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U.S. Sen. Johnson: Testifies before government weaponization select subcommittee, says “corrupt individuals within federal agencies are not acting alone”

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WASHINGTON – On Thursday, U.S. Sen. Ron Johnson (R-Wis.) testified before Chairman Jim Jordan (R-Ohio) and the Select Subcommittee on the Weaponization of the Federal Government.

Sen. Johnson’s testimony detailed instances of government corruption and abuse and described how actors within federal agencies coordinate with the media and other entities to promote leftwing ideology and undermine their political opponents.

Sen. Johnson testified, “Let me be clear. Throughout my testimony, I am not talking about the men and women in government who conduct themselves with integrity and patriotism. But, at the outset, it is important to recognize corrupt individuals within federal agencies are not acting alone. They operate as vital partners of the leftwing political movement that includes most members of the mainstream media, big tech social media giants, global institutions and foundations, Democrat Party operatives, and elected officials. As the Twitter files reveal, these actors work in concert to defeat their political opponents and promote leftwing ideology and government control over our lives.”

Watch Sen. Johnson’s full testimony here.

The full text of Sen. Johnson's opening testimony as prepared can be found here and as delivered can be found below.

"Chairman Jordan, Ranking Member Plaskett, Members of the Select Committee. Thank you for inviting me testify about my personal knowledge of, and experience with, federal agencies being weaponized against U.S. citizens. Senator Grassley has just described the most egregious examples undertaken by multiple actors and agencies to undermine and sabotage our joint investigations.

"But to begin, let me be clear. Throughout my testimony, I am not talking about the men and women in government who conduct themselves with integrity and patriotism. But, at the outset, it is important to recognize corrupt individuals within federal agencies are not acting alone. They operate as vital partners of the leftwing political movement that includes most members of the mainstream media, big tech social media giants, global institutions and foundations, Democrat Party operatives, and elected officials. As the Twitter files reveal, these actors work in concert to defeat their political opponents and promote leftwing ideology and government control over our lives.

"My eyes began opening to this reality with the disclosure of how the Obama administration weaponized the IRS to harass Tea Party groups by denying them tax-exempt status. My personal knowledge and experience with agency corruption began in 2015 when I became Chairman of the Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

"My first investigation ultimately revealed the extensive editing of then-FBI Director James Comey's July 5, 2016 statement that exonerated Secretary Clinton regarding her use of a private email server for official business. The edits were clearly made to downplay the seriousness of her actions. It's important to note those partisan edits were made by the same cast of characters in the FBI that would initiate and drive the corrupt Trump-Russia collusion investigation.

"During our investigation of the FBI's involvement in the Russian collusion hoax, Senator Grassley and I uncovered and made public highly partisan text messages between FBI employees Peter Strzok and Lisa Page. Strzok's December 15, 2016 text, 'Think our sisters have begun leaking like mad. Scorned, worried, and political, they're kicking into overdrive' has never been given the attention it deserves. In a 2022 interview with Jeff Gerth, Strzok said he now believes 'that it is more likely [the leaks] came not from the CIA but from senior levels of the US government or

Congress.'

"Who might those leakers be? Why aren't reporters who received the leaks outraged at being fed false information, and why haven't they blown the whistle on the leakers? Why didn't the mainstream media robustly investigate how they were all duped? The answer is: they weren't duped, they are complicit in creating and fostering the political turmoil our country has been experiencing over the last six years. Those leaks were a key ingredient in the most destructive political dirty trick in U.S. history: the creation and promotion of the false Russia-Trump collusion narrative. To be most effective, however, that narrative relied on coordination between government actors and the media, and the left had allies in the FBI.

"Unable to verify the Steele dossier, the FBI offered Christopher Steele $1 million to provide verification. By December 2016, the FBI knew they had investigated Steele's primary subsource as a Russian spy. In the main body of the DOJ Inspector General's report on FISA abuse, FBI official Bill Priestap is quoted saying the FBI 'didn't have any indication whatsoever' of Russian influence on the Steele dossier. Our investigation uncovered redacted footnotes to that same document that completely contradicted that statement. Why would Priestap's false statement appear in the report but the truth be hidden in classified footnotes? Fourteen months later, in February 2018, the FBI still briefed the Senate Intelligence Committee that the dossier had validity.

"When the Mueller report found no evidence of collusion, the left engineered an impeachment of President Trump. The cooperation between the House Intelligence Committee and the impeachment whistleblower remains murky. Then-Chairman Adam Schiff originally denied his committee had contact with the whistleblower prior to the filing of the complaint — a claim Schiff later attempted to walk back. The genesis of the impeachment saga has yet to be fully investigated. It needs to be.

"Prior to the impeachment proceedings, Hunter Biden's obvious conflicts of interest in Ukraine became public and Senator Grassley and I began investigating. We didn't target Joe and Hunter Biden, their actions demanded it.

"On December 9, 2019, the FBI issued a grand jury subpoena and took possession of Hunter Biden's laptop from John Paul Mac Isaac, a computer shop owner in Wilmington, Delaware. As the FBI left his shop with the laptop, Mr. Mac Isaac recalled one agent saying, 'It is our experience that nothing ever happens to people

that don't talk about these things.' That statement was the opening salvo in a coordinated effort over the next ten months to sabotage any public revelation of Hunter Biden's laptop or any wrongdoing connected to the Bidens.

"Senator Grassley has provided a number of examples of that sabotage, and we will release a report that goes into far greater detail than we had time for today. When available, I hope everyone will read it.

"Perhaps the most egregious and effective act of sabotage against the truth, was the public letter signed by 51 former intelligence officials that claimed the laptop had 'all the classic earmarks of a Russian information operation.' That letter itself was an information operation that interfered with and impacted the 2020 presidential election to a far greater extent than anything Russia ever could have hoped to achieve. Each of those intelligence officials needs to be interviewed to determine how that letter was masterminded.

"While we all condemned the violence on January 6th – we all condemned the violence on January 6th – the fervor in which Biden's Department of Justice has pursued those protestors and rioters stands in stark contrast to their lack of interest in the summer of 2020 rioters. Serious questions regarding instances of unequal application of justice and violations of January 6th defendants' due process rights remain unanswered. SWAT team arrests and treatment of prisoners are legitimate concerns. And neither the Senate nor House investigations adequately explained why the Capitol was so woefully unprepared or how many federal agents and informants were in the crowd.

"COVID has exposed the awesome power that can be misused by government officials. The loss of basic freedoms has been nothing less than breathtaking. Our response to the pandemic has been a miserable failure, a miserable failure: over one million lives lost, the human toll of the economic devastation caused by shutdowns that did not work, the loss of learning and other psychological harms to our children. Federal health officials denied patients early treatment and to this day refuse to acknowledge the extent of significant injuries caused by the COVID vaccines.

"Emails between Anthony Fauci and Francis Collins reveal how they intended to use their awesome government authority to accomplish a 'devastating published take down' of scientists who offered a different approach to handling the pandemic. Have emails also revealed Fauci's attempt to hide his agency's role in funding

dangerous research that might have led to the creation of the deadly coronavirus? We don't know, because those agencies won't provide the unredacted documents.

"Federal health agencies have not been honest or transparent. I have written over 50 oversight letters and the vast majority of the questions I have asked have either received an inadequate response or no response at all. I've requested information the public has a right to know.

"Doctors who have had the courage and compassion to treat COVID patients using their off-label prescription rights have been vilified, censored, and had their careers destroyed. Other health professionals have noticed, toed the line, and remained silent. Parents, who out of concern for their children, questioned school boards and administrators have been labeled potential domestic terrorists and must now fear scrutiny from the federal law enforcement.

"With the release of the Twitter files and the Missouri and Louisiana lawsuit against the Biden administration, we are getting a clearer picture of how active government officials were in suppressing free speech and controlling the narrative. It is also becoming obvious that the World Health Organization has been captured by the Chinese government, that global institutions in general have been captured by the left, and that some charitable foundations are exerting far more power over public policy than should be allowed.

"Chairman Jordan and members of the committee, you have important work before you. Although you have been generous in granting me ten minutes to offer my testimony, I have barely scratched the surface in describing the complexity, power, and destructive nature of the forces that we face.

"Our founders fully understood that government was necessary to avoid anarchy, but they also knew that governmental power was something to fear. That's why they devised a set of checks and balances to limit government's power and influence over our lives. Ideally, a free press would hold all government officials equally accountable, but with today's media mostly biased to the left, congressional oversight is needed now more than ever. And because the administration is not cooperative and transparent, Congress needs whistleblowers from agencies throughout the federal government. I urge men and women with integrity to come forward and reveal the truth.

"Senator Grassley and I will do everything we can to encourage bipartisan oversight

in the Senate and stand ready to assist your efforts in any way we can. Thank you."