



Written by [R. Cort Kirkwood](#) on August 6, 2018

Media Wrong; Trump Did Not Admit Anything New in Tweet

The meeting between Donald Trump, Jr. and some Russians in 2016, ostensibly to get negative information about Hillary Clinton, is again the subject of blaring headlines.

[From NBC](#): "Trump says son's Trump Tower meeting with Russians meant to 'get information' on Clinton."

[From the Associated Press](#): "In a change, Trump says meeting's purpose was Clinton info."

[From the New York Times](#): "President Admits Trump Tower Meeting Was Meant to Get Dirt on Clinton."

But the headlines have just one problem. The president "admitted" this more than a year ago.

The Story

[The president's latest tweet said this](#):

Fake News reporting, a complete fabrication, that I am concerned about the meeting my wonderful son, Donald, had in Trump Tower. This was a meeting to get information on an opponent, totally legal and done all the time in politics — and it went nowhere. I did not know about it!

That sent the news media into another spasm of [Trump Derangement Syndrome](#).

[The New York Times](#):

President Trump said on Sunday that a Trump Tower meeting between top campaign aides and a Kremlin-connected lawyer was designed to "get information on an opponent" — the starkest acknowledgment yet that a statement he dictated last year about the encounter was misleading.

Mr. Trump made the comment in a tweet on Sunday morning that was intended to be a defense of the June 2016 meeting and the role his son Donald Trump Jr. played in hosting it. The president claimed that it was "totally legal" and of the sort "done all the time in politics."

But the tweet also served as an admission that the Trump team had not been forthright when Donald Trump Jr. issued a statement in July 2017 saying that the meeting had been primarily about the adoption of Russian children.

That statement is being scrutinized by the special counsel, Robert S. Mueller III, who is examining a broad array of Mr. Trump's tweets and public statements to determine whether he made them as part of an effort to deceive investigators.

Unhappily for the *Times*, as it own story admits, its first paragraph — and others like it elsewhere — doesn't say anything new.

And, read carefully, the story doesn't say what even its own editors think it says.

2017 Tweet





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A year ago, Trump said the meeting was, indeed, intended to produce material on Clinton. In politics, that's called opposition research.

[Here is the tweet](#) from 2017:

Most politicians would have gone to a meeting like the one Don jr attended in order to get info on an opponent. That's politics!

So today's breathless headlines are, as the [Powerline blog's Paul Mirengoff called them](#), "fake news."

That's because the *Times* — and other news outlets — are trying to recycle Trump's "admission" as something new and they are conflating words with different meanings.

Mirengoff explained that the *Times* is confusing the purpose of the meeting — for Trump, getting the information about Clinton — with the focus of the meeting — "what the participants actually talked about.... The focus and the purpose might be two different things. In this instance, they appear to have been different."

So, as [Mirengoff wrote](#):

Thus, the *Times'* suggestion that there's something new here is, in a real sense, fake news. It's manufactured.

And manufactured for a purpose. The *Times* wants to keep up its Russia-related anti-Trump drumbeat. If recycling old stories and trying to pass them off as news is required, the *Times* will oblige happily.

To make it look like there's something new here, the *Times* cites old statements, not by President Trump but by members of his team, that the meeting focused on subjects other than opposition research.

Indeed, that's been the Trump team's story. Donald Trump Jr. and Jared Kushner expected to get dirt (and would have "loved" to, as Trump Jr. said) but instead the Russians talked about other matters — sanctions and adoptions. These other matters were the focus of the meeting, though not the original purpose from the Trump team's perspective. When it became obvious that the focus of the meeting would not be on Hillary Clinton, Trump Jr. quickly lost interest and the meeting ended soon thereafter.

Thus, the purported disconnect between President Trump's tweets and statements by others on his team does not exist. Claims to the contrary are fake news.

Mirengoff also explained why Trump should not meet with Special Counsel Robert Mueller, who is investigating "collusion" between Trump's campaign and the Russians to steal what was rightfully Hillary Clinton's presidency. Mueller wants to catch Trump in a lie about his foreknowledge of the meeting.

End the Probe

Last week, [Trump said](#) the time had come for Mueller to end what has become a laughable snipe hunt.

In their latest headlines, the media are focused on Trump's acquiring negative information from the Russians on Hillary Clinton, which apparently didn't happen, at least according to *Times* story, as Mirengoff noted.

But the media don't much care about the Clinton campaign's peddling the anti-Trump dossier created



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by a British intelligence agent, and the [FBI's using that dossier](#) to get a warrant to wiretap a Trump campaign advisor.



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