

9-21-2016

JDJ: Mr. Koskinen, I'm going to read from the articles of impeachment. Page 2, it says March 4th, 2014, the Internal Revenue Service magnetically erased 422 backup tapes. Is that statement true?

K: Yes.

JDJ: Were you commissioner at the time that these tapes were erased?

K: Yes.

JDJ: Was there a subpoena in place for the very information that was erased?

K: Yes.

JDJ: More than one subpoena, right? There were two subpoenas.

K: Well, the subpoenas asked for specific information. The assumption is that some of that information was on those tapes.

JDJ: Not the assumption, it was on those tapes. Because it was from the critical time period when Ms. Lerner's hard drive had crashed. Mr. Koskinen, who's Kate Duvall?

K: Kate Duvall was serving as counselor to the commissioner.

JDJ: When we got her bio it said counselor to the commissioner, said she advised on high profile investigations, and she was a member of your senior management team. Is that accurate?

K: Yes.

JDJ: In her deposition, in front of the oversight committee, Ms. Duvall said she learned on Feb. 2, 2014, about Lois Lerner's computer crash and missing emails. So, on Feb 2, the counselor to the commissioner in senior management, working on high profile investigations, learns evidence is missing. And, one month later, March 4, the backup tapes that contained this evidence are destroyed. What a coincidence, Mr. Koskinen. One month after your top counselor learns Ms. Lerner's hard drive is crashed and there are missing emails, the backup tapes, the secondary source – the primary source is gone and a month later, the backup tapes are destroyed. Now here's what's also interesting...those backup tapes were supposed to be destroyed months and months beforehand, weren't they Mr. Koskinen?

K: Yes, and a large number of them had been destroyed in 2012 and 2013.

JDJ: In fact, you testified to this. You said this in testimony in front of the Oversight Committee, you said, "Ms. Lerner's hard drive had crashed in June 2011, as a result, certain emails could not be retrieved. Recovery tapes containing data for that period no longer existed." False statement, they did, but they were supposed to have been erased. This data was retained on tapes for only 6 months. So they were supposed to have been erased actually 2 years prior to the date that they were, but they somehow survived. They somehow survived and then exactly one month, 30 days, after your top counselor, Kate Duvall, in senior management learns that the primary source, the emails, are missing, these backup tapes that have survived for two years suddenly get destroyed. And, we're supposed to believe that was just a coincidence? That just happened by chance?

K: The Inspector General spent a year looking into exactly that subject and came up with the conclusion after interviewing over 50 witnesses that that was totally a mistake by two employees on the midnight shift in Martinsburg.

JDJ: The old “midnight shift guys in Martinsburg” excuse, okay. Let me read one other statement to you, again, from the articles of impeachment. This is on page 3, article 2: “On June 20, 2014, Commissioner Koskinen testified, ‘since the start of this investigation, every email has been preserved, nothing has been lost, nothing has been destroyed.’” Is that statement true, Mr. Koskinen?

K: At the time, that was what I had been informed and I believed. A year later,

JDJ: It couldn’t have been true at the time because the date is June 20, 2014. And, you just told me on March 4 – the first question I asked you – on March 4, 3 months before that, March 4, 2014, that the IRS had destroyed 422 backup tapes.

K: That’s correct.

JDJ: so how is this statement true that you made under oath to a Congressional committee?

K: The statement was not correct in light of that evidence, which I did not know.

JDJ: So the statement wasn’t true?

K: The statement I thought was true, it was not true on the basis of the evidence that we discovered later.

JDJ: Mr. Chairman, this is the problem. You think about any of the folks we represent, any of the constituents I represent in the fourth district of Ohio, has this same fact pattern, where they lose documents, and then a month later – they’re being audited by the IRS, they lose documents – a month later they destroy the backup disk and it’s fine? They can get away with that? This is what so many Americans are frustrated about: this double standard. Mr. Koskinen can lose documents, excuse me the IRS can lose documents, then destroy the backup source – the backup tapes – and nothing happens. Any American, that happens to them, they’re in big trouble and everybody knows it. ... All we’re asking is this guy no longer hold this office. That’s all we’re asking. And in light of this fact pattern, I think that’s the least we can do.