

DAN COATS STILL REFUSING TO PROVIDE THE EVIDENCE THAT RUSSIA DIDN'T AFFECT THE ELECTION

Last month, I noted a troubling exchange between Martin Heinrich, Dan Coats, and Richard Burr in the Global Threats Hearing.

Martin Heinrich then asked Coats why ODNI had not shared the report on election tampering *even with the Senate Intelligence Committee*.

Heinrich: Director Coats, I want to come back to you for a moment. Your office issued a statement recently announcing that you had submitted the intelligence community's report assessing the threats to the 2018 mid-term elections to the President and to appropriate Executive Agencies. Our committee has not seen this report. And despite committee requests following the election that the ODNI brief the committee on any identified threats, it took ODNI two months to get a simple oral briefing and no written assessment has yet been provided. Can you explain to me why we haven't been kept more fully and currently informed about those Russian activities in the 2018-

Chairman Richard Burr interrupts to say that, in fact, he and Vice Chair Mark Warner *have* seen the report.

Burr: Before you respond, let me just acknowledge to the members that the Vice Chairman and I have both been briefed on the report and it's my understanding that the report at some point will be available.

Coats then gives a lame excuse about the deadlines, 45 days, then 45 days.

Coats: The process that we're going through are two 45 day periods, one for the IC to assess whether there was anything that resulted in a change of the vote or anything with machines, uh, what the influence efforts were and so forth. So we collected all of that, and the second 45 days – which we then provided to the Chairman and Vice Chairman. And the second 45 days is with DHS looking, and DOJ, looking at whether there's information enough there to take – to determine what kind of response they might take. We're waiting for that final information to come in.

After Coats dodges his question about sharing the report with the Committee, Heinrich then turns to Burr to figure out when they're going to get the information. Burr at least hints that the Executive might try to withhold this report, but it hasn't gotten to that yet.

Heinrich: So the rest of us can look forward – so the rest of us can then look forward to reading the report?

Coats: I think we will be informing the Chairman and the Vice Chairman of that, of their decisions.

Heinrich: That's not what I asked. Will the rest of the Committee have access to that report, Mr. Chairman?

[pause]

Heinrich: Chairman Burr?

Burr; Well, let me say to members we're sort of in unchartered ground. But I make the same commitment I always do, that anything that the Vice Chairman and myself are exposed to, we'll make every request to open the aperture so that all members will be able to read I think it's vitally important, especially on this one, we're not to a point where we've been denied or we're not to a point that negotiations need to start. So it's my hope that, once the final 45-day window is up that is a report that will be made available, probably to members only.

Coming as it did in a hearing where it became clear that Trump's spooks are helpless in keeping Trump from pursuing policies that damage the country, this exchange got very little attention. But it should!

DOJ missed its 45 day plus 45 day deadline of reporting whether any election tampering had had an effect. But just by one day. The day after their deadline, the Big Dick Toilet Salesman Matt Whitaker and serial liar Kirstjen Nielsen gave Trump a report claiming that any tampering

had not had any impact on the election.

Although the specific conclusions within the joint report must remain classified, the Departments have concluded there is no evidence to date that any identified activities of a foreign government or foreign agent had a material impact on the integrity or security of election infrastructure or political/campaign infrastructure used in the 2018 midterm elections for the United States Congress. This finding was informed by a report prepared by the Office of the Director of National Intelligence (ODNI) pursuant to the same Executive Order and is consistent with what was indicated by the U.S. government after the 2018 elections.

While the report remains classified, its findings will help drive future efforts to protect election and political/campaign infrastructure from foreign interference.

Then, today, CyberComm boasted that that they had helped deter Russia during the midterms.

Senators from both political parties on Thursday praised the military's cyber force for helping secure last year's midterm elections, with one suggesting it was largely due to U.S. Cyber Command that the Russians failed to affect the 2018 vote.

"Would it be fair to say that it is not a coincidence that this election went off without a hitch and the fact that you were actively involved in the protection of very important infrastructure?" Sen. Mike Rounds (R-S.D.) asked Gen. Paul Nakasone, the command's leader, at a hearing of the Senate Armed Services Committee.

Military officials have said new

authorities, approved over the last year, enabled CyberCom to be more aggressive – and effective – in what they privately say was an apparent success. Nakasone, who also heads the National Security Agency, stopped short of saying it was CyberCom that made the difference, telling Rounds that safeguarding the election was the agencies’ “number-one priority.”

But ODNI is still not providing SSCI – the people who are supposed to see such evidence – proof. Heinrich wrote Dan Coats a letter, signed by every member of SSCI,

Your office a statement in December that you had submitted the Intelligence Committee’s report assessing threats to the 2018 elections to the president and appropriate executive agencies. This month, the acting Attorney General and the Secretary of Homeland Security announced they had submitted their joint report evaluating the impact of any foreign interference on election infrastructure for the infrastructure of political organizations during the midterm elections.

While the agencies provided brief unclassified summaries of the reports’ findings, the Select Committee on Intelligence has not been provided either report. We request that you provide to all Committee Members and cleared staff both classified reports required by EO 13848 as soon as possible. Those reports are necessary for the Committee to meet its mission and charter to conduct vigorous oversight over the intelligence and intelligence-related activities of the United States Government.

They’re clearly hiding something. The question

is whether it's that Trump didn't try to prevent tampering, or that some of the efforts – included the known effort to hack Claire McCaskill – actually did have an effect.