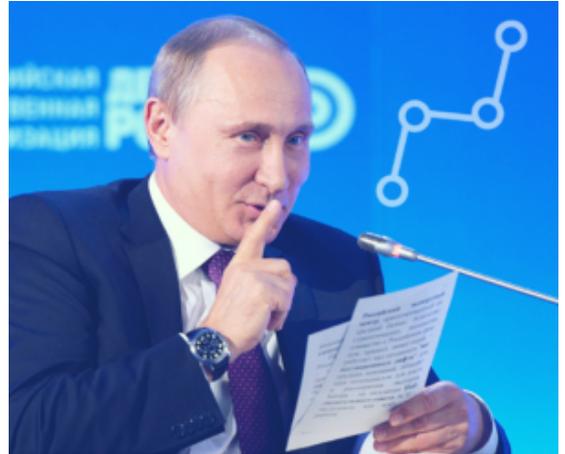


Russian Hacks Unleash Partisan Hacks

Whether or not you believe that Russia's cyber-campaign to mess with this year's U.S. election somehow altered the election's outcome, it should bother every American that there was purposeful, foreign interference in our nation's democratic process.



Unfortunately, there is no such consensus, and the divide between those who care and those who don't is not only deeply partisan, but also a testament to the culture of unabashed political hypocrisy that we now live in.

As many will recall, during the 2012 presidential campaign, President Obama and other prominent Democrats famously mocked Mitt Romney for recognizing Russia as a serious geopolitical threat.

"The 1980s are calling to ask for their foreign policy back," chided the president in one of his debates against Romney. "The Cold War has been over for 20 years."

John Kerry took it a step further in that year's Democratic National Convention. With his arms flailing in condescension as he addressed the audience, he called Romney's assertion that Russia was our number one geopolitical foe "preposterous," adding that "Mitt Romney talks like he's only seen Russia by watching *Rocky IV*."

Four years earlier, vice presidential candidate Sarah Palin was similarly maligned after she observed *Senator* Obama's reaction to the Russian Army invading the nation of Georgia,

and called it “one of indecision and moral equivalence.” She went on to say that it was the kind of response “that would only encourage Russia’s Putin to invade Ukraine next.”

Also widely criticized over the years for his strong words on Russia has been Senator John McCain. He’s been calling out Vladimir Putin as a villain since long before Barack Obama and Hillary Clinton were concocting “reset” buttons and ways to end missile-defense deals with our allies.

Of course, these prominent GOP leaders were later vindicated. Military invention in Ukraine, the downing of Malaysia Airlines Flight 17, the undermining of our efforts in Syria, and other high-profile conflicts have made our country and our president look downright impotent when it comes to Russia. And Republicans, especially over the last four years, have had an absolute field day in pointing this out.

The conservative media and the Republican party have been relentless in their criticism of the rise of Russia, as a geopolitical force, under Obama. That’s why it’s beyond remarkable that Russian interference in our *national election process* – the very heart of our system of representative government – has been met, for the most part, with striking disinterest by the Political Right.

This shouldn’t be a partisan issue, but that’s exactly what it has become. Many in the conservative media have joined President-elect Donald Trump in completely dismissing this concern as “sour grapes” by the Democrats, who are still having trouble accepting the election results.

While there’s little doubt that many liberals are struggling to recognize the legitimacy of Trump’s impending presidency, that’s not the story (at least not the important one). The *real* story is that a foreign entity hacked our political institutions, and used the information they gained to muddle with our election.

And now the same conservative pundits, who for years raised holy hell about Russia's interference in American interests, are suddenly okay with it, simply because their guy (who happens to be a big Putin fan) won the election.

The turnabout has been so sharp that between this and their newfound love for WikiLeaks, I'm half expecting some of these individuals to start wearing ushankas on their cable-news and radio shows. The hypocrisy has been astounding.

On yesterday's *The Five*, Greg Gutfeld (one of the few people in the media who frequently decries political double standards) pointed out that if Hillary Clinton had won the election amidst Russian interference, "It will be all-out war around here [Fox News]." He added, "Trump would be screaming, and of course, the [mainstream] media would dismiss it. That's the nature of team sport politics, which prevents us from seeing that a foreign power may have subverted our system, and we know that that's wrong. But maybe we don't care that it's wrong because our side won."

He was absolutely right. And it should be noted that Gutfeld hasn't been the only intellectually consistent voice, in regard to this story. John McCain, Mitch McConnell, and other GOP leaders have articulated the concern as well, and conservative writer Ben Shapiro struck the right note yesterday when he tweeted, "You can be concerned about Russian interference in our election and still think Trump would have won without that interference."

Unfortunately, the instinct of far too many pro-Trumpers (and partisans in general) is to prioritize the image of their *tribe* above the interests of the nation. Many on the political Left are engaging in similar behavior, in regard to this story.

It was the Democratic party and the liberal media, after all, that had been assuring the American public for years that

Russia was an ally, and that our strained relations with the country were attributable only to George W. Bush's "cowboy diplomacy." We were told that Obama had Putin's number, and that Russia was not a genuine threat to the United States.

Now, these *same* people (who mocked Romney and the rest) have the gall to say that Russia is such an existential threat to the very heart of our nation that they actually *changed* the outcome of our election? Give me a break. If there was one thing clear about election night, it was that Hillary Clinton didn't need any help from Russia to lose. She was a weak candidate, and her campaign made unforgivable mistakes.

Senate Minority Leader Harry Reid has even charged that the Trump campaign was actually *colluding* with Russian officials behind the scenes – an serious accusation for which there is absolutely no evidence. Of course, such rhetoric can simply be written off to Reid's long history of lying. Either that, or he had a flashback to four years ago, and confused Trump for Obama, and Putin for Medvedev. Unsurprisingly, Harry had absolutely no problem with *that* little exchange.

Despite the unprecedented *hackery* of 2016 (both literally and figuratively), I'm still convinced that this country is capable of viewing certain things through a non-partisan lens. But if we can't even form a consensus that a foreign rival intervening in our elections is a serious problem (that needs a serious answer), I'm not sure how much longer I can continue to believe that.

If Russia's intent was merely to sow distrust in American politics, they could have saved themselves some time and resources by simply studying up on American hyper-partisanship.



Hackers and Harpies and Maggots, Oh My!

☒ Notice how I put hackers before harpies and maggots. That's because I think hackers are the worst and should all be executed or at least have their fingers broken.

Ok, ok, I know that sounds a bit extreme but I am royally p.o.'d! I'm a "mom and pop operation" minus the "pop." I'm not a government entity that has lots of juicy information; I'm not a movie studio putting out funny movies about world dictators; I'm not a corporation that produces products other companies/countries want to counterfeit. I'm just trying to muse about today's cultural, social and political life in America.

But does that stop the hackers from messing with me? Nooooooooooooooooooooo! For the past few months, my little website, idontgetit.us, has been hacked not once, not twice, but three times.

If it weren't for my wonderful nephew (you know who you are) who's spent God only knows how many hours on this problem, I

don't know what I would've done.

All I know is how to write an article, how to post it on my website, how to send out a mailing letting my readers know that I've written something new and that's about it. End of story. I have no idea how the rest of it works and I just pray everything runs smoothly.

Well, about four months ago, I started to get "alerts" from my hosting service that something was wrong. For me, that's like seeing red lights appear on my dashboard or the blue screen of death on my computer screen. I completely freeze up, start to vibrate, and call my husband to the rescue or, in the case of my website, my nephew.

Even though my nephew, who has the patience of a saint, has tried to explain what's going on by talking about bots, plugins, themes, malicious injections, hacker shells, he might as well be speaking in tongues. Just yesterday, over 200 (!) attempts were made to log on to my website from Italy. That doesn't include the attempts made by creeps in the Netherlands, Russia, Iraq, United Kingdom, China, France, India, Belarus, Romania, Ukraine as well as Culver City, California over these past few months. These have since been blocked.

Bottom line is that, at the height of the problem, a page was somehow inserted into my website to sell Viagra. Yes, to sell Viagra on the internet using my website to do so.

This is so wrong on so many levels that it's absolutely unbelievable to me.

I've said this a hundred times. If these despicable people used their knowledge and talent to do something positive, we'd probably find cures for all known diseases.

But, more importantly, why would anyone purchase Viagra online? It's illegal without a prescription so if someone has

ED, why wouldn't they just go to their doctor and get one?

Someone said to me that some men are "embarrassed" to tell their doctors. I looked at him quizzically and said, "embarrassed?" No one can imagine the things I've told and asked my doctor. That's why he's there. That's why I pay him big bucks. That's why he went to medical school – to listen to all my "embarrassing" secrets and answer my questions.

Why would anyone risk buying this stuff online when they have absolutely no idea where it's coming from, what's in it, and whether they should be taking it in the first place?

According to the Viagra website, there are 14 reasons not to take it and there are numerous warnings that medicines someone's already taking could have adverse effects if mixed with Viagra. There's also information about counterfeits including the use of "blue printer ink" to make the pills blue. Why would anyone take that risk when he can legitimately get a prescription from his doctor?

My website is up and running. It's one less aggravation for me and my nephew to deal with ... for now. I'm hoping it stays that way.

I don't get it, but if you do, God bless you.