



# Trump says it's "inconceivable" that a lawyer would tape a client

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President Trump responded for the first time Saturday to news that his longtime attorney Michael Cohen **recorded a conversation** with Mr. Trump discussing payment to a former Playboy model. The recording was seized by federal investigators during an April raid on Cohen's office as a part of a criminal investigation into Cohen's business dealings, according to **The New York Times**, **which first reported** the recording.

CBS News learned that Cohen secretly recorded the conversation he had with Mr. Trump shortly before the 2016 election. They discussed making a payment to Playboy model **Karen McDougal**, who claimed she had an affair with Mr. Trump in 2006, shortly after Melania Trump gave birth to Barron Trump.

Mr. Trump, who left for his club in Bedminster, New Jersey, on Friday afternoon without answering reporters' shouted questions about the recording, responded to the news on Twitter Saturday morning.

"Inconceivable that the government would break into a lawyer's office (early in the morning) - almost unheard of," he tweeted. "Even more inconceivable that a lawyer would tape a client - totally unheard of & perhaps illegal. The good news is that your favorite President did nothing wrong!"



**Donald J. Trump** 

@realDonaldTrump



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While Mr. Trump said in his tweet that the government "broke into" the lawyer's office, federal investigators had actually **executed search and seizure warrants** to enter Cohen's home and office to obtain records, CBS News' Jeff Pegues has reported. The FBI's raid of Cohen's home and office stemmed from information gathered during the course of special counsel Robert Mueller's ongoing investigation into Russian meddling, but was part of a separate federal investigation.

The searches were spearheaded by the FBI's public corruption unit. The Justice Department is interested in Cohen's role in paying women to remain silent about claims of sexual relationships with Mr. Trump ahead of the 2016 presidential election.

Mr. Trump also said in his tweet Saturday that a lawyer recording a client is "totally unheard of & perhaps illegal." But The Washington Post reports the conversation took place in New York, which is a one-party consent state — meaning that, legally, only one party in a conversation needs consent for a recording of that conversation to be legal.

Vinoo Varghese, a criminal defense attorney and former prosecutor, told CBS News "there is nothing illegal about Cohen taping Trump."

"The problem is one of ethics for Cohen as an attorney," he said in an email.

"He had a duty of confidentiality towards his client," Varghese said. "By taping his client, there's a greater chance that confidentiality could be breached, exposing Cohen to sanctions."

Cohen has been under immense pressure to cooperate with federal investigators as Mueller's probe continues, [CBS News' Jeff Pegues has reported](#).

*CBS News' Paula Reid contributed to this report.*