Much Ado About Something

by

*Eyes Right*

**Springfield, VA –** Recently several members of President Trump’s cabinet were recorded while discussing a forthcoming military operation against Houthis in the Red Sea region. The recording was made on the Signal messaging app by Jeffrey Goldberg, the editor-in-chief of *The Atlantic*. Mr. Goldberg was accidentally/erroneously added to the conversation allegedly by a staff member of Michael Waltz, the U.S. National Security Advisor. Prominent members of the chat included the Vice-President, J.D. Vance; Pete Hegseth, the Secretary of Defense; Marco Rubio, the Secretary of State, Tulsi Gabbard, the Director of National Intelligence; and Waltz.

In addition to discussing details of the impending airstrikes by U.S. military forces, there was also the mention of a name of an undercover CIA officer and some disparaging remarks concerning U.S. European allies.

Shortly after the military attack, Mr. Goldberg published a redacted account of the meeting. When Mr. Vance and other administration officials attacked Mr. Goldberg’s credibility based on his previous reporting, Goldberg released the entire transcript of the meeting the following day. Concurrently, an official from the National Security Council confirmed that the recording of the meeting was indeed authentic, but administration officials continued to declare that no classified information had been involved.

A political firestorm quickly erupted. Democrats in Congress and their media allies were absolutely giddy and quick to declare the event to be a national emergency. They immediately called for the firing of several chat members, especially Defense Secretary Hegseth. Senate hearings were quickly arranged with key players called to testify. Now, just under a week following the event (quickly termed “Signalgate”) I can find no mention of the event in the daily news cycle. What remains are comments by Democrat supporters proclaiming that the sky is falling, while Republicans have adopted disinterested shrugs that “nothing big” happened.

It may be useful to concentrate on facts. The military strikes took place without incident in terms of Houthi opposition. There were apparently no foreign observers who had access to the chat. The only way that Goldberg gained access to the chat was that he was invited; it is not yet clear why or who was the actual person who added him to the chat. Vice-President Vance’s feelings with respect to European governments has been well known; he has consistently insisted that they have a long history of underspending on defense and have been the beneficiary of U.S. defense for decades with little appreciation. The Signal chat has long been a staple of D.C. officials but has been identified as susceptible to compromise. The pre-strike conversation among Cabinet members was certainly appropriate, but, in retrospect, it would have been better if in person in a secure location.

It appears that once every ounce of political points has been scored, Signalgate will quickly fade into an entry on search engines. Concerns that American warfighters will be worried for their safety in future operations due to premature disclosure of operations is simply a red herring that will occasionally pop up in political circles, but will, in reality, have no substantial effect.

What remains to be disclosed in this entire flap is who was the person who actually added Goldberg to the chat and why. It seems inconceivable that any prominent Republican would have a known antagonist of their party in general, and President Trump in particular, on their list of contacts. Also, it remains curious that Goldberg was identified only by his initials while on the chat so that none of the other participants could be aware of his presence.

The *only* certain lesson from this entire episode is that politics remains a blood sport.

I thought you might like to know.

E-R