

Obama Admits Gap in Russian 'Hack' Case

The hole in the U.S. intelligence community's "high confidence" about Russia "hacking" Democratic emails has always been who gave the material to WikiLeaks, as President Obama admitted, notes ex-CIA analyst Ray McGovern.

By Ray McGovern

Oops. Did President Barack Obama acknowledge that the extraordinary propaganda campaign to blame Russia for helping Donald Trump become president has a very big hole in it, i.e., that the U.S. intelligence community has no idea how the Democratic emails reached WikiLeaks? For weeks, eloquent obfuscation – expressed with "high confidence" – has been the name of the game, but inadvertent admissions now are dispelling some of the clouds.

Does the Russian government hack, as many other governments do? Of course. Did it hack the emails of the Democratic National Committee? Almost certainly, though it was likely not alone in doing so. In the Internet age, hacking is the bread and butter of intelligence agencies. If Russian intelligence did not do so, this would constitute gross misfeasance, especially since the DNC was such easy pickings and the possibility of gaining important insights into the U.S. government was so high. But that is not the question.

It was WikiLeaks that published the very damaging information, for example, on the DNC's dirty tricks that marginalized Sen. Bernie Sanders and ensured that Secretary of State Hillary Clinton would win the Democratic nomination. What remains to be demonstrated is that it was "the Russians" who gave those emails to WikiLeaks. And that is what the U.S. intelligence community doesn't know.

At President Obama's Jan. 18 press conference, he admitted as much: ***"the conclusions of the intelligence community with respect to the Russian hacking were not conclusive as to whether WikiLeaks was witting or not in being the conduit through which we heard about the DNC e-mails that were leaked."*** [Emphasis added]

It is necessary to carefully parse Obama's words since he prides himself in his oratorical constructs. He offered a similarly designed comment at a Dec. 16, 2016 press conference when he said: "based on uniform intelligence assessments, the Russians were responsible for hacking the DNC. ... the information was in the hands of WikiLeaks."

Note the disconnect between the confidence about hacking and the stark declarative sentence about the information ending up at WikiLeaks. Obama does

not bridge the gap because to do so would represent a bald-faced lie, which some honest intelligence officer might call him on. So, he simply presents the two sides of the chasm – implies a connection – but leaves it to the listener to make the leap.

WikiLeaks Account

As I suggested to RT viewers right after the last press conference, the reason WikiLeaks might have been “not witting” could be that it was quite sure it was not a “conduit” for “hacking” by the Russians or anyone else. WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange has stated that the Russian government was not the source and it’s significant that President Obama stopped short of contradicting him. It is also clear that WikiLeaks, in the past, has obtained LEAKED information from U.S. whistleblowers, such as Chelsea Manning.

Former U.K. Ambassador Craig Murray, a close associate of Assange, has made clear that the two separate batches of Democratic emails – one from the DNC and the other from Clinton campaign chairman John Podesta – also were leaks from insiders, not hacks from outsiders.

After the Jan. 18 press conference – what Murray called the “Stunning Admission from Obama on Wikileaks” – Murray wrote:

“In his final press conference, beginning around 8 minutes 30 seconds in, Obama admits that they have no evidence of how WikiLeaks got the DNC material. This undermines the stream of completely evidence-free nonsense that has been emerging from the US intelligence services this last two months, in which a series of suppositions have been strung together to make unfounded assertions that have been repeated again and again in the mainstream media.

“Most crucially of all Obama refers to ‘The DNC emails that were leaked.’ Note ‘leaked’ and not ‘hacked.’ I have been repeating that this was a leak, not a hack, until I am blue in the face. William Binney, former Technical Director of the NSA, has asserted that were it a hack the NSA would be able to give the precise details down to the second it occurred, and it is plain from the reports released they have no such information. Yet the media has persisted with this nonsense ‘Russian hacking’ story.”

So I suppose we should thank Barack Obama for dispelling at least some of the obfuscation at which he is so rhetorically eloquent, while our lame “mainstream” media take steno and regurgitate *ad nauseam*.

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