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Mueller Finds No Collusion Between Trump Campaign And Russian Government; A.G. Barr Says No Obstruction Of Justice Either

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President Donald Trump was vindicated on Sunday after what many -- including the president -- called a protracted witch hunt and conspiracy by Democrats to taint his administration and imperil his chances for reelection.

Following almost two years of Special Counsel Robert Mueller's investigation into possible ties with the aim of collusion between Mr. Trump and Putin's government, and Russian meddling in the U.S. elections, Mr. Mueller, who delivered his report to Attorney General William Barr on Friday, was clear in his report that no ties existed.

Below, three paragraphs of a summarizing letter sent to Congress by Mr. Barr.

The Special Counsel's investigation did not find that the Trump campaign or anyone associated with it conspired or coordinated with Russia in its efforts to influence the 2016 U.S. presidential election. As the report states: "[T]he investigation did not establish that members of the Trump Campaign conspired or coordinated with the Russian government in its election interference activities."

The Special Counsel's investigation determined that there were two main Russian efforts to influence the 2016 election. The first involved attempts by a Russian organization, the Internet Research Agency (IRA), to conduct disinformation and social media operations in the United States designed to sow social discord, eventually with the aim of interfering with the election. As noted above, the Special Counsel did not find that any U.S. person or Trump campaign official or associate conspired or knowingly coordinated with the IRA in its efforts, although the Special Counsel brought criminal charges against a number of Russian nationals and entities in connection with these activities.

The second element involved the Russian government's efforts to conduct computer hacking operations designed to gather and disseminate information to influence the election. The Special Counsel found that Russian government actors successfully hacked into computers and obtained emails from persons affiliated with the Clinton campaign and Democratic Party organizations, and publicly disseminated those materials through various intermediaries, including WikiLeaks. Based on these activities, the Special Counsel brought criminal charges against a number of Russian military officers for conspiring to hack into computers in the United States for purposes of influencing the election. But as noted above, the Special Counsel did not find that the Trump campaign, or anyone associated with it, conspired or coordinated with the Russian government in these efforts, despite multiple offers from Russian-affiliated individuals to assist the Trump campaign.

Republicans and President Trump's campaign seized on the report to shape what is expected to be the president's main campaign rhetoric during the upcoming 2020 general election. If his initial remarks following the special counsel's findings are any indication, Mr. Trump is expected to wage an all-out war during campaigning season, casting Democrats as politicians whose lies were laid bare by the special counsel's report.

"It was a complete and total exoneration," Mr. Trump told reporters in Florida on Sunday before boarding Air Force One following his weekend stay at his Mar-a-Lago club. "It's a shame that our country had to go through this. To be honest, it's a shame that your president has had to go through this."

"This was an illegal takedown that failed," the president added for good measure.

While Mr. Mueller's report did not conclude Mr. Trump had obstructed justice, it did not clear him from the possible crime. However, Mr. Barr said nothing in the report

constituted obstruction of justice by the president, bolstering Mr. Trump's already strong standing following the nearly 2-year probe.

Democrats, however, have vowed to push forward, with many calling for Mr. Barr to release the full report to Congress and the American people. Democrat and Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi, along with her counterpart in the Senate, Minority Leader Chuck Schumer, sought to cast Mr. Barr's letter to Congress as insufficient.

"Attorney General Barr's letter raises as many questions as it answers," said Ms. Pelosi and Mr. Schumer in a joint statement on Sunday.

Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, however, expressed satisfaction on Sunday, while highlighting a major finding of the report: Russia's meddling in the U.S. elections.

"The special counsel's conclusions confirm the President's account that there was no effort by his campaign to conspire or coordinate with Russia in its efforts to influence the 2016 presidential election," he said. "However, Russia's ongoing efforts to interfere with our democracy are dangerous and disturbing, and I welcome the special counsel's contributions to our efforts to understand better Russia's activities in this regard. And I look forward to the continuing work of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence on the threats posed to our democratic institutions by foreign interference. I appreciate the attorney general's commitment to continue to review the record in this matter over the coming days, in conjunction with special counsel Mueller, with the goal of producing as much information as possible, consistent with the law. I look forward to reviewing that information."