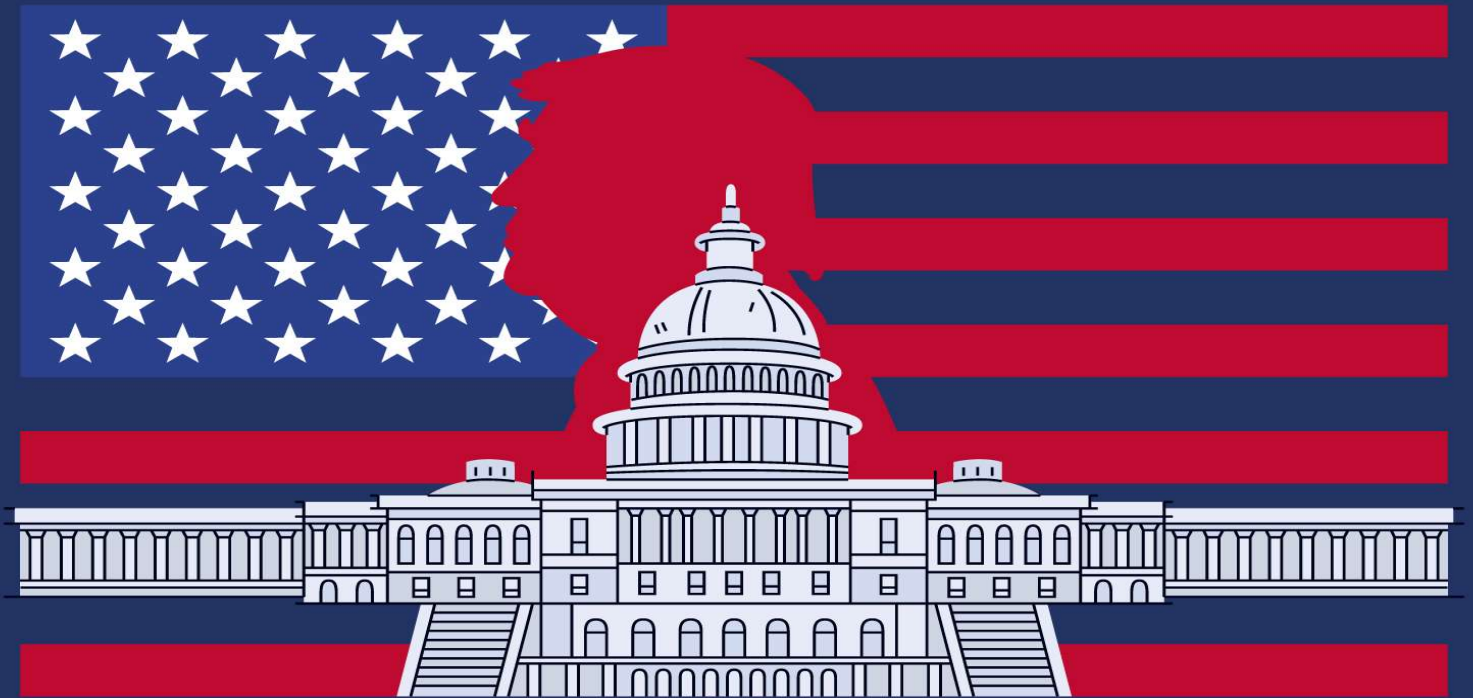


SUMMARY
BY ALYSSA BURNETTE

THE THREAT

BY ANDREW G. McCABE



Summary of The Threat by Andrew G. McCabe

Written by Alyssa Burnette

Why Donald Trump is the biggest threat to
America's national security.

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Introduction

Are you a fan of crime shows like Criminal Minds? For many people, this thrilling drama triggered a fascination with the Federal Bureau of Investigation (and especially their Behavioral Analysis Unit). If you are a fan of crime shows, then your viewing experiences have probably led you to believe that the average day in the FBI is quite exciting. Perhaps you imagine that each day is filled with high-profile cases, deadly shoot-outs, and exhilarating car chases as America's special agents work to capture the worst of the worst. But would it surprise you to know that the biggest threats to our country come from within? Would you be shocked to realize that terrorists are not our number-one concern? Over the course of this summary, we'll explore the author's answers to these questions and learn why Donald Trump is the biggest threat to America's national security.



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The Evolution of the FBI

Do you know what the acronym FBI stands for? If you guessed “Federal Bureau of Investigation,” obviously you’re right. But that acronym also corresponds to the FBI’s motto: Fidelity, Bravery, Integrity. These are the core values that guide America’s leading law enforcement agency. But the author observes that the organization’s mission has changed drastically throughout the years even if its motto has remained the same. One reason for that is both simple and obvious: the world has not been the same since September 11, 2001. From an increase in racial profiling to tightened security in airports, terrorism has radically changed the security procedures implemented in America. Although some counterterrorism measures can be especially overzealous, everyone can agree that we never want to repeat the events of 9/11.

This is especially true for the Federal Bureau of Investigation; the FBI’s Counterterrorism Division has been one of their most vital units from the very beginning of the Bureau’s existence. But even though the FBI has always been concerned about terrorism, the Bureau did not concentrate the bulk of their efforts on this threat until after 9/11. Instead, the FBI primarily focused on threats that originated within the United States, such as organized crime and other high-level threats to national security.

Unsurprisingly, this led to some internal conflicts within the organization, as each division of the FBI felt that they were doing the best and most important work. The counterterrorism division felt that they were serving their country in the best way by protecting it from foreign enemies. By contrast, the organized crime units felt their work was most important because they were fighting to keep the country from being destroyed by domestic enemies. But of course, in reality, both units are doing vitally important work! However, it was not until the tragedy of 9/11 that a strong sense of unity developed within the Bureau. After the Twin Towers fell, many Americans felt united in their love of country and their desire to protect America from similar travesties in

the future. And this was especially true for the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

Overnight, a new emphasis was placed on counterterrorism. Instead of employing a few divisions for this purpose, a network of new counterterrorism units sprang up, each one dedicated to a different threat posed by terrorism. As a result, the events of 9/11 quite literally restructured the FBI. This new sense of unity also brought individual departments together in a way they had never been before. Now, the computer science units worked closely with field agents, forcing each unit to acknowledge the necessity and skill of the other. Banding together against a common enemy encouraged each unit of the FBI to develop a new appreciation for the other. This shift in mentality not only restructured the purpose and methodology of the FBI, but it transformed its culture as well. In fact, after September 11th, the Federal Bureau of Investigation experienced a fundamental shift that would forever restructure its primary focus and the spirit with which the organization accomplished its goals.



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The FBI's Investigative Methods

If you're an ardent *Criminal Minds* fan, you might often find yourself watching an episode and wondering, "How do they do that?!" Maybe you're puzzling over their interrogation techniques and the way FBI agents can skilfully draw a confession out of a suspect. Maybe you marvel at the mind-reading skills of the Behavioral Analysis Unit and their ability to work up a psychological profile. Or maybe you're a fan of the keen eye for detail and razor-sharp reflexes that seem to be part of every agent's tool kit. No matter what you love about the FBI and crime shows, there's a good chance that every *Criminal Minds* fan has wondered about the FBI's investigative methods and wished they could learn the same tricks.

In this chapter, we'll explore one of the FBI's primary investigative methods, although it probably isn't one you've thought about before! Instead of examining tricks like "how to get a confession out of anyone" or "how to construct a psychological profile," we'll consider a procedural tool known as "the Enterprise Theory of Investigation." Enterprise Theory exists more in the realm of the legal jargon you might hear on shows like *Law and Order: Special Victims Unit*, where police officers and defense attorneys debate terms like "fruit of the poisonous tree" or "acting in good faith." In volume 70 of the procedural journal *FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin*, Special Agent Richard McFeely summarizes the Enterprise Theory of Investigation by asserting:

"The ETI encourages a proactive attack on the structure of the criminal enterprise. Rather than viewing criminal acts as isolated crimes, the ETI attempts to show that individuals commit crimes in furtherance of the criminal enterprise itself. The FBI defines a criminal organization as a group of individuals with an identified hierarchy engaged in significant criminal activity. These organizations often engage in a broad range of criminal activities and have extensive supporting networks. Generally, the ETI only proves effective when the organization engages in a myriad of criminal activities. Once investigators have determined that an enterprise exists, the next step involves determining the scope of its illicit activities. Both historical

and real-time evaluations help form the investigative strategy. Because investigators should base this strategy on perceived weaknesses within the enterprise, they must conduct a thorough evaluation of the enterprise's activities. The use of a joint task force is necessary in the successful application of the ETI. Immediate benefits include additional staff, access to more technical and investigative equipment, and the pooling of financial resources for items, such as payment of informants and the purchase of evidence. Attacking the flow of money has become the norm in major Federal organized crime and drug trafficking investigations.

Strategic use of asset forfeiture and money laundering statutes removes not only the illegal proceeds, but more importantly it disables the systems that the enterprise has put into place to accomplish its profit goal. Investigators should interface with prosecutors as early as possible in the case. Case managers should postpone any actions that might expose the scope of the investigation until completion of the covert phase. Thus, by using favorable statutes along with a carefully laid out, multipronged attack on each established component that a criminal enterprise uses to conduct its illegal business, investigators can expand criminal culpability for a single criminal act to all members of the enterprise, regardless of whether they actually committed the crime.”

Now, that's a lot of legal jargon to digest at once! So, let's break that down into more relatable terminology. Put simply, the Enterprise Theory of Investigation is a tool that FBI agents can use to investigate and demolish organized crime syndicates. Here's how it works in practice: let's say the FBI has identified one gangster with suspected ties to a major organized crime syndicate. Although they could easily arrest this one man for multiple crimes, they decide to expand their investigation and attempt to tie him to additional crimes committed by his organization. This means that, instead of searching for evidence that can convict him of only one or two individual crimes, they now have the scope to search for evidence that can link him to a broad network of crimes committed by his gang or crime syndicate. This broad investigative scope thus enables FBI agents to seek connections between their target and a host of other criminals, which means that if you can prove

their connection and their criminal activity, you might succeed in taking down an entire gang or crime family.

But, as you might imagine, this is no easy task! No one is likely to admit to a wide range of criminal activity or say something like, “Yep, I’m involved with the mob!” And that’s where undercover agents and confidential informants come in. Both of these investigative tools are invaluable because they have the potential to provide very compelling evidence. If a confidential informant or an undercover agent witnesses multiple gang members setting up a drug deal or compelling prostitution, everyone who is caught up in that activity can be arrested. This is due to something called “first-hand evidence.” First-hand evidence is something that an individual personally knows or has witnessed with their own eyes. And because it relates to an individual’s personal experience, it is more reliable than hearsay.

For example, if you were a confidential informant and you said, “I know that Tommy shot John because I saw him do it,” and you could provide dates, times, and details that proved you saw this, your testimony would be considered reliable first-hand evidence. By contrast, if you said, “I know Tommy shot John because Tommy’s cousin said he heard that Tommy shot John,” this would be considered hearsay. You can’t prove that a shooting occurred and you have no personal knowledge of the act. All you know is what somebody else told you. That’s why first-hand evidence and the Enterprise Theory of Investigation are critical for helping the FBI do their job. If they can gather solid evidence against a gang member or an organized crime syndicate, they can conclusively prove criminal activity and put those criminals away.



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Why Donald Trump is the Biggest Threat to America's Security

So, now that you know a little bit about the FBI's origins and the investigative tools used by the Bureau, it's time to turn our attention to the real focus of this book: the threat posed by Donald Trump's presidency. Whether you like Trump or not, pretty much everyone can agree that he is loud, brash, and determined to accomplish his goals at all costs. And the author observes that this poses a unique threat to the FBI. That's partly because Trump refused to acknowledge the fact that the FBI and the government should work independently of one another. The author observes that an effective government maintains its success by establishing a system of checks and balances. In a properly functioning system, presidential powers should not be absolute; the ruler of any country should still be held accountable for their actions. And true accountability would mean that any president could be investigated by law enforcement agencies like the FBI and be found criminally liable if they were indeed guilty of a criminal act.

But Trump wanted to be above the law. When he took office, he was instantly suspicious of the FBI and its existing structure; he wanted to fire everyone and replace them with people who would be loyal to him instead of being objective. For example, when he fired FBI director James Comey in 2017, he offered the position to Homeland Security secretary John Kelly. In a conversation with Kelly, Trump told him that he needed Kelly to promise him that he would be loyal. Not loyal to the Constitution, to the mission of the FBI, or to his pursuit of truth and justice, but loyal to Donald Trump himself. Unsurprisingly, Kelly recognized that this statement was problematic. And after a very long and awkward pause in which he wondered what to say, Kelly finally replied that he could promise honesty. To this, Trump retorted, "Yes - honest loyalty."

A British comedian remarking on the absurdity of this exchange observed that this conversation sounds just as ludicrous as a hypothetical scenario in which a man tells a woman, "I want to have sex!" When the woman replies,

“We can be friends,” the man comes back with, “Yes-- sex friends!” In this hypothetical scenario, we can clearly see that the male and female participants have two different goals for their relationship and for the outcome of their conversation. And we can also understand that when someone says they want to be friends, this typically excludes the possibility of a sexual relationship. Therefore, to insist that someone provide you with “honest loyalty” after they have told you they cannot be loyal to you is every bit as ridiculous as insisting that your friendship must be sexual.

Unfortunately, however, this absurdity persisted throughout the duration of Trump’s presidency. Despite the FBI’s numerous attempts to remain objective and professional, Trump continued to pester high-level FBI officials to use their power in unethical ways. From requests to drop open investigations, clear him of all charges, or falsify legal documents, Trump’s demands have been fast, furious, and absolutely ludicrous. Fortunately, however, the FBI has remained steadfast in their commitment to objectivity and truth. They have refused to drop their investigation into Trump’s connection with Russia and have prevented him from using his power or political views to influence the outcome of ongoing investigations. The FBI continues to believe that real democracy can only flourish when its law enforcement agencies and government operate separately and objectively. However, that doesn’t mean that their job is not made infinitely more difficult by Trump’s presidency. His efforts to undermine the FBI and the American government from within have made the FBI’s job very cumbersome indeed. But as America’s leading law enforcement agency, the FBI is determined to persevere against this threat just as they remain steadfast in the face of terrorism and organized crime.



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Final Summary

When we think about the FBI, we often envision them as all-knowing, all-powerful government spies dressed in black. But the author observes that the FBI's power is subject to an extensive system of checks and balances and the objective pursuit of truth and justice is the guiding principle of their organization. This is true whether they are protecting America from terrorists or from domestic threats.

Donald Trump's presidency is one such domestic threat and it has made the FBI's job very difficult. As a law enforcement agency, the FBI should be objective and honest; their investigations should not be influenced by political views or pressure from government officials. But Donald Trump has frequently attempted to pressure FBI officials to bend the rules and distort the truth in order to further his own agenda. This is why the author believes that his presidency is currently the biggest threat to American government and national security.



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