

No obstruction of justice case

In a June 2017 radio interview discussing former FBI director James Comey’s Congressional testimony on his firing by Trump, Whitaker said “there is no criminal obstruction of justice charge to be had here [against Trump].” Obstruction of justice is one of the charges Mueller is believed to be pursuing.

Defunding Mueller’s investigation

Whitaker, former chief of staff to Sessions, sketched out a scenario in which Sessions was fired and his replacement doesn’t fire Mueller but undercuts the investigation, speaking on CNN in July 2017.

“I could see a scenario where Jeff Sessions is replaced, it would [be a] recess appointment and that attorney general doesn’t fire Bob Mueller but he just reduces his budget to so low that his investigations grinds to almost a halt.”

Becoming a “witch hunt”

In an Aug. 2017 CNN op-ed, Whitaker wrote that Mueller’s investigation was at risk of becoming a “witch hunt.” It would be “dangerously close to crossing” a “red line” if he looked into Trump’s finances, he wrote. In contrast to many other experts, Whitaker argued that Mueller does not have “broad, far-reaching powers” in the probe.

“You always take the meeting”

Whitaker has also reportedly defended Donald Trump Jr.’s decision to meet a Russian lawyer offering dirt on Hillary Clinton saying on CNN that “You would always take the meeting”



The “lynch mob” tweet

<https://twitter.com/MattWhitaker46/status/894363989962100736>

A month later, Whitaker joined the Department of Justice as Sessions' chief of staff.



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