

After Trump's withdrawal from Paris accord

Democrats step up campaign on White House-Russia ties

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The Democratic Party and its media allies have seized on the fallout from President Donald Trump's withdrawal from the Paris climate accord to step up their campaign against the White House, charging it with collusion in alleged Kremlin interference in the 2016 presidential election.

Virtually all of the critical commentary on Trump's decision to pull out of the climate agreement has focused on its detrimental impact on the global geostrategic interests of US imperialism, with particular emphasis on the likelihood of increased Russian and Chinese influence in Europe and Asia.

These concerns have intensified the foreign policy conflict at the heart of the political warfare over alleged Trump "softness" toward Russia that has gripped Washington for the past ten months and dominated the first months of the Trump administration. In this conflict, the Democratic Party and the bulk of the establishment media are allied with the dominant factions of the intelligence apparatus, which are opposed to Trump's expressed desire to move away from the aggressive and provocative policy of the Obama administration toward Russia in order to focus more directly on the diplomatic and military offensive against China.

The Democrats have relentlessly pushed the Trump-Russia story line, despite the absence of any substantive evidence that Moscow interfered in the election to damage Democratic candidate Hillary Clinton and aid Trump. They have done so for domestic as well as foreign policy reasons.

The Democratic Party fears the emergence of mass working-class opposition to Trump. It is seeking to divert anger over his attacks on democratic rights and

social programs behind a reactionary drive to remove Russia as an impediment to Washington's hegemonic ambitions in the Middle East, Europe and Asia—a policy that could quickly lead to a war between the world's two biggest nuclear powers.

With Senate testimony scheduled this week from former FBI Director James Comey, fired by Trump in a move to quash the investigation he was heading into possible collusion between the Trump campaign and Moscow, the series of congressional and FBI probes may be reaching a turning point. Following the Comey firing, the Justice Department, under duress, appointed former FBI Director Robert Mueller as an independent counsel, raising the stakes.

On Saturday, both the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post*, which have been spearheading the media campaign against Trump, published lead editorials on the investigations into supposed Trump-Russia collusion. The *Times*' piece, "The Problem With Jared Kushner," sought to stoke up allegations that Trump's son-in-law and closest adviser held illicit, if not treasonous, discussions with Russian officials during the election campaign and postelection transition period. The editorial concluded with a call for Kushner to resign his White House post.

The *Post* denounced attempts by Trump and congressional Republicans to change the narrative by focusing on Obama officials' allegedly improper "unmasking" of Americans caught up in US surveillance of overseas communications.

The *Post* declared: "It's about Mr. Trump's ill-explained and gratuitous attempts during the transition and since to do the bidding of Russian President Vladimir Putin, including trying to unwind the

sanctions against Russia imposed by President Barack Obama after the election meddling was discovered... The ‘big story’ is why Mr. Trump has frantically attempted to shut down the Russia investigations, including through the firing of FBI Director James B. Comey.”

The *Times* editorial pages also featured a column by Obama’s national security adviser, Susan Rice, denouncing Trump for pulling out of the Trans-Pacific Partnership, undermining the NATO alliance and withdrawing from the Paris accord, calling these moves “a whole lot of winning—for Russia and China.” In the piece, she questioned whether Washington would be able to rely on its Western allies should China take “aggressive action in the South China Sea, threatening our Asian allies as well as our own freedom of navigation.”

The Sunday interview programs all began with the latest terror attack in Britain and quickly pivoted to the investigations of the Trump administration. Rice, interviewed on the ABC News “This Week” program, was the most strident in articulating the Democrats’ McCarthyite-style demonization of Russia, repeating the litany of unsubstantiated claims and outright lies that have become Democratic gospel.

“Let’s be clear,” she declared. “Russia is an adversary. Russia not only invaded a sovereign country and annexed part of it in Ukraine and Crimea, it’s not only in cahoots with a regime in Syria that uses chemical weapons, it has interfered directly and deliberately at the direction of the highest levels of its government in our democratic process.”

She concluded by urging Congress to increase sanctions on Moscow.

This effort to whip up anti-Russia sentiment has failed to make any significant headway among broad masses of the American people. Its main impact is within the privileged upper-middle-class social layers that have become the primary base of the Democratic Party. These layers, defined by the media as “left” or “liberal,” have continued to lurch to the right, obsessively promoting the identity politics peddled by the Democratic Party while moving fully into the camp of US imperialism.

On Saturday, a number of organizations in and around the Democratic Party held a so-called “March for Truth” to prosecute the anti-Russian, anti-Trump

campaign. Sponsored by groups such as MoveOn.org, Swing Left, Rock the Vote, Progressive Democrats of America and the National Organization for Women, the event, with a rally in Washington and satellite protests around the country, drew very few participants.

The extensive media coverage was wildly out of proportion to the sparse turnout. The *Times* reported “several dozen demonstrators in Washington,” while the Public Broadcasting Service reported “roughly 1,000” in Washington and “hundreds in New York.” The main demand was for an independent commission to investigate Trump’s ties to Russia, along the lines of the 9/11 Commission.

The tenor of the event was summed up in the remarks of Terry O’Neill, president of the National Organization for Women, who spoke of a “hostile foreign government” having “installed a puppet as president of the United States.”

The nominally “left-liberal” *Nation* magazine enthusiastically promoted the event, prominently posting an article on its website last Wednesday with the headline “Americans Are Taking to the Streets to Demand the Truth on Trump and Russia.”



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