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# Comey says Trump tried to derail Russia investigation

FORMER FBI DIRECTOR CALLS HIS FIRING A PRETENSE BASED ON 'LIES, PLAIN AND SIMPLE'



J. SCOTT APPLEWHITE / THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Former FBI Director James Comey walks through a corridor on Capitol Hill on the way to a secure room to continue his testimony to the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence in Washington, D.C., on Thursday.

By MATT APUZZO AND EMMARIE HUETTEMAN  
The New York Times

WASHINGTON — Former FBI Director James Comey said Thursday at a Senate hearing that he believed President Donald Trump had tried to derail an investigation into his national-security adviser, and he accused the president of lying and defaming him and the FBI.

Comey offered a plain-spoken assessment of a president whose conversations unnerved him from the day they met, weeks before Trump took office.

The Comey who emerged during the hearing was by turns humble, folksy and matter-of-fact, but at the same time, he proved that underneath was a shrewd

politician not afraid to play the Washington game by leaking information on his own.

In testimony to the Senate intelligence Committee, Comey provided an unflattering back story to his abrupt dismissal and raised the question of whether Trump had tried to obstruct justice. Answering that question will fall to the Justice Department special counsel, Robert S. Mueller III.

Comey said he had given all his memos about interactions with the president to Mueller, who he believed would look into the possibility of obstruction. It was the first public suggestion that prosecutors would investigate the president.

See > COMEY, A7

**TV:** Discussion of the Comey hearing played out with partisan spin as networks spent hours on coverage > A5

**PANEL:** Sen. John McCain caused confusion at the hearing with a line of questioning that appeared to conflate two FBI investigations > A6

# Testimony sharpens focus on questions of obstruction

By CHARLIE SAVAGE  
The New York Times

WASHINGTON — If one believes James Comey's account of his encounters with President Donald Trump, it could present a prosecutable case of obstruction of justice, several former prosecutors said Thursday.

They also cautioned that little is normal about this situation. The Justice Department has long argued that the Constitution does not permit prosecuting a sitting president. Even if

Trump left office first — through impeachment or simply by losing re-election in 2020 — there is no guiding precedent in which any former president has been indicted on a charge of ordering a criminal investigation closed for improper reasons.



President Donald Trump

“Usually as a lawyer you look at the precedent and it makes it easy, but it hasn't come up before,” said Samuel W. Buell, a former federal prosecutor who led the Enron Task Force. See > OBSTRUCTION, A6

# Nordstrom family explores company buyout

ALREADY OWNS 31%

Switch would give family more latitude for business moves

By JANET I. TU  
Seattle Times business reporter

In the midst of a tough retail environment that has seen department stores closing locations and clothing companies filing for bankruptcy, members of the Nordstrom family said Thursday they're considering taking the Seattle-based fashion retailer private.

The move comes at a time when retailers generally are struggling to cope with consumers' growing penchant for shopping online as well as general shifts in what they spend their money on. Nordstrom has done better than most retailers in adapting, but sales at its big full-line stores have suffered.

The Nordstrom family members — company Co-Presidents Blake Nordstrom, Peter Nordstrom and Erik Nordstrom; President of Stores James Nordstrom; Chairman Emeritus Bruce Nordstrom; and Anne Gittinger, granddaughter of Nordstrom co-founder John Nordstrom — have not made any proposal yet, the company said.

The group owns 51.8 million shares, representing about 31.2 percent of the company's outstanding stock, it said in a regulatory filing Thursday.

The company, which was founded as a shoe store in 1901 and went public in 1978, currently has a market capitalization — the value of all shares — of about \$7.5 billion at the end of Thursday's trading.

That means that to buy up the 69 percent of shares that they don't own, the family group and any allies would likely need more than \$5 billion — and that's without any

See > NORDSTROM, A10

## ON THE WEB

Jon Talton discusses Nordstrom's possible move. [seattletimes.com/business](http://seattletimes.com/business)



# Cure for distracted driving? Software locks phone while behind the wheel

By MIKE LINDBLOM  
Seattle Times transportation reporter

In the near future, your phone might be smart enough to know whether you are driv-

ing a car, or going along for the ride.

Anti-distraction software by a tech startup called Cellepathy would automatically go into a restrictive “driver mode” when

a phone is within a moving vehicle. Online features such as texts, video, games and social media would be blocked, as well as some or all nonemergency telephone calls.

Your cellphone is like an airplane's black box. It contains a compass, a gyroscope, an accelerometer and GPS tracking.

Using those features and the software, vehicle passengers could perform a verification task, lasting seven seconds or less, to unlock all the apps in “passenger mode.” For instance, they would hold a

phone level and type in a series of numbers.

Cellepathy co-founder Dan See > SOFTWARE, A11

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