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By Fred Mazelis

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Democrats seize on Trump comment to push their anti-Russia campaign

The Democrats and their allies have seized on an ABC News interview of President Donald Trump to renew their charges of disloyalty and collusion with Russia. The uproar follows Trump's remarks to ABC's George Stephanopoulos, in which he said he would be open to receiving information about his 2020 election opponent from a foreign country. "It's not an interference, they have information—I think I'd take it," Trump said.

The latest furor comes two months after the release of the Mueller Report, the investigation by Special Counsel Robert Mueller into a possible conspiracy between Trump's 2016 campaign and Russia and possible obstruction of justice in connection with the probe that followed his victory. Mueller found no illegal conspiracy and said that Justice Department rules prevented him from charging a sitting president with a crime such as obstruction of justice. He pointedly added, however, that his investigation did not exonerate Trump.

The Democrats' response to the Mueller report and the special counsel's public statement at the end of May has been to double down on the basic line of their attack on Trump since the 2016 election campaign—the fabricated claim that the Russian government intervened massively in the election to defeat Democrat Hillary Clinton and elect Trump, making Trump, in the July, 2016 words of *New York Times* columnist Paul Krugman, the "Siberian candidate."

With Trump's latest comments, they have sought to promote this theme even more shrilly, underscoring the entirely right-wing, pro-war basis of their opposition to the most reactionary president in US history.

Former Vice-President Joseph Biden, currently leading in the polls for the 2020 Democratic presidential nomination, tweeted, "President Trump is once again welcoming foreign interference in our elections. This isn't about politics. It is a threat to our national security. An American President should not seek their aid and abet those who seek to undermine democracy."

Other aspirants for the Democratic nomination, including Minnesota Senator Amy Klobuchar and New Jersey Senator Cory Booker, chimed in. Bernie Sanders, speaking on MSNBC, assured his listeners that he would inform the FBI immediately if he were ever approached by a foreign national.

"This is just the latest example of what Vice President Biden meant when he said that Mr. Trump is an existential threat to our country," former CIA Director John Brennan wrote on Twitter. "'Unfit to be President' is a gross understatement."

California Representative Adam Schiff, chairman of the House Intelligence Committee and one of the leading figures in the Democrats' anti-Russia campaign, declared, "The president has either learned nothing from the last two years or picked up exactly the wrong lesson, that he can accept gleefully foreign assistance again and escape the punishment of the law."

The Democrats' appeal is to Wall Street and the military-intelligence complex, not to the mass of working people who are the victims of the tax cuts for the rich, the attacks on immigrants and the assaults on democratic rights that are being carried out by the fascistic demagogue in the White House.

The *New York Times*, which has been in the forefront of the Democrats' anti-Russia campaign, wrote in a front-page article on Friday that the president had "renewed questions about his willingness to profit from the aid of a hostile foreign power."

Washington Post Op-Ed columnist Jennifer Rubin went further than the *Times*, accusing Trump of treason. "Trump is willing to betray his country to win reelection to the presidency," she wrote, demanding that Republicans come forward to defend American capitalism from the "traitor" in the White House.

Multi-billionaire and former New York City mayor Michael Bloomberg weighed in on his Bloomberg website, scolding Trump for failing to recognize the alleged danger of foreign

meddling in America's "democratic elections." Ignoring his own massive spending to influence vote outcomes, the Republican-turned-Democrat focused on the unverified accounts of Russian social media spending amounting to, even if true and directed by the Kremlin, a small fraction of what Bloomberg and his fellow plutocrats spend regularly to buy elections—not to mention the hundreds of millions spent by Washington to install and overthrow governments all over the world.

Trump's enemies in the bourgeois media are playing the patriotism card in different ways. Much was made of the fact that Trump contradicted his own FBI director when he told Stephanopoulos that Christopher Wray was "wrong" to say that any attempt by a foreign national to provide election "dirt" should be reported to the agency. A former FBI agent is quoted as declaring that it is "demoralizing to some extent and confusing and, let's face it, unprecedented to have a commander-in-chief who has such a lack of fundamental understanding..."

The hypocrisy of Trump's Democratic Party opponents knows no bounds. Bipartisanship reigns on such issues as the persecution of Julian Assange, the regime-change operation in Venezuela, the buildup of the Pentagon and the preparations for war with China. There is little or no disagreement on meeting the demands of Wall Street, on so-called "border security" and the need to restrict immigration, or on the alliance with the blood-soaked regimes in Egypt and Saudi Arabia.

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