



Written by [Ron Paul](#) on February 6, 2018

## What the FBI/FISA Memo Really Tells Us About Our Government

The release of the House Intelligence Committee's memo on the FBI's abuse of the FISA process set off a partisan firestorm. The Democrats warned us beforehand that declassifying the memo would be the end of the world as we know it. It was reckless to allow Americans to see this classified material, they said. Agents in the field could be harmed, sources and methods would be compromised, they claimed.



Republicans who had seen the memo claimed that it was far worse than Watergate. They said that mass firings would begin immediately after it became public. They said that the criminality of US government agencies exposed by the memo would shock Americans.

Then it was released and the world did not end. FBI agents have thus far not been fired. Seeing "classified" material did not terrify us, but rather it demonstrated clearly that information is kept from us by claiming it is "classified."

In the end, both sides got it wrong. Here's what the memo really shows us:

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First, the memo demonstrates that there is a "deep state" that does not want things like elections to threaten its existence. Candidate Trump's repeated promises to get along with Russia and to re-assess NATO so many years after the end of the Cold War were threatening to a Washington that depends on creating enemies to sustain the fear needed to justify a trillion dollar yearly military budget.

Imagine if candidate Trump had kept his campaign promises when he became President. Without the "Russia threat" and without the "China threat" and without the need to dump billions into NATO, we might actually have reaped a "peace dividend" more than a quarter century after the end of the Cold War. That would have starved the war-promoting military-industrial complex and its network of pro-war "think tanks" that populate the Washington Beltway area.

Second, the memo shows us that neither Republicans nor Democrats really care that much about surveillance abuse when average Americans are the victims. It is clear that the FISA abuse detailed in the memo was well known to Republicans like House Intelligence Committee Chairman Devin Nunes before the memo was actually released. It was likely also well known by Democrats in the House. But both parties suppressed this evidence of FBI abuse of the FISA process until after the FISA Amendments Act could be re-authorized. They didn't want Americans to know how corrupt the surveillance system really is and how the US has become far too much like East Germany. That might cause more Americans to call up their Representatives and demand that the FISA mass surveillance amendment be allowed to sunset.

Ironically, Chairman Nunes was the biggest cheerleader for the extension of the FISA Amendments even as he knew how terribly the FISA process had been abused!



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Finally, hawks on both sides of the aisle in Congress used “Russia-gate” as an excuse to build animosity toward Russia among average Americans. They knew from the classified information that there was no basis for their claims that the Trump Administration was put into office with Moscow’s assistance, but they played along because it served their real goal of keeping the US on war footing and keeping the gravy train rolling.

But don’t worry: the neocons in both parties will soon find another excuse to keep us terrified and ready to flush away a trillion dollars a year on military spending and continue our arguments and new “Cold War” with Russia.

In the meantime, be skeptical of both parties. With few exceptions they are not protecting liberty but promoting its opposite.

*Ron Paul is a former U.S. congressman from Texas. This article originally appeared at the [Ron Paul Institute for Peace and Prosperity](#) and is reprinted here with permission.*



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