



Written by [Steve Byas](#) on July 16, 2018

Trump Criticized for Performance at Summit With Putin

Shortly after the joint press conference of President Donald Trump and Russian President Vladimir Putin, the harsh criticisms began. Former CIA Director (for President Barack Obama) John Brennan actually tweeted that Trump's performance at the press briefing was "nothing short of treasonous."



It is not surprising that Trump's summit with Putin, and his efforts to improve relations with Russia, has generated intense criticism from the "usual suspects" — Democrats and their allies in the liberal media — but what is disappointing is that he is being lambasted by fellow Republicans and even from some personalities at Fox News. No one can be surprised that Anderson Cooper of CNN would call Trump's performance "disgraceful," but even Neil Cavuto of Fox News described it as "humiliatingly embarrassing."

Senator John McCain (R-Ariz.), a frequent critic of Trump, was particularly harsh in his remarks. "Today's press conference in Helsinki was one of the most disgraceful performances by an American president in memory. The damage inflicted by President Trump's naivete, egotism, false equivalence, and sympathy for autocrats is difficult to calculate."

McCain continued, "These were the deliberate choices of a president who seems determined to realize his delusions of a warm relationship with Putin's regime without any regard for the true nature of his rule, his violent disregard for the sovereignty of his neighbors, his complicity in the slaughter of the Syrian people, his violation of international treaties, and his assault on democratic institutions throughout the world."

Finally, McCain asserted, "No prior president has ever abased himself more abjectly before a tyrant."

Really?

This is incredible. No one can seriously think that McCain has forgotten public laudatory comments made by President Franklin Roosevelt about Soviet dictator Joseph Stalin, a bloodthirsty tyrant who subjugated most of eastern Europe and was responsible for the deaths of tens of millions of his own people. In Beijing in 1972, President Richard Nixon toasted Chinese Communist dictator Mao Tse-tung, who, according to some estimates, killed 60 million human beings. President Jimmy Carter kissed Soviet dictator Leonid Brezhnev, who sent tanks into Czechoslovakia in 1968 to keep that country communist, on both cheeks. Even Putin has been praised in the past from both sides of the aisle — President George W. Bush said he looked into Putin's eyes and supposedly saw his soul. And, of course, President



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Obama's secretary of state, Hillary Clinton, famously handed Putin's foreign minister, Sergei Lavrov, a red "reset" button in 2009. (The Russian word "overload" was mistakenly under the English word, but Lavrov graciously said he would accept the "reset" button).

And who can forget Obama, not knowing his microphone was on, telling then-Russian President Dmitry Medvedev, "This is my last election. After my election I have more flexibility." Medvedev responded, "I understand. I will transmit this information to Vladimir, and I stand with you."

Can one imagine what would happen if a similar episode occurred between Trump and Putin during the present summit?

Even House Speaker Paul Ryan (R-Wis.) piled on in his criticism of Trump: "The president must appreciate that Russia is not our ally. There is no moral equivalence between the United States and Russia, which remains hostile to our most basic values and ideals. The United States must be focused on holding Russia accountable and putting an end to its vile attacks on democracy."

But nothing tops the comments by Brennan in vitriol when he said that Trump's performance rose the level of high crimes and treason. He called on Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, National Security Adviser John Bolton, and Chief of Staff John Kelly to resign in protest. "This," Brennan said, "I think rises to the point of good American patriots resigning in objection to that performance by Donald Trump. I'm at a loss of words to describe just how outrageous his words, his statements, his behavior has been ... and how Mr. Putin now is the master puppeteer of Donald Trump, the person who is in our Oval Office. Outrageous."

What is "outrageous" is that John Brennan would dare question anyone else's patriotism. In 1976, Brennan voted for Gus Hall, the candidate of the U.S. Communist Party, which at that time was a wholly-owned subsidiary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. This was in the middle of the Cold War, when hundreds of Soviet nuclear missiles were pointed toward the United States, and during a time when the Soviet Union had thousands of political prisoners in its gulags.

Yet, he thinks it is Trump who has committed treason?

What exactly did Trump do that was "treasonous"? He asserted that he doesn't "see any reason" to think the Russian government interfered in the 2016 presidential election in which Trump defeated Democratic Party opponent Hillary Clinton — the same Hillary Clinton who gave the Russian foreign minister a "reset" button.

Putin said through a translator, "The Russian state has never interfered and is not going to interfere into internal American affairs, including [the] election process."

A Monday-afternoon promotional news clip of the press conference by MSNBC powerfully illustrates how the anti-Trump media distorts the news to advance their anti-Trump agenda. A reporter asked Putin if he personally favored Trump in the 2016 presidential race, and if his government interfered in the American election. The MSNBC clip shows Putin responding, "Yes, I wanted him to win because he spoke of normalization of Russian-U.S. ties," but cuts off before showing the rest of Putin's response, in which he flatly rejected the allegations that his government colluded with the Trump campaign, calling it "complete nonsense."

Putin was adamant: "I had to repeat that the Russian state never interfered and does not plan to interfere in internal American electoral process."

The obsession over the alleged Russian interference into the U.S. election overshadowed the other



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important parts of the summit. The two world leaders discussed a wide range of issues, including ways to protect Israel from the Syrian conflict, arms control, North Korea, and why it is good for the United States and Russia to get along.

Trump said that it is in the interest of both the United States and Russia to find ways to “cooperate in pursuit of shared interests,” and a productive dialogue between the two nations is also “good for the world.”

Yet, because Trump did not stand at the podium and insult Putin publicly, he is treated to harsh invective not only from expected liberal sources such as CNN and MSNBC, but also supposed allies like Fox News and House Speaker Paul Ryan. And Brennan has the audacity to argue that Trump is the one who has committed treason.

Putin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said that Putin respects Trump’s “America First” stance because Putin believes in “Russia First.” Yet, the candidate who wants to put “America First” is accused of treason, simply because he wants to restore better relations with another major world power.

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