

Russian Interference in US Politics a Crime Even If Ineffective, Gozman Says Opinion

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“If you break into a house and steal only some small thing, it is still breaking and entering even if it shows that you are not much of a thief.”

By Paul Goble for “Window on Eurasia” February 24 – Neither Russian officials nor Americans who follow their lead understand that “the ineffectiveness of [Moscow’s] interference in American elections and the shamefully low level of the professionalism of those involved does not make the crime involved any less serious, Leonid Gozman [pictured] says. It is true that the amount of traffic that the fake Russian accounts generated was “relatively small,” the Russian opposition politician and commentator says; and it is true that those involved often knew English poorly and that the whole foolish project did not have as much an impact as Moscow hoped (echo.msk.ru/blog/leonid_gozman/2153424-echo/). But that in no way lessens the charge of interference despite the attempts of some in Russia and the US to use this as a justification for ignoring what Moscow has been up to, Gozman continues. If you break into a house and steal only some small thing, it is still breaking and entering even if it shows that you are not much of a thief. Moreover, although Gozman does not address this in his comment, those who engage in such breaking and entering create an atmosphere of fear and suspicion that goes far beyond the act itself. That is why criminal law punishes those who engage in such things, even if the value of the specific things taken is relatively small. The same thing, the Moscow writer points out, should happen in this case of breaking and entering into a political system not your own.

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The commentary above is from Paul Goble’s “Window on Eurasia” series and appears here with the author’s permission. Contact Goble at: paul.goble@gmail.com