

The Real Crimes of Russiagate

For a year, the big question of Russiagate has boiled down to this: Did Donald Trump's campaign collude with the Russians in hacking the DNC?

And until last week, the answer was "no."

As ex-CIA director Mike Morell said in March, "On the question of the Trump campaign conspiring with the Russians ... there is smoke, but there is no fire, at all. ... There's no little campfire, there's no little candle, there's no spark."

Well, last week, it appeared there had been a fire in Trump Tower. On June 9, 2016, Donald Trump Jr., Jared Kushner and Paul Manafort met with Russians – in anticipation of promised dirt on Hillary Clinton's campaign.

While not a crime, this was a blunder. For Donald Jr. had long insisted there had been no collusion with the Russians. Caught in flagrante, he went full Pinocchio for four days.

And as the details of that June 9 meeting spilled out, Trump defenders were left with egg on their faces, while anti-Trump media were able to keep the spotlight laser-focused on where they want it – Russiagate.

This reality underscores a truth of our time. In the 19th century, power meant control of the means of production; today, power lies in control of the means of communication.

Who controls the media spotlight controls what people talk about and think about. And mainstream media are determined to keep that spotlight on Trump-Russia, and as far away as possible from their agenda – breaking the Trump presidency and bringing him down.

Almost daily, there are leaks from the investigative and security arms of the U.S. government designed to damage this

president.

Just days into Trump's presidency, a rifle-shot intel community leak of a December meeting between Trump national security adviser Gen. Michael Flynn and Russia's ambassador forced the firing of Flynn.

An Oval Office meeting with the Russian foreign minister in which Trump disclosed that Israeli intelligence had ferreted out evidence that ISIS was developing computer bombs to explode on airliners was leaked. This alerted ISIS, damaged the president, and imperiled Israeli intelligence sources and methods.

Some of the leaks from national security and investigative agencies are felonies, not only violations of the leaker's solemn oath to protect secrets, but of federal law.

Yet the press is happy to collude with these leakers and to pay them in the coin they seek. First, by publishing the secrets the leakers want revealed. Second, by protecting them from exposure to arrest and prosecution for the crimes they are committing.

The mutual agendas of the deep-state leakers and the mainstream media mesh perfectly.

Consider the original Russiagate offense.

Confidential emails of the DNC and John Podesta were hacked, i.e., stolen by Russian intelligence and given to WikiLeaks. And who was the third and indispensable party in this "Tinker to Evers to Chance" double-play combination?

The media itself. While deploring Russian hacking as an "act of war" against "our democracy," the media published the fruits of the hacking. It was the media that revealed what Podesta wrote and how the DNC tilted the tables against Bernie Sanders.

If the media believed Russian hacking was a crime against our democracy, why did they publish the fruits of that crime?

Is it not monumental hypocrisy to denounce Russia's hacking of the computers of Democratic political leaders and institutions, while splashing the contents of the theft all over Page 1?

Not only do our Beltway media traffic in stolen secrets and stolen goods, but the knowledge that they will publish secrets and protect those who leak them is an incentive for bureaucratic disloyalty and criminality.

Our mainstream media are like the fellow who avoids the risk of stealing cars, but wants to fence them once stolen and repainted.

Some journalists know exactly who is leaking against Trump, but they are as protective of their colleagues' "sources" as of their own. Thus, the public is left in the dark as to what the real agenda is here, and who is sabotaging a president in whom they placed so much hope.

And thus does democracy die in darkness.

Do the American people not have a "right to know" who are the leakers within the government who are daily spilling secrets to destroy their president? Are the identities of the saboteurs not a legitimate subject of investigation? Ought they not be exposed and rooted out?

Where is the special prosecutor to investigate the collusion between bureaucrats and members of the press who traffic in the stolen secrets of the republic?

Bottom line: Trump is facing a stacked deck.

People inside the executive branch are daily providing fresh meat to feed the scandal. Anti-Trump media are transfixed by it. It is the Watergate of their generation. They can smell

the blood in the water. The Pulitzers are calling. And they love it, for they loathe Donald Trump both for who he is and what he stands for.

It is hard to see when this ends, or how it ends well for the country.

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