



Written by [C. Mitchell Shaw](#) on April 6, 2017

Russia Probe Witch Hunt Claims Another Victim: Nunes Steps Down

House Intelligence Committee Chairman Devin Nunes (R-Calif.; shown) has stepped down from the investigation into Russian interference in the recent presidential election. While Nunes is the latest casualty in the witch hunt to prove a connection between President Trump and Russia, he is not the first and will not likely be the last.

Thursday morning, Nunes issued a statement saying his decision to step down from the investigation was based in complaints filed with the Office of Congressional Ethics. He said:



Several left-wing activist groups have filed accusations against me with the Office of Congressional Ethics. The charges are entirely false and politically motivated, and are being leveled just as the American people are beginning to learn the truth about the improper unmasking of the identities of U.S. citizens and other abuses of power. Despite the baselessness of the charges, I believe it is in the best interests of the House Intelligence Committee and the Congress for me to have Representative Mike Conaway, with assistance from Representatives Trey Gowdy and Tom Rooney, temporarily take charge of the Committee's Russia investigation while the House Ethics Committee looks into this matter. I will continue to fulfill all my other responsibilities as Committee Chairman, and I am requesting to speak to the Ethics Committee at the earliest possible opportunity in order to expedite the dismissal of these false claims.

The accusations filed by "left-wing activist groups" focused on Nunes' briefing of President Trump about intelligence intercepts of communications between Trump campaign personnel and Russian



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officials. Apparently informing the president of the illegal “unmasking” of citizens of the United States in reports produced while conducting surveillance on a presidential candidate is a bigger deal than that “unmasking” and surveillance.

It appears that Nunes real “crime” was not going along with the preconceived idea of the Democrats involved in the investigation. That preconceived idea is that there is a direct connection between Donald Trump and Moscow. One of the proponents of that idea is Representative Adam Schiff (D-Calif.), who is the ranking Democrat on the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence. He was also one of the most prominent voices calling for Nunes to recuse himself from the investigation.

On March 27, Schiff tweeted:

After much consideration I believe Chairman should recuse himself from involvement in investigation/oversight of Trump campaign & transition pic.twitter.com/jpfA1x80Si
— Adam Schiff (@RepAdamSchiff) March 27, 2017

The link in that tweet opens a picture of the text of his full statement which also says:

This is not a recommendation I make lightly, as the Chairman and I have worked together well for several years; and I take this step with the knowledge of the solemn responsibility we have on the Intelligence Committee to provide oversight on all intelligence matters, not just to conduct the investigation.

That “oversight on all intelligence matters” appears not to include holding the intelligence community accountable for conducting surveillance ([which seems to have certainly included wiretaps](#)) on a presidential candidate and then “unmasking” the names of American citizens whose communications were harvested as part of that surveillance.

For his part, Nunes is clearly not on board with either the witch hunt that has President Trump as its chief target, or many of the Deep State’s other objectives. In a previous article on the surveillance of Trump, *The New American* [reported](#):

President Trump — who has claimed for weeks that the Obama administration had his campaign under surveillance — was referring to an online article published on Friday by Fox News. That article, under the headline “Intelligence official who ‘unmasked’ Trump associates is ‘very high up,’ source says,” says, “Intelligence and House sources with direct knowledge of the disclosure of classified names” told Fox News that House Intelligence Committee Chairman Devin Nunes (shown, R-Calif.) “knows who is responsible — and that person is not in the FBI.” The article also says that an unnamed source with access to information about the case told Fox News that the U.S. intelligence official who is responsible for the “unmasking” of the names of a number of private citizens associated with the Trump campaign is someone “very well known, very high up, very senior in the intelligence world.”

And Nunes was one of a small number of those in Congress who voiced concerns about the CIA’s secret hacking program. As *The New American* [reported](#) at the time:

House Intelligence Committee Chairman Devin Nunes (R-Calif.) told the assembled press at a briefing last Tuesday, “These [leaks] appear to be very, very serious.” He added, “We are extremely concerned, and we are following it closely.”

It’s easy to see why Nunes had to go.



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Schiff's statement calling for Nunes to step down went on to say:

But in much the same way that the Attorney General was forced to recuse himself from the Russian investigation after failing to inform the Senate of his meetings with Russian officials, I believe the public cannot have the necessary confidence that matters involving the President's campaign or transition team can be objectively investigated or overseen by the Chairman.

It is interesting that in his statement (which runs four paragraphs), Schiff does not once mention Nunes by name, instead referring to him only as "the Chairman." Perhaps he plans to use this statement as a form letter to demand the next chairman recuse himself. That may not be that far-fetched, considering that Schiff recounts the liberal revision of the history of Attorney General Jeff Sessions recusal as part of his basis for demanding that Nunes follow suit.

In pointing to a previous victim of the witch hunt being carried out as part of the incestuous relationship between the Deep State and the Left, Schiff avoids facts and merely regurgitates the party line. Sessions (whom Schiff also does not mention by name) was not "forced to recuse himself from the Russian investigation after failing to inform the Senate of his meetings with Russian officials." As *The New American* [reported](#) when the Left was clamoring for Sessions' head on a platter:

The mainstream media is treating this story as if it were Trump's Watergate — even though information is still emerging that challenges that narrative. In fact, the social media hashtag #SessionsGate is already trending on both Twitter and Facebook. The brouhaha is centered around the fact that Sessions did not disclose that he met with with Russian Ambassador to the United States Sergey Kislyak on two separate occasions and, in fact, said — in his sworn confirmation testimony — "I did not have communications with the Russians." That sounds, for all the world, just like perjury. After all, if he said that he "did not have communications with the Russians" when he had, it is pretty cut and dry, right? Only if that is all he said. Because while that is the sum and substance of a plethora of headlines and social media posts, there is more to it than that.

As that article went on to explain:

Sessions was answering a very specific question when he said he "did not have communications with the Russians." That question — asked by Senator Al Franken (D-Minn.) — was, "If there is any evidence that anyone affiliated the Trump campaign communicated with the Russian government in the course of this campaign, what will you do?" Sessions' complete answer (which is not widely reported) was, "Senator Franken, I'm not aware of any of those activities. I have been called a surrogate at a time or two in that campaign, and I did not have communications with the Russians. And I'm unable to comment."

Add to that the salient fact that when Sessions had communicated with "the Russians," it was in his official capacity as a U.S. senator serving on the Senate Armed Services Committee and not in any way connected with the Trump campaign. And, as a lawyer, Sessions understood that the question he was answering was about what happened "in the course of [the Trump] campaign." He also understood that his answer was able to be restricted to the question. He did not mention the meetings with "the Russians" that were part of his official duties because they were wholly irrelevant to the question he was asked. Instead, he said, "I'm unable to comment."

But none of those facts prevented him from being hounded into recusing himself from the investigation. It is noteworthy that in citing Sessions' recusal while calling for Nunes to do the same, Schiff avoided those same honest facts. After all, if a lie worked once, it will probably work again.



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It is interesting that demands for Nunes to step down from the investigation reached a tipping point which resulted in his recusal just days after Schiff admitted that the investigation has been unable to find any solid evidence that there is any connection between Trump and Russia. As [The New American reported](#) in a previous article, Schiff told CNN's *State of the Union* Sunday, "I don't think we can say anything definitively at this point." But he was quick to add, "We are still at the very early stage of the investigation." He also said, "The only thing I can say is that it would be irresponsible for us not to get to the bottom of this."

With Nunes' recusal coming so close on the heels of that statement by Schiff, one is left to wonder if the plan "to get to the bottom of this" doesn't necessarily include getting rid of everyone involved in the investigation who is not part of the witch hunt.

Photo of Rep. Devin Nunes: AP Images



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