

FBI IS EXAMINING POSSIBLE COORDINATION WITH RUSSIA, NOT COLLUSION

Jim Comey's statement confirming an investigation including the Trump campaign on Monday said the following:

I have been authorized by the Department of Justice to confirm that the FBI, as part of our counterintelligence mission, is investigating the Russian government's efforts to interfere in the 2016 presidential election, and that includes investigating the nature of any links between individuals associated with the Trump campaign and the Russian government and whether there was any **coordination** between the campaign and Russia's efforts. As with any counterintelligence investigation, this will also include an assessment of whether any crimes were committed. [my emphasis]

In spite of that careful, pre-approved word choice, "coordination," members of Congress in the hearing, as well as the press both before and after the hearing, have used the term "collusion."

But Comey made it clear much later in the hearing that the term coordination was deliberate. Mike Quigley asked for more details about how the FBI might find collusion with a foreign power. Comey corrected him, stating that he was investigating whether there had been coordination.

Collusion is not a legal term. It is not one I have used today. I said we are investigating to see if there is any coordination between people associated

with the campaign-

I think – though the lawyers should correct me if I'm wrong – this suggests the FBI is thinking in terms of conspiracy.

That, along with Comey's focus on knowing coordination, may put things like Roger Stone's interactions in the limelight – though the case that Guccifer 2.0 is a Russian cut-out is and always has been one of the weakest parts of the public case against Russia, and even top intelligence community people stop short of calling Wikileaks a Russian cut-out (meaning Stone would be able to deny knowingly working with Russians).

It does, however, put the events surrounding the release of Podesta's emails on October 7 in interesting light, though the lefty case on that is neither the best case for that period, nor does it account for all the details that would be of interest.