

**Memo: The Russian Attack is an Ongoing Crisis, The Republican Cover-Up Endangers National Security**

To: Interested Parties

From: The Moscow Project, Center for American Progress Action Fund

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President Trump's own intelligence chiefs and Department of Justice have laid out in stark terms the enormous scope of the Russian attack on our democracy, and made clear that it continues as we speak. National Intelligence Director Dan Coats told the Senate Intelligence Committee, "Frankly, the United States is under attack," adding that "there should be no doubt that [Putin] views the past effort as successful." Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein discussed Russia's "informational warfare against the United States," resulting in indictments of 13 Russian individuals and 3 Russian businesses, detailing a sprawling million-dollar-a-month campaign to sow discord in America and support the election of President Trump.

Amidst this ongoing attack on our democracy, the country will also face questions of staggering magnitude in the weeks and months ahead:

- Has the President of the United States, his family, or his top aides been involved in the conspiracy to defraud the United States that the Department of Justice has already issued indictments for?
- In the ongoing "attack" on the United States that DNI Coats has described, has the Commander-in-Chief or those in his closest circle actually been *coordinating with the attackers*?

It is imperative for our national security and our democracy that Republicans in Congress immediately start being part of the solution rather than part of the problem, and compel President Trump to do the same. Congress must be a check on executive branch wrongdoing, not the getaway driver. If President Trump will not protect our country from this ongoing attack, Congress must fill the leadership vacuum.

**While the Special Counsel continues his investigation, there are clear steps that should be taken immediately to respond to this crisis:**

- 1) **The President must lead an aggressive whole-of-government response to combat Russia's ongoing attack, rather than deny their continued assault on our country.** Failure to respond forcefully is a dereliction of duty. Admiral Mike Rogers, Director of the NSA, joined DNI Coats in decrying a lack of Administration response. Attorney General Sessions has also conceded when asked that he had taken no concrete action. Meanwhile, a recent comprehensive report from CAP evaluated election security in all 50 states and found widespread vulnerabilities. The Trump Administration must help states in every way they can, and Congress must fully fund those efforts.
- 2) **President Trump must start cooperating with law enforcement in this investigation, rather than stonewalling and seeking to discredit it.** President Trump owes it to this country to answer every question the Special Counsel has without

restriction, and to make those answers public when the Special Counsel deems appropriate.

3) **Trump’s Republican allies in Congress must uphold their oath to support and defend the Constitution against all enemies, and end their obsession with smearing the FBI and DOJ to cover up for the Trump Administration and Russia.**

The Special Counsel’s investigation has already garnered three guilty pleas from close Trump aides, and we now know of more than 60 contacts between the Trump team and Russian agents, despite repeated claims that there were none. The investigation is catching criminals, and even more importantly it is the country’s best chance to understand what has been happening so that we can stop it. Congressional Committees should be pursuing witnesses with just as much urgency, interviewing every relevant witness, and refusing to accept phony claims of made-up “privilege” by witnesses who refuse to answer questions about this attack.

4) **The Administration must finally implement the sanctions punishing Russia for their interference.** Failure to do so sends an open invitation to Russia and every other adversary to interfere in our democracy by signaling that there will be no consequences—at least so long as they are in support of the winning political party. As NSA Director Rogers put it, Putin now has the sense that there’s “little price to pay” for attacking our country.

Regardless of the results of the Special Counsel’s investigation, Republicans must start treating the ongoing Russian attack as the threat to our country that it is, and not simply as a political nuisance to be dismissed or covered up. DHS reported that 21 states had voting infrastructure targeted by hackers in 2016, and Russian hacking efforts have spread as far as American nuclear power plants. The intelligence community and DOJ have spoken loud and clear, the system is blinking red, and the oath of office is screaming out for the defense of our Constitution.

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