

Attachment B

CQ Congressional Transcripts

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Dec. 13, 2017 - Revised Final

House Judiciary Committee Holds Hearing on the Justice Department's Investigation of Russia's Interference in the 2016 Presidential Election

LIST OF PANEL MEMBERS AND WITNESSES

Partial Text - complete transcript not yet available

GOODLATTE:

Good morning. The Judiciary Committee will come to order, and Without objection, the chair is authorized to declare recesses of the committee at any time.

We welcome everyone to this morning's hearing on -- oversight hearing with Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein. And I'll begin by recognizing myself for an opening statement.

Thank you, Deputy General -- Attorney General Rosenstein, for appearing for the first time in front of this committee. There is much to discuss today, and we look forward to your testimony and answers to your questions.

The chair thanks the gentleman, recognizes the gentleman from Texas, Mr. Smith, for five minutes.

SMITH:

And thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Rosenstein, I am concerned that the special counsel may be casting too wide of a net -- that he is trying to catch all the fish in the ocean, not just the Soviet sharks. And, if the special counsel were to obtain information not directly related to Russian interference with the election, and he wanted to investigate that further, would he need to obtain your authority to expand the investigation?

ROSENSTEIN:

Yes, he would.

SMITH:

OK. Has he ever asked to expand the scope of the investigation?

ROSENSTEIN:

I appreciate that question, Congressman. If I can explain briefly, there are a lot of media stories speculating about what the special counsel may or may not be doing. I know what he's doing. I'm properly exercising my oversight responsibilities, and so I can assure you that the special counsel is conducting himself consistently with our understanding about the scope of his investigation.

SMITH:

Right. That really wasn't my question. My question was, has he asked you or consulted with you about a desire to expand the investigation beyond the original scope?

ROSENSTEIN:

Well, the consultation, actually, is much more detailed than that. He consults with me, his office consults with me about their investigation, both within and without the scope. So I know what they're authorized to do.

SMITH:

I know you know what they're doing, but has he requested to expand the scope of the original -- of the original jurisdiction?

ROSENSTEIN:

The scope of the original jurisdiction, as you know, is publicly set forth...

SMITH:

Right.

ROSENSTEIN:

... in that order. But the specific matters are not identified in the order. So I discussed that with Director Mueller when he started, and we've had ongoing discussion about exactly what is within the scope of his investigation. And, to the extent there was any ambiguity about it, he's received my permission to include those matters within his investigation.

SMITH:

So he has asked to expand the scope and you've given him permission?

ROSENSTEIN:

Well, yeah -- you're characterizing it as an expansion. As I said, it's a clarification, in most cases. But he understands that this is a special counsel. It's not an independent counsel.

SMITH:

Right. Right.

ROSENSTEIN:

And I'm accountable for what they're doing, and I need to know what they're doing.

SMITH:

Yeah. A clarification may be an expansion, and we may be caught up on the meaning of those words. But I do think -- regardless, I think the American people have a right to know if the original jurisdiction has been expanded. Do you agree with that?

ROSENSTEIN:

The difficulty, Congressman, is that I have a responsibility not to talk about what's being investigated, and that's why the original order doesn't identify any persons or charges.

SMITH:

Right.

ROSENSTEIN:

But we know what's under investigation.

SMITH:

I'm not asking you to go into any specifics, or to name names or to even talk about the subject; just whether or not the request had been made to expand it. You said you clarified his jurisdiction. I assume that that would involve an expansion, as you suggested.

ROSENSTEIN:

I want to make sure I'm 100 percent accurate, and I'll need to check and get back to you as to whether or not we considered particular issues to be a clarification or an expansion.

SMITH:

OK.

ROSENSTEIN:

But, whatever it may be, I'm responsible for and I know what he's investigating.

SMITH:

OK. Please do get back to me on the difference between those two.

Do you feel that the special counsel is authorized to investigate the personal finances of the Trump family members?