

# Political warfare in Washington escalates with subpoena of Trump organization CFO

Alec Andersen  
27 July 2018

The *Wall Street Journal* reported Thursday that longtime Trump Organization executive Allen Weisselberg has been summoned to testify before the New York grand jury that is probing President Donald Trump's former personal lawyer, Michael Cohen.

Weisselberg, who currently serves as the Trump Organization's chief financial officer, was subpoenaed by the US Attorney's Office for the Southern District of New York, although it is not yet known when the subpoena was served. The move appears to be connected to Tuesday's release of a September 2016 phone conversation with Trump that Cohen secretly taped, in which the two discuss a plan to pay for the silence of a *Playboy* model named Karen McDougal, who claimed to have had an affair with Trump in 2006.

The *National Enquirer* purchased the rights to publish McDougal's story for \$150,000 in August 2016 but never published anything on the allegations. On the tape, Trump and Cohen discuss purchasing the rights from the tabloid's publisher, American Media Inc., for about \$150,000.

Cohen can be heard telling Trump that he spoke with Weisselberg about "how to set the whole thing up" and "when it comes time for the financing." However, it appears Cohen never actually followed through on the purchase.

The tape was seized during the April raids of Cohen's office and residences by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). Weisselberg was allegedly responsible for reimbursing Cohen for a separate payment to porn film star Stormy Daniels to buy her silence over an affair she claims to have had with Trump over a decade ago.

The subpoena of Weisselberg appears aimed at gaining information from a source who has long been intimately involved in the finances of the Trump

Organization and the personal finances of Trump himself.

The 71-year-old Weisselberg first served as an accountant for President Trump's father, Fred Trump, in the 1970s and has since risen to become the top accountant in the Trump Organization. When Trump was elected president, his lawyers created an investment trust jointly managed by Weisselberg and the president's two eldest sons, Eric and Donald Jr.

Weisselberg will be compelled to answer questions from prosecutors under oath regarding any aspect of Trump's dubious business and charitable dealings they deem relevant to the investigation of Cohen, unless the accountant exercises his Fifth Amendment right against self-incrimination.

The subpoena of Weisselberg represents an escalation of the factional infighting in Washington, signaling an expansion of the Cohen investigation to involve President Trump's business dealings. Trump previously stated that investigating his business operations represented a "red line," though he did not specify what he intended to do in the event this line was crossed.

The move follows the filing on Wednesday by Republican lawmakers of articles of impeachment against Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein for failing to produce documents relating to the 2016 investigation into Hillary Clinton's use of a private email server during her tenure as secretary of state, and the initiation of the probe into supposed "Russian interference" during the 2016 presidential election.

Thirteen House members of the right-wing Freedom Caucus introduced the articles of impeachment as a maneuver to compel Rosenstein to hand over the documents they sought. While the articles were withdrawn Thursday following consultation with

Republican leaders, the move elicited expressions of outrage from Democratic Party politicians.

Rep. Adam Schiff, a Democrat from California and ranking member of the House Intelligence Committee, wrote in a Wednesday tweet: “These articles of impeachment against Rod Rosenstein were filed in bad faith and show extraordinary lengths to which House Republicans will go to protect Trump.”

Schiff is playing a major role in the campaign by the Democratic Party and the military-intelligence apparatus for Internet censorship under the pretext of combating alleged “Russian meddling” and “fake news.”



To contact the WSWS and the  
Socialist Equality Party visit:

**[wsws.org/contact](https://wsws.org/contact)**