

THE TRUMP ADMINISTRATION DISPROVES THE TRUMP ADMINISTRATION'S CLAIMS THAT MIKE FLYNN'S COMMUNICATIONS WITH SERGEY KISLYAK WERE ROUTINE

In this post, I showed how former National Security Advisor Susan Rice's memorialization of a conversation about Mike Flynn's calls to Sergey Kislyak with President Obama and others on January 5, 2017 made it clear that Obama wanted nothing to do with any investigation into Flynn. I noted there was one redacted passage that seemed, "consistent with Obama adopting some caution, but deferring any more drastic measures unless, 'anything changes in the next few weeks.'"

In a never-ending bid to distract from Trump's disastrous performance on COVID, the Trump Administration has now released the full letter, which reads this way:

On January 5, following a briefing by IC leadership on Russian hacking during the 2016 Presidential election, President Obama had a brief follow-on conversation with FBI Director Jim Comey and Deputy Attorney General Sally Yates in the Oval Office. Vice President Biden and I were also present.

President Obama began the conversation by stressing his continued commitment to ensuring that every aspect of this issue is handled by the Intelligence and law

enforcement communities “by the book”. The President stressed that he is not asking about, initiating or instructing anything from a law enforcement perspective. He reiterated that our law enforcement team needs to proceed as it normally would by the book.

From a national security perspective, however, President Obama said he wants to be sure that, as we engage with the incoming team, we are mindful to ascertain if there is any reason that we cannot share information fully as it relates to Russia.

Director Comey affirmed that he is proceeding “by the book” as it relates to law enforcement. From a national security perspective, Comey said he does have some concerns that incoming NSA Flynn is speaking frequently with Russian Ambassador Kislyak. Comey said that could be an issue as it relates to sharing information. President Obama asked if Comey was saying that the NSC should not pass sensitive information related to Russia to Flynn. Comey replied, “potentially.” He added that he has no indication thus far that Flynn has passed classified information to Kislyak, but he noted that “the level of communication is unusual.”

The President asked Comey to inform him if anything changes in the next few weeks that should affect how we share classified information with the incoming team. Comey said he would.

The italicized passage is new. It reveals that Flynn was speaking to Kislyak “frequently,” a comment which is consistent with Sally Yates’ concern about the “back and forth” between Kislyak in which Flynn was making “specific asks.” Some of those specific asks Yates described in her Mueller interview remain

redacted (as are the transcripts of Flynn's calls with Kislyak themselves).

In DOJ's motion to dismiss Flynn's prosecution, they argue that Flynn's calls were routine calls made to "build relationships."

Such calls are not uncommon when incumbent public officials preparing for their oncoming duties seek to begin and build relationships with soon-to-be counterparts.

But the motion addresses only a subset of calls, not (for example) the face-to-face meeting with Kislyak on December 1, or calls Flynn made during the election (his 302 mentions one he made in January 2016, at a time he claimed not to be working with Trump, but there are reports there were more).

Most importantly, the filing doesn't address a key reason why the FBI had reason to investigate Mike Flynn: the frequency of his calls to Kislyak were "unusual."

In an effort to gaslight Trump supporters, then, the Trump Administration just showed that DOJ's motion to dismiss falsely treated as normal communications that were not.

Which, given that the Trump Administration just produced evidence that proves DOJ's motion to dismiss made a false claim, provides Sullivan all the more reason to demand all the transcripts between Flynn and Kislyak.