

Is Paying Hush Money to Trump's Paramours a Criminal Offense?

By [Stephen Lendman](#)

Global Research, August 23, 2018

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Former US Federal Election Commission chairman Bradley Smith explained "almost anything a candidate does can be interpreted as intended to 'influence an election,' from buying a good watch to make sure he (or she) gets to places on time, to getting a massage so that he (or she) feels fit for the campaign trail, to buying a new suit so that he (or she) looks good on a debate stage."

He added that US election rules and standards are "murky about whether paying hush money to a mistress is a 'campaign expense' or a personal expense." It's certainly highly unlikely to swing an election for one candidate over another.

Long knives wielded by dark forces hostile to Trump are out to remove him from office for the wrong reasons - not the right ones, no legitimate ones ever used against a US president before.

Bill Clinton's illicit sex with Monica Lewinsky, including in the Oval Office's back study bathroom, then lying about his escapade, didn't bring him down.

Numerous US presidents and wannabe ones had extramarital affairs - including Washington, Jefferson, Franklin Roosevelt, Dwight Eisenhower, Jack Kennedy, Lyndon Johnson and Bill Clinton, among others.

Little or nothing was said about their private lives while campaigning or throughout their tenure.

Trump's sex life is his own business, no one else's except his wife's. It's unrelated to affairs of state - only a crime when rape is committed.

On Tuesday, Trump's former lawyer Michael Cohen admitted in court he was directed by DJT to make hush money payments to two of his paramours - believed to be porn star Stormy Daniels and Playboy model Karen McDougal.

Michael Cohen's hush money payments to Stormy Daniels and Karen McDougal, explained

A timeline of Michael Cohen's hush money payments to help Trump.

By Dylan Matthews | [@dylanmatt](#) | dylan@vox.com | Updated Aug 21, 2018, 5:28pm EDT

'Big problems lie ahead for Mr. Cohen and Mr. Trump': Stormy Daniels' lawyer says TWO MORE women claim to be the president's former lovers with hush-money agreements

- Michael Avenatti claims at least two women have come forward with stories similar to Stormy Daniels'
- Daniels, a porn actress, accepted \$130,000 from Donald Trump's lawyer to buy her silence about claims she bedded the president in 2006 and 2007
- Her lawyer says he's vetting the other women's claims, which could signal that 'big problems lie ahead' for Trump and attorney Michael Cohen
- Trump has insisted Daniels' claims are rubbish, letting his 'fixer' Cohen handle the payoffs
- If there were three women involved in hush-money deals instead of just one, however, the credibility of his denials could vanish

Daily Mail, May 17, 2018

According to Cohen's lawyer Lanny Davis, if hush money payments by his client on behalf of Trump "were a crime, then why wouldn't they be a crime for" DJT?

Davis formerly served as Clinton White House special counsel, more recently as a lobbyist for notorious despots and predatory corporate clients. He lacks credibility on issues relating to Trump.

In Manhattan District Court, Cohen said payments to the women in question were made "in coordination with and at the direction of a candidate for federal office," adding:

"I participated in this conduct, which on my part took place in Manhattan, for the principal purpose of influencing the (2016 presidential) election."

Formal charges against Cohen haven't been announced. He pleaded guilty to multiple counts of tax evasion and one count of bank fraud, along with admitting he made what he called illegal campaign contributions on behalf of Trump.

He struck a plea deal with federal prosecutors, cooperating with them against DJT to mitigate his sentence, likely saying what they wanted to hear to save his skin from many years in prison.

Reportedly he was warned if he goes on trial and is convicted, he'll be locked up longterm and heavily fined.

He once bragged he'd "take a bullet" for Trump. Now he's aiming the other way, including by secretly recording his conversations with DJT. One apparently discussed hush money

payments to his paramours.

It's unclear if payments criminally violated campaign finance rules. Trump's lawyer Rudy Giuliani said "(t)here is no allegation of any wrongdoing against the president in the government's charges against Mr. Cohen."

Cohen charges have no allegations of wrongdoing against Trump: Giuliani

Reuters Staff

1 MIN READ



(Reuters) - Federal charges against former Trump attorney Michael Cohen contain no allegation of wrongdoing against President Donald Trump and demonstrate a "pattern of lies and dishonesty" by Cohen over a long period, a counsel for the president said on Tuesday.



Screenshot Reuters.com, August 21, 2018

On December 12, Federal District Court Judge William Pauley will formally sentence him – likely to months in prison and a small fine, not years behind bars and a much heavier one.

Giuliani downplayed the notion that he can harm Trump, saying he's not a credible witness against DJT. "The deputy US attorney came out in a press conference and called him a liar."

Reportedly he's willing to cooperate with special counsel Mueller against the president. Whether and to what extent he's able to harm Trump remains to be seen given that no evidence suggests he or his team were complicit with Russia to help him triumph over Hillary or in any other illegal or unethical way.

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<http://www.claritypress.com/LendmanIII.html> Visit his blog site at sjlendman.blogspot.com. Listen to cutting-edge discussions with distinguished guests on the Progressive Radio News Hour on the Progressive Radio Network. It airs three times weekly: live on Sundays at 1PM Central time plus two prerecorded archived programs.

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