

RICHARD BURR ACCUSES THE OBAMA ADMINISTRATION OF RUNNING OUT THE CLOCK ON ELECTION INTERFERENCE

At the end of yesterday's press conference, Richard Burr made a startling accusation. In response to a question about whether the Trump Administration hasn't done enough to respond to Russia's interference, Burr instead addressed DHS' delayed notice to states about election intrusions, as if that constituted an adequate response from the Trump Administration.

In doing so, Burr accused the Obama Administration of "running out the clock" (apparently, on notifying states).

Listen, I think the Vice Chairman alluded to the fact that though it was slow, getting DHS to recognize [that states needed notice of attempted hacks on their election infrastructure], it didn't take as long as it did for the last Administration to run the clock on it. So we're not trying to look back and point to things that were done wrong. Everybody's done things wrong.

The accusation is particularly galling, given Lisa Monaco's description of her efforts to get the Gang of Eight to write a letter warning states of the threat.

In the briefings, the C.I.A. said there was intelligence indicating not only that the Russians were trying to get Mr. Trump elected but that they had gained computer access to multiple state and local election boards in the United

States since 2014, officials said.

Although the breached systems were not involved in actual vote-tallying operations, Obama administration officials proposed that the eight senior lawmakers write a letter to state election officials warning them of the possible threat posed by Russian hacking, officials said.

But Senator Mitch McConnell of Kentucky, the Republican majority leader, resisted, questioning the underpinnings of the intelligence, according to officials with knowledge of the discussions. Mr. McConnell ultimately agreed to a softer version of the letter, which did not mention the Russians but warned of unnamed “malefactors” who might seek to disrupt the elections through online intrusion. The letter, dated Sept. 28, was signed by Mr. McConnell, Mr. Reid, Speaker Paul D. Ryan and Representative Nancy Pelosi, the ranking Democrat.

On Sept. 22, two other members of the Gang of Eight – Senator Dianne Feinstein and Representative Adam B. Schiff, both of California and the ranking Democrats on the Senate and House intelligence committees – released their own statement about the Russian interference that did not mention Mr. Trump or his campaign by name.

Do the math here: McConnell, Reid, Ryan, and Pelosi signed a letter saying that malefactors might try to disrupt the elections. Then Feinstein (then Burr’s counterpart on SSCI) and Schiff (Nunes’ counterpart on HPSCI) released a stronger letter blaming Russia.

Based on briefings we have received, we have concluded that the Russian intelligence agencies are making a

serious and concerted effort to influence the U.S. election.

At the least, this effort is intended to sow doubt about the security of our election and may well be intended to influence the outcomes of the election—we can see no other rationale for the behavior of the Russians.

We believe that orders for the Russian intelligence agencies to conduct such actions could come only from very senior levels of the Russian government.

We call on President Putin to immediately order a halt to this activity. Americans will not stand for any foreign government trying to influence our election. We hope all Americans will stand together and reject the Russian effort.

None of these are the precise letter that Monaco has said she was after – a letter emphasizing the risk to the polls.

Still, just two people signed no letter: Nunes (who would go on to serve in Trump's transition team) and Burr (who not only was serving on Trump's national security advisory committee, but was in a close race in one of the states most likely to have had the outcome affected by known Russian hacking).

And he has the gall to call out the Obama Administration?