



House Intel Leaders Call On DOJ For Wiretap Evidence On Trump

Mar 12 2017

Washington is in need of fainting couches. Last week, the world was rocked by yet another outrageous claim by President Donald J. Trump: He asserted that former President Barack Obama had tapped his phones during the presidential campaign. So let's unpack this. That story line was building long before Trump embraced it. By smearing Mr Obama, the president may have hoped not only to deflect attention from talk of Russian Federation, but also to arm his supporters with a made-up counter-scandal to set against it.

Later, James Comey, the head of the Federal Bureau of Investigation asked the Justice Department to discredit the Trump claims since they implied the Federal Bureau of Investigation broke the law. Whereas most politicians clamor for a right to privacy, Trump demands that the press respect his God-given right to publicity.

This, though, is not the end of the story. Did Mr. Trump promise the Russians anything if he won the election? That's not the same as spying on one's political opposition. Moreover, once the government has collected the communications, it may search them for information about Americans, which (in the case of information obtained under Section 702) can be used in ordinary criminal cases as well as national security investigations. The denials from

Obama's spokesmen, and the other current and former government officials, do not cover this scenario. That's important. Monitored communication of US citizens is some of the most sensitive intelligence protected by the USA government. More recent reporting has supported this.

The FBI was rebuked by the Democratic National Committee (DNC) when the agency requested access to DNC servers, despite the FBI's repeated attempts to stress the importance of receiving direct access to DNC servers and data, Sputnik reported in January. Before this rule change, such intercepts were scrubbed to black out the names of innocent people who were monitored incidentally. This time, he believes that former President Obama wiretapped Trump Tower during the presidential campaign. He was working on a book a year ago that ordinarily would seem a little far-fetched, but which proved too close to current events.

Why does Trump continue to attack Obama? March 4: Trump tweets: "How low has President Obama gone to tapp [sic] my phones during the very sacred election process". Or White House

spin against everything and everyone not named Donald Trump will create a great whirlpool sucking the entire government into the Potomac, down the Chesapeake, and out to sea. Both of those are warranted because of the Russian interference of our election. The president's media diet includes cable television news shows, like "Fox and Friends", where guests and hosts regularly defend him.

No one enters the presidency knowing everything about the job. What's more, on substantive policy, thus far Trump has not lifted sanctions on Russian Federation or pulled out of North Atlantic Treaty Organisation. And yet, as Cato Institute scholar Julian Sanchez has pointed out, "intelligence monitoring-whether direct or indirect-of persons connected with a presidential campaign inherently carries a high risk of abuse". Alas, we are stuck now with congressional committees tacking this look-see onto the real investigation - President Trump's dealings with the Russians, along with those of his campaign staff, prior to the November election.

"This could have unfolded or become available in the time since I left the government", Clapper responded. It's one thing for Democrats to make a mess of America's relations when they hold the reins of power, but now they're hell-bent on making sure President Donald Trump can't begin to fix the tattered relationship with Moscow. Nonetheless, there is much we don't know. Or these leaks may be nothing more than rumor and innuendo.

"The American people deserve to hear all of the facts", Senate Intelligence Committee Vice Chairman Mark Warner (Democrat-Virginia) said Wednesday, having recently returned from a visit to CIA headquarters at Langley where he said he and a small group of other senators combed through a "first round of documents" in "big, big binders" pertaining to the investigation into alleged Russian meddling in the election. That's not whistleblowing. That's political warfare.