The time has come for Republicans to stand up for their country

By Jim Jones

I’m having a hard time understanding the Republican Party that I joined back in the early 1960s. At that time, our main foreign adversary was the Soviet Union. It was bent on destruction of the American way of life. We engaged in an ugly decades-long struggle with the USSR, fighting proxy wars around the globe. Republicans were in the forefront of the fray, denouncing Russian imperialism while providing the war material to combat Russia’s ambitions. No more.

Many of the current Republican Members of Congress don’t seem to be bothered by the fact that Russia meddled in our elections last year, that Russian media regularly spews out fake news blaming the U.S. for practically all of the world’s ills, that Russia has gobbled up Crimea and is threatening our allies in Europe, that Russia is purposely bombing hospitals and U.S. allies in Syria, that Russia is likely providing arms to the Taliban much like it provided arms to the North Vietnamese to kill American troops in the 1960s, and that Russia is doing many other things to weaken and discredit the United States, both at home and abroad.

They don’t appear to be concerned that our President is seemingly infatuated with Vladimir Putin and cannot bring himself to speak ill of this vile person who has pillaged Russia and used deadly force to silence those who dare speak out against him. They seem to have no qualms about the fact that the President fired the FBI chief just as he was planning to ramp up the investigation of Russia’s efforts to disrupt America’s 2016 elections. And, the day after doing so, the President had a chummy meeting with Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov in the White House--a meeting that Putin had demanded in a recent phone call with the President. It was a nice propaganda coup for Putin that was memorialized by a Russian photographer because American journalists were excluded.

The Republican Party that I remember from years ago would be demanding a full-throated investigation of these activities because they pose a substantial threat to our country. The most some Republicans can muster is a shrug of their shoulders and comments such as, “well its history, let’s just move on.” Has the Republican Party turned into such a hyper-partisan entity that it is not willing to get to the bottom of this alarming mess? Seems so.

We can’t rely on the Justice Department to act in an even-handed manner because the AG, after having recused himself from the Russian investigation, took part in getting rid of the FBI Director. It is essential that an independent commission, like the 9-11 Commission, or a special prosecutor be appointed to conduct a thorough investigation into what the Russians did, how they did it, and whether there was any involvement by U.S. citizens. We must learn all we can about Russia’s cyber capabilities and how to combat them. The Congressional committees do not have the resources or staff to do an adequate job. If we let the Russians get away with their blatant interference with America’s sacred election process, they will do it again. Next time the target may be the Republicans, unless they continue their strange laissez-faire attitude toward Russian aggression.

We need to demand that the Idaho Congressional delegation stand up for America, rather than standing idly by while Putin tries to tear down the American dream.