

1 Meet the Press - May 26, 2019

2 CHUCK TODD:

3 I want to ask you about the decision to give the attorney general this unilateral authority to declassify
4 intelligence. The order says the attorney general should consult with relevant agency heads but not
5 that he has to. Why did the president not force the attorney general to consult with the, with the DNI
6 and the head of the CIA? Here he's giving him unilateral authority not to do it. Only saying he should
7 do it but he doesn't have to. Why?

8 SARAH SANDERS:

9 The president has total confidence in the attorney general and his ability --

10 CHUCK TODD:

11 But not the intelligence community?

12 SARAH SANDERS:

13 -- to make those decisions. We expect -- certainly. That's why we expect that the attorney general
14 will consult with them on matters that he needs that guidance and advice from them. Certainly they
15 work in lock step on a number of things. I don't see this to be any different. The bottom line here is
16 there was a lot of corruption at the FBI and the DOJ. We see constantly more and more things that
17 have come out of that. And the president wants transparency and he's given the attorney general the
18 ability to put that transparency in place, make those decisions. And we're not like at all concerned
19 that the attorney general is not going to do everything that is necessary to make sure we're protecting
20 important intelligence that is vital to our national security.

21 CHUCK TODD:

22 I'm trying to understand what outcome the president expects. He's, he tweeted the following: "My
23 campaign for president was conclusively spied on. Nothing like this has ever happened in American
24 politics. A really bad situation. Treason means long jail sentences and this was treason." Why did
25 the president ask the attorney general to do an investigation if he's already come to a conclusion,
26 already decided what the penalty should be? And I think has already determined what the jail
27 sentences should be? Isn't this the president already playing judge and jury and putting his thumb on
28 the scale here for whatever investigation he claims he wants Mr. Barr to do?

29 SARAH SANDERS:

30 That's pretty rich coming from the media who relentlessly covered and accused the president for over
31 two years of being part of this massive election interference, something that never took place. The
32 idea that anybody now says that the president doesn't have the right and not only that Americans
33 deserve the truth to push back and find out where all of this started is absurd. Literally for day after
34 day after day the media and Democrats in Congress called the president a traitor to his own country
35 and said that he cheated to become president. I mean the idea of that is absolutely outrageous that
36 he had to endure that for two years. And now he wants to know where and why it started. And all
37 of a sudden that's a big deal? That is insane.

38 CHUCK TODD:

39 Sarah, I didn't ask about him --

40 SARAH SANDERS:

41 I think the president is doing exactly what --

42 CHUCK TODD:

43 No, no, no, no, Sarah I did not ask --

44 SARAH SANDERS:

45 -- he should be. And I think America is glad that --

46 CHUCK TODD:

47 Sarah --

48 SARAH SANDERS:

49 -- he's asking for that transparency.

50 CHUCK TODD:

51 I didn't ask whether he should ask those questions. He's not asking questions anymore. He's already
52 made a judgment. That is much different. He's already -- will he accept a result of the attorney
53 general saying, you know what, "Everything was done legally and on the up and up, Mr. President."
54 Will he accept that result from Bill Barr?

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55 SARAH SANDERS:

56 We already know that there was an outrageous amount of corruption that took place at the FBI. They
57 leaked information. They lied. They were specifically working trying to take down the president,
58 trying to hurt the president. We'll leave the, the final call up to the attorney general and he'll get to
59 the bottom of it. But we think Americans deserve the truth.

60 CHUCK TODD:

61 So he doesn't --

62 SARAH SANDERS:

63 The president's asked for that. And we should expect nothing less.

64 CHUCK TODD:

65 So the president is not going to accept exoneration if that's what Bill Barr finds?

66 SARAH SANDERS:

67 Look, I'm not going to get ahead of what the final conclusion is. But we already know that there was
68 a high level of corruption that was taking place. We've seen that in the --

69 CHUCK TODD:

70 There, there --

71 SARAH SANDERS:

72 -- IG investigation --

73 CHUCK TODD:

74 -- which is --

75 SARAH SANDERS:

76 -- that has already happened.

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77 CHUCK TODD:

78 -- not out yet.

79 SARAH SANDERS:

80 There's a lot more there that we still need to know. And we're going to let the attorney general do his
81 job.

82 CHUCK TODD:

83 Well it sounds like you're not -- that's my point. It doesn't sound like you want him to do his job. It
84 sounds like you, the president has already determined the outcome.

85 SARAH SANDERS:

86 Chuck, that's the reason that he's granted the attorney general the authority to declassify that
87 information, to look at all the documents necessary is so that we can get to the very bottom of what
88 happened. Once again, we already know about some wrongdoing. The president's not wrong in that.
89 But he wants to know everything that happened and how far and how wide it went.

90 CHUCK TODD:

91 Does he expect --

92 SARAH SANDERS:

93 We know that there was corruption. Let's see --

94 CHUCK TODD:

95 -- does he expect criminal charges? Does he expect -- he's accused James Comey of treason. Does
96 he expect Jim Comey to be arrested?

97 SARAH SANDERS:

98 Again, we're going to let the attorney general make that determination as he gets to the conclusion
99 of this investigation.

100 CHUCK TODD:

101 So the president, he's not going to accept --

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102 SARAH SANDERS:

103 But we certainly expect the people that were responsible --

104 CHUCK TODD:

105 He's, he's --

106 SARAH SANDERS:

107 -- and that were part of this unprecedented obstruction and corruption at the FBI, those people should
108 certainly be held responsible and be held accountable and the president expects that to take place.

109 CHUCK TODD:

110 So he expects an outcome that he wants, not an outcome that the facts lead to.

111 SARAH SANDERS:

112 Chuck, I think you're trying to muddy the waters too much here. We already know, once again --

113 CHUCK TODD:

114 I think we --

115 SARAH SANDERS:

116 -- that there was wrongdoing.

117 CHUCK TODD:

118 I think what's rich is who's muddying waters.

119 SARAH SANDERS:

120 Now we want to know how much there was. I don't think it's -- well, I don't think it's crazy to want
121 to know how far and how wide the corruption at the FBI was. And that's what the president has asked
122 the attorney general to find.

123 CHUCK TODD:

124 Okay.

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125 SARAH SANDERS:

126 And we'll what happens.

127 CHUCK TODD:

128 Sarah Sanders, White House press secretary in Tokyo for us today. Thanks for coming on and
129 sharing your views. I appreciate it.

130 SARAH SANDERS:

131 You bet. Thanks, Chuck