

Russia Retaliates Against U.S. Sanctions



Summary: Russia has responded to U.S. sanctions by firing hundreds of diplomatic employees.

Vladimir Putin showed his muscle this weekend when he retaliated against sanctions from the United States. Russia fired hundreds of American employees from diplomatic posts in the country, and so far, President Donald Trump has remained mum.

According to *Business Insider*, 755 diplomatic workers were dismissed from the US Embassy in Moscow and from US diplomatic missions in St. Petersburg, Ekaterinburg, and Vladivostok. The move was a response to December 2016 sanctions issued under Trump's predecessor, President Barack Obama, and those sanctions were later expanded upon by Congress.

Last week, Trump said he wanted to review the bill before he signed off on it.

"President Donald J. Trump read early drafts of the bill and negotiated regarding critical elements of it," White House press secretary, Sarah Huckabee Sanders, said. "He has now reviewed the final version and, based on its responsiveness to his negotiations, approves the bill and intends to sign it."

Russia said that it wanted Trump to keep his presidential campaign promise of improving Russian-American relations and that the firing was forced upon them because the sanctions required a response.

According to *The New York Times*, Russia's move "was a major shift in tone from the beginning of this month, when Mr. Putin met President Trump for the first time at the Group of 20 summit meeting in Hamburg, Germany."

Business Insider said that Trump was hesitant to sign the bill because of his relationship with Putin, but that Congress wanted legislation that would limit his power with Russia.

"Even if Trump is inclined to take steps the Russians would welcome, both houses of Congress have now indicated overwhelmingly that they don't trust Trump in dealing with Russia and are going to impose major limits on his leeway for action," said Cold War Studies expert Mark Kramer to *Business Insider*.

Trump is currently in hot water because of Russia. A Department of Justice probe helmed by Robert Mueller is investigating the Kremlin's possible ties in influencing the 2016 Presidential Election, and last week, Congress passed the Russia sanctions to punish the country for its alleged involvement.

During the 2016 Presidential Election, Russia allegedly hacked Hillary Clinton and released embarrassing emails from her campaign, and Trump's son Donald Trump Jr. is also being investigated for meeting with a Russian lawyer who promised to give him information to help his father's campaign crush his opponent, Clinton.

Putin denied all involvement with the American election and said that the allegations were anti-Russian and a scapegoat to internal political strife.

Joshua Tucker, the director of New York University's Jordan Center for the Advanced Study of Russia, told *Business Insider* that the firing was Putin's way of showing the world he was not a pushover.

"Putin wants to show the international community — and probably his domestic audience as well — that he can't be pushed around, and now he's pushed back," Tucker said.

- [Donald Trump Jr. Met with Russian Lawyer During Campaign](#)
- [U.S. and Russia Reach Syrian Ceasefire Agreement](#)

What do you think of Russia's response to the sanctions? Let us know in the comments below.

