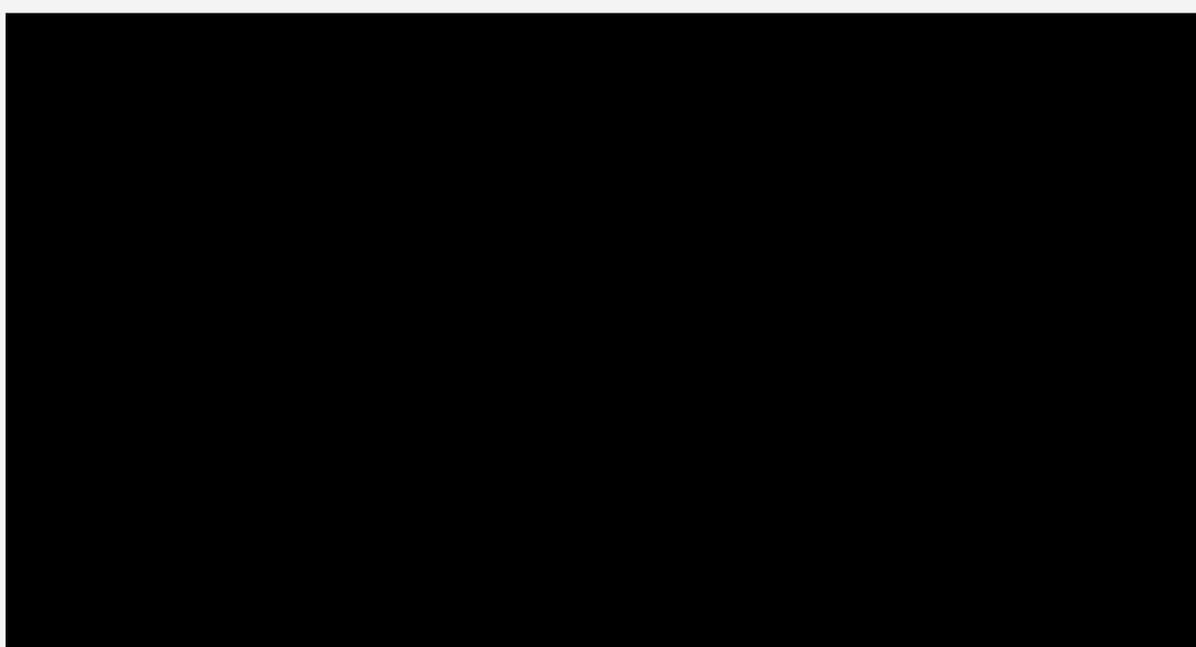


## POLITICS

# Hannity: Deep state's massive effort to destroy Trump

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**Hannity: The deep state's massive effort to destroy Trump**

Fox News' Sean Hannity on Friday night slammed news outlets like The New York Times and CNN as "willing accomplices" for the deep state that is intent on damaging President Trump's presidency by leaking, in many cases, misinformation to the American public.

"The major news outlets, citing unnamed sources, "have all gotten it wrong on this issue," Hannity said. "They all, at this point with the American public, should have zero credibility."

The "deep state," an alleged shadowy network of powerful entrenched federal and military interests, has increasingly become the focus of Republicans who accuse such forces of trying to undermine the new president. Though senior White House staff members don't use the exact label, the notion behind it has taken hold.

To Trump's critics, these assertions come off as paranoid fear of a non-existent shadow government and an effort to create a scapegoat for the White House's struggles. But to Trump's supporters, this represents an overdue challenge to an elite ruling class concerned only with maintaining its own grasp on power.

Hannity said the public should take these "smoking gun" reports that appear to break every night "with a grain of salt."

Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein [said Thursday evening](#) that Americans should "exercise caution" before believing anonymously sourced reports, an apparent reference to ongoing leaks surrounding the investigation into alleged connections between Russian officials and Trump's campaign.

"Americans should exercise caution before accepting as true any stories any stories attributed to anonymous 'officials,'" Rosenstein said in a statement, "particularly when they do not identify the country — let alone the branch or agency of government — with which the alleged sources supposedly are affiliated."

"Of course, the deep state exists. There's a permanent state of massive bureaucracies that do whatever they want and set up deliberate leaks to attack the president," said Newt Gingrich, a Trump confidant, earlier. "This is what the deep state does: They create a lie, spread a lie, fail to check the lie and then deny that they were behind the lie."

Hannity said the deep state hopes for "as much collateral damage as possible."

*The Associated Press contributed to this report*