

# Why Many Americans Trust Donald Trump More Than the CIA

While flying home recently from an overseas trip, I watched a movie in which the CIA played a prominent role, and if the movie is anything is close to reality, the CIA knows a lot—and I mean a whole lot, from what's on our computers to what we're talking about on our phones. Yet a healthy percentage of the American population seems to trust President-elect Trump more than our nation's Central Intelligence Agency. How can this be?

I asked my Twitter followers, "When it comes to alleged Russian influence on the elections, do you believe the CIA or Trump?"

Remarkably, only 18 percent said they trusted the CIA, while 44 percent said they trusted Trump and 38 percent said they were unsure. And it should be noted that while the vast majority of my Twitter followers are, to my knowledge, Christian conservatives, a good number of them did not support Trump. Why, then, are they so distrusting of the CIA?

To answer that question, we can ask this: "Do you trust the federal government?"

As broad as that question is, I think the answer for many Americans would be, "No, I don't."

After all the federal government is the IRS, the Department of Justice, the FBI—and also the CIA. The federal government is the big bad "them" which is always out to get the vulnerable little "us."

As for Trump, although he is about to become the head of that

very federal government, he is perceived by many Americans to be “one of us” rather than part of the system, and the way he is conducting himself thus far as president-elect, with his Twitter account as active as ever, continues to reinforce that perception. He is the champion of “us.”

The federal government is also hardly a stranger to corruption or mismanagement, unless you believe the IRS was not guilty of unfair treatment of conservative organizations, the Department of Justice was not guilty of favored treatment of Hillary Clinton and FBI Director James Comey acted in a completely dispassionate and professional manner. And so it's easy to think the information linked from unnamed CIA sources is unreliable. After all, this is President Obama's CIA, is it not?

We also should bear in mind that the source for the Russian hacking claims is the liberal, mainstream media, which has also taken a big credibility hit in recent months.

Consider these striking results from a June, 2016 Gallup poll focused on Americans' “confidence in institutions.”

The pollster said to each participant, “I am going to read you a list of institutions in American society. Please tell me how much confidence you, yourself, have in each one—a great deal, quite a lot, some or very little?”

At the top of the list was the military, with a high mark of 73 percent positive (41 percent responding with “a great deal” of trust and 32 percent with “quite a lot”). At the bottom of the list was Congress, with only a six percent positive response (those responding with “a great deal” of trust were too small to number; six percent said they had “quite a lot” of trust in Congress). What a staggeringly poor showing for our elected officials and what a strong showing for our military.

Nos. 2 and 3 at the top of the list were small business (68

percent total) and the police (56 percent). Rounding out the bottom of the list were big business (18 percent total), newspapers (20 percent) and television news (21 percent). And despite the constant attacks on religion in America, the church ranked No. 4 on the list, one slot higher than the presidency, which was then followed by the Supreme Court, the public schools, banks and organized labor.

The offshoot of all this is that the CIA is perceived by many as being part of a larger, untrustworthy system, while those pushing the Russian hacking narrative are part of the untrustworthy media. Added to this is the fact that the Hillary Clinton campaign is supportive of efforts to launch an investigation into the alleged Russian hack, and it's easy to see why many trust Trump more than the CIA right now.

Callers to my radio show also emphasized that, whoever was behind the hack, what was revealed was only damning because it was true. Because of this, there's very little sympathy for the Democratic complaints about the hacking and more concern with the content of the hacked material than the question of who did the hacking.

I have no idea whether Russia hacked us or not, and obviously, it will be important for Trump and the CIA to find a place of rapprochement and trust in the days ahead. But right now, Trump continues to represent the views of a fairly significant portion of the populace—which is, after all, how he got elected. {eoa}