

# No Outrage Over Democrat Ties to Foreign Election Interference

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June 15,  
2019



In the latest media-manufactured crisis *du jour*, the president now stands falsely accused of inviting foreign interference into our elections.

During an Oval Office interview with ABC News' George Stephanopoulos on Thursday, President Trump said there "isn't anything wrong" with listening to information offered up by a foreigner about a candidate's political opponent.

"It's not an interference, they have information. I think I'd take it," he told Stephanopoulos when asked whether it's appropriate to accept opposition research from someone in another country. "If I thought there was something wrong, maybe I'd take it to the FBI, if I thought there was something wrong."

The rather innocuous comments unleashed the predictable and tiresome widespread outrage. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.) scolded the president for "not knowing between right and wrong" and demanded that "everyone in the country should be appalled."

Trump's remarks provided the newest grist for impeachment threats. Perpetual bore Senator Mitt Romney (R-Utah) apparently misunderstood Trump's response, but nonetheless seized the opportunity again to boast of his moral superiority. "I ran for president twice. I ran for governor once. I ran for Senate twice," Romney told CNN, once again reminding Americans that he has been in politics for way too long. "I've never had any attempt made by a foreign government. Had that occurred, I would've contacted the FBI immediately."

Even Ellen Weintraub, the chairwoman of the Federal Election Commission, weighed in from her long-expired perch (her term officially ended in 2007) at that agency:

I would not have thought that I needed to say this. [pic.twitter.com/T743CsXq79](https://pic.twitter.com/T743CsXq79)

— Ellen L Weintraub (@EllenLWeintraub) June 13, 2019

While Weintraub's lecture earnedatta boys from the usual suspects, it again brought attention to the legitimate scandal that the media, Democrats, and NeverTrump Republicans continue to ignore and excuse: The use of foreign sources to fabricate and promote the Russian collusion fable during the 2016 presidential campaign.

Further, Weintraub's agency refuses to act on a complaint filed in October 2017 confirming not only that both Hillary Clinton's presidential campaign and the Democratic National Committee paid for that foreign-sourced dirt but also that they attempted to conceal their efforts from federal authorities in violation of campaign disclosure law.

In 2016, the Clinton campaign and DNC used Perkins Coie, a politically connected and influential law firm, as a pass-through to pay Fusion GPS for opposition research related to Donald Trump. Fusion GPS co-founder Glenn Simpson in turn hired Christopher Steele, a British operative who once worked for the U.K.'s version of the CIA. Steele is a British citizen, also known as a "foreigner."

At the same time, Steele was working as an FBI informant for the Obama Justice Department *and* representing Oleg Deripaska, a Russian oligarch close to Russian President Vladimir Putin, in legal matters before the U.S. government.

The former British spy allegedly leveraged his Russian contacts to help compile a series of opposition research memos, commonly known as the "dossier," for Fusion. Steele anonymously referred to several Kremlin-linked individuals in the dossier; notes recently disclosed from an Obama State Department official revealed that Steele claimed two of his sources were a former Russian intelligence chief and a Putin aide.

That material was then passed to Perkins Coie, the law firm representing both Hillary Clinton's political action committee and the DNC, which in turn briefed the Clinton campaign. "I'm proud that we were able to assemble some of the research that has brought

[Russian collusion] to light,” Clinton campaign manager Robby Mook told CNN’s Anderson Cooper in November 2017 after news reports confirmed the provenance of the dossier. “I’m glad that there was research there...I’m glad we’re paying attention to this now.” Mook bragged about how he first brought attention to attempted Russian meddling in July 2016 (coincidentally, the same month that Jim Comey’s FBI opened up a counterintelligence probe into the Trump campaign for suspected collusion) and later leveraged that propaganda to launch the special counsel investigation.

So Mook, the head of the Clinton campaign, boasted about accepting dirt on Donald Trump furnished by a paid foreigner operative (Steele) and possibly sourced by Kremlin-linked associates—and no one cared. News outlets also did not care; both Yahoo News and Mother Jones published stories based on the dossier before the presidential election. Reporters Michael Isikoff and David Corn personally met with both Simpson and Steele, a foreigner, to learn more about his Russian-based research. Neither contacted the FBI with the alarming news that a British national was peddling Russian-sourced allegations in an effort to plant negative stories about the Donald Trump before Election Day.

Steele also reportedly met with reporters and editors at the *Washington Post*, *New York Times*, *The New Yorker*, and CNN to discuss the dossier, according to Simpson’s Senate testimony. No one notified the FBI.

Another person who seems unconcerned about known foreign interference in an American election is . . . Ellen Weintraub. A Democrat appointed by President George W. Bush in 2002, Weintraub was elected FEC chairwoman the following year. Despite her many public rebukes of President Trump and Republicans—and her deep concern about how Russian Facebook memes could brainwash American voters—Weintraub hasn’t expressed any alarm over the evidence that the Clinton campaign and DNC paid for foreign-sourced information on Trump.

Weintraub’s agency continues to sit on a complaint filed 20 months ago by the D.C.-based Campaign Legal Center detailing how both committees failed to report payments to Fusion GPS, only disclosing nearly \$13 million in payments to Perkins Coie during the 2016 election cycle. The funds were vaguely described as “legal services” on reporting documents.

According to the complainant, however, “there is reason to believe that Hillary for America and the DNC filed false reports by (a) failing to accurately report the ‘purpose’ of disbursements, describing disbursements for ‘legal services’ or ‘legal and compliance consulting’ when the actual purpose was research, and (b) inaccurately reporting payments to Perkins Coie that were, in reality, earmarked for Fusion GPS, in violation of FECA’s reporting requirements.”

In his House Intelligence Committee testimony, Simpson said that Perkins Coie paid Fusion \$50,000 per month plus expenses beginning in April 2016. Steele, in turn, was paid about \$180,000 for his foreign-sourced opposition research. (The only difference between what the Democrats actually did in 2016 and what Trump suggested this week is that the Democrats paid big bucks for their international meddling efforts.)

But the FEC still hasn't taken action on the complaint—and there might be a reason why. Before joining the FEC, Weintraub herself was an attorney at Perkins Coie, serving as “Of Counsel to the Political Law Group” according to her FEC bio. A spokesman confirmed to me in an email that “nothing yet” has happened with the complaint and he could not say whether Weintraub has recused herself from investigating the claims against Clinton campaign and the DNC.

So, contrary to Weintraub's threat that “anyone who solicits or accepts foreign assistance risks being on the wrong side of a federal investigation,” her agency has not taken any steps either to punish the known foreign assistance Democrats accepted in the 2016 election to damage Trump's candidacy, or to impose sanctions on the violations that kept all of that foreign activity hidden from the American public.

The only consolation in this latest fracas is that when the investigation into the corrupt origins of the FBI's probe into the Trump campaign exposes the many foreign actors involved in the Democratic-choreographed Russian collusion hoax, we should see who is truly concerned with foreign interference in our elections and who again is only joining the latest outrage machine because, Trump.

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