



Written by [C. Mitchell Shaw](#) on February 17, 2017

## Is the Intelligence Community Keeping President Trump in the Dark?

The ongoing war between the intelligence community and Donald Trump has not eased in the wake of his election; it appears to have escalated, with the intelligence community withholding information from the president. As a candidate, Trump blasted the intelligence community for refusing to conduct a real investigation of Hillary Clinton's many crimes that would have naturally led to an indictment. As President-elect, Trump accused the intelligence community of leaking a manufactured "dossier" alleging that he was under the control of the Kremlin. Now — as president — Trump is finding that even his picks for top intelligence posts are nothing like a guarantee that the intelligence community is mending its evil ways.



The *Wall Street Journal* is [reporting](#) that in the current wave of the war between President Trump and the intelligence agencies that are supposed to supply the president with the intelligence he needs to fulfill his duties as president, those agencies "have withheld sensitive intelligence from President Donald Trump because they are concerned it could be leaked or compromised, according to current and former officials familiar with the matter."

The *Journal* article also says:

The officials' decision to keep information from Mr. Trump underscores the deep mistrust that has developed between the intelligence community and the president over his team's contacts with the Russian government, as well as the enmity he has shown toward U.S. spy agencies. On Wednesday, Mr. Trump accused the agencies of leaking information to undermine him.

In some of these cases of withheld information, officials have decided not to show Mr. Trump the sources and methods that the intelligence agencies use to collect information, the current and former officials said. Those sources and methods could include, for instance, the means that an agency uses to spy on a foreign government.

The White House disputes the story, with an unnamed "White House official " saying, "There is nothing that leads us to believe that this is an accurate account of what is actually happening." And President Trump took to his favorite social media platform to address the issue, tweeting "FAKE NEWS media, which makes up stories and 'sources,' is far more effective than the discredited Democrats - but they are fading fast!" This could be a case of the Trump administration attempting to smooth the waters while looking at options for dealing with the intelligence community. Because — since President Trump's attempts to reform the intelligence community by way of appointing new leadership have failed



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to produce any real reform — he appears to be ready to take more drastic steps.

[According to New York magazine,](#)

A week ago, *Mother Jones* lamented that everyone had mysteriously stopped talking about the “biggest election-related scandal since Watergate”: the U.S. intelligence agencies’ consensus that Russia meddled in the U.S. election in an attempt to help Donald Trump. By the end of the day, the *Washington Post* had published a story that led to — or perhaps just expedited — the firing of National Security Adviser Michael Flynn. And just as that news cycle was winding down on Tuesday, another story emerged alleging that members of the Trump campaign had extensive contact with Russia.

A *New York Times* report on Wednesday night shed some light on why members of the intelligence community might want such information to be public (aside from their alarm over the possibility of the U.S. government being compromised by Russia, and the chaos within the Trump administration). Administration officials tell the paper that President Trump is planning to put Cerberus Capital Management co-founder Stephen Feinberg — a billionaire Trump ally with no experience in national security matters — in charge of a broad review of the intelligence agencies.

This plan has been met with “fierce resistance” from the intelligence community, whose members are worried that this could “curtail their independence and reduce the flow of information that contradicts the president’s worldview,” according to the *Times*.

Of course (as mentioned earlier in this article), tensions between Trump and the intelligence community predate Trump’s presidency. As *The New American* [reported](#) at the time that the intelligence community allowed a classified — and spurious — “[dossier](#)” alleging the various ways and means by which the Kremlin had supposed control over President-elect Trump to leak to the media:

In his press conference Wednesday, President-elect Donald Trump responded to recent attacks against him by the intelligence community by saying that leaking “information that turned out to be so false and fake” was “something that Nazi Germany would have done.” His remarks were in reference to an unsubstantiated “dossier” added to the intelligence community’s report of alleged Russian interference in recent U.S. elections.

In that press conference on January 11, Trump said:

I think it was disgraceful. Disgraceful that the intelligence agencies allowed any information that turned out to be so false and fake out. I think it’s a disgrace, and I say that’s something that Nazi Germany would have done — and did do. I think it’s a disgrace that information that was false and fake and never happened got released to the public.

In that same article, this writer made the assertion that “the intelligence community is a dysfunctional group of liars and manipulators, and Trump — whatever his other faults may be — is standing up to them.” Of course, standing up to the intelligence community is likely to draw fire. It is reasonable to conclude that that fire may take the form of the intelligence community taking the advice of former Senator Harry Reid (D-Nev.) to provide Trump with fake intelligence. As this writer said in that article of the intelligence community’s claim that Trump had been “presented” with a two-page synopsis of the less-than-credible “dossier” — a claim denied by Trump and others, even some within the intelligence community:

It appears the intelligence community, which has no love for Trump, is working to delegitimize his



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presidency before it even begins. In fact, the intelligence agencies' actions may actually be following the advice offered by former Senator Harry Reid (D-Nev.) when he said the best way for them to deal with Trump would be to "Fake it, pretend you're doing a briefing, but you can't give the guy any information." Reid's comments were made in July when he was still the Senate minority leader, and Trump was the GOP nominee in the presidential race. In a video interview, Reid told the *Huffington Post*:

How would the CIA and the other intelligence agencies brief this guy? How could they do that? I would suggest to the intelligence agencies, if you're forced to brief this guy, don't tell him anything, just fake it, because this man is dangerous. Fake it, pretend you're doing a briefing, but you can't give the guy any information.

Reid went on to say about Trump, "This guy, he's part of a foreign power. We knew he liked Putin before this, but this is quite ridiculous."

Ah, the obligatory reference to Russia that has played such an important role in this poorly scripted drama.

Reid repeated his advice in another video interview — this time with CNN correspondent Manu Raju, saying, "What I've suggested is now — because he's the nominee for the party and he's entitled to briefings from the CIA for example — I said publicly, 'Give him fake briefings. Pretend you're briefing him. Don't tell him anything that you don't want to get out.'" Raju asked Reid, "But as the Republican nominee, isn't he entitled to get those briefings?" Reid responded, "Give him fake briefings." Raju asked, "What does that even mean?" Undeterred, Reid answered, "It means they'll tell him stuff; he won't know the difference." With obvious shock, Raju said, "You're basically telling the intelligence community to lie to him!"

Reid did what so many liberals do without even realizing it. He shifted gears and pretended that he never suggested any such thing. "No. No, you don't *lie*. I'm not going to lie to you, that's why I have to tell you everything."

It now appears that in its war with President Trump, the intelligence community — which lied both to and about Trump when he was president-elect — is withholding intelligence from him as president. This looks like a good time for a complete house-cleaning, because if the intelligence community cannot be trusted, it serves no purpose whatsoever.



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