



McCain easily shocked by alleged Russian meddling

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For someone who has served in war, Sen. John McCain is easily shocked. He has joined the wailing and gnashing of teeth filling Washington over Russia's alleged hacking of the Democrats. He and his war-happy colleague Sen. Lindsey Graham are pressing for an investigation by a newly constituted select congressional committee.

McCain naturally blamed President Barack Obama, who, it seems, is responsible for just about every problem on Earth for the latter's lack of "leadership," which McCain never defines. In this case, worries McCain, if the Russians are "able to harm the electoral process, they may destroy democracy." Indeed, he continued, "This is the sign of a possible unraveling of the world order that was established after World War II, which has made one of the most peaceful periods in the history of the world."

For all of the Sturm und Drang generated by the alleged Russian hack, it appears to have been rather modest. Some doubts remain that the Russians even were responsible. Nor was there any attack on the American electoral system. No voting machines were broken into. No votes were changed.

Donald Trump won because a majority of Americans in critical states preferred him to his badly compromised opponent, whose failings have been on display publicly for a quarter century.

Moreover, there is evidence that an attempt was made to hack Republican accounts as well. In any case, the cyber-raid was of a private party, in which no national secrets were compromised or business technologies stolen. Rather, the information obtained should have been public since it highlighted the sleaze surrounding the Clintons. The release actually benefited the American public.

The principle lesson of the Democratic hack, as well as previous attacks on Sony Pictures and other private entities, is that cybersecurity is everyone's responsibility. There are more than a

few malign actors on the loose who will take advantage of any opportunity to steal information for fun or profit.

Ironically, Democrats were not always so squeamish about reliance on Moscow for political support. In 1983 California Sen. John Tunney, an intimate of Sen. Ted Kennedy, passed a message to KGB head Viktor Chebrikov, who summarized the matter in a memo to Communist Party General Secretary Yuri Andropov, which was discovered after the Soviet Union's collapse. In sum, Kennedy hoped to bring Soviet political and military figures onto American television to explain how they were misunderstood peaceniks resisting crazy Ronald Reagan's war-like policies.

McCain, too, apparently is unaware of his manifold hypocrisies and inconsistencies. He, along with the neoconservative cabal, never has been shy about insisting on Washington's right to intervene in other nations' political systems.

Covert involvement goes back through the Cold War. Multiple aid programs for "democracy" have been created to back parties and factions seen as more pro-American. U.S. officials insisted on the Palestinian elections which brought Hamas to power. It is neoconservative gospel that Obama could and should have prevented Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's re-election in 2009. Numerous Americans, including McCain, backed a street revolution against the elected, Russia-friendly government.

Sen. McCain never seemed to find a war he didn't want to fight — Balkans, Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, Syria, Iran, North Korea, Georgia, Ukraine. In criticizing Russia's war with Georgia, which the latter started, he declared in 2008: "in the 21st century nations don't invade other nations."

If Russia was behind the Clinton hack, Americans owe Vladimir Putin a round of applause. The information released confirmed what some of us already believed about the Clintons and their followers. This cyberattack affected the 2016 presidential election by giving Americans better information to use in deciding who to vote for.

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