

The Who's Who on Kash Patel's Crazy Enemies List

Trump's pick to run the FBI has already made it known who he plans to persecute if he gets confirmed.

-Timothy Noah/, December 3, 2024

Like Ko-Ko, Lord High Executioner in [The Mikado](#), Kash Patel has a little list and has threatened to come after those people who bear the misfortune of being on it. “We will go out and find the conspirators,” Patel [said last year](#) on Steve Bannon’s podcast, “not just in government, but in the media.... Whether it’s criminally or civilly, we’ll figure that out.”

Who are these conspirators? In his 2022 book, *Government Gangsters*, Patel names them; they number 60. President Donald Trump has nominated for FBI director someone who compiled and publicized his very own enemies list. As a public service, I append Patel’s entire list to the end of this article.

Patel doesn’t literally call his list, which appears as an appendix in *Government Gangsters*, an enemies list; more blandly, he calls it “Members of the Executive Branch Deep State.” But “deep state,” in the context of Trumpworld grievance, is no neutral term. In the book, Patel calls the deep state “a cabal of unelected tyrants” and “the most dangerous threat to our democracy.” Consider also the book’s title, and that in introducing the list Patel apologizes for omitting “other corrupt actors of the first order.” It’s an enemies list.

What kind of person keeps a list of enemies? A person with more than the usual share. Most of us have at most two or three enemies—not so many that you have to write all their names down to keep track. Patel is different, and it is not unreasonable to question his mental stability on these grounds alone. The most famous [enemies list](#), you’ll recall, was President Richard Nixon’s, and not even Nixon’s allies considered it a sign of robust mental health.

You can’t fault Patel for partisanship, though. Counting conservatively, 17 percent of his list consists of people that Trump himself either appointed or nominated during his previous term. That doesn’t speak particularly well of our president-elect. How exactly did Trump happen to elevate at least 10 people to higher office who turned out to be enemies of the state?

Or maybe they’re just enemies of Patel. Patel includes on his list former Trump Attorney General William Barr, and the only serious offense Patel accuses Barr of committing was threatening to resign if Trump installed Patel as his deputy. Characteristically, Patel complains not that Barr turned him down for the job but that Barr “undermined President Trump” by turning him down for the job. In addition to that would-be boss, Patel includes in his enemies list two actual bosses, National Security Council Chairman John Bolton (an “arrogant control freak” who also resisted

hiring Patel but finally did so reluctantly) and Mark Esper (who tried unsuccessfully to fire Patel).

More conventionally, Patel includes on his enemies list the last three Democratic nominees for president: Kamala Harris, President Joe Biden, and Hillary Clinton. Former President Barack Obama, for some reason, is left off the list, even though Obama's chief of staff John Podesta is on it.

The term "deep state" is most often used to disparage the civil service, which Patel more or less wishes to eliminate. In addition to reinstituting [Schedule F](#), which would strip many civil service protections from government workers, Patel favors legislation that allows the president to fire civil servants directly. But almost all the people on Patel's enemies list are political appointees, who by definition come and go with new administrations and are therefore more properly categorized as the Shallow State.

Maybe Patel hesitated to punch down (though such considerations didn't keep him from including 27-year-old Cassidy Hutchinson, the former assistant to Trump chief of staff Mark Meadows who gave [testimony damaging to Trump](#) before the January 6 committee). More likely, Patel is just as clueless as most Trump loyalists about what it is government employees do all day and why they do it (topics dear to my heart that I wrote about [here](#) and [here](#); see also *The Washington Post*'s [recent series](#) profiling individual civil servants).

Patel may be "fiery," as newspaper euphemism [puts it](#), but he's also opportunistic, which probably explains why no member of Congress made his enemies list (excepting Senator-elect Adam Schiff and Representative Eric Swalwell, whom he mentions as numbering among those "other corrupt actors of the first order" he regrets leaving out). When he compiled this list, Patel knew that in a future Trump administration he might score a Cabinet or sub-Cabinet nomination requiring Senate confirmation; that obstacle course now lies before him.

Most cruelly, Patel includes in his enemies list no members of what he calls the "fake news mafia press corps." Perhaps somebody tipped him that journalists prize such designations more highly than the Pulitzer. Here at *The New Republic* it remains a matter of institutional pride that Nixon's [enemies list](#) included [John Osborne](#), then TNR's White House correspondent, plus two future TNR staff writers, Stanley Karnow and Morton Kondracke, and a future TNR owner, [Martin Peretz](#). Patel also neglects Hollywood. Nixon [included](#) on his list Shirley MacLaine, Herb Alpert, Paul Newman, and Carol Channing, who said she considered it the highest compliment of her career.

What's Taylor Swift, chopped liver? Maybe Patel didn't want to load too many of his own names knowing that Trump was sure to have a little list of his own.

But enough commentary. Here's Patel's list:

Michael Atkinson (former inspector general of the intelligence community)

Lloyd Austin (defense secretary under President Joe Biden)

Brian Auten (supervisory intelligence analyst, FBI)

James Baker (*not* the former secretary of state; this James Baker is former general counsel for the FBI and former deputy general counsel at Twitter)

Bill Barr (former attorney general under Trump)

John Bolton (former national security adviser under Trump)

Stephen Boyd (former chief of legislative affairs, FBI)

Joe Biden (president of the United States)

John Brennan (former CIA director under President Barack Obama)

John Carlin (acting deputy attorney general, previously ran DOJ's national security division under Trump)

Eric Ciaramella (former National Security Council staffer, Obama and Trump administrations)

Pat Cippolone (former White House counsel under Trump)

James Clapper (Obama's director of national intelligence)

Hillary Clinton (former secretary of state and presidential candidate)

James Comey (former FBI director)

Elizabeth Dibble (former deputy chief of mission, U.S. Embassy, London)

Mark Esper (former secretary of defense under Trump)

Alyssa Farah (former director of strategic communications under Trump)

Evelyn Farkas (former deputy assistant secretary of defense for Russia, Ukraine, Eurasia under Obama)

Sarah Isgur Flores (former DOJ head of communications under Trump)

Merrick Garland (attorney general under Biden)

Stephanie Grisham (former press secretary under Trump)

Kamala Harris (vice president under Biden; former presidential candidate)

Gina Haspel (CIA director under Trump)

Fiona Hill (former staffer on the National Security Council)

Curtis Heide (FBI agent)

Eric Holder (former attorney general under Obama)*

Robert Hur (special counsel who investigated Biden over mishandling of classified documents)

Cassidy Hutchinson (aide to Trump chief of staff Mark Meadows)

Nina Jankowicz (former executive director, Disinformation Governance Board, under Biden)

Lois Lerner (former IRS director under Obama)

Loretta Lynch (former attorney general under Obama)

Charles Kupperman (former deputy national security adviser under Trump)

Gen. Kenneth Mackenzie, retired (former commander of United States Central Command)

Andrew McCabe (former FBI deputy director under Trump)

Ryan McCarthy (former secretary of the Army under Trump)

Mary McCord (former acting assistant attorney general for national security under Obama)

Denis McDonough (former chief of staff for Obama, secretary of veterans affairs under Biden)

Gen. Mark Milley, retired (former chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff)

Lisa Monaco (deputy attorney general under Biden)

Sally Myer (former supervisory attorney, FBI)

Robert Mueller (former FBI director, special counsel for Russiagate)

Bruce Ohr (former associate deputy attorney general under Obama and Trump)

Nellie Ohr (wife of Bruce Ohr and former CIA employee)

Lisa Page (former legal counsel for Deputy Director Andrew McCabe at FBI under Obama and Trump; exchanged texts about Trump with Peter Strzok)

Pat Philbin (former deputy White House counsel under Trump)
John Podesta (former counselor to Obama; senior adviser to Biden on climate policy)
Samatha Power (former ambassador to the United Nations under Obama, administrator of AID under Biden)
Bill Priestap (former assistant director for counterintelligence, FBI, under Obama)
Susan Rice (former national security adviser under Obama, director of the Domestic Policy Council under Biden)
Rod Rosenstein (former deputy attorney general under Trump)
Peter Strzok (former deputy assistant director for counterintelligence, FBI, under Obama and Trump; exchanged texts about Trump with Lisa Page)
Jake Sullivan (national security adviser under President Joe Biden)
Michael Sussman (former legal representative, Democratic National Committee)
Miles Taylor (former DHS official under Trump; penned *New York Times* op-ed critical of Trump under the byline, “Anonymous”)
Timothy Thibault (former assistant special agent, FBI)
Andrew Weissman (Mueller’s deputy in Russiagate probe)
Alexander Vindman (former National Security Council director for European affairs)
Christopher Wray (FBI director under Trump and Biden; Trump nominated Patel to replace him even though Wray’s term doesn’t expire until August 2027)
Sally Yates (former deputy attorney general under Obama and, briefly, acting attorney general under Trump)

** This article originally misidentified Eric Holder.*