

Report: Justice Department Inspector General Will 'Investigate the Investigation'

In the months leading up to the 2016 presidential election, while investigating former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton's use of a private email server, congressional Republicans were incensed when FBI Director James Comey declared there was no need for a criminal indictment.

"Investigate the investigation" became part of their mantra, and it was adopted by the Trump presidential campaign as part of its argument that Washington, D.C., was a swamp in need of draining. The Department of Justice Office of Inspector General, apparently, was listening, because the Republicans are getting their wish.

Just not the way they probably had hoped. Inspector General Michael Horowitz issued the following statement Thursday:

In response to requests from numerous chairmen and ranking members of congressional oversight committees, various organizations and members of the public, the Office of the Inspector General will initiate a review of allegations regarding certain actions by the Department of Justice and the Federal Bureau of Investigation in advance of the 2016 election.

Cognizant of the scope of the OIG's jurisdiction under Section 8E of the Inspector General Act, the review will examine the following issues:

- Allegations that Department or FBI policies or procedures were not followed in connection with,

or in actions leading up to or related to, the FBI Director's public announcement on July 5, 2016, and the Director's letters to Congress on October 28 and November 6, 201, and that certain underlying investigative decisions were based on improper considerations;

- Allegations the FBI Deputy Director should have been recused from participating in certain investigative matters;
- Allegations that the Department's assistant attorney general for legislative affairs improperly disclosed non-public information to the Clinton campaign and/or should have been recused from participating in certain matters;
- Allegations that Department and FBI employees improperly disclosed non-public information; and
- Allegations that decisions regarding the timing of the FBI's release of certain Freedom of Information Act documents on Oct. 30 and Nov. 1, 2016, and the use of a Twitter account to publicize same, were influenced by improper considerations.

The review will not substitute the OIG's judgment for the judgments made by the FBI or the Department regarding the substantive merits of investigative or prosecutive decisions.

Finally, if circumstances warrant, the OIG will consider including other issues that may arise during the course of the review.

Of course, the White House says it had nothing to do with Horowitz's decision. And that may be true, but Horowitz served as deputy assistant attorney general and then as chief of staff to Attorney General Janet Reno in President Bill Clinton's administration. {eoa}