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Guests Remind NBC, CNN: Obama Gave Classified Intel to Russia

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Kyle Drennen via [Newsbusters](#)

While NBC and CNN joined the rest of the media in rushing to condemn the Trump White House over an unconfirmed *Washington Post* report that the President inadvertently shared classified information with Russian officials, guests on both networks provided important context that the Obama administration intentionally shared classified intelligence with Russia less than a year ago.

Appearing on Friday's *NBC Today*, security analyst Juan Zarate warned: "The problem is the Russians aren't trustworthy. The Russians have proven that when we've provided information in the past, they've used it against us." He then proceeded to explain how former President Obama gave the Russians classified information just months ago:

Back in the summer of 2016, the Obama administration provided some information to the Russians about some of the things happening on the ground. Guess what happened? The Russians then attacked some of those sites of our allies, our proxies that we were working with. And that's a problem.

Meanwhile, over on CNN's *New Day*, political analyst Jeffrey Lord provided some "perspective" to anchor Chris Cuomo:

The only thing I would say here, Chris is perspective. Perspective is all. I'm holding two headlines from the *Washington Post*, one of May 25th, 2014, "White House mistakenly identifies CIA chief in Afghanistan." The Obama administration put the name of the CIA on the press release, exposed him and endangered his life. The second one, June 30, 2016, "U.S. Offers to share Syrian intelligence on terrorist with Russia," which

is to say the Obama administration wanted to give their intelligence to the Russians. All I'm saying here is there's perspective. We need to find out the facts and let's have perspective.

Incidentally, notice that the 2014 story was from the same Post reporter, Greg Miller, who wrote Monday's article.

In sharp contrast to the wall-to-wall media coverage of the Trump story, Obama offering to share intel with Russia was greeted with yawns from the press.

Here are excerpts of the May 16 exchanges on NBC and CNN:

Today
7:10 AM ET

(...)

MATT LAUER: Can you just clarify something? This concerns an ISIS plot. The Russians are supposed to be our partners in fighting ISIS. So explain why sharing of information with them is so dangerous.

JUAN ZARATE: Well, two reasons. First of all, I think the President may think that he's trying to create some degree of trust, maybe trying to create some cooperation on the ground. That may be in the back of his mind. The problem is the Russians aren't trustworthy. The Russians have proven that when we've provided information in the past, they've used it against us.

Back in the summer of 2016, the Obama administration provided some information to the Russians about some of the things happening on the ground. Guess what happened? The Russians then attacked some of those sites of our allies, our proxies that we were working with. And that's a problem.

And I think part of the challenge here is, how much can we trust the Russians? What you're seeing here is a deficit of trust, a deficit of discipline, I think, on the part of the President.

(...)

New Day
6:34 AM ET

CHRIS CUOMO: All right. This latest self-imposed and perhaps most egregious error by the president is sparking all kinds of questions about competence, was his inability to protect highly classified information with Russian diplomats a sign that he's not up to the job. There's a New York Times op-ed you should read for your self from David Brooks. The

headline is this, when the world is led by a child. It says, quote, “From all we know so far, Trump didn’t do it,” talking about the classified information, “because he’s a Russian agent or from any malevolent intent. He did it because he is sloppy, because he lacks all impulse control, and above all because he is a 7-year-old boy desperate for the approval of those he admires.” Let’s discuss Jeffrey Lord, former commentator and White House official and David from senior editor at the Atlantic. Jeffrey, I’m sure you have a robust defense for why this is a nor his criticism of the president is unwarranted so give it to us.

JEFFERY LORD: Okay. The only thing I would say here, Chris is perspective. Perspective is all. I’m holding two headlines from the Washington Post, one of May 25th, 2014, “White House mistakenly identifies CIA chief in Afghanistan.” The Obama administration put the name of the CIA on the press release, exposed him and endangered his life. The second one, June 30, 2016, “U.S. Offers to share Syrian intelligence on terrorist with Russia,” which is to say the Obama administration wanted to give their intelligence to the Russians. All I’m saying here is there’s perspective. We need to find out the facts and let’s have perspective. With all respect to David Brooks he’s a never-Trumper. That’s fine. But from that perspective, Donald Trump isn’t going to do anything David Brooks likes. As I remember famously with David Brooks, he was certain Senator Obama would be a great president because of the crease in his slacks. I mean, with all due respect —

CUOMO: That was a rhetorical flourish from Brooks but let’s put that to the side, you’ve made your point.

(...)

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