



Written by [James Murphy](#) on July 1, 2019

## The “Forgotten President” Claims Trump’s Presidency is “Illegitimate”

Former president Jimmy Carter (shown) is claiming that current President Donald Trump would not have won the 2016 presidential election without assistance from Russia. Carter made the remarks at a [Carter Center Event](#) in Leesburg, Virginia on Friday.



And in his own inimitable way, the current president responded in kind.

Sitting next to his former vice-president Walter Mondale, the 94-year-old Carter was [asked how the United States should respond to Russia’s alleged election meddling in 2016](#).

“Well, the president himself should condemn it, admit that it happened, which I think 16 intelligence agencies have already agreed to say. And there’s no doubt that the Russians did interfere in the election. And I think the interference, although not yet quantified, if fully investigated would show that Trump didn’t actually win the election in 2016. He lost the election, and he was put into office because the Russians interfered on his behalf.”

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The one-term former president was likely referring to the [2017 analysis](#) that concluded that Russia interfered with the 2016 election.

For the record, Trump defeated Democrat Hillary Clinton by garnering 304 electoral votes to Clinton’s 227.

When asked by moderator and presidential biographer Jon Meacham if he believed that his assertions made Trump an “illegitimate” president, Carter paused, then responded, “Based on what I just said, which I can’t retract, I would say yes.”

Previously, in a [New York Times piece in 2017](#), Carter said, “I don’t think there’s any evidence that what the Russians did changed enough votes, or any votes.”

Earlier in the day, at a photo-op during the G-20 summit in Japan, Trump stood next to Russian President Vladimir Putin. A journalist shouted a question about whether he would tell Putin not to interfere in the 2020 election. Trump responded, “Of course, I will.” Then, in a truly “Trumpian” moment, the president turned to Putin, wagged his finger in a mockingly stern way and said, “Don’t meddle in the election.”

The light moment between Trump and Putin set the leftist outrage machine into full motion with some [comparing](#) Trump’s joking to outgoing British Prime Minister Theresa May’s dour expression while taking a photo with Putin. The outgoing British leader had reportedly been discussing the 2018 nerve agent attack on former Russian spy Sergei Skripal and his daughter in Salisbury in the U.K. Skripal and his daughter survived the attack although they were almost killed.

Trump reacted to Carter’s assertion of illegitimacy in a muted fashion for the bombastic current



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president. Perhaps in deference to the nonagenarian's age, Trump called Carter "a nice man," but also a "terrible president."

Trump went on to explain that he won because he "campaignned better, smarter, hotter than Hillary Clinton. I went to Wisconsin, I went to Michigan the night of the vote."

"I won Michigan, I won Wisconsin, I won Pennsylvania, I won states that hadn't been won by Republicans for many years," Trump continued. "This had nothing to do with anybody but the fact that I worked much harder and smarter than Hillary Clinton did."

Trump said he "felt bad" for the former president, asserting that Carter's one term in office was so bad that his own Democrat Party has distanced itself from the erstwhile leader. "He's been trashed within his own party, he's been badly trashed. I felt bad for him because you look over the years, his party has virtually ... he's like the forgotten president," Trump said. "And I understand why they say that."

Previously, any relationship that Trump shared with Carter was apparently cordial, with Carter having taken a [phone call](#) from Trump in April discussing upcoming trade talks with China. Carter also reportedly [offered to travel to North Korea](#) to speak with Kim Jong-un on Trump's behalf. Carter famously traveled to North Korea in 1994 over the objections of then-President Bill Clinton to meet with Kim Jong-un's grandfather Kim Il-sung in order to broker a peace deal.

In the same [2017 New York Times article](#) mentioned above, Carter seemed to defend Trump — at least a little — saying, "I think the media have been harder on Trump than any other president certainly that I've known about," Carter said. "I think they feel free to claim that Trump is mentally and everything else without hesitation."

It would appear that with another election season coming up, the former president has gotten new marching orders from the DNC and has "changed his mind" about certain things.

*Photo of former president Jimmy Carter: AP Images*



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