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Smith Statement on Evidence of Trump Collusion With Russia (/press-releases?ID=11247FF6-FA9C-458C-9AA2-A880744AB5CD)

May 19, 2017 - May 20, 2017

Washington, D.C. – *Today, House Armed Services Committee Ranking Member Adam Smith (D-WA) made the following statement about the existence of evidence indicating collusion between members of President Trump's team and the Russian government:*

"As we discuss the issue of Russian collusion, it is important for people to keep in mind the following: It is simply not accurate to state that 'there is no evidence of collusion between President Trump's team and the Russian government.'

"In fact, there is a mountain of evidence that the public has been aware of for some time. For example, Trump campaign operative Carter Page flew to Moscow on a campaign-approved trip and gave a speech savaging the United States and its allies for opposing corruption and supporting democratic values, then met with Russian Ambassador Kislyak at the Republican convention. A FISA court judge found there was enough evidence to constitute probable cause that he was a foreign agent working on behalf of Russia.

“Trump campaign manager Paul Manafort, who has been a paid consultant for a previous pro-Putin president of Ukraine, also met with Ambassador Kislyak at the convention, as did Trump national security chair Jeff Sessions. Right before the convention, the Republican Party platform was altered so that it did not support lethal defensive weapons for Ukraine, a policy position desired by the Russians, reportedly at the behest of the Trump campaign. All of those campaign officials then denied meeting with Kislyak before admitting having done so.

“Trump campaign operative Roger Stone communicated with both Wikileaks and an online persona controlled by Russian intelligence officials that was involved in the hacking of the Democratic Party and Hillary Clinton’s campaign, accurately predicting the release of documents hacked by the Russians and bragging that Clinton campaign chair John Podesta would be next, two days before his emails were released. It was recently reported that Trump campaign officials had at least 18 undisclosed calls and emails with the Russian government in the last seven months of the campaign. This is just the beginning of the information on the public record. It is all evidence of collusion.

“What we do not have right now is conclusive proof that President Trump’s team colluded with the Russian government. But a lack of conclusive proof is not the same thing as a lack of evidence, and we should not confuse the two.

“There is sufficient evidence to justify the appointment of a special prosecutor, there is enough evidence for Congress to continue investigating, and there is enough evidence that the American people should be deeply concerned about the President’s dealings with Russia. We do the truth a disservice when we blur those two questions, and it is important that we make every effort to keep this distinction clear.”

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