



Written by [C. Mitchell Shaw](#) on July 30, 2019

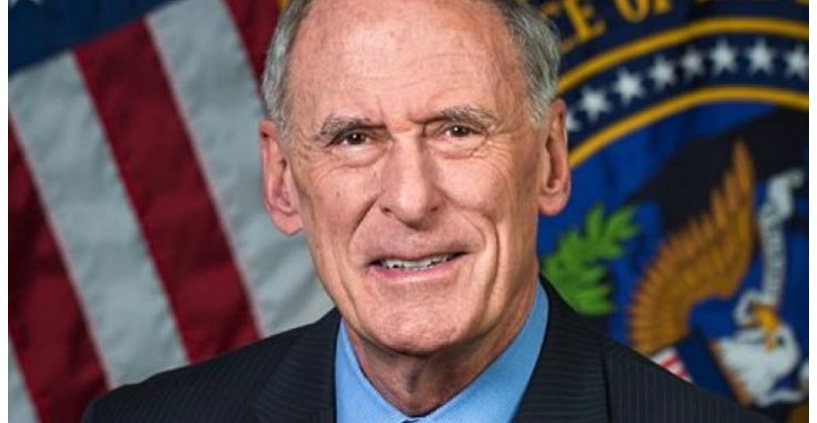
Trump Rids Himself of Coats, but Is His Proposed Replacement Any Better?

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President Trump has announced that Dan Coats (shown) — who has served as director of national intelligence since March 2017, replacing outgoing James Clapper — has resigned effective August 15. Trump — who promised to “drain the swamp” — has had an administration plagued by Deep State insiders and has something of a revolving door in his administration as one insider after another has come and gone. Coats is the most recent in a long line of such insiders to temporarily occupy important positions in the Trump administration.



Coats was announced by President-elect Trump on January 5, 2017 to fill the vacancy left by Clapper’s resignation from the Office of Director of National Intelligence (ODNI). He was confirmed by the Senate in an 85–12 vote on March 15, 2017. He was sworn into office on March 16, 2017, making him the fifth person to hold that office since it was created by President George W. Bush in the wake of the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001.

His relationship with the president was strained at times, particularly when Coats released reports and made statements that were both in direct opposition to statements made by Trump, and lent false credibility to the false narrative of “Trump/Russia collusion” so favored by the left wing of the establishment.

For instance, almost exactly a year ago — on July 16, 2018, Coats released a public statement agreeing with the U.S. intelligence community (IC) that the Russian government had indeed interfered in the 2016 election that put President Trump in the White House. That statement came one day after President Trump had publicly rescinded his endorsement of the IC’s assessment.

In September 2018, it was widely speculated that Coats was the author of [an anonymous New York Times hit piece masquerading as an op/ed piece](#) that described President Trump as a narcissistic idiot who threatened to destroy the America he promised to make great again. Coats denied that he was the author of the piece. Of course, it is possible that Coats did not write the piece. For that matter, it is possible that the *Times* created the piece out of whole cloth. Either way, this episode, coming right behind the previous episode, could not have helped the relationship between Trump and Coats.

More recently, Coats appointed an election “czar” to fill the newly created role, which is tasked with oversight of the efforts of all intelligence agencies to protect elections from interference. Again, this



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was seen as another endorsement of the Trump/Russia collusion narrative.

Besides Russian interference in U.S. elections, Coats also publicly disagreed with Trump on other policy issues, including the nuclear capabilities of North Korea. Furthermore, he told investigators that the president urged him to publicly deny any link between Trump and Russia. This last bit may have been a final bridge too far for President Trump and led to the president exercising his prerogative to demand that Coats resign.

Whatever the cause of Coats turning in his letter of resignation, he wrote in that letter that it had been a “distinct privilege” to serve as DNI, but that it was time to “move on.”

President Trump has nominated Representative John Ratcliffe (R-Texas) to replace Coates. Unlike Coates, Ratcliffe seems to share the president’s opinion that the Mueller probe has been too broad. He grilled Mueller during his testimony last week and told Fox News on Sunday that it is time to move beyond the threat of impeachment being made by Democrats.

And while Democrats are tripping over themselves to make one statement after another claiming that Ratcliffe is both too political and under-qualified for the job, Representative Devin Nunes — who serves as the ranking Republican on the House intelligence Committee — tweeted that Ratcliffe “understands the intricacies of the intelligence community as well as civil liberties.”

Ratcliffe has been part of the post-9/11 surveillance establishment since 2004, when he was appointed by President George W. Bush as the chief of anti-terrorism and national security for the Eastern District of Texas in the Department of Justice. After three years in that post, he was named acting U.S. attorney of the Eastern District of Texas in 2007, and later appointed U.S. attorney by then-Attorney General Michael Mukasey, who has himself been both an active participant in and an apologist for the Surveillance State and emerging Police State empowered by the deliberately misnamed USA PATRIOT Act. After leaving that post, Ratcliffe resumed his private law practice, becoming a partner with former Attorney General John Ashcroft in the Ashcroft, Sutton, Ratcliffe law firm before serving as an aide to Mitt Romney.

Given Trump’s predilection to choose establishment insiders as members of his Cabinet, and Ratcliffe’s connections to the establishment, time will tell whether this new appointment is an upgrade or a precursor to more of the same. All indications are that the latter is more likely than the former.

Photo of Dan Coats: [Official Photo](#) of Office of the Director of National Intelligence



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