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As the president plunges into a sea of what-aboutism, pulling Fox News talking heads after him, let's recall what it is actually about ... (1)

... a crime was committed, a very serious crime: a computer hack. It's no less a burglary for stealing digital rather than physical property. Same crime as Watergate. (2)

All the way back in the summer of 2016, everybody knew who committed this crime: Russian military intelligence. Claims that maybe it was an "inside job" etc. were floated in bad faith by untruthful people - but everybody knew, the Trump campaign very much included. (3)

When Donald Trump Jr. accepted his famous Trump Tower meeting, he was hoping to receive the proceeds of a crime. He was disappointed in that hope, but that's what he hoped. (4)

And when the proceeds of the crime did begin to be posted on the WikiLeaks site later in the summer of 2016 and -devastatingly - less than 1 hour after the reporting of the "Access Hollywood" tape in October 2016, everybody understand that this was Putin acting to help Trump (5)

None of this bears any resemblance to "oppo research" - information obtained lawfully by asking questions, reading archives, etc. It was crime, no less criminal for being outsourced to foreigners beyond the reach of US prosecutors (6)

The Mueller report found insufficient evidence to convict anyone on the Trump campaign of culpability in the crime. But it stressed: the crime was committed by Russian military intelligence to help Trump, and the Trump campaign knowingly welcomed that help (7)

If the Trump campaign had flown a private investigator to Moscow to interview people about the (bogus) Uranium One Clinton story ... nobody would object. That is oppo research. If they trawled old Arkansas police records in search of something discrediting ... again, research (8)

What fellow Republicans first and then Democrats later hired Christopher Steele to do - interview people, collect rumors, sift through them - falls into this former category. The quality of Steele's work you can dispute. He committed no crimes in course of doing it. (9)

Trump Jr's visitors in June 2016 purported to deliver - and Trump's actual helpers later in the year did actually deliver - the proceeds of crimes. In full light of day, and with Trump on video urging them onward. (10)

The Trump campaign was absolved of criminal culpability by Mueller in large part on issue o intent. Did they truly understand they were being invited to participate in a crime? Did they truly wish to participate? And could that be proven beyond reasonable doubt? (11)

That's why President Trump's words to ABC were so important. He was asked, now that you have full knowledge of all that was at issue - including the crime committed by the Putin regime by hacking Americans - would you receive that information again? Trump answered YES. (12)

Trump confessed the thing Mueller could not prove. (END)

In tweet 5, "understand" should read "understood"
Sorry !

In tweet 11, "o intent" should have been typed "of intent"

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