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CIA Claims Russia Intervened to Get Trump Elected

By Jason Ditz
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Unnamed officials are saying that the CIA has issued a secret assessment claiming that Russia not only intervened in last month's US presidential election, but did so explicitly to get President-elect Donald Trump elected

The report emerged just hours after President Obama was announced to have ordered a "full review" into the allegations Russia had attempted to interfere in the election, but takes the allegation much farther, as the limited statements from intelligence agencies on the matter had previously speculated that if Russia did do anything, it was to try to put the US election process in doubt, not to elect Trump.

The allegations that Russia was bent on getting Trump elected came primarily from the Clinton campaign, which tried to present Trump as a sort of Manchurian candidate, with Clinton herself going so far as to call Trump "Putin's puppet" in the final presidential debate.

The CIA's claims appear to dramatically undercut the rest of the government's narrative, which includes a White House confirmation that there was no measurable increase in cyber activity around the election, nor any indication Russia had planned any malicious cyber activity for the US election.

That the allegations are coming out of the CIA at all is noteworthy, as the investigation into the allegations against Russia was carried out by the FBI, and all indications were that they had come up empty. With no evidence, the FBI was unwilling to issue any statements supporting the accusations.

The CIA offered no real evidence themselves, simply making some references to unnamed people involved in leaking data to WikiLeaks being somewhat close to the Russian government. WikiLeaks denied Russia was the source of the leaks long ago.

Indeed, that the CIA is not only suddenly involved, but suddenly at the forefront, may well reflect President-elect Trump's stated policy intentions being far removed from those that the CIA has endorsed, and might be done with an eye toward undermining Trump's position in those upcoming policy battles.

At the center of those Trump vs. CIA battles is Syria, as the CIA has for years pushed to move away from the ISIS war and toward imposing regime change in Syria. Trump, by contrast, has said he intends to end the CIA-Saudi program arming the Syrian rebels, and focus on fighting ISIS. Trump was even said to be seeking to coordinate anti-ISIS operations with Russia.

The CIA allegations could easily imperil that plan, as so long as the allegations remain part of the public discourse, evidence or not, anything Trump does with respect to Russia is going to have a black cloud hanging over it.

The Trump transition team issued a statement mocking the allegations, noting "these are the same people that said Saddam Hussein had weapons of mass destruction." That's indeed the case, though ominously these same people managed to drive American policy for years on end with those false allegations.

While the Obama Administration has insisted their own "full review" won't change the outcome of the election, and indeed Obama aides suggested they won't publicly release the results, the accusations seem set to last long after Trump's inauguration, and have set the stage for a major battle between the next president and the CIA