Russiagate Disclosures Reveal CIA LIES

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Glenn Greenwald (GG): The New York Times felt compelled to report on these documents, and they framed it as, oh, these documents aren't really that important, they don't do anything like what Trump and his supporters say they do. That's how they framed it. In fact, there's the headline: New Reports on Russian Interference Don't Show What Trump Says They Do. And the subheadline was: "The administration's claims are overblown, but newly declassified information provides some messy details about a January 2017 intelligence assessment of Moscow's election interference." Isn't this amazing? They have to admit that the documents that Tulsi released about Russiagate – which The New York Times has not only pushed, but won a Pulitzer for – they admit that there's things in there that disprove what a lot of Obama officials were saying. They're allies. John Brennan, James Comey, James Clapper. But instead of leading with that, instead of saying new disclosures call into question claims of Obama officials about Russiagate – they can't say that because that indicts The New York Times as well. So they have to frame it as, oh, these new reports, they're not nearly as important as what Trump says they are. But then they use this kind of scummy phrasing like "these newly released documents provide some messy details", "messy", just "messy". Just kind of messes things up.

And I'm one of the main points, namely that John Brennan, as we just showed you, testified before Congress and stated publicly in many other instances that the Steele Dossier played no role whatsoever in the CIA assessment, the CIA finding about Russia or Trump and Russia. These documents show, in fact, that CIA documents cite the Steele Dossier, the exact opposite of what John Brennan had been claiming – that it was part of their body of intelligence, or as he called it, "corpus of intelligence" on which they relied. And listen to how The New York Times, having to acknowledge that, decides that they're going to – this is the language they use to describe this, quote: Mr. Brennan has publicly said the Steele Dossier material was not incorporated or used in the assessment itself because of the CIA's concerns. In 2017, he told Congress that the Steele Dossier, quote, 'was not in any way used as a basis for the intelligence community assessment that was done'. The newly disclosed material complicates that narrative." In other words, these newly disclosed materials showed that what Brennan said was a lie, proves that what Brennan was saying was false. And rather than just say that, just like there's some "messy" stuff in here, as the subheadline put it, all

they're going to say is that the newly disclosed material complicates Brennan's narrative. Just complicates the narrative. That's not a big deal. Lying's a big deal. But having your narrative complicated, that's, what is that? Everyone's narrative is a little complicated. And then they say this, quote: "For one, these documents showed that Mr. Brennan internally defended appending a summary of the Steele Dossier to the assessment after CIA analysts requested the compromise, too." And there are other documents in the CIA documents, that in their annex reference the documents they're using, one of which is the Steele Dossier. So it proves John Brennan was a liar. Not that that's news. John Brennan is one of the most pathological liars to hold high office in the United States, at least in my lifetime, alongside James Clapper.

And it was very appropriate that the two of those pathological liars, Obama's CIA director John Brennan and his director of national intelligence, James Clapper, united to write an op-ed in The New York Times, which is exactly of course where it should go, where they basically are here to just dismiss all these new disclosures as meaningless. And The New York Times headlined their article this way: Brennan and Clapper: Let's Set the Record Straight on Russia in 2016. And these denials say so much about their guilt. So I just want to go through a couple of these. First of all, they say this: "Tulsi Gabbard, the director of national intelligence, and John Ratcliffe, the CIA director, have over the past month claimed that senior officials of the Obama administration manufactured politicized intelligence, silenced intelligence professionals, and engaged in a broad, quote, 'treasonous conspiracy' to undermine the presidency of Donald Trump. This is patently false. In making those allegations, they seek to rewrite history. We want to set the record straight, and in doing so, sound a warning." This is the first thing they say after this. "While some external critiques have noted that parts of the Russiagate investigation could have been handled better –" they're willing to acknowledge that, given that an FBI director pled guilty to lying to the FISA court in order to extract from the FISA court utterly baseless and unjustified warrants to spy on officials of the Trump campaign, including Carter Page, after he left the campaign. The Durham report also indicted a Hillary Clinton lawyer and found massive flaws in the Russiagate investigation, as did the inspector general of the Justice Department as well. So a lot of these reviews have been very, very harshly critical of the Russigate investigation. And all they're willing to say is, look, some external critiques have noted that parts of it could have been handled better. Like, yeah, we weren't perfect, but...

They go on to claim "multiple thorough years long reviews of the assessment had validated its findings and the rigor of its analysis. The most noteworthy was the unanimous bipartisan five-volume report issued by the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, whose Republican members at the time included Marco Rubio, now the Secretary of State, and Senator Tom Cotton, now, the committee chairman." Now, it is true that this Senate Intelligence Committee report on a unanimous, bipartisan basis that did include Marco Rubo and Tom Cotton went way further than the Mueller investigation went. That's why if you point to the Mueller Investigation, the Mueller report, and say, look, he said there's no evidence to prove any of this. I don't mean the Russian interference, but the Trump-Russian collusion. The liberals will say, oh, but there was this Intelligence Committee report that came out that was unanimous, that went further. And we have covered many times that this Senate Select Committee on Intelligence was one of the reforms that Washington pretended to implement after the only time the CIA was really meaningfully investigated, the Intelligence Committee was really meaningful investigating by Congress. It was the Church Committee in the mid-1970s, 1977, because there was not just Watergate, but a whole bunch of disclosures about some really sinister stuff the CIA and FBI had been doing under J. Edgar Hoover during the Cold War – some inhumane, incredibly immoral investigations that nobody knew

about in the government, including not the President nor the Congress. Like mind control stuff. They had infiltrated social movements, all sorts of things that they were never supposed to do. And so in the wake of Watergate and the downfall of Nixon and the discrediting of all these agencies, that was the first and only time that Congress really had the space to investigate. And it was led by Senator Frank Church, a liberal from Idaho, but he had a lot of credibility. He had served in the military and fought in World War II and then covered a lot of incredibly illegal and inappropriate things.

And not just CIA and FBI, but the NSA had been doing it as well. And that's where these reforms came from, things like the FISA Court. So from now on, if the government wants to use the NSA to spy on people, they have to go through the FISA Court first. And we talked about why the Fisa Court is a joke, it's not a real court, it's in the Justice Department, only the government gets to show up. And that's why 99% of the time or more they ask for a warrant, they get it. So it had the illusion of reform, but it was a fake reform. It didn't really put limits on what the government could do. But the same was true of the creation of these select committees on intelligence. The idea was, no, we need a permanent committee, an intelligence committee, that is going to oversee and provide serious limits on what the CIA and the intelligence community can do. But the whole time, from the beginning and ever since, it has been purposely staffed with hardcore CIA loyalists. They don't ever provide any real oversight. They rubber stamp what the CIA does. For decades, the leading Democrat in the Senate Intelligence Committee, the chairwoman or the ranking member, was Dianne Feinstein, one of the most vocal supporters of the CIA in the intelligence community. She voted for the Iraq War, she was a huge supporter of Israel. All people who are put on this committee are only people who love the CIA and who endorse what they do. And this investigation was nothing. They basically just endorsed what the CIA had concluded about Russia.

But the real investigations that were done, including the documents that were just released, do the opposite. Then they go on to say this, Clapper and Brennan: "First, the so-called Steele Dossier, a series of memos now largely discredited,–" It's amazing. The Steele Dossier was the dominant feature of American politics from late 2016, early 2017, when CNN reported it and Ben Smith of Buzzfeed published it all the way up until the end of the Mueller investigation. And to this very day, people believe in the Steele Dossier. And only now are they willing to say, oh no, that's largely discredited. But even back in 2017, Brennan wanted to distance himself from the Steele Dossier, saying it wasn't part of anything we did. Because all the way back in 2018, they knew it was fake. Even in 2016, and they just allowed the media and everybody else to circulate it, believe in it. So now here's what they're trying to say: "The so-called Steele Dossier, a series of memos now largely discredited about purported Trump-Russia links written by a former British intelligence agent. Ms. Gabbard and Mr. Ratcliffe have claimed it played an integral role in formulating the assessment. We have testified under oath and the reviews of the assessment have confirmed that the Dossier was not used as a source or taken into account for any of its analysis or conclusions." Now I just showed you that that's a lie that CIA documents cite the Steele Dossier as part of what they relied upon. Even the New York Times article, the news article that I read to you, trying to say these are exaggerated, that it complicates the narrative – even they admitted that these newly released documents negate John Brennan's claim that the CIA didn't use the Steele Dossiers. They absolutely did.

And then here's the last paragraph that I find so amazing. This is what Brennan and Clapper write: "Finally, and contrary to the Trump administration's wild and baseless claims, there

was no mention of, quote, 'collusion' between the Trump campaign and the Russians in the assessment, nor any reference to the publicly acknowledged contacts that had taken place. The sole focus of the assessment was on Russia's actions, not on whom they might have been interacting with in the United States." So they're saying, look, we had nothing to do with collusion. That wasn't part of our assessment. All we were saying was that the Russians interfered. We had nothing to do with this claim that Trump and Russia were together in this. Does anyone believe this? As I said at the start, had it just been that the Russians tried to interfere in our election, it wouldn't have been even a news story, let alone a major two year scandal with Robert Mueller investigating. Because of course the Russians interfere in our elections. We interfere in theirs, we interfere in everybody else's. Great powers interfere in their internal politics all the time. They did wildly exaggerate what the Russians tried to do. They also claimed that Putin was doing it because he wanted Trump to win, even though there was never any evidence of that. Like everybody else in the world, the Russians thought Hillary Clinton was going to win and that most of what they were trying to do was to weaken her or discredit her before she assumed the presidency. This claim that oh, [Putin] was rooting for Trump, he knew Trump would do his bidding – this all came from the CIA and FBI. And the fact that Clapper and Brennan are now trying to distance themselves from it as though they had nothing to do with pushing these collusion claims is an insult to everybody's intelligence.

And just to give you one piece of proof. Remember, when John Brennan left the CIA, he became a NBC news analyst. They made the director of the CIA a person known for lying as part of his job. They turned him into a news person. He became somebody who NBC News and MSNBC used to interpret and report the news to the American public. And in 2019, as it became clear that Mueller was winding up his investigation – even though he had not yet indicted anyone in the Trump family or Trump or anybody else for collusion, which John Brennan is now saying, we had nothing to do with pushing – John Brennan went on the Lawrence O'Donnell's show and he basically said, look, I don't believe Mueller is going to close his investigation yet. Because there's still one thing, a very important thing for him to do before he closes his investigation. And that is namely, indict people, Americans, for colluding with the Russians on the hacking of the emails and interference of the 2016 campaign. Brennan said, nobody has been indicted yet on that and there's no way Mueller will conclude his investigation, of course he's going to have to indict people on that. He was speaking as a former CIA director implying that he had intelligence that showed that Trump and the Russians colluded, exactly what he's denying now he ever had anything to do with. Listen to what he said on MSNBC, this was March 5th, 2019, just a week before Mueller closed his investigation and sent in his report.

John Brennan (JB): For example, this week on Friday, not knowing anything about it, but Friday is the day that the grand jury indictments come down. And also this Friday is better than next Friday because next Friday is the 15th of March, which is the Ides of March. And I don't think Robert Mueller will want to have that dramatic flair of the Ides of March when he is going to be delivering what I think are going to be his indictments, the final indictments as well as the report that he gives to the Attorney General.

GG: All right, now just look at how Robert Mueller was always talked about. Brennan was saying, look, we're going to get final indictments, the collusion indictments finally, the indictments of Donald Trump Junior and Donald Trump Senior perhaps and all the people who colluded with the Russians. And there's two possibilities, we can get it this Friday or next Friday. Next Friday though is March 15th and Robert Mueller is too much of a serious

professional to want to have a dramatic flair doing it on the Ides of March. Like, who cares? But that was how Robert Mueller was talked about. He's such an integrity-driven, professional law enforcement official that everything is by the book. So don't expect indictments two weeks from now because that's too much of a dramatic flair for Robert Mueller, he doesn't like drama. But this Friday coming up, said Brennan, this is when the real indictments are coming down. And Lawrence O'Donnell was like, how do you know that? And this is what happened.

Lawrence O'Donnell (LO): What makes you believe that he has more indictments?

JB: Because he hasn't addressed the issues related to criminal conspiracy as well as any individuals…

LO: Criminal conspiracy involving the Russians?

JB: …And the Russian, yes, yeah. I think it was very….

LO: And that's an area you know something about.

GG: So do you see here? He's saying, look, I know this investigation can't close because we still have to indict the Trump family for criminally colluding with the Russians. Something that's not bad. He's saying we had nothing to do with that. That wasn't part of what we were doing. That wasn't part of our assessment. That is exactly who pushed this bullshit collusion claim from the start – John Brennan. And of course he and James Clapper are now trying to deny that they did it because the whole thing has been proven to be a hoax by these new releases and all other evidence before it. Here's John Brennan on MSNBC assuring everybody there's more indictments coming before Robert Mueller closes his investigation because he hasn't yet indicted any Americans on the core conspiracy. And that was the core conspiracy claim that gave rise to Russiagate.

LO: And that's an area you know something about. That investigation was developing while you were still on the job.

JB: Well, it was in terms of looking at what was going on with the Russians and whether or not US persons were actively collaborating, colluding, cooperating, involved in a conspiracy with them or not.

GG: So, Lawrence O'Donnell is trying to say, look, you're not just an MSNBC pundit predicting investigations and indictments for collusion. You're actually someone who has inside knowledge on it. You were the CIA director. And that's when this investigation started. That's when these beliefs began that Trump and the Russians colluded. And Brennan said, yeah, I was the CIA director, that's part of what we were investigating. It was a crucial part – the collusion between Trump and Russia. This is where it came from, from John Brennan and Jim Comey and the liars at the FBI and the CIA. I'm going to play you the rest of this, but here's John Brennan saying "that came from us, we were the ones investigating that". Now he's here on MSNBC saying, I know these indictments have to come because things that I saw on the inside, as Lawrence O'Donnell provoked him to say, showed me that there was collusion. This is what they were all going around saying.

JB: …but also if there's going to be any member of the Trump family.

LO: Did you see enough at that stage to believe that there would now result in indictments once investigated?

JB: I thought at the time that there were going to be individuals who were going to have issues with the Department of Justice. Yes, and I think we've already seen a number of individuals who have been indicted, either have pleaded guilty or have been convicted now. So, again, I don't have any inside knowledge. I'm not talking with anybody in special counsels.

LO: Yes, you do. You have the inside knowledge of what began it all.

JB: But not about the status of the investigation right now. But I do think also if anybody from the Trump family, or extended family, is going to be indicted, it would be in the final act of Mueller's investigation, because Bob Mueller and I think his team knows that if he were to do something, indicting a Trump family member, or if he were to go forward with indictment on criminal conspiracy involving US persons, that would basically be the death knell of the special counsel's office. Because I don't believe that Donald Trump would allow Bob Mueller to continue in the aftermath of those types of actions.

LO: John Brennan, thank you very much. You have to listen to every word in the John Brennan answer. Thank you very much for joining us. I really appreciate it.

GG: Look at that smug Lawrence O'Donnell: We know these indictments are coming – John Brennan, this guy is on the inside. He knows everything. So you got to listen to every word he's saying. It all contains secret code. And what John Brennan was saying clear as day in that two minute appearance on MSNBC was that he had inside information. He was investigating. He had knowledge while CIA director that proved there was collusion between American citizens, probably in the Trump family and the Russian government. And that's why he was saying it can't possibly be the case that Robert Mueller will close the investigation without indicting those people. John Brennan and Jim Comey were the ones and of course, James Clapper, who pushed out that collusion during the 2016 campaign to prevent Donald Trump from winning. And then in 2017 and 2018 and 2019 to undermine his presidency. And now in 2025, The New York Times has the audacity to publish an op-ed from them saying: we weren't even interested in collusion, that's not anything we were looking at, we just were interested in whether the Russians were involved.

Now, Michael Shellenberger, there were some newly released documents yesterday. I was actually on the Megyn Kelly show for about two hours. They came out maybe a few minutes, like 30 minutes before we started that show. So she did the best she could in going over these new documents and I did the best I could in analyzing them. But before they came out, they were obviously given to Michael Shellenberger by somebody because he was able to publish a report that contained some of the key documents. The headline of which is: FBI Helped Clinton Campaign Orchestrate The Russian Collusion Hoax To Distract From Email Investigation, Newly Declassified Documents Show. "An appendix to the Durham report reveals that intelligence on the 'Clinton Plan' to frame Trump as controlled by Russia was deemed credible by the CIA." And that's what these documents show is exactly what I just showed you – that John Brennan and the CIA were the ones pushing this lie. John Brennan worked with Hillary Clinton. Hillary Clinton was the secretary of state for the Obama administration 2008 to 2012. That was when John Brennan was. Obama's national security

advisor in that iconic picture where they so inspirationally killed this aging, decrepit Osama bin Laden, the crowning jewel of the Obama administration in that now famous photo in the Situation Room. You see John Brennan and Hillary Clinton sitting at the table. They worked together. Obviously, John Brennan wanted Hillary Clinton to win. Obviously, John Brennan hated Donald Trump. He was attacking the CIA, knocking the CIA. As Chuck Schumer said, if you do that, they'll get back at you. And this was the attempt to get back at them. This complete abuse of power to interfere in our domestic politics, something the CIA was never intended to do, purely to interfere in an election and then sabotage an elected president.

Now one of the reasons why I haven't spent so much time on this show going over these new documents is because I spent so much time over the past seven years explaining why this was so obvious from the start. To me, the evidence was so clear. And I just want to end by pointing this one thing out: This claim that Donald Trump was blackmailed by Vladimir Putin, that he was doing Putin's bidding, that Putin had sexual and financial and personal blackmail material over him – this was the conspiracy theory that dominated our politics for three years. Virtually everyone in the media pushed it in every media outlet, corporate media outlet, you can see articles "What does Putin have over Trump?" Remember he went to that summit with Putin. And they called it the "treason summit" and the Washington post hired body posture analysts, body language analysts to say that Trump just seemed unusually submissive around Putin. I mean, they were constantly pushing this “Oh, Trump's scared of Putin, Putin has control over him”. This was insane stuff. It's like hiring psychics and saying, I feel like I see, I see a video at the Ritz-Carlton with Putin – body language experts! And this was the claim for three years. They talk about other people who have [inaudible] conspiracy theories – this was one of the sickest and most deranged and obviously fake conspiracy theories I've ever heard.

And just to underscore the point: There were two primary policies that the Trump administration had in its first term, 2017 to 2020, regarding Russia. And both of those two policies were designed to attack as aggressively as possible, the two most vital interests that Russia has: Number one, Trump flooded Ukraine with offensive weapons when the Obama administration wouldn't. They did that in 2017. As we now know, flooding Ukraine with offensive weapons is a major threat to Russia in the eyes of the Kremlin. If Putin were blackmailing Trump and had control over Trump, how is it possible that Trump flooded Ukraine with offensive weapons? That's the first thing. The second thing is: The key to future Russian economic prosperity was Nord Stream 2, the pipeline built underground that the Americans and Ukrainians ended up destroying that was designed to enable Russia to sell very cheap natural gas to Germany and then the rest of Europe. That was the part of future Russian economic prosperity. And Trump hated Nord Stream 2. He went around threatening Europe saying, look, we pay for your defense in NATO and you are not going to be buying cheap natural gas from Russia when you can buy our natural gas. We have huge amounts of natural gas. You have to buy it from us, not from Russia because we're the ones, not Russia, who defends you. We pay to keep you safe. So Trump was trying to destroy Nord Stream 2 and the Europeans' willingness to buy Russian gas. Again, if Putin had blackmail control over Trump, both of those policies would have instantly ended it in the eyes of any rational person, but the media wasn't interested in being rational. They were obsessed with this conspiracy theory. It was central to their worldview, to their political agenda, to everything they had done, they invested in it. And all the evidence, including Trump's own actions, made it not just false, but absurd, ridiculous, laughable that Trump was somehow controlled by Putin in the Kremlin. And yet they stuck with it and they pushed it. And of course, that's why Brennan and Clapper are now trying to say, oh, we never had anything to do with any of that, even

though it came from the bowels of the CIA and the FBI. And that is one of the gravest scandals in modern political history: that these intelligence agencies cooked up lies on behalf of the candidate that they worked with, that came from their administration, that they wanted to win. Not only to defeat the candidate that was attacking them and criticizing them and they hated Donald Trump, but even once he won, they used it to undermine and destroy his presidency. And it was all a fabrication. It was all a lie. And these new documents released by Tulsi Gabbard bolster that even more in case any other people out there ever doubted it. These new documents are the final nails in the coffin.

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