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## Will the State Department Become a Subsidiary of the CIA?



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I wonder how Rex Tillerson feels about being the first high-level federal official to be fired publically and online, in one brutal tweet. I'm sure he expected the hammer to come down on him, but not like that. And I wonder if he will come forward to describe what led up to it. Unlikely, as he's an extremely wealthy and still influential corporate player who would have little to gain from telling all. Still, some intrepid journalist should take Rex to lunch and encourage him to cry in his beer.

The events unfurled in typical chaotic Trumpian fashion. [According](#) to The Atlantic,

The White House said Tuesday that Tillerson was informed last Friday that he would be replaced as secretary of state. But the statement released Tuesday by Steve Goldstein, the undersecretary of state for public diplomacy, suggested Tillerson did not see it coming until he saw the president's tweet Tuesday morning that he would be replaced by Mike Pompeo, the CIA director. Goldstein himself has been fired since making the statement. Chief of Staff John Kelly claimed to have informed Tillerson three days previously that a tweet would be forthcoming, and let it hang. That's how long it took for the triumvirate behind the throne (Kelly, DoD Secretary James Mattis, and National Security Advisor H.R. McMaster) to line up a B team. These military officers have become Trump's minders, nudging him toward decisions that implement deep state war plans. John Grant writes in [CounterPunch](#):

The ex-Nixon dirty trickster Roger Stone, who Kelly blocked from Trump access, is cited in Michael Wolff's *Fire and Fury: Inside the Trump White House* as telling people, "Mattis, McMaster and Kelly had agreed that no military action would ever be taken unless the three were in accord — and that at least one of them would always remain in Washington if the others were away."

And so, here we have a junta minding the store whose collective wisdom had determined that State under Tillerson wasn't accommodating US bellicosity as enthusiastically as it should. Their solution? Elevate CIA Chief Mike Pompeo to replace Tillerson. Pompeo, whom NPR glowingly [described](#) as having "an extraordinary résumé. He graduated at the top of his class at West Point. He served as a tank officer in Europe. He went to Harvard Law School." He's also a bombastic Tea-Party Republican and a national security hawk who takes a hard line no matter what crisis is at hand. I'm sure that résumé will be useful in convincing North Korea to disarm and Putin to back off from Syria. At least, that seems to be the troika's current calculus. Trump seems amenable to their choice: "With Mike, we've had a very good chemistry from the beginning," he told reporters. And Pompeo says he's equally chill with the Tweeter-in-Chief: "We have a half-hour, 40 minutes every day. He asks lots of hard questions as any good intelligence consumer would. He's very engaged."

Before that hammer hit Tillerson, they had already cleared the way to replace Pompeo with seasoned spook Gina Haspel, who proved her loyalty to the Company by destroying evidence of systematic torture. "She ran the 'black site' prison in Thailand where al-Qaida suspect Abu Zabaydah was waterboarded 83 times," NPR [reported](#) last winter. "Those sessions were videotaped but the tapes were destroyed in 2005, two years after a member

of Congress called on the CIA to preserve such tapes.” Who ordered or at least expedited their destruction? Gina Haspel herself. Running a torture center was a “dirty job,” John Bennett, the chief of the CIA’s clandestine service at the time later told NPR, but Gina bravely stepped up to do it. “... it was not only legal but necessary for the safety of the country. And they did it – Gina did it – because they felt it was their duty.”

Obama apparently felt that way, since he declined to prosecute any CIA officials for engaging in torture. Had he had the guts to go after them, Gina might be wearing a jumpsuit now instead of a business suit. As Dexter Filkins [wrote](#) in the New Yorker last year after Trump named Haspel Deputy Director,

When Obama took office, in 2009, he declared that he would not prosecute anyone involved in the C.I.A.’s interrogation programs, not even senior officers, among whom Haspel was one. At the time, Obama said he wanted to look forward and not back. But the past, as Obama well knows, never goes away. With the prospect of American torture looming again, I wonder if Obama regrets his decision. After all, people like Haspel, quite plausibly, could have gone to prison.

When Edward Snowden heard of her advancement, he tweeted ([March 13, 2018](#))

Interesting: The new CIA Director Haspel, who “tortured some folks,” probably can’t travel to the EU to meet other spy chiefs without facing arrest due to an [@ECCHRBerlin](#) complaint to Germany’s federal prosecutor. Details: <https://t.co/7q4euQKtm7>

Such team spirit clearly deserves a promotion. A round of applause, then, for Gina Haspel, someone who has known no calling besides black ops, winner of the George H. W. Bush Award for excellence in counterterrorism, and the first of her sex to crash through CIA’s bulletproof glass ceiling to the Director’s office. Her résumé implies she must have been born at Langley HQ. There’s no paper trail for her prior to 1985, when she joined the agency.

The one bright spot is that both Pompeo and Haspel will have to testify before Congress votes of on their appointments. John McCain and Ron Wyden are already on record as being opposed to Haspel’s appointment. Intense public pressure may help to drag skeletons of torture victims out of the agency’s closet, but don’t expect it to matter. The deep state is used to getting what it wants and doesn’t let things like due process get in the way.

Now that the Department of State is to be a wholly owned subsidiary of the CIA, America can rest easy. No more mister nice guy. Diplomacy is for wimps. Let’s show all those upstart nations and that upstart commander-in-chief who’s boss.

