

ABC's *Good Morning America*

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33 seconds

[ON-SCREEN HEADLINE: Breaking Overnight; James Comey Indicted]

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: President Trump's retribution campaign as two storms take shape. The Justice Department takes aim at Donald Trump political enemies. Former FBI Director James Comey indicted on two felony counts after demands from President Trump for prosecution. Comey speaks out overnight.

JAMES COMEY: I have great confidence in the federal judicial system and I'm innocent, so let's have a trial.

STEPHANOPOULOS: The reaction this morning, who the President could target next. Pierre Thomas has the latest from the courthouse. Rachel Scott from the White House. Dan Abrams here in studio.

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7:02:27 a.m.

3 minutes and 11 seconds

[ON-SCREEN HEADLINE: Breaking Overnight; Former FBI Director James Comey Indicted]

STEPHANOPOULOS: President Trump's retribution campaign reached a new and ominous level late yesterday. The first criminal indictment of the man Trump considers a political enemy. Since the Watergate scandal, more than 50 years ago, presidents have refrained from interfering directly in criminal prosecutions by the Justice Department. The facts surrounding indictment of former FBI Director James Comey showed that those norms have been shattered. The indictment was brought by a former lawyer for President Trump, a lawyer who has never prosecuted a case. It comes after demands for Comey's prosecution from President Trump. The firing by President Trump of the U.S. Attorney who refused to prosecute, citing insufficient evidence of a crime, and the refusal of career prosecutors who investigated Comey to sign the indictment, again citing insufficient evidence of a crime. We're going to analyze all the fallout this morning. Chief justice correspondent Pierre Thomas starts us off. Good morning, Pierre.

PIERRE THOMAS: George, good morning. The long-running battle between the two men who will soon play out in the courthouse behind me. Today, former FBI Director Comey is claiming he is the victim of a tyrant, and vowing to fight the charges. But the President and DOJ leadership say that the charges are justified, accusing Comey of corruption and lying to Congress. This morning, former FBI Director James Comey has been indicted on two felony counts. One charge of making a false statement to Congress, and another for obstruction of a congressional proceeding. Just days ago, President Trump publicly demanding his attorney general take action

against his political enemies. Moments after Comey's indictment, Trump posting online, justice in America are calling the former FBI director "one of the worst human beings this country has ever been exposed to."

SENATOR TED CRUZ (R-TX): Mr. Comey, I have the report right in front of me.

THOMAS: In the indictment, Comey is accused of lying whether he authorized the leak to the press applying to the Senate Judiciary committee. But Comey last night firing back.

COMNEY: My family and I have known for years that there are costs for standing up to Donald Trump. But we couldn't imagine ourselves living any other way. We will not live on our knees, and you shouldn't either.

THOMAS: The former FBI director, who stands a towering 6'8", has been a larger-than-life figure in law enforcement for decades. From being not only the FBI director, but also the deputy attorney general. He was the U.S. Attorney for the Southern District of New York, a prosecutor and high-profile cases who once helped convict members of the Gambino crime family, but he quickly became a target for the President after Trump blamed him for the investigation into Russian interference during the 2016 election. And Comey is also a controversial figure for Democrats. Many of whom think he cost Hilary Clinton the presidency by reopening the investigation into her private email server just 11 days before the 2016 election. Now the one-time investigator has been investigated and indicted. Comey this morning offering a sharp criticism of the Justice Department, saying he still believes in the system.

COMNEY: My heart is broken for the Department of Justice, but I have great confidence in the federal judicial system. And I'm innocent, so let's have a trial and keep the faith.

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7:06:16 a.m.

4 minutes and 59 seconds

THOMAS: Democratic lawmakers outraged.

CONGRESSMAN JAMIE RASKIN (D-MD) [on MSNBC's *Inside with Jen Psaki*, 09/26/25]: Well, it's obviously an outrage, it is a scandal. And it does feel like a major lurch into further lawlessness in the country because it was Donald Trump's own handpicked U.S. Attorney, Mr. Siebert, originally charged with investigating James Comey, and came back with the conclusion that there was not remotely enough evidence to prosecute for any offense.

THOMAS: It comes as federal authorities target other perceived enemies of the president, including New York Attorney General Letitia James, and Senator Adam Schiff. And now we're learning the Justice Department has targeted the group funded by billionaire Democratic donor George Soros, who the President has said should be put in jail. Sources telling ABC News top federal prosecutors from around the country received a letter this week from the Justice

Department ordering them to investigate Soros' philanthropic organization, the Open Society Foundations. It listed potential charges to consider that ranging from material support for terrorism, arson, wire fraud, and racketeering. But provided no evidence. A spokesman for Soros's group defending their work as "peaceful and lawful," calling DOJ's move "politically motivated attacks on civil society meant to silence speech the administration disagrees with." If convicted, Comey faces up to five years in prison, but it's clear that Comey is ready to fight for his innocence and his reputation, George.

STEPHANOPOULOS: Okay, Pierre, thanks very much. Let's bring in our chief legal analyst Dan Abrams, senior political correspondent Rachel Scott. Again, this is pretty extraordinary what we're seeing here. The President demanded a prosecution and he got it.

DAN ABRAMS: Yeah, and look, what seems like the facts are pretty amazing as well. It seems this is a case about whether James Comey authorized a leak by his deputy, Andrew McCabe, about Hilary Clinton and an investigation of the Clinton Foundation. Not a leak about Donald Trump. The inspector general at the Department of Justice investigated this and determined that it was James Comey who was likely telling the truth about what happened, and not Andrew McCabe. Comey said I didn't authorize the leak. McCabe said he authorized the leak after the fact. McCabe actually was close to getting indicted for this by the first Trump administration because the Department of Justice inspector general had determined that McCabe likely lied. So, McCabe almost gets indicted in 2019 over this. They don't — they're not able to get the indictment. And now Comey is going to get indicted for the same conversation, which the inspector general believed Comey, and not McCabe — and by the way, even if you believe McCabe's account, he is not saying that Comey knew about the leak before it happened. He's talking about it after the fact.

STEPHANOPOULOS: Except for the President's personal attorney, every other prosecutor looked at this and said we don't have the evidence.

ABRAMS: So, she actually had to file this herself, very unusual that the U.S. Attorney doesn't have one of the line prosecutors signing off on this, working on this. She had to literally alter herself, some of the language in court, which is very unusual. And it shows you that, at this point, she's kind of in this on her own in this U.S. Attorney's office.

STEPHANOPOULOS: And Rachel, the President said the quiet part out loud again and again and again. Even this morning.

RACHEL SCOTT: And George, the President campaigned on this idea of retribution, that he would go after his perceived political enemies. This morning, just moments ago, he is out on social media. He is repeatedly attacking Comey, calling him a dirty cock — cop saying that a very big price must be paid. The President has gone through extraordinary steps to make this idea of retribution a reality. He has stripped security clearances from some top former and current national security officials, has revoked Secret Service protections from some of his harshest critics, including John Bolton, former Vice President Kamala Harris, forced out federal prosecutors who do not bring the charges that he wants, and then, just days ago, the extraordinary

and remarkable statement from the President publicly calling on his own attorney general, who represents an independent, impartial Justice Department, to not just go after Comey, but also to go after New York Attorney General Letitia James, to go after Democratic Senator Adam Schiff. This idea of retribution that he campaigned on now a central part of his presidency and he has made it clear he wants more indictments to follow, George.

STEPHANOPOULOS: And, Dan, all of these public statements from the President could actually help James Comey get this thrown out by a judge.

ABRAMS: Correct. Correct. Look, that's going to be the first question, is this case even going to make it to trial? Is a judge going to throw out this case? That is certainly going to be part of the defense's argument, citing each and every one of the social media posts by the President, demanding this prosecution and looking at the sort of history of how we got here.