

DOES DEVIN NUNES' UNMASKING PSEUDO-SCANDAL BETRAY KNOWLEDGE OF THE "COLLUSION" WITH THE SAUDIS AND EMIRATES?

When Mike Flynn's plea deal revealed that he lied about efforts to stave off criticism of Israel's illegal settlements, I noted that that (and the efforts to cozy up to Saudi Arabia and UAE) was what the unmasking panic was probably about.

The most public confirmed unmasking involved Susan Rice discovering that Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed al-Nahyan had a secret meeting with Flynn, Kushner, and Bannon in NY.

Former national security adviser Susan Rice privately told House investigators that she unmasked the identities of senior Trump officials to understand why the crown prince of the United Arab Emirates was in New York late last year, multiple sources told CNN.

The New York meeting preceded a separate effort by the UAE to facilitate a back-channel communication between Russia and the incoming Trump White House.

The crown prince, Sheikh Mohammed bin

Zayed al-Nahyan, arrived in New York last December in the transition period before Trump was sworn into office for a meeting with several top Trump officials, including Michael Flynn, the president's son-in-law, Jared Kushner, and his top strategist Steve Bannon, sources said.

But we now know that there would be intercepts between Netanyahu and Kushner leading up to it.

I wouldn't even be surprised if the Republicans are so certain they've been unmasked because Israel has their own way of discovering such things.

I've laid out how Jared Kushner's "peace" "plan" really is just an attempt to remap the Middle East to the interests of Israel and Saudi Arabia, interests which require significantly more belligerence against Iran than Obama showed. The unmasked discussions would include the ones that preceded Kushner's order to Flynn to try to undercut the resolution, as well as whatever else Kushner discussed with Netanyahu at the time.

Today's NYT scoop revealing that the Trump campaign colluded not just with Russians, but also Saudis, Emirates, and Israelis explain why the discovery of the later meetings was so dangerous: because it would reveal other efforts Trump made to sell out American foreign policy.

Three months before the 2016 election, a small group gathered at Trump Tower to meet with Donald Trump Jr., the president's eldest son. One was an Israeli specialist in social media manipulation. Another was an emissary for two wealthy Arab princes. The third was a Republican donor with a controversial past in the Middle East as a private security contractor.

The meeting was convened primarily to offer help to the Trump team, and it forged relationships between the men and Trump insiders that would develop over the coming months – past the election and well into President Trump's first year in office, according to several people with knowledge of their encounters.

Erik Prince, the private security contractor and the former head of Blackwater, arranged the meeting, which took place on Aug. 3, 2016. The emissary, George Nader, told Donald Trump Jr. that the crown princes who led Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates were eager to help his father win election as president. The social media specialist, Joel Zamel, extolled his company's ability to give an edge to a political campaign; by that time, the firm had already drawn up a multimillion-dollar proposal for a social media manipulation effort to help elect Mr. Trump.

[snip]

It is unclear whether such a proposal was executed, and the details of who commissioned it remain in dispute. But Donald Trump Jr. responded approvingly, according to a person with knowledge of the meeting, and after those initial offers of help, Mr. Nader was quickly embraced as a close ally by Trump

campaign advisers – meeting frequently with Jared Kushner, Mr. Trump’s son-in-law, and Michael T. Flynn, who became the president’s first national security adviser.

This puts the unmasking panic – and Devin Nunes’ role in it – in entirely new light. It’s not just that Seychelles meeting in the transition period – it’s this earlier meeting, where a bunch of autocrats got the candidate’s son to agree to collude on the election.

Which makes me wonder, how would Trump Transition Official Devin Nunes know that? When Nunes manufactured a totally bogus unmasking scandal, did he know of these earlier meetings showing illegal collusion?

Update: I realize, now, that Nunes’ unmasking panic may actually have served as a giant red flag for Mueller that there were aspects of the Trump team’s dealings with UAE and Israel that were of acute concern to the team. Well done Devin!