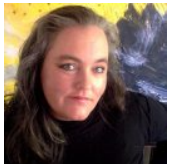


# Report Says Russia-gaters Should Go Quietly in the Night

After more than two years of mania about Russia stealing the 2016 election for Trump and demonization of anyone who questioned it, an embarrassing end may soon be near for the Russia-gaters, says Caitlin Johnstone.

**By Caitlin Johnstone**



In a new article titled "Mueller report PSA: Prepare for disappointment", *Politico* cites information provided by defense attorneys and "more than 15 former government officials with investigation experience spanning Watergate to the 2016 election case" to warn everyone who's been lighting candles at their Saint Mueller altars that their hopes of Trump being removed from office are about to be dashed to the floor.

"While [Mueller is] under no deadline to complete his work, several sources tracking the investigation say the special counsel and his team appear eager to wrap up," *Politico* reports.

"The public, they say, shouldn't expect a comprehensive and presidency-wrecking account of Kremlin meddling and alleged obstruction of justice by Trump?—not to mention an explanation of the myriad subplots that have bedeviled lawmakers, journalists and amateur Mueller sleuths," the report also says, adding that details of the investigation may never even see the light of day. "It will be up to DOJ leaders to make the politically turbo-charged decision of whether to make Mueller's report public," *Politico* reported.

So that's it then. An obscene amount of noise and focus, a few indictments and process crime convictions which have nothing to do with Russian collusion, and



## Maddow: Russians May Be Controlling Our Government



This is by far the clearest indication yet that the Mueller investigation will end with Trump still in office and zero proof of collusion with the Russian government, which has been obvious since the beginning to everyone who isn't a complete moron. For two years the idiotic, fact-free, xenophobic Russia-gate conspiracy theory has been ripping through mainstream American consciousness with shrieking manic hysteria, sucking all oxygen out of the room for legitimate criticisms of the actual awful things that the US president is doing in real life. Those of us who have been courageous and clear-headed enough to stand against the groupthink have been shouted down, censored, slandered and smeared as assets of the Kremlin on a daily basis by unthinking consumers of mass media propaganda, despite our holding the philosophically unassailable position of demanding the normal amount of proof that would be required in a post-Iraq invasion world.

As I predicted long ago, "Mueller isn't going to find anything in 2017 that these vast, sprawling networks wouldn't have found in 2016. He's not going to find anything by 'following the money' that couldn't be found infinitely more efficaciously via Orwellian espionage. The factions within the intelligence community that were working to sabotage the incoming administration last year would have leaked proof of collusion if they'd had it. They did not have it

then, and they do not have it now. Mueller will continue finding evidence of corruption throughout his investigation, since corruption is to DC insiders as water is to fish, but he will not find evidence of collusion to win the 2016 election that will lead to Trump's impeachment. It will not happen." This has remained as true in 2018 as it did in 2017, and it will remain true forever.

None of the investigations arising from the Russia-gate conspiracy theory have turned up a single shred of evidence that Donald Trump colluded with the Russian government to rig the 2016 election, or to do anything else for that matter. All that the shrill, demented screeching about Russia has accomplished is manufacturing support for steadily escalating internet censorship, a massively bloated military budget, a hysterical McCarthyite atmosphere wherein anyone who expresses political dissent is painted as an agent of the Kremlin and any dissenting opinions labeled "Russian talking points", a complete lack of accountability for the Democratic Party's brazen election rigging, a total marginalization of real problems and progressive agendas, and an overall diminishment in the intelligence of political discourse. The Russia-gaters were wrong, and they have done tremendous damage already.

In a just world, everyone who helped promote this toxic narrative would apologize profusely and spend the rest of their lives being mocked and marginalized. In a world wherein pundits and politicians can sell the public a war which results in the slaughter of a million Iraqis and suffer no consequences of any kind, however, we all know that that isn't going to happen. Russia-gate will end not with a bang, but with a series of carefully crafted diversions. The goalposts will be moved, the news churn will shuffle on, the herd will be guided into supporting the next depraved oligarchic agenda, and almost nobody will have the intellectual honesty and courage to say "Hey! Weren't these assholes promising us we'll see Trump dragged off in chains a while back? Whatever happened to that? And why are we all talking about China now?"

But whether they grasp it or not, mainstream liberals have been completely discredited. The mass media outlets which inflicted this obscene psyop upon their audiences deserve to be driven out of business. The establishment which would inflict such intrusive psychological brutalization upon its populace just to advance a few preexisting agendas has proven that it deserves to be opposed on every front and rejected at every turn.

And those of us who have been standing firm and saying this all along deserve to be listened to. We were right. You were wrong. Time to sit down, shut up, stop babbling about Russian bots for ten seconds, and let those who see clearly get a word in edgewise.

*This article originally appeared on Medium.*

Caitlin Johnstone is a rogue journalist, poet, and utopia prepper who publishes regularly at Medium. Follow her work on Facebook, Twitter, or her website. She has a podcast and a new book *Woke: A Field Guide for Utopia Preppers*. This article was re-published with permission.

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## When Black Panthers Aligned with Confederate-Flag-Wielding, Working-Class Whites

Can the unlikely alliance of the Black Panthers and a group of transplanted Southern Whites in 1969 hold any lesson today, asks Colette Gaiter.

**By Colette Gaiter**

*The Conversation*



In the 2016 presidential election, Donald Trump won the white vote across all demographics except for college-educated white women. He did especially well among working class white voters: 67 percent of whites without a college degree voted for him.

Some post-election analysis marveled at how the white working class could vote against its own interests by supporting a billionaire businessman who is likely to support policies that cut taxes for the rich and weaken the country's social safety net. Since the New Deal, the Democratic Party has been seen as the party of working people, while Republicans were considered the party of the elites. Trump was able to flip this narrative to his advantage. Election 2016 balkanized issues and made it seem impossible to work on racism, sexism, poverty and economic issues all at once. A core question moving forward for social justice advocates and the Democratic Party is how they can move beyond identity politics and attract working-class voters of all races, building stronger coalitions among disparate groups.

One place to look for inspiration and instruction might be 1960s social movements that understood the power of alliances across identities and issues. During this period, a radical coalition formed that might seem impossible today: A group of migrant southerners and working-class white activists called the Young Patriots joined forces with the Black Panthers in Chicago to fight systemic class oppression.

So how did this alliance form? And how can its lessons be applied to today's political moment?

## **An Unlikely Alliance**

In the post-civil rights era, a militant Black Power movement emerged, with the Black Panther Party for Self Defense forming in 1966. Inspired by Malcolm X and other international black thought leaders, the group embraced armed struggle as a potential tool against organized racial oppression – a radical break from the philosophy of nonviolent protest. A large faction of the group developed in Chicago, where one of the party leaders was a young man named Fred Hampton.

Chicago in the 1960s was a brutal place for poor people. Black, brown and white people all dealt with poverty, unemployment, police violence, substandard housing, inadequate schools and a lack of social services. Ethnic and racial groups each created their own social service and activist networks to combat every kind of oppression.

One was the Young Patriot Organization (YPO), which was based in Hillbilly Harlem, an uptown neighborhood of Chicago populated by displaced white southerners. Many YPO members were racist, and they flaunted controversial symbols associated with southern pride, such as the Confederate flag. But like blacks and Latinos, the white Young Patriots and their families experienced discrimination in Chicago. In their case, it was because they were poor and from the South.

In his short time as a Black Panther leader, Fred Hampton wanted to advance the group's goals by forming a "Rainbow Coalition" of working class and poor people of all races.

Former members of the Chicago Panthers and YPO tell different versions of the same story of how the groups connected: Each attended the other's organizing meetings and decided to work together on their common issues. Over time, the Black Panthers learned to tolerate Confederate flags as intransigent signs for rebellion. Their only stipulation was that the white Young Patriots denounce racism.

Eventually, Young Patriots rejected their deeply embedded ideas of white supremacy – and even the Confederate flag – as they realized how much they had in common with the Black Panthers and Latino Young Lords.

Assumed to be natural enemies, these groups united in their calls for economic justice. In the Aug. 9, 1969 issue of The Black Panther newspaper, the party's chief of staff, David Hilliard, admiringly called the Young Patriots "the only

revolutionaries we respect that ever came out of the mother country.” Recalling his work with the YPO, former Black Panther Bobby Lee explained that “The Rainbow Coalition was just a code word for class struggle.”

In the end, the Illinois Panthers brought together various elements of the black community, Confederate flag-waving southern white migrants (Young Patriots), Puerto Ricans (Young Lords), poor white ethnic groups (Rising Up Angry, JOIN Community Union, and the Inter-communal Survival Committee), students and the women’s movement. The disparate groups under the coalition’s umbrella pooled resources and shared strategies for providing community services and aid that the government and private sector would not. Initiatives included health clinics, feeding homeless and hungry people, and legal advice for those dealing with unethical landlords and police brutality.

## **Racial Divide Exposed**

Almost 50 years after the original Rainbow Coalition, the U.S. electorate remains divided along racial lines. Even though Donald Trump asked black Americans, “What do you have to lose?” by voting for him and abandoning the Democratic Party, it didn’t work: Only 8 percent of black voters (and 28 percent of Latino and 27 percent of Asian voters) cast ballots for Trump. Blacks and Latinos are well-represented in the working class, and people of color will become the majority in the working class in 2032.

Much 2016 post-election attention has focused on working-class white voters, who have been characterized as “forgotten” and “angry” for being left out of the economic recovery. Yet African-Americans have been far worse off; since the 2007 recession, the unemployment rate of African-Americans is nearly double that of Hispanics and more than twice that of whites.

Hillary Clinton was the candidate who collected the most diverse voter base – the 2016 Democratic National Convention in Philadelphia looked like the Rainbow Coalition redux – and she was expected to win the election. However, that visual hid racism’s residual and deeply entrenched place in U.S. society. One of the lessons of the 2016 election is that the country is not as advanced in its work on ending racism and discrimination as most would like to believe. Trump did not have to do much to capitalize on this.

The Rainbow Coalition members in 1960s Chicago understood how difficult it is to build coalitions across identities. Former Black Panther Bobby Lee recalled working with the Young Patriots:

“It wasn’t easy to build an alliance. I advised them on how to set up ‘serve

the people' programs – free breakfasts, people's health clinics, all that. I had to run with those cats, break bread with them, hang out at the pool hall. I had to lay down on their couch, in their neighborhood. Then I had to invite them into mine. That was how the Rainbow Coalition was built, real slow.”

The coalition, bringing together seemingly polar opposite Black Panthers and Young Patriots, showed that real interactions allow people to understand that their struggles are not essentially different. Trump probably was sincere when he invited African-Americans to join his movement. He simply didn't realize that a glib invitation would not produce the same results as real coalition-building over a period of time.

The lesson to learn from studying 1960s social movements is that lasting change toward economic and racial justice will probably be built brick by brick, person to person and “real slow.”

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