

Trump finally admits Russia helped get him elected

“I had nothing to do with Russia helping me to get elected,” the president tweeted.





President Donald Trump has finally admitted what many have known for more than two years: Russia helped elect him as president.

In a tweetstorm pushing back against the conclusions of [special counsel Robert Mueller's investigation](#) — no collusion with Russia, maybe obstruction of justice — Trump either purposely or accidentally referred to Moscow's preference for him in the 2016 election.

“Russia, Russia, Russia! That’s all you heard at the beginning of this Witch Hunt Hoax,” [Trump](#) tweeted on Thursday morning. “And now Russia has disappeared because I had nothing to do with Russia helping me to get elected. It was a crime that didn’t exist.”

The key part there, just for emphasis, was “I had nothing to do with Russia helping me to get elected.” In other words, “the Kremlin tried to help me win, but I didn’t coordinate with them.”

Just an hour later, though, he told reporters that Russia didn’t have anything to do with helping him win, contradicting his own tweet. “I got me elected. Russia didn’t help me at all,” the president said.

Still, the tweet was the first time Trump said anything like that Russia helped him in 2016. He’s long denied Moscow played any role whatsoever in influencing the 2016 presidential vote, like he did to reporters in person, likely because he felt admitting such a thing would taint his election victory.

He’s repeatedly bought the denials of Russian President Vladimir Putin that Moscow didn’t aim to sway the election in his favor. “I will tell you that President Putin was extremely strong and powerful in his denial today,” [Trump](#) said alongside the Russian leader in Helsinki last July.

But Trump’s statements always contradicted what American intelligence and law enforcement officials said. In January 2017, the top US agencies — including the CIA and FBI — put out a public [report](#) saying that “Russian President Vladimir Putin ordered an influence campaign in 2016 aimed at the US

presidential election,” adding, “We further assess Putin and the Russian Government developed a clear preference for President-elect Trump.”

And when Mueller released his [report](#) in April, he had an entire section devoted to Russia’s efforts to meddle throughout the campaign. He followed up during his only public appearance as the special counsel on Wednesday by [reiterating](#) “there were multiple, systematic efforts to interfere in our election. That allegation deserves the attention of every American.”

So it seems Trump doesn’t agree with his own tweet. Fine, but the real question is does he agree with what his own government says? The answer to that, it seems, is no.

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