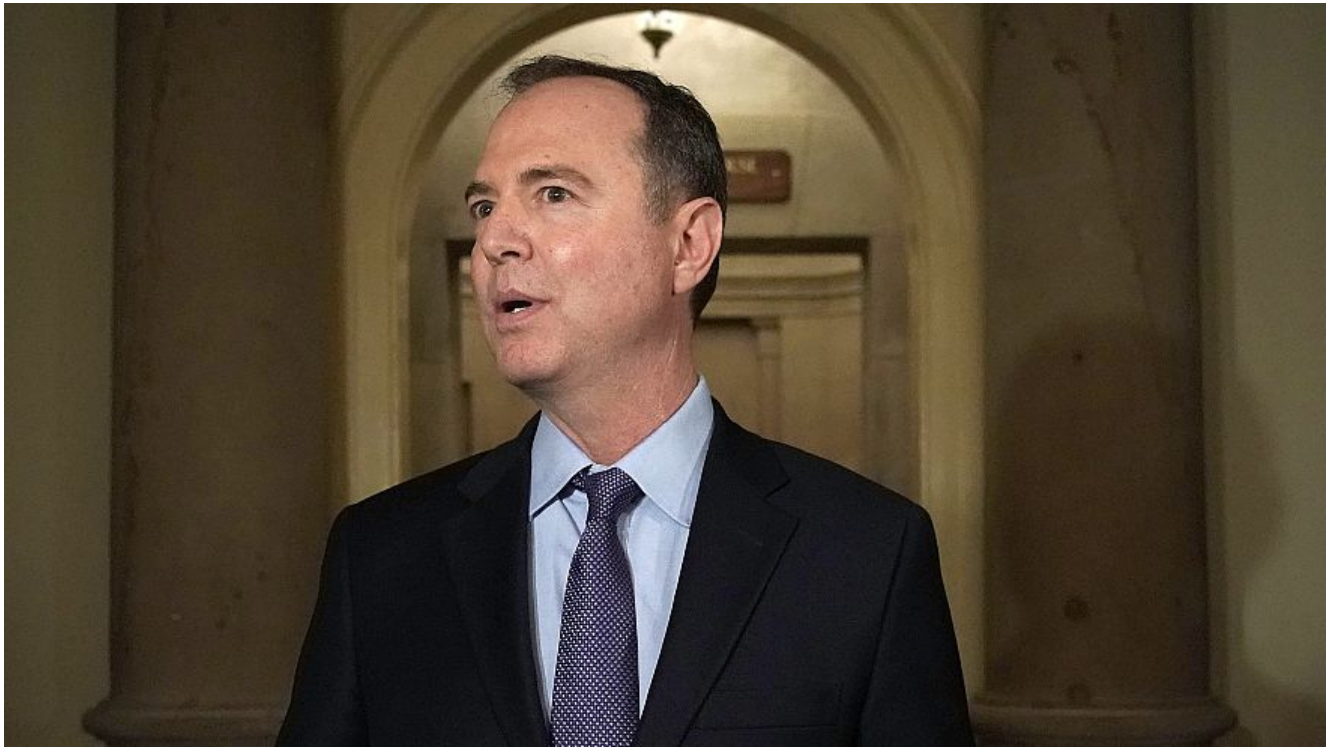


Dems vow action after report Trump directed Cohen to lie about Russia dealings



A top House Democratic lawmaker is vowing to look into new allegations that President Donald Trump directed his former lawyer Michael Cohen to lie to Congress about negotiations to build a Trump Tower in Moscow. BuzzFeed News on Thursday evening reported that Cohen told special counsel Robert Mueller the president personally instructed him to lie to Congressional investigators in order to minimize links between Trump and his Moscow building project, citing two federal law enforcement officials involved in an investigation of the matter. The report also alleged that Cohen was directed to give a false impression that the project had ended before it actually did. NBC News has not independently confirmed this report. Rep. Adam Schiff, D-Calif., the chairman of the House Intelligence committee, called the allegation the “most serious to date” Thursday evening and said that his committee would look into the matter.



Rep. Adam Schiff, D-Calif., who is part of a Congressional delegation scheduled for an overseas trip, speaks to members of the media on Thursday. Alex Wong

"The allegation that the President of the United States may have suborned perjury before our committee in an effort to curtail the investigation and cover up his business dealings with Russia is among the most serious to date," Schiff said in a tweet. "We will do what's necessary to find out if it's true." Rudy Giuliani, the president's personal lawyer said in a statement to NBC News on Friday that, "If you believe Cohen I can get you a great deal on the Brooklyn Bridge." BuzzFeed News reported that the special counsel's office learned about Trump directing Cohen to lie through interviews with multiple witnesses from the Trump Organization. The special counsel also obtained internal company emails, text messages and other documents, the report said. Cohen, 52, pleaded guilty in federal court in November to a single count of making false statements to Congress about the project. He admitted to making several significant lies to the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence last year about Trump's Moscow project, including testimony that the project had ended in January 2016 because of "business reasons." Rep. Ted Deutch, D-Fla., the chairman of the House Ethics Committee, on MSNBC's "Morning Joe" sidestepped questions about whether the allegation would lead to impeachment, but said "this is as serious as it gets." "This is more evidence that the president has violated his oath of office," he said. "If he told Michael Cohen to lie Congress, if he suborned perjury, this is as serious as it

gets."Other Democratic lawmakers pounced on the report, with some calling for Trump's impeachment."If the @BuzzFeed story is true, President Trump must resign or be impeached," Rep. Joaquin Castro, D-Texas, tweeted Thursday evening.Sen. Chris Murphy, D-Conn., said on Thursday that Mueller should not end his Russian investigation and to also brief Congress on its progress."Listen, if Mueller does have multiple sources confirming Trump directed Cohen to lie to Congress, then we need to know this ASAP. Mueller shouldn't end his inquiry, but it's about time for him to show Congress his cards before it's too late for us to act," he said."If the President directed Cohen to lie to Congress, that is obstruction of justice. Period. Full stop," Rep. David Cicilline, D-Rhode Island, said in a tweet on Thursday.

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