

Reading Into the Readout: President Trump's Meeting With Lavrov

Wednesday, President Donald Trump met with Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov at the White House.

The meeting was held behind closed doors, so we have no idea what was actually said, but as is standard practice after such high-level discussions, the White House provided a readout of the meeting. For those who have never seen one before, it's a short (sometimes little more than a sentence or two) synopsis of a meeting.

In this case, we were treated to a fairly healthy readout. But something important was missing.

First, here's the full readout of the meeting:

President Donald J. Trump met today with Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov of Russia, following on the visit of Secretary of State Rex Tillerson to Moscow last month. President Trump emphasized the need to work together to end the conflict in Syria, in particular underscoring the need for Russia to rein in the Assad regime, Iran and Iranian proxies. The president raised Ukraine and expressed his administration's commitment to remain engaged in resolving the conflict and stressed Russia's responsibility to fully implement the Minsk agreements. He also raised the possibility of broader cooperation on resolving conflicts in the Middle East and elsewhere. The president further emphasized his desire to build a better relationship between the United States and Russia.

You can usually read a lot into a readout based on the words that are used in it. But in this case, we might have actually

learned more from what isn't in it.

Typically, the White House readouts are quick to stress the good, great or excellent (pick your favorite adjective) the relationship is between the U.S. and the other leader's nation. For instance, here's the readout from the president's phone call with newly elected South Korean President Moon Jae-in:

President Donald J. Trump spoke today with President Moon Jae-in of the Republic of Korea to congratulate him and the Korean people on his great election victory and their peaceful, democratic transition of power. President Trump and President Moon agreed to continue to strengthen the United States-Republic of Korea alliance and to deepen the enduring friendship between our two countries. President Trump said he looks forward to working with President Moon and invited him to visit Washington at an early date. President Moon accepted the invitation.

Here's another readout from the president's congratulatory phone call with French President-elect Emmanuel Macron:

President Donald J. Trump spoke today with president-elect Emmanuel Macron of France to congratulate him on his victory in the May 7th French presidential election. President Trump emphasized his desire to work closely with President-elect Macron in confronting shared challenges and noted the long and robust history of cooperation between the United States and its oldest ally, France. The two leaders agreed to spend time together during the May 25th NATO leaders meeting in Brussels.

See what we mean? Now, granted, the U.S. and Russia are still technically adversaries. But, if you were to believe the Democrat/liberal mainstream media narrative, you would've thought something about a "conducive meeting" or "cordial conversation" would pop up in the readout.

It didn't. And by reading the rest of the readout, it's pretty clear that wasn't purposely left out to combat the as-yet still unproven allegations of Russian collusion with the president's election campaign.

If we read through it again, and actually read into what's in it this time, we see that perhaps the meeting wasn't as cordial as the president would've liked.

It sounds like the president was making his case for Russia to rein in Bashar al-Assad and Iran and to be a better partner in the joint effort to destroy ISIS. That wasn't any indication of agreement in the readout suggests it was a very one-sided conversation.

The president also discussed Ukraine, a very sore subject for both sides, as well as the U.S. position that Russia must abide by the Minsk Protocols, which call for Russia to stop backing the rebels in the Donbass region of Ukraine. That's not language of cooperation or finding common ground—it almost sounds like a demand.

Again, we have no way of knowing how those conversations really went, barring a White House leak, but we should get a general sense very soon. But just judging from what we've been told so far, there's more than enough reason to be praying.
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