
PAUL RYAN: [REDACTED] DIDN'T TELL HILLARY CLINTON NOT TO GO TO WISCONSIN OR MICHIGAN'

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A day after calling WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange a sycophant for Russia, House Speaker Paul Ryan said its clear Moscow tried to meddle in the U.S. presidential election [REDACTED] but that wasnt the reason for President-elect Donald Trumps stunning victory in November.

He won fair and square, Ryan said during a Thursday press briefing in Washington. He won clearly and convincingly. Russia didnt tell Hillary Clinton not to go to Wisconsin or Michigan. They didnt put the server in her basement or put the stuff on Anthony Weiners laptop.

The Wisconsin Republican said the United States would never condone any foreign actor, any outside interference from trying to mess with our elections.

But lets just put this in the proper perspective, Ryan said. Lets deny those who are trying to delegitimize a presidency before it starts, while doing what we need to do to make sure going forward that outside actors dont interfere with our political system.

Ryans comments came as intelligence officials testified before the Senate Armed Services Committee on Russian meddling in the election.

Director of National Intelligence James Clapper said the Russian governments involvement went far beyond the now highly publicized hacks of Democratic email accounts, which were merely one part of a multilayered campaign of propaganda and deception. The hacks led to the disclosure of politically embarrassing emails on WikiLeaks, driving weeks of negative news coverage during the campaign.

While there has been a lot of focus on the hacking, this is actually part of a multifaceted campaign that the Russians mounted, Clapper told the committee.

On Thursday, Jan. 5, President-elect Donald Trump's comments and tweets about the intel surrounding the Russian hacking scandal were front and center at the Senate Armed Services Committee hearing.

Early Wednesday, Trump cast doubt on the conclusion by U.S. intelligence officials that Russia was behind the hacking of Clinton campaign chief John Podesta and the Democratic National Committee, and suggested that he believes Assanges claims more than the CIAs.

Julian Assange said a 14 year old could have hacked Podesta [REDACTED] why was DNC so careless? Trump tweeted. Also said Russians did not give him the info!

In an interview that aired Tuesday, Assange told Fox News Sean Hannity that Russia was not the

source of the stolen documents. Similar to Ryan, Assange said that those who say otherwise are trying to delegitimize Trumps election victory.

Related: Intel chief: Russias election interference went far beyond hacks

They are trying to say that President-elect Trump is not a legitimate president, Assange said in the interview, which was conducted Monday at the Ecuadorean Embassy in London, where Assange has been living in exile for more than two years.

We can say, we have said repeatedly over the last two months, that our source is not the Russian government and it is not a state party, he told Hannity.

Despite Assanges claims, the U.S. intelligence community has said it is certain that Russia was behind the cyberattacks that led to the WikiLeaks disclosures.

In an interview with conservative radio host Hugh Hewitt on Wednesday morning, Ryan was asked for his thoughts on Assange.

Donald Trump appears to side with WikiLeaks founder over Russian hacking

In a series of new tweets, President-elect Donald Trump appeared to side with WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange over his claims that Russia was not the source of hacked Democratic Party emails during the presidential election. He also continues to taunt the U.S. intelligence community over its conclusion that Russia was at fault.

None, other than I think the guy is a sycophant for Russia, Ryan said. He leaks, he steals data and compromises national security.

On Thursday, Trump denied backing Assanges version of the events. He tweeted that it is for the people to make up their own minds as to the truth. But Trump has also attacked the U.S. intelligence assessment about Russia and the cyberattacks. He and his transition team have repeatedly pointed to the intelligence failure regarding weapons of mass destruction in the run-up to the 2003 invasion of Iraq.

Well, they dont always get everything right. Weve seen that clearly, Ryan said Thursday of U.S. intelligence. I do have faith that our men and women in our intelligence community are doing an incredible job, sacrificing for our country. But theres always room for improvement.

Kaynak/Source: