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SENATE

REPORT
116–290

RUSSIAN ACTIVE MEASURES CAMPAIGNS AND INTERFERENCE IN THE 2016 U.S. ELECTION

R E P O R T

VOLUMES I–V

TOGETHER WITH

ADDITIONAL VIEWS

SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE
UNITED STATES SENATE



NOVEMBER 10, 2020.—Ordered to be printed

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VOLUME I

RUSSIAN EFFORTS AGAINST ELECTION INFRASTRUCTURE

WITH ADDITIONAL VIEWS

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Russian Efforts Against Election Infrastructure

I. (U) INTRODUCTION

(U) From 2017 to 2019, the Committee held hearings, conducted interviews, and reviewed intelligence related to Russian attempts in 2016 to access election infrastructure. The Committee sought to determine the extent of Russian activities, identify the response of the U.S. Government at the state, local, and federal level to the threat, and make recommendations on how to better prepare for such threats in the future. The Committee received testimony from state election officials, Obama administration officials, and those in the Intelligence Community and elsewhere in the U.S. Government responsible for evaluating threats to elections.

II. (U) FINDINGS

1. [redacted] The Russian government directed extensive activity, beginning in at least 2014 and carrying into at least 2017, against U.S. election infrastructure[1] at the state and local level. [redacted] The Committee has seen no evidence that any votes were changed or that any voting machines were manipulated.[2]

2. [redacted]

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[1] **(U)** The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) defines *election infrastructure* as "storage facilities, polling places, and centralized vote tabulation locations used to support the election process, and information and communications technology to include voter registration databases, voting machines, and other systems to manage the election process and report and display results on behalf of state and local governments, " according to the January 6, 2017 statement issued by Secretary of Homeland Security Jeh Johnson on the Designation of Election Infrastructure as a Critical Infrastructure Subsector, available at https://www.dhs.gov/news/2017/10/06/statement-secretary-johnson-designation-election-infrastructure-critical. Similarly, the Help America Vote Act (HAVA), Pub. L. No. 107-252, Section 301(b)(1) refers to a functionally similar set of equipment as "voting systems," although the definition excludes physical polling places themselves, among other differences, 52 U.S.C. §21081(b). This report uses the term *election infrastructure* broadly, to refer to the equipment, processes, and systems related to voting, tabulating, reporting, and registration.

[2] [redacted] The Committee has reviewed the intelligence reporting underlying the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) assessment from early 2017 [redacted] The Committee finds it credible.

[3] **(U)** The names of the states the Committee spoke to have been replaced with numbers. DHS and some states asked the Committee to protect state names before providing the Committee with information. The Committee's goal was to get the most information possible, so state names are anonymized throughout this report. Where the report refers to public testimony by Illinois state election officials, that state is identified.

3. **(U)** While the Committee does not know with confidence what Moscow's intentions were, Russia may have been probing vulnerabilities in voting systems to exploit later. Alternatively, Moscow may have sought to undermine confidence in the 2016 U.S. elections simply through the discovery of their activity.

4. **(U)** Russian efforts exploited the seams between federal authorities and capabilities, and protections for the states. The U.S. intelligence apparatus is, by design, foreign-facing, with limited domestic cybersecurity authorities except where the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) can work with state and local partners. State election officials, who have primacy in running elections, were not sufficiently warned or prepared to handle an attack from a hostile nation-state actor.

5. **(U)** DHS and FBI alerted states to the threat of cyber attacks in the late summer and fall of 2016, but the warnings did not provide enough information or go to the right people. Alerts were actionable, in that they provided malicious Internet Protocol (IP) addresses to information technology (IT) professionals, but they provided no clear reason for states to take this threat more seriously than any other alert received.

6. **(U)** In 2016, officials at all levels of government debated whether publicly acknowledging this foreign activity was the right course. Some were deeply concerned that public warnings might promote the very impression they were trying to dispel—that the voting systems were insecure.

7. **(U)** Russian activities demand renewed attention to vulnerabilities in U.S. voting infrastructure. In 2016, cybersecurity for electoral infrastructure at the state and local level was sorely lacking; for example, voter registration databases were not as secure as they could have been. Aging voting equipment, particularly voting machines that had no paper record of votes, were vulnerable to exploitation by a committed adversary. Despite the focus on this issue since 2016, some of these vulnerabilities remain.

8. **(U)** In the face of this threat and these security gaps, DHS has redoubled its efforts to build trust with states and deploy resources to assist in securing elections. Since 2016, DHS has made great strides in learning how election procedures vary across states and how federal entities can be of most help to states. The U.S. Election Assistance Commission (EAC), the National Association of Secretaries of State (NASS), the National Association of State Election Directors (NASED), and other groups have helped DHS in this effort. DHS's work to bolster states' cybersecurity has likely been effective, in particular for those states that have leveraged DHS's cybersecurity assessments for election infrastructure, but much more needs to be done to coordinate state, local, and federal knowledge and efforts in order to harden states' electoral infrastructure against foreign meddling.

9. **(U)** To assist in addressing these vulnerabilities, Congress in 2018 appropriated $380 million in grant money for the states to bolster cybersecurity and replace vulnerable

voting machines.[4] When those funds are spent, Congress should evaluate the results and consider an additional appropriation to address remaining insecure voting machines and systems.

10. **(U)** DHS and other federal government entities remain respectful of the limits of federal involvement in state election systems. States should be firmly in the lead for running elections. The country's decentralized election system can be a strength from a cybersecurity perspective, but each operator should be keenly aware of the limitations of their cybersecurity capabilities and know how to quickly and properly obtain assistance.

III. (U) THE ARC OF RUSSIAN ACTIVITIES

[redacted] In its review of the 2016 elections, the Committee found no evidence that vote tallies were altered or that voter registry files were deleted or modified, though the Committee and IC's insight into this is limited. Russian government-affiliated cyber actors conducted an unprecedented level of activity against state election infrastructure in the run-up to the 2016 U.S. elections [redacted] Throughout 2016 and for several years before, Russian intelligence services and government personnel conducted a number of intelligence-related activities targeting the voting process. [redacted] the Committee found ample evidence to suggest that the Russian government was developing and implementing capabilities to interfere in the 2016 elections, including undermining confidence in U.S. democratic institutions and voting processes.[5]

[redacted]

- [redacted]

---

[4] **(U)** Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2018, Pub. L. No. 115-141, 132 Stat. 348, 561-562.

[5] **(U)** The Committee has limited information on the extent to which state and local election authorities carried out forensic evaluation of registration databases. These activities are routinely carried out in the context of private sector breaches.

[6] [redacted] FBI LHM, [redacted]

[7] [redacted] FBI LHM, [redacted]

[8] [redacted] DHS Homeland Intelligence Brief, [redacted]

[9] [redacted] FBI LHM, [redacted]

- [redacted]
- [redacted]

[redacted] Evidence of scanning of state election systems first appeared in the summer prior to the 2016 election. In mid-July 2016, Illinois discovered anomalous network activity, specifically a large increase in outbound data, on a Illinois Board of Elections' voter registry website.[12] Working with Illinois, the FBI commenced an investigation.[13] [redacted] The attack resulted in data exfiltration from the voter registration database.[16]

(U) On August 18, 2016, FBI issued an unclassified FLASH[17] to state technical-level experts on a set of [redacted] suspect IP addresses identified from the attack on Illinois's voter registration databases.[18] [redacted] The FLASH product did not attribute the attack to Russia or any other particular actor.[21]

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[10] **(U** [redacted]**)** FBI Electronic Communication, [redacted]

[11] [redacted] FBI LHM, [redacted]

[12] **(U)** DHS briefing for SSCI staff, March 5, 2018.

[13] **(U)** SSCI Transcript of the Open Hearing on Russian Interference in the 2016 U.S. Elections, held on Wednesday, June 21, 2017, p. 113.

[14] **(U** [redacted]**)** According to the United States Computer Emergency Readiness Team (US-CERT), an SQL injection is "an technique that attempts to subvert the relationship between a webpage and its supporting database, typically in order to trick the database into executing malicious code."

[15] **(U)** DHS IIR 4 0050006 17, *An IP Address Targeted Multiple U.S. State Government's to Include Election Systems*, October 4, 2016

[16] **(U** [redacted]**)** DHS briefing for SSCI staff, March 5, 2018.

[17] **(U)** FBI FLASH alerts are notifications of potential cyber threats sent to local law enforcement and private industry so that administrators are able to guard their systems against the described threat. FLASHs marked TLP: AMBER are considered sharable with members of the recipients own organization and those with direct need to know.

[18] Number T-LD1004-TT, TLP-AMBER, [redacted]

[19] **(U)** *Ibid.*

[20] **(U)** *Ibid.*

[21] R [redacted] wned [redacted]

(U[redacted]) After the issuance of the August FLASH, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and the Multi-State-Information Sharing & Analysis Center (MS-ISAC)[22] asked states to review their log files to determine if the IP addresses described in the FLASH had touched their infrastructure. This request for voluntary self-reporting, in conjunction with DHS analysis of NetFlow activity on MS-ISAC internet sensors, identified another 20 states whose networks had made connections to at least one IP address listed on the FLASH.[23] DHS was almost entirely reliant on states to self-report scanning activity.

[redacted] Former Special Assistant to the President and Cybersecurity Coordinator Michael Daniel said, "eventually we get enough of a picture that we become confident over the course of August of 2016 that we're seeing the Russians probe a whole bunch of different state election infrastructure, voter registration databases, and other related infrastructure on a regular basis."[25] Dr. Samuel Liles, Acting Director of the Cyber Analysis Division within DHS's Office of Intelligence and Analysis (I&A), testified to the Committee on June 21, 2017, that "by late September, we determined that internet-connected election-related networks in 21 states were potentially targeted by Russian government cyber actors."[26]

[redacted]

[22] **(U)** The MS-ISAC is a DHS-supported group dedicated to sharing information between state, local, tribal, and territorial (SLTT) government entities. It serves as the central cybersecurity resource for SLTT governments. Entities join to receive cybersecurity advisories and alerts, vulnerability assessments, incident response assistance, and other services.

[23] **(U[redacted])** DHS IIR 4 005 0006, *An IP Address Targeted Multiple U.S. State Governments to Include Election Systems*, October 4, 2016; DHS briefing for SSCI staff, March 5, 2018.

[24] **(U)** SSCI Transcript of the Interview with John Brennan, Former Director, CIA, held on Friday, June 23, 2017, p. 41.

[25] **(U)** SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Michael Daniel, Former Special Assistant to the President and Cybersecurity Coordinator, National Security Council, held on August 31, 2017, p. 39.

[26] **(U)** SSCI Transcript of the Open Hearing on Russian Interference in the 2016 U.S. Elections, held on Wednesday, June 21, 2017, p. 12.

(U) DHS and FBI issued a second FLASH and a Joint Analysis Report in October that flagged suspect IP addresses, many unrelated to Russia.[27] DHS briefers told the Committee that they were intentionally over-reporting out of an abundance of caution, given their concern about the seriousness of the threat. DHS representatives told the Committee, "We were very much at that point in a sort of duty-to-warn type of attitude . . . where maybe a specific incident like this, which was unattributed at the time, wouldn't have necessarily risen to that level. But . . . we were seeing concurrent targeting of other election-related and political figures and political institutions . . . [which] led to what would probably be more sharing than we would normally think to do."[28]

DHS assessed that the searches, done alphabetically, probably included all 50 states, and consisted of research on "general election-related web pages, voter ID information, election system software, and election service companies."[31]

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[27] **(U)** FBI FLASH, Alert Number T-LD1005-TT, TLP-AMBER, ; DHS/FBI JAR-16-20223, *Threats to Federal, State, and Local Government Systems,* October 14, 2016.

[28] **(U)** SSCI interview with DHS and CTIIC, February 27, 2018, p. 9-10.

[29] FBI LHM,

[30]

[31] DHS Homeland Intelligence Brief, *Update:*

[32] NSA DIRNSA, May 5, 2017. This information was not available to the U.S. government until April 2017.

[33]

[34] **(U)** NSA DIRNSA, May 5, 2017.

The Russian Embassy placed a formal request to observe the elections with the Department of State, but also reached outside diplomatic channels in an attempt to secure permission directly from state and local election officials. [37] In objecting to these tactics, then-Assistant Secretary of State for European and Eurasian Affairs Victoria Nuland reminded the Russian Ambassador that Russia had refused invitations to participate in the official OSCE mission that was to observe the U.S. elections.[38]

[35] **(U)** FBI IIR ; FBI IIR
[36] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[37] **(U)** DTS 2018-2152, SSCI Interview with Andrew McCabe, Former Deputy Director of the FBI, February 14, 2018, pp. 221-222.
[38] Email, sent November 4, 2016; from ; to: , , , . Subject: Kislyak Protest of FBI Tactics.
[39] **(U)** NSA DIRNSA, May 5, 2017.
[40] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[41]
[42]
[43]

(U) The Committee found no evidence of Russian actors attempting to manipulate vote tallies on Election Day, though again the Committee and IC's insight into this is limited.

(U[redacted]) In the years since the 2016 election, awareness of the threat, activity by DHS, and measures at the state and local level to better secure election infrastructure have all shown considerable improvement. The threat, however, remains imperfectly understood. In a briefing before Senators on August 22, 2018, DNI Daniel Coats, FBI Director Christopher Wray, then-DHS Secretary Kirstjen Nielsen, and then-DHS Undersecretary for the National Protection and Programs Division Christopher Krebs told Senators that there were no known threats to election infrastructure. However, Mr. Krebs also said that top election vulnerabilities remain, including the administration of the voter databases and the tabulation of the data, with the latter being a much more difficult target to attack.[44] Relatedly, several weeks prior to the 2018 mid-term election, DHS assessed that "numerous actors are regularly targeting election infrastructure, likely for different purposes, including to cause disruptive effects, steal sensitive data, and undermine confidence in the election."[45]

[redacted]

IV. (U) ELEMENTS OF RUSSIAN ACTIVITIES

A. (U) Targeting Activity

[redacted] Scanning of election-related state infrastructure by Moscow was the most widespread activity the IC and DHS elements observed in the run up to the 2016 election.[48]

- [redacted] In an interview with the Committee, Mr. Daniel stated: "What it mostly looked like to us was reconnaissance. . . . I would have characterized it at the time as sort of conducting the reconnaissance to do the network mapping, to do the topology mapping so

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[44] **(U)** DTS 2018-3275, Summary of 8/22/2018 All Senators Election Security Briefing, August 28, 2018.
[45] **(U[redacted])** Homeland Security Intelligence Assessment: Cyber Actors Continue to Engage in Influence Activities and Targeting of Election Infrastructure, October 11, 2018.
[46] **(U)** DTS 2019-1368, NIC 2019-01, Intelligence Community Assessment: A Summary of the Intelligence Community Report on Foreign Interference as Directed by Executive Order 13848, March 29, 2019. p. 2-3.
[47] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[48] **(U)** SSCI interview of representatives from DHS and CTIIC, February 27, 2018, p. 12.

that you could actually understand the network, establish a presence so you could come back later and actually execute an operation."[49]

- **(U)** Testifying before the Committee, Dr. Liles characterized the activity as "simple scanning for vulnerabilities, analogous to somebody walking down the street and looking to see if you are home. A small number of systems were unsuccessfully exploited, as though somebody had rattled the doorknob but was unable to get in . . . [however] a small number of the networks were successfully exploited. They made it through the door."[50]

[redacted] DHS and FBI assessments on the number of affected states evolved since 2016. In a joint FBI/DHS intelligence product published in March 2018, and coordinated with the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA), the Department of State, the National Intelligence Council, the National Security Agency (NSA), and the Department of Treasury, DHS and FBI assessed [redacted] that Russian intelligence services conducted activity [redacted].[51]

- [redacted] DHS arrived at their initial assessment by evaluating whether the tactics, techniques, and procedures (TTPs) observed were consistent with previously observed Russian TTPs, whether the actors used known Russian-affiliated malicious infrastructure, and whether a state or local election system was the target.[53]

- **(U)** The majority of information examined by DHS was provided by the states themselves. The MS-ISAC gathered information from states that noticed the suspect IPs pinging their systems. In addition, FBI was working with some states in local field offices and reporting back FBI's findings.

- **(U)** If some states evaluated their logs incompletely or inaccurately, then DHS might have no indication of whether they were scanned or attacked. As former-Homeland Security Adviser Lisa Monaco told the Committee, "Of course, the law enforcement and the intelligence community is going to be significantly reliant on what the holders and

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[49] **(U)** SSCI Transcript of the Interview of Michael Daniel, Former Assistant to the President and Cybersecurity Coordinator, National Security Council, August 31, 2017, p. 44.
[50] **(U)** SSCI Transcript of the Open Hearing on Russian Interference in the 2016 U.S. Elections, held on Wednesday, June 21, 2017, p. 13.
[51] [redacted] DHS/FBI Homeland Intelligence Brief, [redacted]
[52] **(U)** *See* chart, *infra*, for information on successful breaches.
[53] **(U)** DHS did not count attacks on political parties, political organizations, or NGOs. For example, the compromise of an email affiliated with a partisan State 13 voter registration organization was not included in DHS's count.

owners and operators of the infrastructure sees on its system [sic] and decides to raise their hand."[54]

[redacted] However, both the IC and the Committee in its own review were unable to discern a pattern in the affected states, [redacted]

(U) Mr. Daniel told the Committee that by late August 2016, he had already personally concluded that the Russians had attempted to intrude in all 50 states, based on the extent of the activity and the apparent randomness of the attempts. "My professional judgment was we have to work under the assumption that they've tried to go everywhere, because they're thorough, they're competent, they're good."[55]

[redacted] Intelligence developed later in 2018 bolstered Mr. Daniel's assessment that all 50 states were targeted. [redacted]

- [redacted]

[54] **(U)** SSCI Transcript of the Interview with of Lisa Monaco, Former Homeland Security Advisor, August 10, 2017, p. 38.
[55] **(U)** SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Michael Daniel, Former Assistant to the President and Cybersecurity Coordinator, National Security Council, August 31, 2017, p. 40.
[56] [redacted] DHS/FBI Homeland Intelligence Bulletin, [redacted]
[57] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[58] **(U)** DHS briefing for SSCI staff, March 5, 2018.
[59] **(U)** SSCI interview of representatives from DHS and CTIIC, February 27, 2018, pp. 11-12.
[60] **(U)** DHS briefing for SSCI staff, March 5, 2018.

- [redacted]
- [redacted]

[redacted]

(U) However, IP addresses associated with the August 18, 2016 FLASH provided some indications the activity might be attributable to the Russian government, particularly the GRU:

- [redacted]
- [redacted]
- **(U/[redacted])** One of the Netherlands-based [redacted] "exhibited the same behavior from the same node over a period of time. . . . It was behaving like . . . the same user or group of users was using this to direct activity against the same type of targets," according to DHS staff.[69]

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[61] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[62] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[63] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[64] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[65] [redacted]
[66] [redacted] FBI IIR [redacted]
[67] **(U)** Cyber Threat Intelligence Integration Center (CTIIC) Cyber Threat Intelligence Summary, October 7, 2016.
[68] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[69] **(U)** SSCI interview of representatives from DHS and CTIIC, February 27, 2018, p. 13.

- [redacted]

[redacted] The IC's confidence level about the attribution of the attacks evolved over 2017 and into 2018. [redacted]

- [redacted]
- [redacted]

[redacted] The Committee reached out to the 21 states that DHS first identified as targets of scanning activity to learn about their experiences. Election officials provided the Committee

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[70] **(U)** DHS Electronic Communication, December 19, 2016, email from: DHS/NCCIC; to: CIA.
[71] [redacted]
[72] [redacted]
[73] [redacted] DHS Intelligence Assessment, *Hostile Russian Cyber Targeting of Election Infrastructure in 2016; Probable Non-State Actors Attempt Disruption*, May 3, 2017.
[74] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[75] **(U)** SSCI interview of representatives from DHS and CTIIC, February 27, 2018, p. 13.
[76] [redacted] DHS arrived at their initial assessment of 21 states affected by adding the eleven plus seven states, plus the three where scanning activity appeared directed at less specifically election-focused infrastructure.
[77] **(U)** SSCI conference call with DHS and FBI, March 29, 2018.

details about the activity they saw on their networks, and the Committee compared that accounting to DHS's reporting of events.[78] Where those accounts differed is noted below. The scanning activity took place from approximately June through September 2016.

STATE	OBSERVED ACTIVITY[79]
Illinois	**(U)** *See infra,* "Russian Access to Election-Related Infrastructure" for a detailed description.
State 2	**(U)** *See infra,* "Russian Access to Election-Related Infrastructure" for a detailed description.
State 3	**(U)** According to State 3 officials, cyber actors using infrastructure identified in the August FLASH conducted scanning activity.[80] State 3 officials noticed "abnormal behavior" and took action to block the related IP addresses.[81] [redacted] DHS reported GRU scanning attempts against two separate domains related to election infrastructure.[82]
State 4	**(U)** *See infra,* "Two Unexplained Events" for a detailed description.
State 5	**(U)** Cyber actors using infrastructure identified in the August FLASH scanned "an old website and non-relevant archives," according to the State 5 Secretary of State's office.[83] The following day, State 5 took action to block the IP address.[84] [redacted] DHS, however, reported GRU scanning activity on two separate State 5 Secretary of State websites, plus targeting of a District Attorney's office[85] in a particular city.[86] Both the websites appear to be current addresses for the State 5 Secretary of State's office.
State 6	**(U)** According to State 6 officials, cyber actors using infrastructure identified in the August FLASH scanned[87] the entire state IT infrastructure, including by using the Acunetix tool, but the "affected systems" were the Secretary of State's

[78] **(U)** DHS briefed Committee staff three times on the attacks, and staff reviewed hundreds of pages of intelligence assessments.

[79] **(U)** Slight variation between what states and DHS reported to the Committee is an indication of one of the challenges in election cybersecurity. The system owners—in this case, state and local administrators—are in the best position to carry out comprehensive cyber reviews, but they often lack the expertise or resources to do so. The federal government has resources and expertise, but the IC can see only limited information about inbound attacks because of legal restrictions on operations inside the United States.

[80] **(U)** Memorandum for the Record, SSCI Staff, Conference Call with [State 3], December 8, 2017.

[81] **(U)** *Ibid.*

[82] **(U)** DHS briefing for Committee staff on March 5, 2018.

[83] **(U)** Memorandum for the Record, SSCI Staff, Conference Call with [State 5], December 1, 2017.

[84] **(U)** *Ibid.*

[85] **(U[redacted])** Briefers suggested the "most wanted" list housed on the District Attorney's website may have in some way been connected to voter registration. The exact nature of this connection, including whether it was a technical network connection or whether databases of individuals with felony convictions held by the District Attorney's office had voting registration implications, is unclear.

[86] **(U)** DHS briefing for Committee staff on March 5, 2018.

[87] **(U)** State 6 officials did not specify, but in light of the DHS assessment, they likely meant SQL injection.

	web application and the election results website.[88] If the penetration had been successful, actors could have manipulated the unofficial display of the election tallies.[89] State officials believed they would have caught any inconsistency quickly.[90] State 6 became aware of this malicious activity and alerted partners.[91] [redacted] DHS reported that GRU actors scanned State 6, then unsuccessfully attempted many SQL injection attacks. State 6 saw the highest number of SQL attempts of any state.
State 7	**(U)** According to State 7 officials, cyber actors using infrastructure identified in the August FLASH scanned public-facing websites, including the "static" election site.[92] It seemed the actors were "cataloging holes to come back later," according to state election officials.[93] State 7 became aware of this malicious activity after receiving an FBI alert.[94] [redacted] DHS reported GRU scanning attempts against two separate domains related to election infrastructure.[95]
State 8	**(U)** According to State 8 officials, cyber actors using infrastructure identified in the August FLASH scanned a State 8 public election website on one day.[96] State 8 officials described the activity as heightened but not particularly out of the ordinary.[97] State 8 became aware of this malicious activity after receiving an alert.[98] [redacted]
State 9	**(U)** According to State 9 officials, cyber actors using infrastructure identified in an October MS-ISAC advisory[101] scanned the statewide voter registration

[88] **(U)** Memorandum for the Record, SSCI Staff, Conference Call with [State 6], November 17, 2017.
[89] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[90] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[91] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[92] **(U)** Memorandum for the Record, SSCI Staff, Conference Call with [State 7], January 25, 2018.
[93] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[94] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[95] **(U)** DHS briefing for Committee staff on March 5, 2018.
[96] **(U)** Memorandum for the Record, SSCI Staff, Conference Call with [State 8], February 2, 2018.
[97] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[98] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[99] **(U)** DHS briefing for Committee staff on March 5, 2018.
[100] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[101] **(U)** While the Committee was unable to review the specific indicators shared with State 9 by the MS-ISAC in October, the Committee believes at least one of the relevant IPs was originally named in the August FLASH because of technical data held by DHS which was briefed to the Committee.

	system.[102] Officials used the analogy of a thief casing a parking lot: they said the car thief "didn't go in, but we don't know why."[103] State 9 became aware of this malicious activity after receiving an alert.[104] [redacted] DHS reported GRU scanning activity on the Secretary of State domain.[105]
State 10	**(U)** According to State 10 officials, cyber actors using infrastructure identified in the August FLASH conducted activity that was "very loud," with a three-pronged attack: a Netherlands-based IP address attempted SQL injection on all fields 1,500 times, a U.S.-based IP address attempted SQL injection on several fields, and a Poland-based IP address attempted SQL injection on one field 6-7 times.[106] State 10 received relevant cybersecurity indictors from MS-ISAC in early August, around the same time that the attacks occurred.[107] State 10's IT contractor attributed the attack to Russia and suggested that the activity was reminiscent of other attacks where attackers distract with lots of noise and then "sneak in the back."[108] **(U)** State 10, through its firewall, blocked attempted malicious activity against the online voter registration system and provided logs to the National Cybersecurity and Communications Integration Center (NCCIC)[109] and the U.S. Computer Emergency Readiness Team (US-CERT).[110] State 10 also brought in an outside contractor to assist.[111] [redacted] DHS confirmed GRU SQL injection attempts against State 10's voter services website on August 5 and said that the attack was blocked after one day by State 10's firewall.[112]
State 11	**(U)** According to State 11 officials, they have seen no evidence of scanning or attack attempts related to election infrastructure in 2016.[113] While State 11 officials noted an IP address "probing" state systems, activity which was "broader than state election systems," State 11 election officials did not provide specifics on which systems.[114]

[102] **(U)** Memorandum for the Record, SSCI Staff, Conference Call with [State 9], November 17, 2017.
[103] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[104] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[105] **(U)** DHS briefing for Committee staff on March 5, 2018.
[106] **(U)** Memorandum for the Record, SSCI Staff, Conference Call with [State 10], November 29, 2017.
[107] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[108] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[109] **(U)** NCCIC is DHS's cyber watch center.
[110] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[111] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[112] **(U)** DHS briefing for Committee staff on March 5, 2018.
[113] **(U)** Memorandum for the Record, SSCI Staff, Conference Call with [State 11], December 8, 2017.
[114] **(U)** *Ibid.*

	[redacted] DHS reported GRU scanning activity on the Secretary of State domain.[115]
State 12	**(U)** Cyber actors using infrastructure identified in the August FLASH conducted scanning activity that "lasted less than a second and no security breach occurred," according to State 12 officials.[116] State 12 became aware of this malicious activity after being alerted to it.[117] [redacted] DHS reported that because of a lack of sensor data related to this incident, they relied on NetFlow data, which provided less granular information.[118] DHS's only clear indication of GRU scanning on State 12's Secretary of State website came from State 12 self-reporting information to MS-ISAC after the issuance of the August FLASH notification.[119]
State 13	**(U)** According to State 13 officials, they have seen no evidence of scanning or attack attempts related to state-wide election infrastructure in 2016.[120] [redacted]
State 14	[redacted] MS-ISAC passed DHS reports of communications between a suspect IP address used by the GRU at the time and the State 14 election commission webpage, but no indication of a compromise.[123] In addition, DHS was informed of activity relating to separate IP addresses in the August FLASH,

[115] **(U)** DHS briefing for Committee staff on March 5, 2018.
[116] **(U)** Memorandum for the Record, SSCI Staff, Conference Call with [State 12], December 1, 2017.
[117] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[118] **(U)** DHS briefing for Committee staff on March 5, 2018.
[119] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[120] **(U)** Memorandum for the Record, SSCI Staff, Conference Call with [State 13], December 1, 2017.
[121] **(U)** FBI IIR [redacted] DHS briefing for Committee staff on March 5, 2018.
[122] [redacted]; DHS briefing for Committee staff on March 5, 2018. For more information on decisions by DHS to exclude certain activity in its count of 21 states, *see* text box, *infra*, "DHS Methodology for Identifying States Touched by Russian Cyber Actors."
[123] [redacted] DHS/FBI Homeland Intelligence Brief, [redacted]; DHS briefing for Committee staff on March 5, 2018.

	including attempted Domain Name System (DNS) lookups and potentially malicious emails, some dating back to January 2016.[124]
State 15	**(U)** State 15 officials were not aware that the state was among those targeted until they were notified.[125] State 15's current lead election official was not in place during the 2016 election so they had little insight into any scanning or attempted intrusion on their systems. State 15 officials said that generally they viewed 2016 as a success story because the attempted infiltration never got past the state's four layers of security. [redacted] DHS reported broad GRU scanning activity on State 15 government domains.[126]
State 16	**(U)** According to State 16 officials, cyber actors using infrastructure identified in the October FLASH conducted scanning activity against a state government network.[127] [redacted]DHS reported information on GRU scanning activity based on a self-report from State 16 after the issuance of the October FLASH.[128]
State 17	**(U)** State 17 officials reported nothing "irregular, inconsistent, or suspicious" leading up to the election.[129] While State 17 IT staff received an MS-ISAC notification, that notification was not shared within the state government.[130] [redacted] DHS reported GRU scanning activity on an election-related domain.[131]
State 18	**(U)** State 18 election officials said they observed no connection from the IP addresses listed in the election-related notifications.[132] [redacted] DHS reported indications of GRU scanning activity on a State 18 government domain.[133]
State 19	**(U)** According to State 19 officials, cyber actors using infrastructure identified in October by MS-ISAC conducted scanning activity. State 19 claimed this activity was "blocked," but did not elaborate on why or how it was blocked.[134]

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[124] **(U/**[redacted]**)** DHS IIR 4 019 0012 17, *Cyber Activity Targeting [State 14] Government Networks from Internet Protocol Addresses Associated with Targeting State Elections Systems*, October 21, 2016.
[125] **(U)** Memorandum for the Record, SSCI Staff, Conference Call with [State 15], March 12, 2018.
[126] **(U)** DHS briefing for Committee staff on March 5, 2018.
[127] **(U)** Memorandum for the Record, SSCI Staff, Conference Call with [State 16], December 1, 2017.
[128] **(U)** DHS briefing for Committee staff on March 5, 2018.
[129] **(U)** Memorandum for the Record, SSCI Staff, Conference Call with [State 17], January 25, 2018.
[130] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[131] **(U)** DHS briefing for Committee staff on March 5, 2018.
[132] **(U)** Memorandum for the Record, SSCI Staff, Conference Call with [State 18], December 8, 2017.
[133] **(U)** DHS briefing for Committee staff on March 5, 2018.
[134] **(U)** Memorandum for the Record, SSCI Staff, Conference Call with [State 19], December 1, 2017.

	[redacted] DHS reported indications of GRU scanning activity on two separate State 19 government domains.[135]
State 20	**(U)** According to State 20 officials, cyber actors using infrastructure identified in October by MS-ISAC were "knocking" on the state's network, but no successful intrusion occurred.[136] [redacted] DHS reported GRU scanning activity on the Secretary of State domain.[137]
State 21	**(U)** State 21 officials received indicators from MS-ISAC in October 2016. They said they were not aware the state was among those targeted until notified.[138] [redacted] DHS reported GRU scanning activity on an election-related domain as well as at least one other government system connected to the voter registration system.[139]

[redacted] Neither DHS nor the Committee can ascertain a pattern to the states targeted, lending credence to DHS's later assessment that all 50 states probably were scanned. DHS representatives told the Committee that "there wasn't a clear red state-blue state-purple state, more electoral votes, less electoral votes" pattern to the attacks. DHS acknowledged that the U.S. Government does not have perfect insight, and it is possible the IC missed some activity or that states did not notice intrusion attempts or report them.[140] [redacted]

[redacted]

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[135] **(U)** DHS briefing for Committee staff on March 5, 2018.
[136] **(U)** Memorandum for the Record, SSCI Staff, Conference Call with [State 20], November 17, 2017.
[137] **(U)** DHS briefing for Committee staff on March 5, 2018.
[138] **(U)** Memorandum for the Record, SSCI Staff, Conference Call with [State 21], November 17, 2017.
[139] **(U)** DHS briefing for Committee staff on March 5, 2018.
[140] **(U)** SSCI interview with DHS and CTIIC, February 27, 2018, p. 25.
[141] [redacted]
[142] **(U)** SSCI interview with DHS and CTIIC, February 27, 2018, p. 21.

(U/[redacted]) As of October 2018, the IC and DHS were looking for evidence of threats to election systems, [redacted]. An October 11, 2018 DHS Intelligence Assessment reported the following:

> *We judge that numerous actors are regularly targeting election infrastructure, likely for different purposes, including to cause disruptive effects, steal sensitive data, and undermine confidence in the election. We are aware of a growing volume of malicious activity targeting election infrastructure in 2018, although we do not have a complete baseline of prior years to determine relative scale of the activity. Much of our understanding of cyber threats to election infrastructure is due to proactive sharing by state and local election officials, as well as more robust intelligence and information sharing relationships amongst the election community and within the Department. The observed activity has leveraged common tactics—the types of tactics that are available to nation-state and non-state cyber actors, alike—with limited success in compromising networks and accounts. We have not attributed the activity to any foreign adversaries, and we continue to work to identify the actors behind these operations. At this time, all these activities were either prevented or have been mitigated.*

(U/[redacted]) Specifically:

> *Unidentified cyber actors since at least April 2018 and as recently as early October continue to engage in a range of potential elections-related cyber incidents targeting election infrastructure using spear-phishing, database exploitation techniques, and denial of service attacks, possibly indicating continued interest in compromising the availability, confidentiality, and integrity of these systems. For example, on 24 August 2018, cybersecurity officials detected multiple attempts to illegally access the State of Vermont's Online Voter Registration Application (OLVR), which serves as the state's resident voter registration database, according to DHS reporting. The malicious activity included one Cross Site Scripting attempt, seven Structured Query Language (SQL) injection attempts, and one attempted Denial of Service (DoS) attack. All attempts were unsuccessful.*[143]

(U/[redacted]) In summarizing the ongoing threat to U.S. election systems, DHS further said in the same product, "We continue to assess multiple elements of U.S. election infrastructure are potentially vulnerable to cyber intrusions."[144]

B. (U) Russian Access to Election Infrastructure

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[143] **(U/[redacted])** DHS, Homeland Security Intelligence Assessment, *Cyber Actors Continue to Engage in Influence Activities and Targeting of Election Infrastructure*, October 11, 2018.
[144] **(U)** *Ibid.*

(U) The January 6, 2017 Intelligence Community Assessment (ICA), "Assessing Russian Activities and Intentions in Recent U.S. Elections," states:

> *Russian intelligence obtained and maintained access to elements of multiple U.S. state or local electoral boards. DHS assesses that the types of systems Russian actors targeted or compromised were not involved in vote tallying.*[145]

[redacted] Based on the Committee's review of the ICA, the Committee concurs with this assessment. The Committee found that Russian-affiliated cyber actors gained access to election infrastructure systems across two states, including successful extraction of voter data. However, none of these systems were involved in vote tallying.

1. (U) Russian Access to Election Infrastructure: Illinois

(U) In June 2016, Illinois experienced the first known breach by Russian actors of state election infrastructure during the 2016 election.[146] As of the end of 2018, the Russian cyber actors had successfully penetrated Illinois's voter registration database, viewed multiple database tables, and accessed up to 200,000 voter registration records.[147] The compromise resulted in the exfiltration of an unknown quantity of voter registration data.[148] Russian cyber actors were in a position to delete or change voter data, but the Committee is not aware of any evidence that they did so.[149]

- [redacted] DHS assesses with high confidence that the penetration was carried out by Russian actors.[150]
- **(U/[redacted])** The compromised voter registration database held records relating to 14 million registered voters, [redacted]. The records exfiltrated included information on each voter's name, address, partial social security number, date of birth, and either a driver's license number or state identification number.[151]

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[145] **(U)** Intelligence Community Assessment, *Assessing Russian Activities and Intentions in Recent U.S. Elections*, January 6, 2017, p. iii.
[146] **(U/[redacted])** DHS IIR 4 005 0006, *An IP Address Targeted Multiple U.S. State Government's to Include Election Systems*, October 4, 2016; DHS briefing for SSCI staff, March 5, 2018.
[147] **(U)** "Illinois election officials say hack yielded information on 200,000 voters," [Local Newspaper], August 29, 2016.
[148] **(U)** DHS IIR [redacted] SCI Open Hearing on June 21, 2017, p 110
[149] **(U)** State Board of Elections, *Illinois Voter Registration System Records Breached*, August 31, 2016. As reflected elsewhere in this report, the Committee did not undertake its own forensic analysis of the Illinois server logs to corroborate this statement; SSCI interview with DHS and CTIIC, February 27, 2018, p. 24.
[150] **(U)** *See infra*, "Russian Scanning and Attempted Access to Election-Related Infrastructure" for a complete discussion on attribution related to the set of cyber activity linked to the infrastructure used in the Illinois breach.
[151] **(U/[redacted])** FBI IIR [redacted] DHS Intelligence Assessment, May 3, 2017, 0144-17, p. 2.

- [redacted] DHS staff further recounted to the Committee that "Russia would have had the ability to potentially manipulate some of that data, but we didn't see that."[152] Further, DHS staff noted that "the level of access that they gained, they almost certainly could have done more. Why they didn't . . . is sort of an open-ended question. I think it fits under the larger umbrella of undermining confidence in the election by tipping their hand that they had this level of access or showing that they were capable of getting it."[153]

- **(U)** According to a Cyber Threat Intelligence Integration Center (CTIIC) product, Illinois officials "disclosed that the database has been targeted frequently by hackers, but this was the first instance known to state officials of success in accessing it."[154]

(U) In June 2017, the Executive Director of the Illinois State Board of Elections (SBE), Steve Sandvoss, testified before the Committee about Illinois's experience in the 2016 elections.[155] He laid out the following timeline:

- **(U)** On June 23, 2016, a foreign actor successfully penetrated Illinois's databases through an SQL attack on the online voter registration website. "Because of the initial low-volume nature of the attack, the State Board of Election staff did not become aware of it at first."[156]

- **(U)** Three weeks later, on July 12, 2016, the IT staff discovered spikes in data flow across the voter registration database server. "Analysis of the server logs revealed that the heavy load was a result of rapidly repeated database queries on the application status page of our paperless online voter application website."[157]

- **(U)** On July 13, 2016, IT staff took the website and database offline, but continued to see activity from the malicious IP address.[158]

- **(U)** "Firewall monitoring indicated that the attackers were hitting SBE IP addresses five times per second, 24 hours a day. These attacks continued until August 12th [2016], when they abruptly ceased."[159]

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[152] **(U)** SSCI interview with DHS and CTIIC, February 27, 2018, p. 14.
[153] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[154] **(U)** CTIIC Cyber Threat Intelligence Summary, August 18, 2016.
[155] **(U)** SSCI Open Hearing on June 21, 2017. The Committee notes that, in his testimony, Mr. Sandvoss said Illinois still had not been definitively told that Russia perpetrated the attack, despite DHS's high confidence. The Committee also notes that DHS eventually provided a briefing to states during which DHS provided further information on this topic, including the DHS high-confidence attribution to Russia.
[156] **(U)** *Ibid.*, p. 110.
[157] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[158] **(U)** *Ibid.*, p. 111.
[159] **(U)** *Ibid.*

- **(U)** On July 19, 2016, the election staff notified the Illinois General Assembly and the Attorney General's office.
- **(U)** Approximately a week later, the FBI contacted Illinois.[160]
- **(U)** On July 28, 2016, both the registration system and the online voter registration became fully functional again.[161]

2. (U) Russian Access to Election Infrastructure: State 2

[redacted] Separately, GRU cyber actors breached election infrastructure in State 2. [redacted]

- [redacted]

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[160] **(U)** *Ibid.*, p. 113.
[161] **(U)** *Ibid.*, p. 112.
[162] **(U)** [redacted] FBI Electronic Communication, [redacted]
[163] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[164] [redacted]
[165] **(U)** FBI Briefing on [State 2] Election Systems, June 25, 2018.
[166] **(U)** DHS briefing for SSCI staff, March 5, 2018.
[167] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[168] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[169] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[170] [redacted] DTS 2018-2416; FBI Briefing on [State 2] Election Systems, June 25, 2018, p. 16.
[171] **(U)** SSCI interview with DHS and CTIIC, February 27, 2018, compartmented session.

[redacted]
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[redacted]

(U) FBI and DHS Interactions with State 2[179]	
August 18, 2016	**(U)** FBI FLASH notification identified IP addresses targeting election offices.[180]
August 24, 2016	**(U)** State 2 Department of State received the FLASH from National Association of Secretaries of State.[181]
August 26, 2016	**(U)** State 2 Department of State forwarded FLASH to counties and advised them to block the IP addresses.[182] [redacted] Separately, [redacted] determined one of the listed IP addresses scanned its system.[183] [redacted] subsequently discovered suspected intrusion activity and contacted the FBI.[184]

[172] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[173] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[174] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[175] [redacted] DTS 2018-2416; FBI Briefing on [State 2] Election Systems, June 25, 2018, pp. 7.
[176] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[177] [redacted] *Ibid. See also* EB-0004893-LED
[178] **(U)** SSCI interview with DHS and CTIIC, February 27, 2018, p. 42.
[179] [redacted] DTS 2018-2416; FBI Briefing on [State 2] Election Systems, June 25, 2018, pp. 7.
[180] **(U)** FBI FLASH, Alert Number T-LD1004-TT, TLP-AMBER, [redacted]
[181] [redacted] DTS 2018-2416; FBI Briefing on [State 2] Election Systems, June 25, 2018, p. 4.
[182] **(U)** *Ibid.*, pp. 4-5.
[183] **(U)** *Ibid.*, p. 5.
[184] **(U)** *Ibid.*

August 31, 2016	[redacted] FBI opened its investigation on the [redacted] and "conducted outreach to State 2 county election officials to discuss individual security postures and any suspicious activity."[185] FBI outreach reveals that one State 2 county—County A—was scanned.[186]
September 30, 2016	[redacted] FBI held a conference call with county election officials to advise of the attempt to probe County A.[187] FBI also notified state and local officials of available DHS services.[188]
October 4, 2016	[redacted] County B's IT administrator contacted FBI regarding a potential intrusion.[189] According to the FBI, "Of particular concern, the activity included a connection to a county voting, testing, and maintenance server used for poll worker classes."[190]
October 14, 2016	**(U)** FBI shared County B indicators by issuing a FLASH.[191]
December 29, 2016	**(U)** DHS and FBI released a Joint Analysis Report (JAR) on the "GRIZZLY STEPPE" intrusion set; report represents the first IC attribution of state election-related systems to the Russians.[192]
[redacted]	[redacted]
June 2017	**(U)** DHS notified State 2 counties of a possible intrusion "as part of a broader notification to 122 entities identified as spearphishing victims in an intelligence report."[194]

[185] [redacted] DTS 2018-2416; FBI Briefing on [State 2] Election Systems, June 25, 2018, p. 5.
[186] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[187] **(U)** *Ibid.*, pp. 5-6.
[188] **(U)** *Ibid.*, p. 6.
[189] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[190] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[191] **(U//** [redacted] **)** FBI FLASH, Alert Number T-LD1005-TT, TLP-AMBER, [redacted]
[192] **(U)** DHS/FBI, Joint Analysis Report, JAR-16-20296A, GRIZZLY STEPPE – Russian Malicious Cyber Activity, December 29, 2016.
[193] [redacted] DTS 2018-2416; FBI Briefing on [State 2] Election Systems, June 25, 2018, p. 7.
[194] **(U)** *Ibid.*

July 2017	**(U)** FBI published a FLASH report warning of possible spearphishing.[195]
November 2017	**(U)** FBI and DHS participated in the first meeting of the State 2 elections task force.[196]
February 2018	**(U)** FBI requested direct engagement with Counties B, C, and D, including a reminder of available DHS services.[197]
March 2018	**(U)** FBI reports that "our office engaged" the affected counties through the local FBI field office.[198] The FBI could not provide any further detail on the substance of these engagements to the Committee.
May 29, 2018	[redacted] FBI provided a SECRET Letterhead Memo to DHS "formally advising of our investigation into the intrusion [redacted], the reported intrusion at County B, and suspected compromises of Counties C and D."[199]
June 11, 2018	**(U)** FBI reports that as of June 11, 2018, Counties A, B, C, and D had not accepted DHS services.[200]

[redacted]

[195] **(U)** FBI FLASH, Alert Number EB-000083-LD, TLP-AMBER, [redacted]. *See* DTS 2018-3174.
[196] [redacted] DTS 2018-2416; FBI Briefing on [State 2] Election Systems, June 25, 2018, p. 7.
[197] **(U)** *Ibid.*, p. 6.
[198] **(U)** *Ibid.*, p. 34.
[199] **(U)** *Ibid.*, pp. 8-9.
[200] **(U)** *Ibid.*, p. 20.
[201] [redacted] DTS 2018-2416; FBI Briefing on [State 2] Election Systems, June 25, 2018, pp. 20-21.
[202] [redacted] DHS briefing for SSCI staff, March 5, 2018.

- **(U)** State 2's Secretary of State and Election Director told the Committee in December 2017 that there was "never an attack on our systems." "We did not see any unusual activities. I would have known about it personally."[203] State 2 did not want to share with the Committee its cybersecurity posture, but state officials communicated that they are highly confident in the security of their systems.[204]

- **(U)** State 2's election apparatus is highly decentralized, with each county making its own decisions about acquiring, configuring, and operating election systems.[205]

- **(U)** As of August 9, 2018, DHS was complimentary of the steps State 2 had taken to secure its voting systems, including putting nearly all counties on the ALBERT sensor system, joining the Elections Infrastructure Information Sharing and Analysis Center (EI-ISAC), and using congressionally appropriated funds plus additional state funds to hire cybersecurity advisors.[206]

C. (U) Russian Efforts to Research U.S. Voting Systems, Processes, and Other Elements of Voting Infrastructure

[redacted]

- [redacted]

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[203] **(U)** Memorandum for the Record, SSCI Staff, Conference Call with [State 2], December 1, 2017.
[204] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[205] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[206] **(U)** DTS 2018-2581, Memorandum for the Record, Telephone call with DHS, August 9, 2018.
[207] [redacted] FBI LHM, [redacted]
[208] **(U)** *Ibid.*, p. 5.
[209] [redacted] Note: "FISA" refers to electronic surveillance collected on a foreign power or an agent of a foreign power pursuant to the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act of 1978. This collection could have come from landlines, electronic mail accounts, or mobile phones used by personnel at a foreign embassy (i.e., an "establishment" FISA) or used by personnel associated with a foreign power (i.e., "agents of a foreign power"). This FISA collection would have been approved by the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court ("FISC"), effectuated by FBI, and then could also have been shared with NSA or CIA, or both, depending on the foreign target.

- [redacted]
- [redacted] It is unknown if Tarantsov attended the events.
- [redacted]
- [redacted]

D. (U) Russian Activity Directed at Voting Machine Companies

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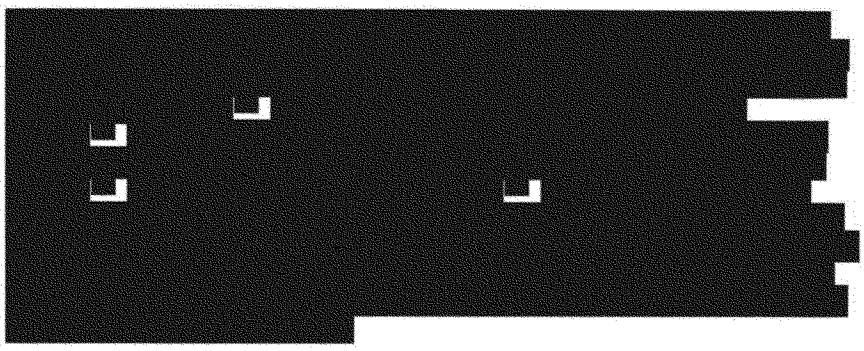
[210] [redacted] FBI LHM,
[211] [redacted] FBI LHM,
[212] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[213] **(U)** *Ibid.*, p. 3.
[214] **(U)** *Ibid.*, p. 4.
[215] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[216] **(U)** *Ibid.*, p. 5.
[217] [redacted]

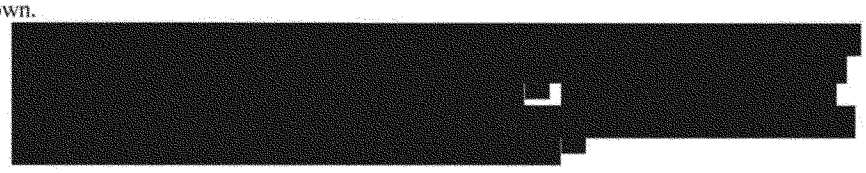
Russian government actors engaged in attacks on election systems,

- FBI reported that "between December 2015 and June 2016, DHS further told the Committee that malicious cyber actors had scanned a widely-used vendor of election systems.[219]

- 

E. (U) Russian Efforts to Observe Polling Places

Department of State were aware that Russia was attempting to send election observers to polling places in 2016. The true intention of these efforts is unknown.

- 

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[218] FBI Electronic Communication,

[219] **(U)** DHS briefing for SSCI staff, March 5, 2018.

[220]

[221] **(U)** *Ibid.*

[222] **(U)** *Ibid.*

[223] **(U)** NSA DIRNSA, May 5, 2017, p. 3.

[224] **(U)** *Ibid.*, pp. 1-3.

[225] **(U)** FBI IIR

[226] **(U)** *Ibid.*

- The Russian Embassy placed a formal request to observe the elections with the Department of State, but also reached outside diplomatic channels in an attempt to secure permission directly from state and local election officials.[227] For example, in September 2016, the State 5 Secretary of State denied a request by the Russian Consul General to allow a Russian government official inside a polling station on Election Day to study the U.S. election process, according to State 5 officials.[228]

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[227] **(U)** DTS 2018-2152, SSCI Transcript of the Interview of Andrew McCabe, Former Deputy Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, February 14, 2018, pp. 221-222.
[228] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[229] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[230] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[231] Email, sent November 4, 2016; from ; to: , , , ; subject: Kislyak Protest of FBI Tactics.
[232] Email, sent: September 13, 2016; from: subject: Russia visas/travel.
[233] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[234] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[235] Email Sent: Monday, November 7, 2016, 8:11 AM; from: ; to: subject: RE: Kislyak Protest of FBI Tactics --- SECRET//NOFORN.

F.

G. (U) Russian Activity Possibly Related to a Misinformation Campaign on Voter

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[236] DTS 2018-3952; MFR of Interview with Randy Coleman, December 5, 2018.
[237] (U) NSA DIRNSA, May 5, 2017.
[238] (U) *Ibid.*
[239] (U) SSCI Interview with DHS and CTIIC, February 27, 2018, pp. 47-48.
[240] FBI IIR
[241] (U/) FBI LHM,
[242] (U) *Ibid.*

[redacted]

(U) The declassified, January 6, 2017, Intelligence Community Assessment also highlighted preparations related to voter fraud, noting that Russian diplomats "were prepared to publicly call into question the validity of the results" and that "pro-Kremlin bloggers had prepared a Twitter campaign, #DemocracyRIP, on election night in anticipation of Secretary Clinton's victory, judging from their social media activity."[245]

(U) During a 2017 election, State 17 saw bot activity on social media, including allegations of voter fraud, in particular on Reddit. State 17 had to try to prove later that there was no fraud.[246]

H. (U) Two Unexplained Events

1. (U) Cyber Activity in State 22

[redacted]

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[243] [redacted]
[244] [redacted]
[245] **(U)** Intelligence Community Assessment, *Assessing Russian Activities and Intentions in Recent U.S. Elections*, January 6, 2017, p. 2.
[246] **(U)** *See* Memorandum for the Record, SSCI Staff, Conference Call with State 17, January 25, 2018. The Committee notes it is conducting a related investigation into the use of social media by Russian-government affiliated entities.
[247] **(U)** The Fusion Center model is a partnership between DHS and state, local, tribal, and territorial entities. They serve as a focal point for "the receipt, analysis, gathering, and sharing of threat-related information."
[248] **(U)** CTIIC Cyber Threat Intelligence Summary/Cyber Threats in Focus, Malicious Cyber Activity on Election-Related Computer Networks Last Spring Possibly Linked to Russia, October 7, 2016; DHS, IIR 4 019 0147 16, September 28, 2016.
[249] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[250] **(U)** *Ibid.*

2. (U) Cyber Activity in State 4

(U[redacted]) State 4 officials, DHS, and FBI in the spring and summer of 2016, struggled to understand who was responsible for two rounds of cyber activity related to election infrastructure. Eventually, one set of cyber activity was attributed to Russia and one was not.

(U[redacted]) First, in April of 2016, a cyber actor successfully targeted State 4 with a phishing scam. After a county employee opened an infected email attachment, the cyber actor stole credentials, which were later posted online.[251] Those stolen credentials were used in June 2016 to penetrate State 4's voter registration database.[252] A CTIIC product reported the incident as follows: "An unknown actor viewed a statewide voter registration database after obtaining a state employee's credentials through phishing and keystroke logging malware, according to a private-sector DHS partner claiming secondhand access. The actor used the credentials to access the database and was in a position to modify county, but not statewide, data."[253]

(U[redacted]) DHS analysis of forensic data provided by a private sector partner discovered malware on the system, and State 4 shut down the voter registration system for about eight days to contain the attack.[254] State 4 officials later told the Committee that that while the cyber actor was able to successfully log in to a workstation connected to election related infrastructure, additional credentials would have been needed for the cyber actor to access the voter registration database on that system.[255]

(U) At first, FBI told State 4 officials that the attack may have originated from Russia, but the ties to the Russian government were unclear. "The Bureau described the threat as 'credible' and significant, a spokesman for State 4 Secretary of State said."[256] State 4 officials also told press that the hacker had used a server in Russia, but that the FBI could not confirm the

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[251] **(U)** [redacted]

[252] **(U)** SSCI interview with DHS and CTIIC, February 27, 2018, p. 38.

[253] [redacted] Cyber Threat Intelligence Integration Center (CTIIC), Compromised State Election Networks, November 2, 2016, p. 1.

[254] **(U[redacted])** DHS IIR 4 005 0829 16, *A [redacted] U.S. State Government's Election System Targeted by Malicious Activity*, September 9, 2016; Memorandum for the Record, SSCI Staff, Conference Call with [State 4], December 1, 2017.

[255] **(U)** Memorandum for the Record, SSCI Staff, Conference Call with [State 4], December 1, 2017.

[256] **(U)** [redacted]

attack was tied to the Russian government.[257] DHS and FBI later assessed it to be criminal activity, with no definitive tie to the Russian government.[258]

[redacted] Subsequently, Russian actors engaged in the same scanning activity as seen in other states, but directed at a domain affiliated with a public library.[259] Officials saw no effective penetration of the system. DHS has low confidence that this cyber activity is attributable to the Russian intelligence services because the target was unusual and not directly involved in elections.[260] [redacted]

V. (U) RUSSIAN INTENTIONS

(U) Russian intentions regarding U.S. election infrastructure remain unclear. Russia might have intended to exploit vulnerabilities in election infrastructure during the 2016 elections and, for unknown reasons, decided not to execute those options. Alternatively, Russia might have sought to gather information in the conduct of traditional espionage activities. Lastly, Russia might have used its activity in 2016 to catalog options or clandestine actions, holding them for use at a later date. Based on what the IC knows about Russia's operating procedures and intentions more broadly, the IC assesses that Russia's activities against U.S. election infrastructure likely sought to further their overarching goal: undermining the integrity of elections and American confidence in democracy.

- **(U)** Former-Homeland Security Adviser Lisa Monaco told the Committee that "[t]here was agreement [in the IC] that one of the motives that Russia was trying to do with this active measures campaign was to sow distrust and discord and lack of confidence in the voting process and the democratic process."[262]

- [redacted] DHS representatives told the Committee that "[w]e see . . . Russians in particular obviously, gain access, learn about the environment, learn about what systems are interconnected, probing, the type of intelligence preparation of the environment that you would expect from an actor like the Russians. So certainly the context going forward

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[redacted]

[258] **(U)** SSCI interview with DHS and CTIIC, February 27, 2018, p. 40.

[259] **(U)** [redacted]

[260] [redacted] DHS/FBI Homeland Intelligence Brief, [redacted]

[261] **(U)** *Ibid.*

[262] **(U)** SSCI Transcript of the Interview with of Lisa Monaco, Former Homeland Security Advisor, August 10, 2017, p. 30.

is a concern of what they might have learned and how much more they know about the systems."[263]

- [redacted] Mr. McCabe told the Committee that it seemed to him like "classic Russian cyber espionage. . . . [They will] scrape up all the information and the experience they possibly can," and "they might not be effective the first time or the fifth time, but they are going to keep at it until they can come back and do it in an effective way."[264]

- [redacted] Mr. Daniel told the Committee:

> *While any one voting machine is fairly vulnerable, as has been demonstrated over and over again publicly, the ability to actually do an operation to change the outcome of an election on the scale you would need to, and do it surreptitiously, is incredibly difficult. A much more achievable goal would be to undermine confidence in the results of the electoral process, and that could be done much more effectively and easily. . . . A logical thing would be, if your goal is to undermine confidence in the U.S. electoral system—which the Russians have a long goal of wanting to put themselves on the same moral plane as the United States . . . one way would be to cause chaos on election day. How could you start to do that? Mess with the voter registration databases.*[265]

- [redacted] Ms. Monaco further echoed that concern:

> *Well, one of the things I was worried about—and I wasn't alone in this—is kind of worst-case scenarios, which would be things like the voter registration databases. So if you're a state and local entity and your voter registration database is housed in the secretary of state's office and it is not encrypted and it's not backed up, and it says Lisa Monaco lives at Smith Street and I show up at my [polling place] and they say 'Well we don't have Ms. Monaco at Smith Street, we have her at Green Street,' now there's difficulty in my voting. And if that were to happen on a large scale, I was worried about confusion at polling places, lack of confidence in the voting system, anger at a large scale in some areas, confusion, distrust. So there was a whole sliding scale of*

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[263] **(U)** SSCI interview with DHS and CTIIC, February 27, 2018, p. 15.
[264] **(U)** DTS 2018-2152, SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Andrew McCabe, Former Deputy Director of the FBI, February 14, 2018, pp. 224-225.
[265] **(U)** SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Michael Daniel, Former Assistant to the President and Cybersecurity Coordinator, National Security Council, August 31, 2017, pp. 27, 34.

horribles just when you're talking about voter registration databases.[266]

- [redacted]

(U) Chaos on Election Day: Three Scenarios

[redacted] Mr. Daniel said that in the early fall of 2016, a policy working group was looking at three scenarios:

> *One was, could the Russians do something to the voter registration databases that could cause problems on Election Day? An example of that would be, could you go in and flip the digits in everybody's address, so that when they show up with their photo ID it doesn't match what's in the poll book? It doesn't actually prevent people from voting. In most cases you'll still get a provisional ballot, but if this is happening in a whole bunch of precincts for just about everybody showing up, it gives the impression that there's chaos.*[268]
>
> *A second one was to do a variant of the penetrating voting machines, except this time what you do is you do a nice video of somebody conducting a hack on a voting machine and showing how you could do that hack and showing them changing a voting outcome, and then you post that on YouTube and you claim you've done this 100,000 times across the United States, even though you haven't actually done it at all.*[269]
>
> *Then the third scenario that we looked at was conducting a denial of service attack on the Associated Press on Election Day, because pretty much everybody, all those nice maps that everybody puts up on all the different news services, is in fact actually based on Associated Press stringers at all the different precincts and locations. . . . It doesn't actually change anything, but it gives the impression that there's chaos.*[270]

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[266] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Lisa Monaco, Former Homeland Security Advisor, August 10, 2017, p. 28.
[267] [redacted]
[268] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Michael Daniel, Former Assistant to the President and Cybersecurity Coordinator, National Security Council, August 31, 2017, p. 33.
[269] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 34-35.
[270] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 35.

VI. (U) NO EVIDENCE OF CHANGED VOTES OR MANIPULATED VOTE TALLIES

(U) In its review, the Committee has seen no indications that votes were changed, vote-tallying systems were manipulated, or that any voter registration data was altered or deleted, although the Committee and IC's insight is limited. Poll workers and voting monitors did not report widespread suspicious activity surrounding the 2016 election. DHS Assistant Secretary Jeanette Manfra said in the Committee's open hearing in June 2017 that "I want to reiterate that we do have confidence in the overall integrity of our electoral system because our voting infrastructure is fundamentally resilient." Further, all three witnesses in that hearing—Ms. Manfra, Dr. Liles, and FBI Assistant Director for Counterintelligence Bill Priestap—agreed that they had no evidence that votes themselves were changed in any way in the 2016 election.[271]

- **(U)** Dr. Liles said that DHS "assessed that multiple checks and redundancies in U.S. election infrastructure, including diversity of systems, non-internet connected voting machines, pre-election testing and processes for media, campaign and election officials to check, audit, and validate the results—all these made it likely that cyber manipulation of the U.S. election systems intended to change the outcome of the national election would be detected."[272] He later said "the level of effort and scale required to change the outcome of a national election would make it nearly impossible to avoid detection."[273]
- [redacted]
- **(U)** States did not report either an uptick in voters showing up at the polls and being unable to vote or a larger than normal quantity of provisional ballots.

(U) The Committee notes that nationwide elections are often won or lost in a small number of precincts. A sophisticated actor could target efforts at districts where margins are already small, and disenfranchising only a small percentage of voters could have a disproportionate impact on an election's outcome.

(U) Many state election officials emphasized their concern that press coverage of, and increased attention to, election security could create the very impression the Russians were seeking to foster, namely undermining voters' confidence in election integrity. Several insisted that whenever any official speaks publicly on this issue, they should state clearly the difference between a "scan" and a "hack," and a few even went as far as to suggest that U.S. officials stop

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[271] **(U)** SSCI Transcript of the Open Hearing on Russian Interference in the 2016 U.S. Elections, held on Wednesday, June 21, 2017.
[272] **(U)** SSCI Transcript of the Open Hearing on Russian Interference in the 2016 U.S. Elections, held on Wednesday, June 21, 2017, p. 13.
[273] **(U)** *Ibid.*, p. 47.

talking about the issue altogether. One state official said, "We need to walk a fine line between being forthcoming to the public and protecting voter confidence."[274]

(U) Mr. Brennan described a similar concern in IC and policy discussions:

> *We know that the Russians had already touched some of the electoral systems, and we know that they have capable cyber capabilities. So there was a real dilemma, even a conundrum, in terms of what do you do that's going to try to stave off worse action on the part of the Russians, and what do you do that is going to . . . [give] the Russians what they were seeking, which was to really raise the specter that the election was not going to be fair and unaffected.*[275]

(U) Most state representatives interviewed by the Committee were confident that they met the threat effectively in 2016 and believed that they would continue to defeat threats in 2018 and 2020. Many had interpreted the events of 2016 as a success story: firewalls deflected the hostile activity, as they were supposed to, so the threat was not an issue. One state official told the Committee, "I'm quite confident our state security systems are pretty sound."[276] Another state official stated, "We felt good [in 2016]," and that due to additional security upgrades, "we feel even better today."[277]

(U) However, as of 2018, some states were still grappling with the severity of the threat. One official highlighted the stark contrast they experienced, when, at one moment, they thought elections were secure, but then suddenly were hearing about the threat.[278] The official went on to conclude, "I don't think any of us expected to be hacked by a foreign government."[279] Another official, paraphrasing a former governor, said, "If a nation-state is on the other side, it's not a fair fight. You have to phone a friend."[280]

(U) In the month before Election Day, DHS and other policymakers were planning for the worst-case scenario of efforts to disrupt the vote itself. Federal, state, and local governments created incident response plans to react to possible confusion at the polling places. Mr. Daniel said of the effort: "We're most concerned about the Russians, but obviously we are also concerned about the possibility for just plain old hacktivism on Election Day. . . . The incident response plan is actually designed . . . to help us [plan for] what is the federal government going to do if bad things start to happen on Election Day?"

[redacted] Mr. Daniel added that this was the first opportunity to exercise the process established under Presidential Policy Directive-41. "We asked the various agencies with lead

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[274] **(U)** Memorandum for the Record, SSCI Staff, Conference Call with [State 8], February 2, 2018.
[275] **(U)** SSCI Transcript of the Interview with John Brennan, Former Director, CIA, held on Friday, June 23, 2017, p. 54.
[276] **(U)** Memorandum for the Record, SSCI Staff, Conference Call with [State 6], November 17, 2017.
[277] **(U)** Memorandum for the Record, SSCI Staff, Conference Call with [State 8], February 2, 2018.
[278] **(U)** Memorandum for the Record, SSCI Staff, Conference Call with [State 20], November 17, 2017.
[279] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[280] **(U)** Memorandum for the Record, SSCI Staff, Conference Call with [State 9], November 17, 2017.

responsibility, all right, give us your Election Day plan." That led to the creation of an Election Day playbook; steps included enhanced watch floor procedures, connectivity between FBI field offices and FBI and DHS, and an "escalation path" if "we needed to get to Lisa [Monaco] or Susan [Rice] in a hurry" on Election Day.[281]

VII. (U) SECURITY OF VOTING MACHINES

(U) The Committee review of Russian activity in 2016 highlighted potential vulnerabilities in many voting machines, with previous studies by security researchers taking on new urgency and receiving new scrutiny. Although researchers have repeatedly demonstrated it is possible to exploit vulnerabilities in electronic voting machines to alter votes,[282] some election officials dispute whether such attacks would be feasible in the context of an actual election.

- **(U)** Dr. Alex Halderman, Professor of Computer Science at the University of Michigan, testified before the Committee in June 2017 that "our highly computerized election infrastructure is vulnerable to sabotage and even to cyber attacks that could change votes."[283] Dr. Halderman concluded, "Voting machines are not as distant from the internet as they may seem."[284]

- **(U)** When State 7 decommissioned its Direct-Recording Electronic (DRE) voting machines in 2017, the IT director led an exercise in attempting to break into a few of the machines using the access a "normal" voter would have in using the machines.[285] The results were alarming: the programmed password on some of the machines was ABC123, and the testers were able to flip the machines to supervisor mode, disable them, and "do enough damage to call the results into question."[286] The IT director shared the results with State 21 and State 24, which were using similiar machines.[287]

- **(U)** In 2017, DEFCON[288] researchers were able to find and exploit vulnerabilities in five different electronic voting machines.[289] The WinVote machines, those recently decertified by State 7, were most easily manipulated. One attendee said, "It just took us a couple of hours on Google to find passwords that let us unlock the administrative

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[281] **(U)** *Ibid.*, p. 82.
[282] **(U)** *See also, infra,* "Direct-Recording Electronic (DRE) Voting Machine Vulnerabilities."
[283] **(U)** SSCI Transcript of the Open Hearing on Russian Interference in the 2016 U.S. Elections, held on Wednesday, June 21, 2017, p. 117.
[284] **(U)** *Ibid.*, p. 110.
[285] **(U)** Memorandum for the Record, SSCI Staff, Conference Call with [State 7], January 25, 2018.
[286] **(U)** *Ibid.* The machines used were WinVote voting machines.
[287] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[288] **(U)** DEFCON is an annual hacker conference held in Las Vegas, Nevada. In July 2017, at DEFCON 25, the conference featured a Voting Machine Hacking Village ("Voting Village") which acquired and made available to conference participants over 25 pieces of election equipment, including voting machines and electronic poll books, for generally unrestricted examination for vulnerabilities.
[289] **(U)** Matt Blaze, et. al., *DEFCON 25: Voting Machine Hacking Village: Report on Cyber Vulnerabilities in U.S. Election Equipment, Databases, and Infrastructure*, September 2017, https://www.defcon.org/images/defcon-25/DEF%20CON%2025%20voting%20report.pdf, pp. 8-13.

functions on this machine."[290] A researcher was able to hack into the WinVote over WiFi within minutes using a vulnerability from 2003.[291] Once he had administrator-level access, he could change votes in the database. Researchers also discovered available USB ports in the machine that would allow a hacker to run software on the machine.[292] One said "with physical access to back [sic] of the machine for 15 seconds, an attacker can do anything."[293] Hackers were less successful with other types of machines, although each had recorded vulnerabilities.[294]

- **(U)** The 2018 DEFCON report found similar vulnerabilities, in particular when hackers had physical access to the machines. For example, hackers exploited an old vulnerability on one machine, using either a removable device purchasable on eBay or remote access, to modify vote counts.[295]

- **(U[redacted])** DHS briefed the Committee in August 2018 that these results were in part because the hackers had extended physical access to the machines, which is not realistic for a true election system. Undersecretary Krebs also disagreed with reporting that a 17-year-old hacker had accessed voter tallies.[296] Some election experts have called into question the DEFCON results for similar reasons and pointed out that any fraud requiring physical access would be, by necessity, small scale, unless a government were to deploy agents across thousands of localities.

- **(U)** ES&S Voting Systems disclosed that some of its equipment had a key security vulnerability. ES&S installed remote access software on machines it sold in the mid-2000s, which allowed the company to provide IT support more easily, but also created potential remote access into the machines. When pressed by Senator Ron Wyden of Oregon, the company admitted that around 300 voting jurisdictions had the software. ES&S says the software was not installed after 2007, and it was only installed on election-management systems, not voting machines.[297] More than 50 percent of voters vote on ES&S equipment, and 41 states use its products.

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[290] **(U)** Elizabeth Wise, "Hackers at DefCon Conference Exploit Vulnerabilities in Voting Machines," *USA Today*, July 30, 2017, https://www.usatoday.com/story/tech/2017/07/30/hackers-defcon-conference-exploit-vulnerabilities-voting-machines/523639001/.
[291] **(U)** Matt Blaze, et. al., *DEFCON 25: Voting Machine Hacking Village: Report on Cyber Vulnerabilities in U.S. Election Equipment, Databases, and Infrastructure*, September 2017, https://www.defcon.org/images/defcon-25/DEF%20CON%2025%20voting%20report.pdf, p. 4.
[292] **(U)** *Ibid.*, p. 9.
[293] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[294] **(U)** *Ibid.*, pp. 8-13.
[295] **(U)** Robert McMillian and Dustin Volz, "Voting Machine Used in Half of U.S. Is Vulnerable to Attack, Report Finds," *Wall Street Journal*, September 27, 2018. The machine referenced is the ES&S Model 650, which ES&S stopped making in 2008 but is still available for sale.
[296] **(U)** DTS 2018-3275, Summary of 8/22/2018 All Senators Election Security Briefing, August 28, 2018
[297] **(U)** Hacks, Security Gaps And Oligarchs: The Business of Voting Comes Under Scrutiny. Miles Parks, NPR, September 21, 2018.

(U) Advocates of electronic voting point out the flaws in paper ballots, like the potential for the introduction of fraudulent ballots or invalidated votes due to stains or extra marks. The Committee believes that any election system should be protected end-to-end, including against fraud.

(U) Direct-Recording Electronic (DRE) Voting Machine Vulnerabilities

(U) While best practices dictate that electronic voting machines not be connected to the internet, some machines are internet-enabled. In addition, each machine has to be programmed before Election Day, a procedure often done either by connecting the machine to a local network to download software or by using removable media, such as a thumb drive. These functions are often carried out by local officials or contractors. If the computers responsible for writing and distributing the program are compromised, so too could all voting machines receiving a compromised update. Further, machines can be programmed to show one result to the voter while recording a different result in the tabulation. Without a paper backup, a "recount" would use the same faulty software to re-tabulate the same results, because the primary records of the vote are stored in computer memory.[298]

(U) Dr. Halderman said in his June 2017 testimony before SSCI:

> *I know America's voting machines are vulnerable because my colleagues and I have hacked them repeatedly as part of a decade of research studying the technology that operates elections and learning how to make it stronger. We've created attacks that can spread from machine to machine, like a computer virus, and silently change election outcomes. We've studied touchscreen and optical scan systems, and in every single case we found ways for attackers to sabotage machines and to steal votes. These capabilities are certainly within reach for America's enemies.*
>
> *Ten years ago, I was part of the first academic team to conduct a comprehensive security analysis of a DRE voting machine. We examined what was at the time the most widely used touch-screen DRE in the country and spent several months probing it for vulnerabilities. What we found was disturbing: we could reprogram the machine to invisibly cause any candidate to win.*[299]

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[298] **(U)** "Some DREs also produce a printed record of the vote and show it briefly to the voter, using a mechanism called a voter-verifiable paper audit trail, or VVPAT. While VVPAT records provide a physical record of the vote that is a valuable safeguard against cyberattacks, research has shown that VVPAT records are difficult to accurately audit and that voters often fail to notice if the printed record doesn't match their votes. For these reasons, most election security experts favor optical scan paper ballots." Written Statement by J. Alex Halderman, June 21, 2017, citing S. Goggin and M. Byrne, "An Examination of the Auditability of Voter Verified Paper Audit Trail (VVPAT) Ballots," *Proceedings of the 2007 USENIX/ACCURATE Electronic Voting Technology Workshop,* August 2007; B. Campbell and M. Byrne, "Now do Voters Notice Review Screen Anomalies?" *Proceedings of the 2009 USENIX/ACCURATE/IAVoSS Electronic Voting Technology Workshop,* August 2009.

[299] **(U)** The machine was the Diebold AccuVote TS, which was still used statewide in at least one state as of 2017.

> *Cybersecurity experts have studied a wide range of U.S. voting machines—including both DREs and optical scanners—and in* every single case, *they've found severe vulnerabilities that would allow attackers to sabotage machines and to alter votes. That's why there is overwhelming consensus in the cybersecurity and election integrity research communities that our elections are at risk.*[300]

(U) In speaking with the Committee, federal government officials revealed concerns about the security of voting machines and related infrastructure. Former Assistant Attorney General for National Security John Carlin told the Committee:

> *"I'm very concerned about . . . our actual voting apparatus, and the attendant structures around it, and the cooperation between some states and the federal government."*[301] *Mr. Carlin further stated, "We've literally seen it already, so shame on us if we can't fix it heading into the next election cycles. And it's the assessment of every key intel professional, which I share, that Russia's going to do it again because they think this was successful. So we're in a bit of a race against time heading up to the two-year election. Some of the election machinery that's in place should not be."*[302]

(U) Mr. McCabe echoed these concerns, and noted that, in the last months before the election, FBI identified holes in the security of election machines, saying "there's some potential there."[303]

(U) As of November 2016, five states were using exclusively DRE voting machines with no paper trail, according to open source information.[304] An additional nine states used at least some DRE voting machines with no paper trail.[305]

- **(U)** State 20 has 21-year-old DRE machines. While the state is in the process of replacing its entire voting system, including these machines, State 20 is aiming to have the updates ready for the 2020 elections.

- **(U)** In State 21, 50 of 67 counties as of November 2017 used DRE voting machines.[306]

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[300] **(U)** SSCI Transcript of the Open Hearing on Russian Interference in the 2016 U.S. Elections, held on Wednesday, June 21, 2017, pp. 116-117.
[301] **(U)** SSCI Transcript of the Interview with John Carlin, Former Assistant Attorney General for National Security, held on Monday, September 25, 2017, p. 86.
[302] **(U)** *Ibid.*, pp. 86-87.
[303] **(U)** DTS 2018-2152, SSCI Interview with Andrew McCabe, Former Deputy Director of the FBI, February 14, 2018, p. 221.
[304] **(U)** BallotPedia, *Voting Methods and Equipment By State*, https://ballotpedia.org/Voting_methods_and_equipment_by_state.
[305] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[306] **(U)** Memorandum for the Record, SSCI Staff, Conference Call with [State 21], November 17, 2017.

- **(U)** State 5 used paper-backed voting in only about half its machines and DRE voting machines without paper backup in the other half.[307]

- **(U)** Some states are moving to a hybrid model—an electronic voting machine with a paper backup, often in the form of a receipt that prints after the voter submits their vote. For example, State 12 uses some DREs, but all equipment is required to have a paper trail, and the paper ballot is the ballot of record.[308] State 12 also conducts a mandatory state-wide audit.[309] Similarly, State 13 uses some paper-based and some electronic machines, but all are required to have a paper trail.[310]

(U) The number of vendors selling voting machines is shrinking, raising concerns about a vulnerable supply chain. A hostile actor could compromise one or two manufacturers of components and have an outsized effect on the security of the overall system.

- [redacted] "My job," said Ms. Monaco when asked whether she was worried about voting machines themselves getting hacked, "was to worry about every parade of horribles. So I cannot tell you that that did not cross my mind. We were worried about who, how many makers. We were worried about the supply chain for the voting machines, who were the makers? . . . Turns out I think it's just Diebold—and have we given them a defensive briefing? So to answer your question, we were worried about it all."[311]

- [redacted] Mr. McCabe pointed out that a small number of companies have "90%" of the market for voting machines in the U.S. Before the 2016 election, [redacted] briefed a few of the companies on vulnerabilities,[312] but a more comprehensive campaign to educate vendors and their customers is warranted.

(U) Voluntary Voting System Guidelines

(U) Part of the voting reform implemented under The Help America Vote Act of 2002 was a requirement that the Election Assistance Commission create a set of specifications and requirements against which voting systems can be tested, called the Voluntary Voting System Guidelines (VVSG). The EAC adopted the first VVSG in December 2005. The EAC then tasked the Technical Guidelines Development Committee, chaired by the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) and including members from NASED, with updating the guidelines. In March 2015, the EAC approved VVSG 1.1; in January 2016, the EAC adopted

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[307] **(U)** Memorandum for the Record, SSCI Staff, Conference Call with [State 5], December 1, 2017.
[308] **(U)** Memorandum for the Record, SSCI Staff, Conference Call with [State 12], December 1, 2017.
[309] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[310] **(U)** Memorandum for the Record, SSCI Staff, Conference Call with [State 13], December 1, 2017.
[311] **(U)** SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Lisa Monaco, Former Homeland Security Advisor, held on Thursday, August 10, 2017, p. 31.
[312] **(U)** SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Andy McCabe, Deputy Director of the FBI, held on Wednesday, February 14, 2018, pp. 220-221.

an implementation plan requiring that all new voting systems be tested against the VVSG 1.1 beginning in July 2017. VVSG 1.1 has since been succeeded by version 2.0, which was released for a 90-day public comment period on February 15, 2019. The EAC will compile the feedback for Commissioners to review shortly thereafter.[313] VVSG 2.0 includes the following minimum security guidelines:

- **(U)** An error or fault in the voting system software or hardware cannot cause an undetectable change in election results. (9.1)
- **(U)** The voting system produces readily available records that provide the ability to check whether the election outcome is correct and, to the extent possible, identify the root cause of any irregularities. (9.2)
- **(U)** Voting system records are resilient in the presence of intentional forms of tampering and accidental errors. (9.3)
- **(U)** The voting system supports strong, configurable authentication mechanisms to verify the identities of authorized users and includes multi-factor authentication mechanisms for critical operations. (11.3)
- **(U)** The voting system prevents unauthorized access to or manipulation of configuration data, cast vote records, transmitted data, or audit records. (13.1)
- **(U)** The voting system limits its attack surface by reducing unnecessary code, data paths, physical ports, and by using other technical controls. (14.2)
- **(U)** The voting system employs mechanisms to protect against malware. (15.3)
- **(U)** A voting system with networking capabilities employs appropriate, well-vetted modern defenses against network-based attacks, commensurate with current best practice. (15.4)

(U) As of March 2018, 35 states required that their machines be certified by EAC, but compliance with the VVSG standards is not mandatory. Secretary Nielsen testified before the Committee that the United States should "seek for all states" to use the VVSG standards.[314]

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[313] **(U)** *EAC Commissioners Unanimously Vote to Publish VVSG 2.0 Principles and Guidelines for Public Comment;* https://www.eac.gov/news/2019/02/15/eac-commissioners-unanimously-vote-to-publish-vvsg-20-principles-and-guidelines-for-public-comment/; February 15, 2019

[314] **(U)** SSCI Transcript of the Open Hearing on Election Security, held on March 21, 2018, p. 47.

VIII. (U) THE ROLE OF DHS AND INTERACTIONS WITH THE STATES

(U) The federal government's actions to address election security threats evolved significantly from the summer of 2016 through the summer of 2018. Contemporaneous with the Russian attacks, DHS and FBI were initially treating the situation as they would a typical notification of a cyber incident to a non-governmental victim. By the fall of 2016, however, DHS was attempting to do more extensive outreach to the states. Then in the fall of 2017, DHS undertook an effort to provide a menu of cyber support options to the states.

A. (U) DHS's Evolution

[redacted] For DHS and other agencies and departments tasked with intelligence collection or formulating policy options through the interagency process, the full scope of the threat began to emerge in the summer of 2016. Secretary Johnson told the Committee that "I know I had significant concerns by [summer of 2016] about doing all we could to ensure the cybersecurity of our election systems."[315] Mr. Daniel said in his interview that by the end of July, the interagency was focused on better protecting electoral infrastructure as part of a "DHS and FBI-led domestic effort."[316]

[redacted] Policymakers quickly realized, however, that DHS was poorly positioned to provide the kind of support states needed. Mr. Daniel said that interagency discussions about the threat "start[ed] a process of us actually realizing that, frankly, we don't actually have very much in the way of capability that we can directly offer the states"—a fact that the states themselves would later echo.[317]

- [redacted] Ms. Monaco said that DHS initially found a "pretty alarming variance in the number of voting registration databases and lack of encryption and lack of backup for all of these things."[318] Ms. Monaco added that "[i]n light of what we were seeing, in light of the intelligence we were getting briefed on, this was a very specific direction and decision to say we need to really accelerate this, put a significant push on resources and engagement at the senior-most levels."[319]

- [redacted] Mr. Daniel and the working group identified DHS's cyber teams as possible assistance to the states. "DHS had teams that could go and provide that support to the private sector. We've been doing that. That's a program that existed for years for critical

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[315] **(U)** SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Jeh Johnson, Former Secretary of Homeland Security, held on Monday, June 12, 2017, p. 10.
[316] **(U)** SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Michael Daniel, Former Special Assistant to the President and Cybersecurity Coordinator, National Security Council, held on Wednesday, August 31, 2017, p. 28.
[317] **(U)** *Ibid.*, p. 38.
[318] **(U)** SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Lisa Monaco, Former Homeland Security Advisor, held on Thursday, August 10, 2017, SSCI interview of Lisa Monaco, August 10, 2017, p. 19.
[319] **(U)** *Ibid.*, p. 21.

> infrastructure companies. And we realized that we could repurpose [some of those teams], but we don't have that many of them . . . four or five. It was not very many."[320]

(U) DHS attempted a nuanced outreach to the states on the threat. Ms. Monaco highlighted a delicate balancing act with the interactions with states:

> *I know we tried very hard to strike a balance between engaging state and local officials and federal officials in the importance of raising cyber defenses and raising cybersecurity . . . and not sowing distrust in the system, both because, one, we believed it to be true that the system is in fact quite resilient because of what I mentioned earlier, which is the diffuse nature; and because we did not want to, as we described it, do the Russians' work for them by sowing panic about the vulnerability of the election.*[321]

(U) In an August 15, 2016, conference call with state election officials, then-Secretary Johnson told states, "we're in a sort of a heightened state of alertness; it behooves everyone to do everything you can for your own cybersecurity leading up to the election." He also said that there was "no specific or credible threat known around the election system itself. I do not recall—I don't think, but I do not recall, that we knew about [State 4] and Illinois at that point."[322] The Committee notes that this call was two months after State 4's system was breached, and more than a month after Illinois was breached and the state shut down its systems to contain the problem. During this call, Secretary Johnson also broached the idea of designating election systems as critical infrastructure.

(U) A number of state officials reacted negatively to the call. Secretary Johnson said he was "surprised/disappointed that there was a certain level of pushback from at least those who spoke up. . . . The pushback was: This is our—I'm paraphrasing here: This is our responsibility and there should not be a federal takeover of the election system."[323]

- **(U)** The call "does not go incredibly well," said Mr. Daniel. "I was not on the call, no, but all of the reporting back and then all of the subsequent media reporting that is leaked about the call shows that it did not go well." Mr. Daniel continued: "I was actually quite surprised . . . in my head, there is this: yes, we have this extremely partisan election going on in the background; but the Russians are trying to mess with our election. To me, that's a national security issue that's not dependent on party or anything else."[324]

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[320] **(U)** SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Michael Daniel, Former Special Assistant to the President and Cybersecurity Coordinator, National Security Council, held on Wednesday, August 31, 2017, p. 41.
[321] **(U)** SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Lisa Monaco, Former Homeland Security Advisor, held on Thursday, August 10, 2017, p. 29.
[322] **(U)** SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Jeh Johnson, Former Secretary of Homeland Security, held on Monday, June 12, 2017, p. 13.
[323] **(U)** *Ibid.*, pp. 13-14.
[324] **(U)** *Ibid.*, p. 48.

- **(U)** Ms. Monaco also related how DHS received significant push back from the states and decided to "focus our efforts on really pushing states to voluntarily accept the assistance that DHS was trying to provide."[325]

- **(U)** States also reported that the call did not go well. Several states told the Committee that the idea of a critical infrastructure designation surprised them and came without context of a particular threat. Some state officials also did not understand what a critical infrastructure designation meant, in practical terms, and whether it would give the federal government the power to run elections. DHS also did not anticipate a certain level of suspicion from the states toward the federal government. As a State 17 official told the Committee, "when someone says 'we're from the government and we're here to help,' it's generally not a good thing."[326]

(U) Critical Infrastructure Designation

(U) One of the most controversial elements of the relationship between DHS and the states was the decision to designate election systems as critical infrastructure. Most state officials relayed that they were surprised by the designation and did not understand what it meant; many also felt DHS was not open to input from the states on whether such a designation was beneficial.

(U) Secretary Johnson remembers the first time he aired the possibility of a designation was on August 3, 2016. He went to a reporters' breakfast sponsored by the Christian Science Monitor and publicly "floated the idea of designating election infrastructure as critical infrastructure."[327] Then, on August 15, 2016, Secretary Johnson had a conference call with election officials from all 50 states. "I explained the nature of what it means to be designated critical infrastructure. It's not a mandatory set of [regulations], it's not a federal takeover, it's not binding operational directives. And here are the advantages: priority in terms of our services and the benefit of the protection of the international cyber norm."[328] Secretary Johnson continued: "I stressed at the time that this is all voluntary and it prioritizes assistance if they seek it."[329]

(U) Some states were vocal in objecting to the idea. In evaluating the states' response, DHS came to the conclusion that it should put the designation on hold, deciding it would earn more state trust and cooperation if it held off on the designation as critical infrastructure and perhaps sought more buy-in from the states at a later date.[330]

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[325] **(U)** SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Lisa Monaco, Former Homeland Security Advisor, held on Thursday, August 10, 2017, SSCI interview of Lisa Monaco, August 10, 2017, p. 25.
[326] **(U)** Memorandum for the Record, SSCI Staff, Conference Call with State 17, January 25, 2018.
[327] **(U)** SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Jeh Johnson, Former Secretary of Homeland Security, held on Monday, June 12, 2017, p. 10.
[328] **(U)** *Ibid.*, p. 14. For additional information on the definition of critical infrastructure in a cybersecurity context, *see* Executive Order 13636, *Improving Critical Infrastructure Cybersecurity*, February 12, 2013.
[329] **(U)** SSCI Transcript of the Open Hearing on Election Security, March 21, 2018, p. 34.
[330] **(U)** *Ibid.*, p. 115.

(U) After the election, Secretary Johnson decided the time had come to make the designation. He held a follow-up call with NASS on the critical infrastructure designation in January 2017: "I didn't tell them I'm doing this the next day, but I told them I was close to making a decision. I didn't hear anything further [along the lines of additional, articulated objections], so the same day we went public with the [unclassified] version of the report,[331] I also made the designation."[332]

(U) Mr. Daniel summed up the rationale for proceeding this way: "I do believe that we should think of the electoral infrastructure as critical infrastructure, and to me it's just as critical for democracy as communications, electricity, water. If that doesn't function, then your democracy doesn't function. . . . To me that is the definition of 'critical.'"[333]

(U) In interviews with the Committee in late 2017 and early 2018, several states were supportive of the designation and saw the benefits of, for example, the creation of the Government Coordinating Council. Others were lukewarm, saying they had seen limited benefits for all the consternation officials said it had caused. Still others remained suspicious that the designation is a first step toward a federal takeover of elections.

B. (U) The View From the States

(U) For most states, the story of Russian attempts to hack state infrastructure was one of confusion and a lack of information. It began with what states interpreted as an insignificant event: an FBI FLASH notification on August 18, 2016, [redacted][334] Then, in mid-October, the MS-ISAC reached out to state IT directors with an additional alert about specific IP addresses scanning websites.[335] At no time did MS-ISAC or DHS identify the IP addresses as associated with a nation-state actor. Given the lack of context, state staff who received the notification did not ascribe any additional urgency to the warning; to them, it was a few more suspect IP addresses among the thousands that were constantly pinging state systems. Very few state IT directors informed state election officials about the alert.

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[331] **(U)** Secretary Johnson was referring to the declassified version of the Intelligence Community Assessment, *Assessing Russian Activities and Intentions in Recent U.S. Elections*, January 6, 2017.
[332] **(U)** *Ibid.*, p. 46.
[333] **(U)** SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Michael Daniel, Former Special Assistant to the President and Cybersecurity Coordinator, National Security Council, held on Wednesday, August 31, 2017, p. 98.
[334] **(U)** FBI FLASH, Alert Number T-LD1004-TT, TLP-AMBER, [redacted]
[335] **(U)** FBI FLASH, Alert Number T-LD1005-TT, TLP-AMBER, [redacted]; DHS/FBI JAR-16-20223, *Threats to Federal, State, and Local Government Systems*, October 14, 2016.

- **(U)** State 11 had a meeting with DHS officials, including the regional DHS cyber advisor, in August 2016, but according to State 11 officials, DHS did not mention any specific threat against election systems from a nation-state actor.[336]

- **(U)** State 13 reported that DHS contacted an affected county at one point, but never contacted the state-level officials.[337]

- **(U)** When they saw an IP address identified in the alerts had scanned their systems, State 6 and State 16 sent their logs to the MS-ISAC for analysis.[338] State 16 said it never received a response.[339]

(U) DHS, conversely, saw its efforts as far more extensive and effective. Ms. Manfra testified to SSCI that DHS "held a conference call where all 50 secretaries of state or an election director if the secretary of state didn't have that responsibility [participated], in August, in September, and again in October [of 2016], both high-level engagement and network defense products [sic]."[340] Mr. Daniel reported that "by the time Election Day rolls around, all but one state has taken us up on the offer to at least do scanning [,] so I want to give people credit for not necessarily sticking to initial partisan reactions and . . . taking steps to protect their electoral infrastructure."[341]

(U) States reported to the Committee that Election Day went off smoothly. For most state election officials, concerns about a possible threat against election systems dropped off the radar until the summer or fall of 2017. Many state election officials reported hearing for the first time that Russian actors were responsible for scanning election infrastructure in an estimated 21 states from the press or from the Committee's open hearing on June 21, 2017. During that hearing, in response to a question from Vice Chairman Warner inquiring whether all affected states were aware they were attacked, Ms. Manfra responded that "[a]ll of the system owners within those states are aware of the targeting, yes, sir."[342] However, when pressed as to whether election officials in each state were aware, the answer was less clear.[343]

- **(U)** In that hearing, Dr. Liles said DHS had "worked hand-in-hand with the state and local partners to share threat information related to their networks."[344]

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[336] **(U)** Memorandum for the Record, SSCI Staff, Conference Call with [State 11], December 8, 2017.
[337] **(U)** Memorandum for the Record, SSCI Staff, Conference Call with [State 13], December 1, 2017.
[338] **(U)** Memorandum for the Record, SSCI Staff, Conference Call with [State 6], November 17, 2017; Memorandum for the Record, SSCI Staff, Conference Call with [State 16], December 1, 2017.
[339] **(U)** *Ibid.* State 6 did not indicate whether they received feedback from DHS.
[340] **(U)** SSCI Transcript of the Open Hearing on Russian Interference in the 2016 U.S. Elections, June 21, 2017, p. 74.
[341] **(U)** SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Michael Daniel, Former Special Assistant to the President and Cybersecurity Coordinator, National Security Council, held on Wednesday, August 31, 2017, p. 49.
[342] **(U)** SSCI Transcript of the Open Hearing on Russian Interference in the 2016 U.S. Elections, held on Wednesday, June 21, 2017, p. 28.
[343] **(U)** *Ibid.*, pp. 62-63.
[344] **(U)** *Ibid.*, p. 12.

- **(U)** Ms. Manfra said, "The owners of the systems within those 21 states have been notified." Senator King then asked, "How about the election officials in those states?" Ms. Manfra responded, "We are working to ensure that election officials as well understand. I'll have to get back to you on whether all 21 states ....[crosstalk]."[345]

- **(U)** Given Ms. Manfra's testimony and the fact that some election officials did not get a notification directly to their offices, election officials in many states assumed they were not one of the 21; some even issued press releases to that effect.[346]

(U) The disconnect between DHS and state election officials became clear during Committee interactions with the states throughout 2017. In many cases, DHS had notified state officials responsible for network security, but not election officials, of the threat. Further, the IT professionals contacted did not have the context to know that this threat was any different than any other scanning or hacking attempt, and they had not thought it necessary to elevate the warning to election officials.

(U) After the hearing, and in part to respond to confusion in the states, DHS held a conference call with representatives from 50 states in September 2017. In that call, DHS said they would contact affected states directly. State 8 state election officials noted that the call became "somewhat antagonistic."[347] State 17 officials reported that the phone call "just showed how little DHS knew about elections."[348] Several officials argued that all 50 states should be notified of who had been hacked. DHS followed up with one-to-one phone calls to states over the next several days.

- **(U)** Officials from some states reported being shocked that they were in fact one of the states, and further surprised that their states had supposedly been notified.

- **(U)** Most state officials found the conference calls lacking in information and were left wondering exactly what the threat might be. Several states said the DHS representatives could not answer any specific questions effectively.

(U) Following this series of difficult engagements, DHS set about trying to build relationships with the states, but it faced a significant trust deficit. Early follow-up interactions between state election officials and DHS were rocky. States reported that DHS seemed to have little to no familiarity with elections. For example, State 6 said that the DHS representatives they were assigned seemed to know nothing about State 6, and, when pressed, they admitted they were "just reading the spreadsheet in front of [them]."[349] State 8 reported that "we are spending

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[345] **(U)** *Ibid.*, pp. 62-63.
[346] **(U)** State 8 said they put out a press release because DHS had said publicly that they had notified the 21 states, and "if you were one of the 21, you would know."
[347] **(U)** Memorandum for the Record, SSCI Staff, Conference Call with [State 8], February 2, 2018.
[348] **(U)** Memorandum for the Record, SSCI Staff, Conference Call with [State 17], January 25, 2018.
[349] **(U)** Memorandum for the Record, SSCI Staff, Conference Call with [State 6], November 17, 2017.

a ton of time educating outside groups on how elections are run."[350] State 3 officials said, "DHS didn't recognize that securing an election process is not the same as securing a power grid."[351]

(U) By early 2018, State officials gave DHS credit for making significant progress over the next six months. States began to sign up for many of the resources that DHS had to offer, and DHS hosted the first meeting of the Government Coordinating Council required under the critical infrastructure designation. Those interactions often increased trust and communication between the federal and state entities. For example, DHS has identified a list of contacts to notify if they see a threat; that list includes both IT officials and election officials. State 9 described it as "quite a turnaround for DHS," and further stated that the Secretaries of State had been disappointed with how slowly DHS got up to speed on election administration and how slowly the notifications happened, but DHS was "quick with the *mea culpas* and are getting much better."[352]

(U) Not all of the engagements were positive, however. State 13 in early December 2017 still reported continued frustration with DHS, indicating to the Committee that it had not seen much change in terms of outreach and constructive engagement. As of summer 2017, according to State 13, "the lack of urgency [at DHS] was beyond frustrating."[353]

C. (U) Taking Advantage of DHS Resources

(U) As DHS has pursued outreach to the states, more and more have opened their doors to DHS assistance. DHS told the Committee that its goal has been relationship building and:

> *In the partnerships with the states and secretaries of states, state election directors, and at the local level, we're trying to shift them to a culture of more information security management, where they can now account for the integrity of their system, or, if something did happen . . . they know the full extent of what happened on their system. . . . We're providing vulnerability assessments and trend analysis, in addition to connecting them to the threat intelligence that we can, in order to evolve their . . . cyber culture.*[354]

(U) DHS's assistance can be highly tailored to need, and falls into roughly two buckets: remote cyber hygiene scans, which provide up to weekly reports, and on-site risk and vulnerability assessments. DHS also offers a suite of other services, including phishing campaign assessments. All these efforts seek to provide the states with actionable information to improve cyber hygiene, but DHS has been keen to avoid what could be perceived by the states as

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[350] **(U)** Memorandum for the Record, SSCI Staff, Conference Call with [State 8], February 2, 2018.
[351] **(U)** Memorandum for the Record, SSCI Staff, Conference Call with [State 3], December 8, 2017.
[352] **(U)** Memorandum for the Record, SSCI Staff, Conference Call with [State 9], November 17, 2017.
[353] **(U)** Memorandum for the Record, SSCI Staff, Conference Call with [State 13], December 1, 2017.
[354] **(U)** SSCI interview with DHS and CTIIC, February 27, 2018, pp. 54-55.

unfunded mandates.[355] Some states requesting more intensive services have also experienced significant delays before DHS could send a team to assist.

- **(U)** By October 2018, DHS said 35 states, 91 local jurisdictions, and eight election system vendors had signed up for remote persistent scans.[356] All the requests for these scans have been fulfilled. "They can be turned on basically within the week," according to DHS.[357]

- **(U)** DHS said that as of October 2018, it had completed 35 in-depth, on the ground vulnerability assessments: 21 states, 13 localities, and one election system vendor. These assessments are one week off-site remote scans followed by a second week on site.[358]

- **(U)** Two states who completed the in-depth assessments reported in late 2017 they had had a good experience. State 12 officials said the team was "extremely helpful and professional."[359] State 10 said the review was a good experience, although DHS was somewhat limited in what it could do.[360] For example, DHS did a phishing email test that showed the training for employees had worked.[361] DHS gave "good and actionable recommendations." Although DHS "didn't really understand election systems when they came," they learned a lot.[362]

- **(U)** As of November 2017, State 6 and State 9 requested an on-site scan, but those scans were on track to be delayed past the August 2018 primaries.[363] State 7 was expecting a four-to-six month delay.[364] State 8 signed up for a checkup in October 2017 and was due to get service the following February.[365] As of January 2018, State 17 also had requested an on-site scan.[366]

(U) In a sign of improving relations between the states and DHS, two states that had elections in 2017 attempted to include DHS in the process more extensively than in the past. In State 17, a two-person DHS team sat with election officials during the 2017 special election and monitored the networks. Even though "their presence was comforting," they "really didn't do much." State 17 signed DHS's normal MOU, but also added its own clause to underscore the state's independence: a formal sunset on DHS's access to state systems, one week after the

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[355] **(U)** *Ibid.*, p. 60.
[356] **(U)** *Ibid.*, p. 57.
[357] **(U)** DHS phone call with SSCI; October 16, 2018.
[358] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[359] **(U)** Memorandum for the Record, SSCI Staff, Conference Call with [State 12], December 1, 2017.
[360] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[361] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[362] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[363] **(U)** Memorandum for the Record, SSCI Staff, Conference Call with [State 6], November 17, 2017; Memorandum for the Record, SSCI Staff, Conference Call with [State 9], November 17, 2017.
[364] **(U)** Memorandum for the Record, SSCI Staff, Conference Call with [State 7], January 25, 2018.
[365] **(U)** Memorandum for the Record, SSCI Staff, Conference Call with [State 8], February 2, 2018.
[366] **(U)** Memorandum for the Record, SSCI Staff, Conference Call with [State 17], January 25, 2018.

election. State 7 reported their experience with DHS during the 2017 statewide election was quite good. DHS sat with election officials all day, which meant State 7 could pass messages quickly to NCCIC.

(U) In March 2018, Congress appropriated $380 million in funding for election security improvements. The funding was distributed under the formula laid out in the Help American Vote Act (HAVA) and was intended to aid in replacing vulnerable voting machines and improving cybersecurity. As of July 2018, 13 states said they intended to use the funds to buy new voting machines, and 22 said they have "no plans to replace their machines before the election—including all five states that rely solely on paperless electronic voting devices," according to a survey by Politico.[367]

IX. (U) RECOMMENDATIONS

1. (U) Reinforce States' Primacy in Running Elections*

(U) States should remain firmly in the lead on running elections, and the federal government should ensure they receive the necessary resources and information.

2. (U) Build a Stronger Defense, Part I: Create Effective Deterrence

(U) The United States should communicate to adversaries that it will view an attack on its election infrastructure as a hostile act, and we will respond accordingly. The U.S. Government should not limit its response to cyber activity; rather, it should create a menu of potential responses that will send a clear message and create significant costs for the perpetrator.

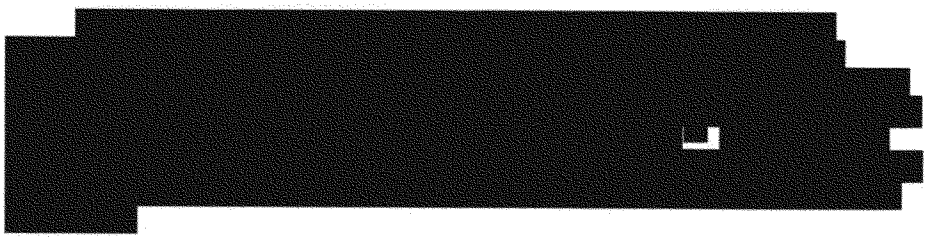
[redacted] **Ideally, this principle of deterrence should be included in an overarching cyber doctrine for the U.S. Government.** That doctrine should clearly delineate cyberespionage, cybercrime, and cyber attacks. Further, a classified portion of the doctrine should establish what the U.S. Government believes to be its escalation ladder in the cyber realm—what tools does it have, what tools should it pursue, and what should the limits of cyber war be. The U.S. strategic approach tends to overmatch adversaries with superior technology, and policymakers should consider what steps the U.S. will need to take to outstrip the capabilities of Russia, China, Iran, North Korea, and other emerging hostile actors in the cyber domain.

(U) U.S. cyber doctrine should serve as the basis for a discussion with U.S. allies and others about new cyber norms. Just as the international community has established norms and treaties about the use of technologies and weapons systems, the U.S. should lead a conversation about cyber norms and the limits of cyber activity with allies and others.

*The Committee's recommendation to "reinforce states' primacy in running elections" should be understood in reference to states' responsibility for election security, and not as pertaining to broader election issues, such as campaign finance laws or voting rights laws.

[367] **(U)** States Slow to Prepare for Hacking Threats, Eric Geller, Politico, July 18, 2018.

3. **(U) Build a Stronger Defense, Part II: Improve Information Gathering and Sharing on Threats**



[redacted] **The U.S. government needs to build the cyber expertise and capacity of its domestic agencies, such as DHS and FBI, and reevaluate the current authorities that govern efforts to defend against foreign cyber threats.** NSA and CIA collection is, by law, directed outside the United States. [redacted]

[redacted] **The U.S. government should invest in capabilities for rapid attribution of cyber attacks, without sacrificing accuracy.** [redacted] However, the IC needs to improve its ability to provide timely and actionable warning. Timely and accurate attribution is not only important to defensive information sharing, but will also underpin a credible deterrence and response strategy.

(U) The federal government and state governments need to create clear channels of communication two ways—down from the federal government to the state and local level, and up from the state and local officials on the front lines to federal entities. In 2016, DHS and FBI did not provide enough information or context to election officials about the threat they were facing, but states and DHS have made significant progress in this area in the last two years. For example, Secretary of Homeland Security Nielsen testified to the Committee in March 2018 that "today I can say with confidence that we know whom to contact in every state to share threat information. That capability did not exist in 2016."[369]

(U) A key component of information sharing about elections is security clearances for appropriate officials at the state and local level. DHS and its partners can effectively strip classified information off of cyber indicators, which can then be passed to technical staff at the state level, but in order for those indicators to not get lost in the multitude of cyber threats those professionals see on a daily basis, senior officials at the state and local levels need to know the

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[368] [redacted]

[369] **(U)** SSCI Transcript of the Open Hearing on Election Security, held on March 21, 2018, p. 16.

context surrounding the indicators. State officials need to know why a particular threat is of significant concern, and should be prioritized. That context could come from classified information, or states could come to understand that threat information DHS passes them is more serious than that received through other sources. DHS's goal is to obtain clearances for up to three officials per state.[370] As of August 2018, DHS had provided a clearance to 92 officials[371]; as of late 2017 all state election officials had received interim secret clearances or one-day read-ins for secret-level briefings.[372] DHS, along with ODNI and FBI, also hosted state and local election officials for a SECRET-level briefing on the sidelines of the biannual NASS and NASS-ED conferences in Washington, DC in February 2018. In March, Amy Cohen, Executive Director of NASS-ED testified in front of the Committee that, "It would be naïve to say that we received answers to all our questions, but the briefing was incredibly valuable and demonstrated how seriously DHS and others take their commitment to the elections community as well as to our concerns."[373] The Committee recommends DHS continue providing such briefings and improve the quality of information shared.

(U) Fundamental to meaningful information sharing, however, is that state officials understand what they are getting. New inductees to the world of classified information are often disappointed—they expected to see everything laid out in black and white, when intelligence is often very gray, with a pattern discernable only to those who know where to look and what conclusions to draw. Those sharing the intelligence should manage expectations—at the SECRET level, officials are likely to see limited context about conclusions, but not much more.

(U) Federal officials should work to declassify information, for the purpose of providing warning to appropriate state and local officials, to the greatest extent possible. If key pieces of context could be provided at a lower classification level while still protecting classified information, DHS and its partners should strive to do so.

4. (U) Build a Stronger Defense, Part III: Secure Election-Related Cyber Systems

(U) Despite the expense, cybersecurity needs to become a higher priority for election-related infrastructure. The Committee found a wide range of cybersecurity practices across the states. Some states were highly focused on building a culture of cybersecurity; others were severely under-resourced and relying on part-time help.

(U) The Committee recommends State officials work with DHS to evaluate the security of their election systems end-to-end and prioritize implementing the following steps to secure voter registration systems, state records, and other pre-election activities. The Committee additionally recommends that State officials:

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[370] **(U)** SSCI Transcript of the Open Hearing on Election Security, held on March 21, 2018, p.15.
[371] **(U)** DTS 2018-3275, Summary of 8/22/2018 All Senators Election Security Briefing, August 28, 2018.
[372] **(U)** SSCI Transcript of the Open Hearing on Election Security, held on March 21, 2018, p 15, 26.
[373] **(U)** SSCI Transcript of the Open Hearing on Election Security, held on March 21, 2018, p.113.

- **(U)** Identify the weak points in their networks, like under-resourced localities. State 7 said they are not worried about locations like larger counties when it comes to network security, but they are worried about "the part-time registrar who is also the town attorney and the town accountant and is working out of a 17th century jail." [374]

- **(U)** Undertake security audits of state and local voter registration systems, ideally utilizing private sector entities capable of providing such assistance. State and local officials should pay particular attention to the presence of high severity vulnerabilities in relevant web applications, as well as highly exploitable vulnerabilities such as cross-site scripting and SQL injection.

- **(U)** Institute two-factor authentication for user access to state databases.

- **(U)** Install monitoring sensors on state systems. As of mid-2018, DHS's ALBERT sensors covered up to 98% of voting infrastructure nationwide, according to Undersecretary Krebs.[375]

- **(U)** Include voter registration database recovery in state continuity of operations plans.

- **(U)** Update software in voter registration systems. One state mentioned that its voter registration system is more than ten years old, and its employees will "start to look for shortcuts" as it gets older and slower, further imperiling cybersecurity.

- **(U)** Create backups, including paper copies, of state voter registration databases.

- **(U)** Consider a voter education program to ensure voters check registration information well prior to an election.

(U) DHS in the past year has stepped up its ability to assist the states with some of these activities, but DHS needs to continue its focus on election infrastructure and pushing resources to the states.

(U) The Committee recommends DHS take the following steps:

- **(U)** Create an advisory panel to give DHS expert-level advice on how states and localities run elections. The Government Coordinating Council, created as part of the critical infrastructure designation, could serve as a venue for educating DHS on what states do and what they need.

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[374] **(U)** Memorandum for the Record, SSCI Staff, Conference Call with [State 7], January 25, 2018.
[375] **(U)** DTS 2018-3275, Summary of 8/22/2018 All Senators Election Security Briefing, August 28, 2018.

- **(U)** Create guidelines on cybersecurity best practices for elections and a public awareness campaign to promote election security awareness, working through EAC, NASS, and NASED, and with the advisory panel.

- **(U)** Develop procedures and processes to evaluate and routinely provide guidance on relevant vulnerabilities associated with voting systems in conjunction with election experts.

- **(U)** DHS has already created a catalog of services they can provide to states to help secure states' systems. DHS should maintain the catalog and continue to update it as it refines its understanding of what states need.

- **(U)** Expand capacity so wait times for services, like voluntary vulnerability assessments, are manageable and so that DHS can maintain coverage on other critical infrastructure sectors. Robbing resources from other critical infrastructure sectors will eventually create unacceptable new vulnerabilities.

- **(U)** Work with GSA to establish a list of approved private-sector vendors who can provide services similar to those DHS provides. States report being concerned about "vultures" —companies who show up selling dubious cyber solutions. That being said, some states will be more comfortable having a private sector entity evaluate their state systems than a federal agency.

- **(U)** Continue to build the resources of the newly established EI-ISAC. States have already found this information sharing service useful, and it could serve as a clearinghouse for urgent threat information. As of August 2018, the EI-ISAC had over 1,000 members with participants in all 50 states.[376]

- **(U)** Continue training for state and local officials, like the table-top exercise conducted in August of 2018 that brought together representatives from 44 states, localities, and the federal government to work through an election security crisis.[377] The complexity of the scenario encouraged state and local officials to identify serious gaps in their preparations for Election Day.

5. (U) Build a Stronger Defense, Part IV: Take Steps to Secure the Vote Itself

(U) Given Russian intentions to undermine the credibility of the election process, states should take urgent steps to replace outdated and vulnerable voting systems. When safeguarding the integrity of U.S. elections, all relevant elements of the government—including at the federal, state, and local level—need to be forward looking and work to address vulnerabilities before they are exploited.

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[376] **(U)** DTS 2018-3275, Summary of 8/22/2018 All Senators Election Security Briefing, August 28, 2018.
[377] **(U)** DHS, Press release: DHS Hosts National Exercise on Election Security, August 15, 2018.

- **(U)** As states look to replace HAVA-era machines that are now out of date, they should purchase more secure voting machines. Paper ballots and optical scanners are the least vulnerable to cyber attack; at minimum, any machine purchased going forward should have a voter-verified paper trail and remove (or render inert) any wireless networking capability.

- **(U)** States should require that machines purchased from this point forward are either EAC certified or comply with the VVSG standards. State purchasers should write contracts with vendors to ensure adherence to the highest security standards and to demand guarantees the supply chains for machines are secure.

- **(U)** In concert with the need for paper ballots comes the need to secure the chain of custody for those ballots. States should reexamine their safeguards against insertion of fraudulent paper ballots at the local level, for example time stamping when ballots are scanned.

- **(U)** Statistically sound audits may be the simplest and most direct way to ensure confidence in the integrity of the vote.[378] States should begin to implement audits of election results. Logic and accuracy tests of machines are a common step, but do not speak to the integrity of the actual vote counting. Risk-limiting audits, or some similarly rigorous alternative, are the future of ensuring that votes cast are votes counted. State 8, State 12, State 21, State 9, State 2, State 16, and others already audit their results, and others are exploring additional pilot programs.[379] However, as of August 2018, five states conducted no post-election audit and 14 states do not do a complete post-election audit.[380] The Committee recognizes states' concern about the potential cost of such audits and the necessary changes to state laws and procedures; however, the Committee believes the benefit of having a provably accurate vote is worth the cost.

- **(U)** States should resist pushes for online voting. One main argument for voting online is to allow members of the military easier access to their fundamental right to vote while deployed. While the Committee agrees states should take great pains to ensure members

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[378] **(U)** Election experts point out, however, that audits could create a new vector for election-related lawsuits. Complainants could allege that the audit was done improperly, or that the audit process reflected bias.

[379] **(U)** State 8 passed a law to audit starting in 2018, with random precinct sampling. State 12 does state-wide audits. State 21 audits 2% of ballots, randomly selected. State 9 picks 210 of 4100 precincts at random for an audit. State 2 hand-counts ballots in randomly selected precincts and uses automated software to test. A States law on ballot storage can't accommodate risk-limiting audits. Instead, they use ClearBallot software. They upload images of ballots to an external hard drive and send it to ClearBallot. ClearBallot is blind to who won and independently evaluates the results. In addition, the company can identify problems with scanners; for example, when a fold in absentee ballots recorded as a vote. Cybersecurity experts still doubt, however, that this type of procedure is secure.

[380] **(U)** DTS 2018-3275, Summary of 8/22/2018 All Senators Election Security Briefing, August 28, 2018.

of the military get to vote for their elected officials, no system of online voting has yet established itself as secure.[381]

- **(U)** DHS should work with vendors of election equipment to educate them about the vulnerabilities in both the machines and the supply chains for the components of their machines. Idaho National Lab is already doing some independent work on the security of a select set of voting machines, developing a repeatable methodology for independently testing the security of such systems.

- **(U)** The Department of State should work with FBI and DHS to warn states about foreign efforts to access polling places outside normal channels in the future and remain vigilant about rejecting aberrant attempts.

- **(U)** The Associated Press is responsible for reporting unofficial, initial election results on election night and is a critical part of public confidence in the voting tally. States and DHS should work with the AP and other reporting entities to ensure they are both secure and reporting accurate results.

- **(U)** The Committee found that, often, election experts, national security experts, and cybersecurity experts are speaking different languages. Election officials focus on transparent processes and open access and are concerned about introducing uncertainty into the system; national security professionals tend to see the threat first. Both sides need to listen to each other better and to use more precise language.

6. (U) Assistance for the States

(U) State officials told the Committee the main obstacle to improving cybersecurity and purchasing more secure voting machines is cost. State budgets are stretched thin by priorities that seem more urgent on a daily basis and are far more visible to constituents.

(U) In March 2018, Congress appropriated $380 million in funds under the HAVA formula for the states. As of August 2018, states had begun to allocate and spend that money for items such as cybersecurity improvements.

(U) The Committee recommends the EAC, which administers the grants, regularly report to Congress on how the states are using those funds, whether more funds are needed, and whether states have both replaced outdated voting equipment and improved

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[381] **(U)** Dr. Halderman in his testimony before the Committee said, "I think that online voting, unfortunately, would be painting a bullseye on our election system. Today's technology just does not provide the level of security assurance for an online election that you would need in order for voters to have high confidence. And I say that having myself . . . hacked an online voting system that was about to be used in real elections, having found vulnerabilities in online voting systems that are used in other countries. The technology just isn't ready for use." *See* SSCI Transcript of the Open Hearing on Russian Interference in the 2016 U.S. Elections, held on Wednesday, June 21, 2017, p. 152.

cybersecurity. More funds may be needed, as the allocation under the HAVA formula did not prioritize replacing vulnerable electronic-only machines.

- **(U)** States should be able to use grant funds to improve cybersecurity in a variety of ways, including hiring additional IT staff, updating software, and contracting with vendors to provide cybersecurity services. "Security training funded and provided by a federal entity such as the EAC or DHS would also be beneficial in our view,"[382] an official from Illinois testified.

- **(U)** Funds should also be available to defray the cost of instituting audits.

- **(U)** States with vulnerable DRE machines with no paper backup should receive urgent access to funding. Dr. Halderman testified that replacing insecure paperless voting machines nationwide would cost $130 to $400 million dollars. Risk-limiting audits would cost less than $20 million a year.[383]

7. [redacted] **Build a Credible** [redacted]

[redacted]

[382] **(U)** SSCI Transcript of the Open Hearing on Russian Interference in the 2016 U.S. Elections, held on Wednesday, June 21, 2017, p. 114.
[383] **(U)** *Ibid.*, p. 119.

MINORITY VIEWS OF SENATOR WYDEN

(U) The role of the federal government

(U) The Committee report describes Russian attacks on U.S. election infrastructure in 2016 and lays out many of the serious vulnerabilities that exist to this day. These vulnerabilities pose a direct and urgent threat to American democracy which demands immediate congressional action. The defense of U.S. national security against a highly sophisticated foreign government cannot be left to state and county officials. For that reason, I cannot support a report whose top recommendation is to "reinforce[ ] state's primacy in running elections."

(U) Congress's constitutional role in regulating federal elections is well-established. In response to an inquiry from the bipartisan leadership of the U.S. Senate, the General Accounting Office (GAO) wrote that "[w]ith regard to the administration of federal elections, Congress has constitutional authority over both congressional and presidential elections."[1] Indeed, pursuant to the Elections Clause of the U.S. Constitution,[2] Congress's authority over congressional elections is "paramount to that of the states." As the GAO report details, Congress has repeatedly passed legislation related to the administration of elections on topics such as the timing of federal elections, voter registration, absentee voting requirements, disability access, and voting rights.

(U) If there was ever a moment when Congress needed to exercise its clear constitutional authorities to regulate elections, this is it. America is facing a direct assault on the heart of our democracy by a determined adversary. We would not ask a local sheriff to go to war against the missiles, planes and tanks of the Russian Army. We shouldn't ask a county election IT employee to fight a war against the full capabilities and vast resources of Russia's cyber army. That approach failed in 2016 and it will fail again. The federal government's response to this ongoing crisis cannot be limited offers to provide resources and information, the acceptance of which is voluntary. If the country's elections are to be defended, Congress must also establish mandatory, nation-wide cybersecurity requirements.

(U) Security of voting machines

(U) Experts are clear about the measures necessary to protect U.S. elections from cyber manipulation.[3] Absent an accessibility need, most voters should hand-mark paper ballots. For voters with some kind of need, ballot marking devices that print paper ballots should be available. Risk-limiting audits must be also be required. Currently, however, only Virginia, Colorado and Rhode Island meet these requirements.[4] These critical reforms must be adopted

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[1] "Elections. The Scope of Congressional Authority in Election Administration," General Accounting Office, March 2001, prepared in response to a joint inquiry from Senator Trent Lott, Republican Leader; Senator Tom Daschle, Democratic Leader; Senator Mitch McConnell, Chairman, and Senator Christopher Dodd, Ranking Member, of the Senate Committee on Rules and Administration.

[2] Article I, Section 4, Clause 1

[3] Securing the Vote; Protecting American Democracy; National Academy of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine, September 2018

[4] National Conference of State Legislatures, Post-Election Audits, January 3, 2019. Verifiedvoter.org. The Verifier – Polling Place Equipment – November 2018. Oregon requires paper ballots and the Oregon State Senate has passed a bill requiring risk-limiting audits.

throughout the country, which is why, on June 27, 2019, the House of Representatives passed H.R. 2722, the Securing America's Federal Elections (SAFE) Act. The security of the country's voting machines depends on this legislation being signed into law.

(U) The Committee, in recommending basic security measures like paper ballots and audits, notes that there is currently "a wide range of cybersecurity practices across the states." Indeed, the data is deeply concerning and highlights the need for mandatory, nation-wide standards. For example, the Committee rightly highlights the vulnerabilities of Direct-Recording Electronic (DRE) Voting Machines, noting that, without a paper trail, there would be no way to conduct a meaningful "recount" and compromises would remain undetected. As of November 2018, however, there were still four states in which every single county relied on DREs without voter verified paper audit trail printers (VVPAT) and, in an additional eight states, there were multiple counties that relied on DREs without a VVPAT.[5] Gaps in the deployment of VVPATs, which are far less secure than hand-marked paper ballots, demonstrate that even bare minimum security best practices are not being met in many parts of the country.

(U) In addition, 16 states have no post-election audits of any kind, while many others have insufficient or perfunctory audits. Only four states have a statutory requirement for risk-limiting audits, while two states provide options for counties to run different kinds of audits, one of which is a risk-limiting audit.[6] Next year, a third state will provide that option. In other words, the vast majority of states have made no moves whatsoever toward implementing minimum standards that experts agree are necessary to guarantee the integrity of elections.

(U) The Committee rightly identifies problems with vendors of voting machines, noting vulnerabilities in both the machines and the supply chains for machine components. Currently, however, the federal government has no regulatory authority that would require these vendors to adhere to basic security practices.[7] Only general federal requirements that states and localities use paper ballots and conduct audits will ensure that the risk posed by voting machines provided by private vendors to states and localities can be contained. The stakes could not be more clear. As Homeland Secretary Kirstjen Nielsen testified to the Committee, "If there is no way to audit the election, that is absolutely a national security concern."[8]

(U) Registration databases and election night reporting websites

(U) Two additional components of the U.S. election infrastructure require immediate, mandatory cybersecurity fixes. The first are voter registration databases. The Committee received testimony about successful Russian exfiltration of databases of tens of thousands of voters.[9] Expert witnesses also described the chaos that manipulated voter registration data could cause should voters arrive at the polls and find that their names had been removed from the rolls.

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[5] Verifiedvoter.org. The Verifier – Polling Place Equipment – November 2018.
[6] The four states are Colorado, Nevada, Rhode Island, and Virginia. National Conference of State Legislatures, Post-Election Audits, January 3, 2019.
[7] Testimony of Homeland Security Secretary Kirstjen Nielsen, March 21, 2018.
[8] Testimony of Homeland Security Secretary Kirstjen Nielsen, March 21, 2018.
[9] Testimony of Connie Lawson, President-elect, National Association of Secretaries of State, and Secretary of State, State of Indiana; testimony of Steve Sandvoss, Executive Director of Illinois State Board of Elections, June 21, 2017; Illinois Voter Registration System Database Breach Report.

As one expert testified, this form of interference "could be used to sabotage the election process on Election Day."[10]

(U) The Committee report describes a range of cybersecurity measures needed to protect voter registration databases, yet there are currently no mandatory rules that require states to implement even minimum cybersecurity measures. There are not even any voluntary federal standards.

(U) An additional component of the U.S. election infrastructure that requires immediate, mandatory cybersecurity measures are the election night reporting websites run by the states. The Committee heard testimony about a Russian attack on Ukraine's web page for announcing results. That attacked allowed the Russians to use misinformation that left Ukraine in chaos for days after the election. As the Committee's expert witness warned, "[w]e need to look at that playbook. They will do it to us."[11] Like voter registration databases, election results websites are not subject to any mandatory standards. Both of these critical vulnerabilities, as well as vulnerabilities of voting machines, must be addressed by the U.S. Congress through the passage of S. 2238, the Senate version of the SAFE Act.

(U) Given the inconsistent, and at times non-existent adherence to basic cybersecurity among states and localities, I cannot agree with the Committee's conclusion that "the country's decentralized election system can be a strength from a cybersecurity perspective." Until election security measures are required of every state and locality, there will be vulnerabilities to be exploited by our adversaries. The persistence of those vulnerabilities has national consequences. The manipulation of votes or voter registration databases in any county in the country can change the result of a national election. The security of the U.S. election system thus hinges on its weakest links – the least capable, least resourced local election offices in the country, many of which do not have a single full-time employee focused on cybersecurity.

(U) Every American has a direct stake in the cybersecurity of elections throughout the country. Congress has an obligation to protect the country's election system everywhere. If there were gaps in the defense of our coastline or air space, members would ensure that the federal government close them. Vulnerabilities in the country's election cybersecurity require the same level of national commitment.

(U) Cybersecurity vulnerabilities and influence campaigns

(U) The cybersecurity vulnerabilities of the U.S. election system cannot be separated from Russia's efforts to influence American voters. As the January 2017 Intelligence Community Assessment (ICA) concluded, and as the Committee report notes, the Russians were "prepared to publicly call into question the validity of the results" and "pro-Kremlin bloggers had prepared a Twitter campaign, #DemocracyRIP, on election night in anticipation of Secretary Clinton's victory." This plan highlights an additional reason why nation-wide election cybersecurity standards are so critical. If Russia's preferred candidate does not prevail in the 2020 election, the

[10] Testimony of Alex J. Halderman, Professor of Computer Science and Engineering, University of Michigan, June 21, 2017.
[11] Testimony of Eric Rosenbach, Co-Director of the Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs, Harvard Kennedy School, March 21, 2018.

Russians may seek to delegitimize the election. The absence of any successful cyber intrusions, exfiltrations or manipulations would greatly benefit the U.S. public in resisting such a campaign.

(U) While not formally part of the U.S. election infrastructure, the devices and accounts of candidates and political parties represent an alarming vulnerability in the country's overall election system. Russia's campaign of hacking the emails of prominent political figures and releasing them through Wikileaks, Gucifer 2.0, and DCLeaks was probably its most effective means of influencing the 2016 election. The Committee has received extensive testimony about these operations, the vulnerabilities that allowed them to occur, and the threat those vulnerabilities pose to the integrity of American democracy.[12] Yet little has been done to prevent it from happening all over again. S. 1569, the Federal Campaign Cybersecurity Assistance Act of 2019, addresses these vulnerabilities head on by authorizing political committees to provide cybersecurity assistance to candidates, campaigns and state parties.

(U) These vulnerabilities extend to the U.S. Senate, most of whose members are or will be candidates for reelection or for other positions. As a November 2018 Senate report noted, there is "mounting evidence that Senators are being targeted for hacking, which could include exposure of personal data."[13] Private communications and information reside on personal accounts and devices. Passage of S. 890, the Senate Cybersecurity Protection Act, will authorize the Senate Sergeant at Arms to protect the personal devices and accounts of Senators and their staff and help prevent the weaponization of their data in campaigns to influence elections.

(U) Assessments related to the 2016 election

(U) I have also submitted these Minority Views to address assessments related to Russian activities during the 2016 election. According to the January 2017 ICA, DHS assessed that "the types of systems we observed Russian actors targeting or compromising are not involved in vote tallying." An assessment based on observations is only as good as those observations and this assessment, in which DHS had only moderate confidence,[14] suffered from a lack of observable data. As Acting Deputy Undersecretary of Homeland Security for National Protection and Programs Directorate, Jeannette Manfra, testified at the Committee's June 21, 2017, hearing, DHS did not conduct any forensic analysis of voting machines.

(U) DHS's prepared testimony at that hearing included the statement that it is "likely that cyber manipulation of U.S. election systems intended to change the outcome of a national election would be detected." The language of this assessment raises questions, however, about DHS's ability to identify cyber manipulation that could have affected a very close national election, particularly given DHS's acknowledgment of the "possibility that individual or isolated cyber

[12] See, for example, Committee hearing, March 30, 2017.
[13] Senators' Personal Cybersecurity Working Group Report, submitted by the Senators' Personal Cybersecurity Working Group, November 2018.
[14] Responses to Questions for the Record from Dr. Samuel Liles, Acting Director of Cyber Division, Office of Intelligence and Analysis; and Jeanette Manfra, Acting Deputy Undersecretary, National Protection and Programs Directorate, following Committee hearing, June 21, 2017.

intrusions into U.S. election infrastructure could go undetected, especially at local levels."[15] Moreover, DHS has acknowledged that its assessment with regard to the detection of outcome-changing cyber manipulation did not apply to state-wide or local elections.[16]

(U) Assessments about manipulations of voter registration databases are equally hampered by the absence of data. As the Committee acknowledges, it "has limited information on the extent to which state and local election authorities carried out forensic evaluation of registration databases." Assessments about Russian attacks on the administration of elections are also complicated by newly public information about the infiltration of an election technology company. Moreover, as the Special Counsel reported, the GRU sent spear phishing emails to "Florida county officials responsible for administering the 2016 election" which "enabled the GRU to gain access to the network of at least one Florida county government."[17]

(U) The Committee, in stating that it had found no evidence that vote tallies were altered or that voter registry files were deleted or modified, rightly noted that the Committee's and the IC's insight into this aspect of the 2016 election was limited. I believe that the lack of relevant data precludes attributing any significant weight to the Committee's finding in this area.

(U) The Committee's investigation into other aspects of Russia's interference in the 2016 election will be included in subsequent chapters. I look forward to reviewing those chapters and hope that outstanding concerns about members' Committee staff access to investigative material, including non-compartmented and unclassified information, will be resolved.

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[15] Responses to Questions for the Record from Dr. Samuel Liles, Acting Director of Cyber Division, Office of Intelligence and Analysis; and Jeanette Manfra, Acting Deputy Undersecretary, National Protection and Programs Directorate, following.Committee hearing, June 21, 2017.

[16] Responses to Questions for the Record from Dr. Samuel Liles, Acting Director of Cyber Division, Office of Intelligence and Analysis; and Jeanette Manfra, Acting Deputy Undersecretary, National Protection and Programs Directorate, following.Committee hearing, June 21, 2017.

[17] Report on the Investigation Into Russian Interference In The 2016 Presidential Election, Special Counsel Robert S. Mueller III, March 2019

ADDITIONAL VIEWS OF SENATORS HARRIS, BENNET, AND HEINRICH

(U) The Russian government's attack on the 2016 election was the product of a deliberate, sustained, and sophisticated campaign to undermine American democracy. Russian military intelligence carried out a hacking operation targeting American political figures and institutions. The Internet Research Agency—an entity with ties to Russian President Vladimir Putin—used social media to sow disinformation and discord among the American electorate. And, as this report makes clear, individuals affiliated with the Russian government launched cyber operations that attempted to access our nation's election infrastructure, in some cases succeeding.

(U) The Russian objectives were clear: deepen distrust in our political leaders; exploit and widen divisions within American society; undermine confidence in the integrity of our elections; and, ultimately, weaken America's democratic institutions and damage our nation's standing in the world. The Committee did not discover evidence that Russia changed or manipulated vote tallies or voter registration information, however Russian operatives undoubtedly gained familiarity with our election systems and voter registration infrastructure—valuable intelligence that it may seek to exploit in the future.

(U) The Committee's report does not merely document the wide reach of the Russian operation; the report reveals vulnerabilities in our election infrastructure that we must collectively address. We do not endorse every recommendation in the Committee's report, and we share some of our colleagues' concerns about the vulnerability that we face, particularly at the state level, where counties with limited resources must defend themselves against sophisticated nation-state adversaries. Nevertheless, the report as a whole makes an important contribution to the public's understanding of how Russia interfered in 2016, and underscores the importance of working together to defend against the threat going forward.

(U) It is critical that state and local policymakers study the report's findings and work to secure election systems by prioritizing cybersecurity, replacing outdated systems and machines, and implementing audits to identify and limit risk. The Intelligence Community and other federal agencies must improve efforts to detect cyberattacks, enhance coordination with state and local officials, and develop strategies to mitigate threats. And, critically, Congress must take up and pass legislation to secure our elections. We must provide states the funding necessary to modernize and maintain election infrastructure, and we must take commonsense steps to safeguard the integrity of the vote, such as requiring paper ballots in all federal elections.

(U) Our adversaries will persist in their efforts to undermine our shared democratic values. In order to ensure that our democracy endures, it is imperative that we recognize the threat and make the investments necessary to withstand the next attack.

VOLUME II
RUSSIA'S USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA
WITH ADDITIONAL VIEWS

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[redacted]

I. (U) INTRODUCTION

[redacted] In 2016, Russian operatives associated with the St. Petersburg-based Internet Research Agency (IRA) used social media to conduct an information warfare campaign designed to spread disinformation and societal division in the United States.[1] [redacted] Masquerading as Americans, these operatives used targeted advertisements, intentionally falsified news articles, self-generated content, and social media platform tools to interact with and attempt to deceive tens of millions of social media users in the United States. This campaign sought to polarize Americans on the basis of societal, ideological, and racial differences, provoked real world events, and was part of a foreign government's covert support of Russia's favored candidate in the U.S. presidential election. [redacted]

(U) The Senate Select Committee on Intelligence undertook a study of these events, consistent with its congressional mandate to oversee and conduct oversight of the intelligence activities and programs of the United States Government, to include the effectiveness of the Intelligence Community's counterintelligence function. In addition to the work of the professional staff of the Committee, the Committee's findings drew from the input of cybersecurity professionals, social media companies, U.S. law enforcement and intelligence agencies, and researchers and experts in social network analysis, political content, disinformation, hate speech, algorithms, and automation, working under the auspices of the Committee's Technical Advisory Group (TAG).[3] The efforts of these TAG researchers led to the release of two public reports on the IRA's information warfare campaign, based on data provided to the Committee by the social media companies.[4] These reports provided the

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[1] **(U)** For purposes of this Volume, "information warfare" refers to Russia's strategy for the use and management of information to pursue a competitive advantage. *See* Congressional Research Service, *Defense Primer: Information Operations*, December 18, 2018.

[2] [redacted]

[3] **(U)** The TAG is an external group of experts the Committee consults for substantive technical advice on topics of importance to Committee activities and oversight. In this case, the Committee requested the assistance of two independent working groups, each with the technical capabilities and expertise required to analyze the data. The two working groups were led by three TAG members, with John Kelly, the founder and CEO of the social media analytics firm Graphika, and Phil Howard, an expert academic researcher at the Oxford Internet Institute, leading one working group, and Renee DiResta, the Director of Research at New Knowledge, a cybersecurity company dedicated to protecting the public sphere from disinformation attacks, leading the other.

[4] **(U)** Renee DiResta, Dr. Kris Shaffer, Becky Ruppel, David Sullivan, Robert Matney, Ryan Fox, Dr. Jonathan Albright, and Ben Johnson, "The Tactics and Tropes of the Internet Research Agency," *New Knowledge*, December 17, 2018, https://www.newknowledge.com/articles/the-disinformation-report/; Phil Howard, Bharath Ganesh, Dimitra Liotsiou, John Kelly, and Camille Francois, "The IRA, Social Media and Political Polarization in the United States, 2012-2018," *Computational Propaganda Research Project, Oxford Internet Institute,* December 2018,

Committee, social media companies, U.S. law enforcement, international partners, fellow researchers and academics, and the American public with an enhanced understanding of how Russia-based actors, at the direction of the Russian government, effectuated a sustained campaign of information warfare against the United States aimed at influencing how this nation's citizens think about themselves, their government, and their fellow Americans. The Committee supports the findings therein.

(U) The Committee also engaged directly with a number of social media companies in the course of this study. The willingness of these companies to meet with Members and staff, share the results of internal investigations, and provide evidence of foreign influence activity collected from their platforms was indispensable to this study. Specifically, the Committee's ability to identify Russian activity on social media platforms was limited. As such, the Committee was largely reliant on social media companies to identify Russian activity and share that information with the Committee or with the broader public. Thus, while the Committee findings describe a substantial amount of Russian activity on social media platforms, the full scope of this activity remains unknown to the Committee, the social media companies, and the broader U.S. Government.

II. (U) FINDINGS

1. **(U)** The Committee found that the IRA sought to influence the 2016 U.S. presidential election by harming Hillary Clinton's chances of success and supporting Donald Trump at the direction of the Kremlin.

   (U) The Committee found that the IRA's information warfare campaign was broad in scope and entailed objectives beyond the result of the 2016 presidential election. Further, the Committee's analysis of the IRA's activities on social media supports the key judgments of the January 6, 2017 Intelligence Community Assessment, "Assessing Russian Activities and Intentions in Recent US Elections," that "Russia's goals were to undermine public faith in the US democratic process, denigrate Secretary Clinton, and harm her electability and potential presidency."[5] However, where the Intelligence Community assessed that the Russian government "aspired to help President-elect Trump's election chances when possible by discrediting Secretary Clinton and publicly contrasting her unfavorably to him," the Committee found that IRA social media activity was overtly and almost invariably supportive of then-candidate Trump, and to the detriment of Secretary Clinton's campaign.[6]

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https://int.nyt.com/data/documenthelper/534-oxford-russia-internet-research-agency/c6588b4a7b940c551c38/optimized/full.pdf.

[5] **(U)** Office of the Director of National Intelligence (ODNI), "Assessing Russian Activities and Intentions in Recent US Elections," *Intelligence Community Assessment (Unclassified Version)*, January 6, 2017, https://www.dni.gov/files/documents/ICA_2017_01.pdf.

[6] **(U)** *Ibid.*

(U) The Committee found that the Russian government tasked and supported the IRA's interference in the 2016 U.S. election. This finding is consistent with the Committee's understanding of the relationship between IRA owner Yevgeniy Prigozhin and the Kremlin, the aim and scope of the interference by the IRA, and the correlation between the IRA's actions and electoral interference by the Russian government in other contexts and by other means.[7] Despite Moscow's denials, the direction and financial involvement of Russian oligarch Yevgeniy Prigozhin, as well as his close ties to high-level Russian government officials including President Vladimir Putin, point to significant Kremlin support, authorization, and direction of the IRA's operations and goals.

[redacted]

2. **(U)** The Committee found that Russia's targeting of the 2016 U.S. presidential election was part of a broader, sophisticated, and ongoing information warfare campaign designed to sow discord in American politics and society. Moreover, the IRA conducted a vastly more complex and strategic assault on the United States than was initially understood. The IRA's actions in 2016 represent only the latest installment in an increasingly brazen interference by the Kremlin on the citizens and democratic institutions of the United States.

[redacted] Russia's history of using social media as a lever for online influence operations predates the 2016 U.S. presidential election and involves more than the IRA. The IRA's operational planning for the 2016 election goes back at least to 2014, when two IRA operatives were sent to the United States to gather intelligence in furtherance of the IRA's objectives.[9] [redacted]

[7] **(U)** Indictment, *United States v. Internet Research Agency*, et al., Case 1:18-cr-00032-DLF (D.D.C. Feb. 16, 2018).

[8] [redacted]

[9] **(U)** Scott Shane and Mark Mazzetti, "The Plot to Subvert an Election – Unraveling the Russia Story So Far," *The New York Times*, September 20, 2018.

[10] [redacted]

[11] [redacted]

[12] **(U)** *Ibid.*

[redacted]

(U) Analysis of the behavior of the IRA-associated social media accounts makes clear that while the Russian information warfare campaign exploited the context of the election and election-related issues in 2016, the preponderance of the operational focus, as reflected repeatedly in content, account names, and audiences targeted, was on socially divisive issues—such as race, immigration, and Second Amendment rights—in an attempt to pit Americans against one another and against their government. The Committee found that IRA influence operatives consistently used hot-button, societal divisions in the United States as fodder for the content they published through social media in order to stoke anger, provoke outrage and protest, push Americans further away from one another, and foment distrust in government institutions. The divisive 2016 U.S. presidential election was just an additional feature of a much more expansive, target-rich landscape of potential ideological and societal sensitivities.

3. (U) The Committee found that the IRA targeted not only Hillary Clinton, but also Republican candidates during the presidential primaries. For example, Senators Ted Cruz and Marco Rubio were targeted and denigrated, as was Jeb Bush.[14] As Clint Watts, a former FBI Agent and expert in social media weaponization, testified to the Committee, "Russia's overt media outlets and covert trolls sought to sideline opponents on both sides of the political spectrum with adversarial views towards the Kremlin." IRA operators sought to impact primaries for both major parties and "may have helped sink the hopes of candidates more hostile to Russian interests long before the field narrowed."[15]

4. (U) The Committee found that no single group of Americans was targeted by IRA information operatives more than African-Americans. By far, race and related issues were the preferred target of the information warfare campaign designed to divide the country in 2016. Evidence of the IRA's overwhelming operational emphasis on race is evident in the IRA's Facebook advertisement content (over 66 percent contained a term related to race) and targeting (locational targeting was principally aimed at African-Americans in key metropolitan areas with), its Facebook pages (one of the IRA's top-performing pages, "Blacktivist," generated 11.2 million engagements with Facebook users), its Instagram content (five of the top 10 Instagram accounts were focused on African-American issues and audiences), its Twitter content (heavily focused on hot-button issues with racial undertones, such as the NFL kneeling protests), and its YouTube

[13] [redacted]

[14] (U) Indictment, *United States v. Internet Research Agency, et al.*, Case 1:18-cr-00032-DLF (D.D.C. Feb. 16, 2018); Renee DiResta, Dr. Kris Shaffer, Becky Ruppel, David Sullivan, Robert Matney, Ryan Fox, Dr. Jonathan Albright, and Ben Johnson, "The Tactics and Tropes of the Internet Research Agency," *New Knowledge*, December 17, 2018.

[15] (U) Clint Watts, Hearing before the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, March 30, 2017, available at https://www.intelligence.senate.gov/hearings/open.

activity (96 percent of the IRA's YouTube content was targeted at racial issues and police brutality).

5. **(U)** The Committee found that paid advertisements were not key to the IRA's activity, and moreover, are not alone an accurate measure of the IRA's operational scope, scale, or objectives, despite this aspect of social media being a focus of early press reporting and public awareness.[16] An emphasis on the relatively small number of advertisements, and the cost of those advertisements, has detracted focus from the more prevalent use of original, free content via multiple social media platforms. According to Facebook, the IRA spent a total of about $100,000 over two years on advertisements—a minor amount, given the operational costs of the IRA were approximately $1.25 million dollars a month.[17] The nearly 3,400 Facebook and Instagram advertisements the IRA purchased are comparably minor in relation to the over 61,500 Facebook posts, 116,000 Instagram posts, and 10.4 million tweets that were the original creations of IRA influence operatives, disseminated under the guise of authentic user activity.

6. **(U)** The Committee found that the IRA coopted unwitting Americans to engage in offline activities in furtherance of their objectives. The IRA's online influence operations were not constrained to the unilateral dissemination of content in the virtual realm, and its operatives were not just focused on inciting anger and provoking division on the internet. Instead, the IRA also persuaded Americans to deepen their engagement with IRA operatives. For example, the IRA targeted African-Americans over social media and attempted and succeeded in some cases to influence their targets to sign petitions, share personal information, and teach self-defense training courses.[18] In addition, posing as U.S. political activists, the IRA requested—and in some cases obtained—assistance from the Trump Campaign in procuring materials for rallies and in promoting and organizing the rallies.[19]

7. **(U)** The Committee found that the IRA was not Russia's only vector for attempting to influence the United States through social media in 2016. Publicly available information showing additional influence operations emanating from Russia unrelated to IRA activity make clear the Kremlin was not reliant exclusively on the IRA in 2016. Russia's intelligence services, including the Main Directorate of the General Staff of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation (GRU), also exploited U.S. social media platforms as a

[16] **(U)** Dan Keating, Kevin Schaul and Leslie Shapiro, "The Facebook ads Russians targeted at different groups," *Washington Post,* November 1, 2017.
[17] **(U)** Indictment, *United States v. Internet Research Agency, et al.,* Case 1:18-cr-00032-DLF (D.D.C. Feb. 16, 2018).
[18] **(U)** Shelby Holliday and Rob Barry, "Russian Influence Campaign Extracted Americans' Personal Data," *Wall Street Journal,* March 7, 2018.
[19] **(U)** Indictment, *United States v. Internet Research Agency, et al.,* Case 1:18-cr-00032-DLF (D.D.C. Feb. 16, 2018).

vehicle for influence operations.[20] Information acquired by the Committee from intelligence oversight, social media companies, the Special Counsel's investigative findings, and research by commercial cybersecurity companies all reflect the Russian government's use of the GRU to carry out another core vector of attack on the 2016 election: the dissemination of hacked materials.

8. **(U)** The Committee found that IRA activity on social media did not cease, but rather increased after Election Day 2016. The data reveal increases in IRA activity across multiple social media platforms, post-Election Day 2016: Instagram activity increased 238 percent, Facebook increased 59 percent, Twitter increased 52 percent, and YouTube citations went up by 84 percent.[21] As John Kelly noted: "After election day, the Russian government stepped on the gas. Accounts operated by the IRA troll farm became more active after the election, confirming again that the assault on our democratic process is much bigger than the attack on a single election."[22]

   (U) Though all of the known IRA-related accounts from the Committee's data set were suspended or taken down in the fall of 2017, outside researchers continue to uncover additional IRA social media accounts dedicated to spreading malicious content. According to an October 2018 study of more than 6.6 million tweets linking to publishers of intentionally false news and conspiracy stories, in the months before the 2016 U.S. election, "more than 80% of the disinformation accounts in our election maps are still active . . . [and] continue to publish more than a million tweets in a typical day."[23]

III. (U) THE REACH OF SOCIAL MEDIA

(U) Social media and its widespread adoption have changed the nature and practice of human interaction for much of the world. During the 2016 election campaign season, approximately 128 million Facebook users in the United States alone generated nearly nine billion interactions related to the 2016 U.S. presidential election.[24] In just the last month of the campaign, more than 67 million Facebook users in the United States generated over 1.1 billion likes, posts, comments, and shares related to Donald Trump. Over 59 million Facebook users in the United States generated over 934 million likes, posts, comments and shares related to Hillary Clinton. On Election Day, 115.3 million Facebook users in the United States generated 716.3

[20] **(U)** Adam Entous, Elizabeth Dwoskin, and Craig Timberg, "Obama tried to give Zuckerberg a wake-up call over fake news on Facebook," *Washington Post,* September 24, 2017.
[21] **(U)** John Kelly, SSCI Transcript of the Closed Briefing on Social Media Manipulation in 2016 and Beyond, July 26, 2018.
[22] **(U)** John Kelly, Hearing before the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, August 1, 2018, available at https://www.intelligence.senate.gov/hearings/open.
[23] **(U)** Matthew Hindman and Vlad Barash, "Disinformation, 'Fake News' and Influence Campaigns on Twitter," Knight Foundation, October 4, 2018, https://knightfoundation.org/articles/seven-ways-misinformation-spread-during-the-2016-election.
[24] **(U)** Dana Feldman, "Election Day Dominated Facebook With Over 716M Election-Related Interactions," *Forbes,* November 9, 2016.

million interactions related to the election and viewed election-related videos over 640 million times.[25]

(U) The Twitter platform also featured prominently across the arc of the 2016 campaign season. Americans sent roughly one billion tweets and retweets about the election between the first primary debates in August 2015 and Election Day 2016.[26] The U.S. Election Day 2016 was the most-Tweeted Election Day ever, with worldwide users generating more than 75 million election-related tweets.[27]

(U) Political campaigns, in the ambition of harvesting this connectivity and speaking "directly" with as many voters as possible, have adapted and attempted to exploit this new media environment. Total digital advertisement spending related to the 2016 election cycle on social media reached $1.4 billion—a 789 percent increase over 2012.[28]

(U) Social media has created new virtual venues for American participation in the national political discourse, and offered a new channel for direct democratic engagement with elected officials, media representatives, and fellow citizens around the world. However, the same system of attributes that empowers these tools and their users to positively increase civic engagement and constructive dialogue lends itself to exploitation, which frequently materializes as the dissemination of intentionally false, misleading, and deliberately polarizing content.[29]

(U) According to one November 2016 analysis, in the final three months leading up to Election Day, calculated by total number of shares, reactions, and comments, the top-performing intentionally false stories on Facebook actually outperformed the top news stories from the nineteen major news outlets.[30] That analysis found that in terms of user engagement, the top two intentionally false election stories on Facebook included articles alleging Pope Francis' endorsement of Donald Trump for President (960,000 shares, reactions, and comments), and WikiLeaks' confirmation of Hillary Clinton's sale of weapons to ISIS (789,000 shares, reactions, and comments).[31]

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[25] **(U)** Ivana Kottasova, "Trump's Win Smashes Social Media Records," *CNN*, November 9, 2016.
[26] **(U)** Bridget Coyne, "How #Election2016 was Tweeted so far," *Twitter Blog*, November 7, 2016.
[27] **(U)** Twitter, "6.8 Million Viewers Watch Twitter Live Stream of BuzzFeed News' Election Night Special," November 10, 2016, https://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/68-million-viewers-watch-twitter-live-stream-of-buzzfeed-news-election-night-special-300360415.html.
[28] **(U)** Kate Kaye, "Data-Driven Targeting Creates Huge 2016 Political Ad Shift: Broadcast TV Down 20%, Cable and Digital Way Up," *AdAge*, January 3, 2017.
[29] **(U)** The term "fake news" is not a useful construct for understanding the complexity of influence operations on social media in today's online ecosystem. The term's definition has evolved since the 2016 election and today, has been, at times, misappropriated to fit certain political and social perspectives.
[30] **(U)** Craig Silverman, "This Analysis Shows How Viral Fake Election News Stories Outperformed Real News on Facebook," *Buzzfeed*, November 16, 2016, ("During these critical months of the campaign, 20 top-performing false election stories from hoax sites and hyper-partisan blogs generated 8,7111,000 shares, reactions and comments on Facebook. . . . Within the same time period, the 20 best performing election stories from 19 major news websites generated a total of 7,367,000 shares, reactions and comments on Facebook.")
[31] **(U)** *Ibid.*

(U) A September 2017 Oxford Internet Institute study of Twitter users found that, "users got more misinformation, polarizing, and conspiratorial content than professionally produced news."[32] According to the study, in the "swing state" of Michigan, professionally produced news was, by proportion, "consistently smaller than the amount of extremist, sensationalist, conspiratorial, masked commentary, fake news and other forms of junk news," and the ratio was most disproportionate the day before the 2016 U.S. election.[33,34] A National Bureau of Economic Research paper from January 2017 assessed that intentionally false content accounted for 38 million shares on Facebook in the last 3 months leading up to the election, which translates into 760 million clicks—or "about three stories read per American adult."[35]

(U) In conducting a broader analysis of false information dissemination, in what was described as "the largest ever study of fake news," researchers at MIT tracked over 125,000 news stories on Twitter, which were shared by three million people over the course of 11 years.[36,37] The research found that, "Falsehood diffused significantly farther, faster, deeper, and more broadly than the truth in all categories of information, and the effects were more pronounced for false political news than for false news about terrorism, natural disasters, science, urban legends, or financial information." The study also determined that false news stories were 70 percent more likely to be retweeted than accurate news, and that true stories take about six times as long to reach 1,500 people on Twitter as false stories do. According to the lead researcher in the study, Soroush Vosoughi, "It seems pretty clear that false information outperforms true information."[38]

(U) The spread of intentionally false information on social media is often exacerbated by automated, or "bot" accounts. The 2016 U.S. election put on full display the impact that more sophisticated automation and the proliferation of bots have had on American political discourse. Researchers at the University of Southern California who evaluated nearly 20 million election-related tweets assessed that about one-fifth of the political discourse around the 2016 election on Twitter may have been automated and the result of bot activity. This research, however, does not make clear what country the bot activity originated from, or whether the activity was

[32] **(U)** Phil Howard, et al., "Social Media, News and Political Information during the U.S. Election: Was Polarizing Content Concentrated in Swing States," Oxford Internet Institute, Project on Computational Propaganda, September 29, 2017, https://arxiv.org/ftp/arxiv/papers/1802/1802.03573.pdf.

[33] **(U)** A swing state is a U.S. state in which Republican and Democratic candidates have similar levels of support and which is likely to play a key role in the outcome of presidential elections.

[34] **(U)** Philip Howard, Gillian Bolsover, et al., "Junk News and Bots During the U.S. Election: What Were Michigan Voters Sharing Over Twitter?" Oxford Internet Institute, Project on Computational Propaganda, March 26, 2017, http://comprop.oii.ox.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/89/2017/03/What-Were-Michigan-Voters-Sharing-Over-Twitter-v2.pdf.

[35] **(U)** Hunt Allcott and Matthew Gentzkow, "Social Media and Fake News in the 2016 election," *Journal of Economic Perspectives,* Volume 31, Number 2, Spring 2017, 211-236, http://www.nber.org/papers/w23089.

[36] **(U)** Soroush Vosoughi, et al., "The spread of true and false news online," *Science*, Volume 359, Issue 6380, March 9, 2018, http://ide.mit.edu/sites/default/files/publications/2017%20IDE%20Research%20Brief%20False%20News.pdf.

[37] **(U)** Robinson Meyer, "The Grim Conclusions of the Largest Ever Study of Fake News," *The Atlantic*, March 8, 2018: https://www.theatlantic.com/technology/archive/2018/03/largest-study-ever-fake-news-mit-twitter/555104/.

[38] **(U)** *Ibid.*

necessarily malicious in nature. These researchers also concluded that "bots [were] pervasively present and active in the online political discussion about the 2016 U.S. presidential election," adding that "the presence of social media bots can indeed negatively affect democratic political discussion rather than improving it."[39] Arriving at a similar conclusion, an Oxford Internet Institute study of 17 million tweets posted during the 2016 election found that bots "reached positions of measurable influence," and "did infiltrate the upper cores of influence and were thus in a position to significantly influence digital communications during the 2016 U.S. election."[40]

(U) In testimony to the Committee, social media researcher John Kelly suggested that automated accounts focused on fringe political positions are far more active than the voices of actual people holding politically centrist views: "In our estimate, today the automated accounts at the far left and far right extremes of the American political spectrum produce as many as 25 to 30 times the number of messages per day on average as genuine political accounts across the mainstream." In other words, "the extremes are screaming while the majority whispers."[41] Taken as a whole, the attributes of social media platforms render them vulnerable for foreign influence operations intent on sowing discord throughout American society.

IV. (U) RUSSIAN USE OF DISINFORMATION

(U) Russia's attack on the 2016 election was a calculated and brazen assault on the United States and its democratic institutions, but this was not the Kremlin's first foray into asymmetric warfare against America. Russian interference in 2016 represents the latest and most sophisticated example of Russia's effort to undermine the nation's democracy through targeted operations. As the January 6, 2017, Intelligence Community Assessment states, Moscow's provocations "demonstrated a significant escalation in directness, level of activity, and scope of effort." However, the activities only "represent the most recent expression of Moscow's longstanding desire to undermine the U.S.-led liberal democratic order."[42]

(U) Russia's intelligence services have been focused for decades on conducting foreign influence campaigns, or "active measures," and disinformation.[43,44] The Russian intelligence services "pioneered dezinformatsiya [disinformation] in the early twentieth century," and by the mid-1960's, had significantly invested in disinformation and active measures.[45] According to

[39] **(U)** Alessandro Bessi and Emilio Ferrara, "Social Bots Distort the 2016 US Presidential Election Online Discussion," *First Monday*, Volume 21, Number 11, 7 November 7, 2016, https://ssrn.com/abstract=2982233.
[40] **(U)** Samuel Woolley and Douglas Guilbeault, "Computational Propaganda in the United States of America: Manufacturing Consensus Online," Oxford Internet Institute Computational Propaganda Research Project, May 2017, http://comprop.oii.ox.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/89/2017/06/Comprop-USA.pdf.
[41] **(U)** John Kelly, Hearing before the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, August 1, 2018, available at https://www.intelligence.senate.gov/hearings/open.
[42] **(U)** ODNI, "Background to 'Assessing Russian Activities and Intentions in Recent U.S. Elections': The Analytic Process and Cyber Incident Attribution," January 6, 2017, https://www.dni.gov/files/documents/ICA_2017_01.pdf.
[43] **(U)** "Active measures" is a Soviet-era term now called "measures of support" by the Russian government.
[44] **(U)** Disinformation is the intentional spread of false information to deceive.
[45] **(U)** *"Dezinformatsiya"* is a Russian word, defined in the 1952 Great Soviet Encyclopedia as the "dissemination (in the press, on the radio, etc.) of false reports intended to mislead public opinion."

testimony Roy Godson and Thomas Rid provided to the Committee, over 10,000 individual disinformation operations were carried out during the Cold War involving approximately 15,000 personnel at its peak.[46,47]

A. (U) Russian Active Measures

(U) For decades, Soviet active measures pushed conspiratorial and disinformation narratives about the United States around the world. The KGB authored and published false stories and forged letters concerning the Kennedy assassination, including accounts suggesting CIA involvement in the killing. Martin Luther King, Jr. was the target of manufactured KGB narratives, as was Ronald Reagan. Russian intelligence officers planted anti-Reagan articles in Denmark, France, and India during his unsuccessful 1976 bid for the Republican presidential nomination. A declassified U.S. State Department document from 1981 outlines a series of realized Russian active measures operations, including the spread of falsehoods concerning U.S. complicity in the 1979 seizure of the Grand Mosque of Mecca and responsibility for the 1981 death of Panamanian General Omar Torrijos, as well as an elaborate deception involving multiple forgeries and false stories designed to undermine the Camp David peace process and to exacerbate tensions between the United States and Egypt.[48] Among the most widely known and successful active measures operations conducted during the Cold War centered on a conspiracy that the AIDS virus was manufactured by the United States at a military facility at Fort Detrick in Maryland. This fictional account of the virus' origin received considerable news coverage, both in the United States and in over forty non-Cold War aligned countries around the world.[49]

(U) In a 1998 CNN interview, retired KGB Major General Oleg Kalugin described active measures as "the heart and soul of Soviet intelligence":

> *Not intelligence collection, but subversion; active measures to weaken the West, to drive wedges in the Western community alliances of all sorts, particularly NATO; to sow discord among allies, to weaken the United States in the eyes of the people of Europe, Asia, Africa, Latin America, and thus to prepare ground in case the war really occurs.*[50]

(U) While this history of discrediting the United States with spurious rumors and disinformation is well-chronicled, Russia has continued the practice today.

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[46] **(U)** Thomas Rid, Hearing before the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, March 30, 2017, available at https://www.intelligence.senate.gov/hearings/open.

[47] **(U)** Roy Godson, Hearing before the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, March 30, 2017, available at https://www.intelligence.senate.gov/hearings/open.

[48] **(U)** Department of State, "Soviet Active Measures: Forgery, Disinformation, Political Operations," Special Report No. 88, October 1981, https://www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/docs/CIA-RDP84B00049R001303150031-0.pdf.

[49] **(U)** Christopher M. Andrew and Vasili Mitrokhin, *The Sword and the Shield: The Mitrokhin Archive & the Secret History of the KGB*, Basic Books, 1985, p. 244.

[50] **(U)** Oleg Kalugin, "Inside the KGB: An interview with retired KGB Maj. Gen. Oleg Kalugin," *CNN*, January 1998.

(U) As Sergey Tretyakov, the former SVR (the foreign intelligence service of the Russian Federation, and a successor organization to the KGB) "rezident," or station chief for Russian intelligence in New York, wrote in 2008, "Nothing has changed. . . . Russia is doing everything it can today to embarrass the U.S."[51]

B. (U) Russia's Military and Information Warfare

(U) While active measures have long been a tool of the Russian intelligence services, a shift toward developing and honing the tools of information warfare represents a more recent development for the Russian conventional military and larger national security establishment.

(U) The embrace of asymmetric information operations resulted from a number of factors, but chiefly from the Russian national security establishment's belief that these operations are effective. Pavel Zolotarev, a retired major general in the Russian Army, explained, "We had come to the conclusion . . . that manipulation in the information sphere is a very effective tool."[52] That conclusion was reinforced by the perception that these operations are extremely difficult to defend against, particularly with multinational military alliances like NATO, which is built to deter and if necessary defeat a traditional, conventional military threat. Information warfare, in addition, is an extremely low-cost alternative to conventional military conflict.

(U) A lack of alternatives also motivates Russia's reliance on asymmetric tactics. Russia's national security establishment may have had no choice but to increase its asymmetric capabilities given its inability to compete with the West on a more traditional, military hard power basis. Former National Intelligence Officer for Russia and Eurasia Eugene Rumer stated in 2017 testimony to the Committee that Russia's information warfare toolkit "performs the function of the equalizer that in the eyes of the Kremlin is intended to make up for Russia's weakness vis-à-vis the West."[53]

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[51] **(U)** *See* Evan Osnos, David Remnick, and Joshua Yaffa, "Trump, Putin, and the new Cold War," *New Yorker*, March 6, 2017.
[52] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[53] **(U)** Eugene Rumer, Hearing before the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, March 30, 2017, available at https://www.intelligence.senate.gov/hearings/open.
[54] [redacted]

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C. (U) Russia's Weaponization of Social Media

(U) Portending what was to come in 2016, General Philip Breedlove assessed in his September 2014 remarks to the NATO Wales Summit that, regarding Ukraine, "Russia is waging

[55] (U) *Ibid.*
[56] (U) *Ibid.*

the most amazing information warfare blitzkrieg we have ever seen in the history of information warfare."[57] Social media platforms enabled Russia's Ukraine campaign, and aided materially in the realization of its military's adoption of information warfare doctrine.

(U) Compared to more traditional methods for information warfare used in the Cold War, Watts described social media as providing Russia a "cheap, efficient, and highly effective access to foreign audiences with plausible deniability of their influence."[58]

(U) Russia's aptitude for weaponizing internet-based social media platforms against the United States resulted from Moscow's experience conducting online disinformation campaigns against its own citizens for over a decade. Russia's online disinformation efforts are rooted in the early and mid-2000s, when the Kremlin sought to suppress opposition in the face of rapidly expanding internet-based communications.[59]

(U) Studying the technology used by its political opponents, the Kremlin hijacked the capabilities and weaponized their use against Russia's own people. Russia perfected the use of these tools and methods of information warfare over time, paving the way for its decision to similarly target the citizens of other countries. Russia has also continued its domestic deployment of these tools.

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D. (U) Russian Social Media Tactics

(U) The Kremlin has honed and refined its social media disinformation tactics over the last decade. Lessons learned through information warfare campaigns directed both internally

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[57] **(U)** *See* John Vandiver, "SACEUR: Allies must prepare for Russia 'hybrid war,'" *Stars and Stripes*, September 4, 2014.

[58] **(U)** Clint Watts, Hearing before the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, March 30, 2017, available at https://www.intelligence.senate.gov/hearings/open.

[59] **(U)** Michael Connell and Sarah Vogler, "Russia's Approach to Cyber Warfare," CNA Analysis and Solutions, Occasional Paper Series, March 2017.

[60] [redacted]

[61] **(U)** *Report On The Investigation Into Russian Interference In The 2016 Presidential Election*, Special Counsel Robert S. Mueller, III, March 2019.

and at the populations of regional neighbors provided Moscow valuable insights into how information and social media could be most effectively used against the West.

(U) Although the tactics employed by Russia vary from one campaign to the next, there are several consistent themes in the Russian disinformation playbook.

(U) High Volume and Multiple Channels. Russian disinformation efforts tend to be wide-ranging in nature, in that they utilize any available vector for messaging, and when they broadcast their messaging, they do so at an unremitting and constant tempo. Christopher Paul and Miriam Matthews from the RAND Corporation describe the Russian propaganda effort as a "firehose of falsehood," because of its "incredibly large volumes," its "high numbers of channels and messages," and a "rapid, continuous, and repetitive" pace of activity. Russia disseminates the disinformation calculated to achieve its objectives across a wide variety of online vehicles: "text, video, audio, and still imagery propagated via the internet, social media, satellite television and traditional radio and television broadcasting."[62] One expert, Laura Rosenberger of the German Marshall Fund, told the Committee that "[t]he Russian government and its proxies have infiltrated and utilized nearly every social media and online information platform—including Instagram, Reddit, YouTube, Tumblr, 4chan, 9GAG, and Pinterest."[63]

(U) The desired effect behind the high volume and repetition of messaging is a flooding of the information zone that leaves the target audience overwhelmed. Academic research suggests that an individual is more likely to recall and internalize the *initial* information they are exposed to on a divisive topic. As RAND researchers have stated, "First impressions are very resilient."[64] Because first impressions are so durable and resistant to replacement, being first to introduce narrative-shaping content into the information ecosystem is rewarded in the disinformation context.

(U) Merging Overt and Covert Operations. The modern Russian disinformation playbook calls for illicitly obtaining information that has been hacked or stolen, and then weaponizing it by disseminating it into the public sphere. The most successful Russian operations blend covert hacking and dissemination operations, social media operations, and fake personas with more overt influence platforms like state-funded online media, including RT and Sputnik.

(U) According to FBI:

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[62] **(U)** Christopher Paul and Miriam Matthews, "The Russian 'Firehose of Falsehood,' Propaganda Model," *RAND Corporation,* 2016, https://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/perspectives/PE100/PE198/RAND_PE198.pdf.
[63] **(U)** Laura Rosenberger, Written Testimony, Hearing before the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, August 1, 2018, available at https://www.intelligence.senate.gov/hearings/open.
[64] **(U)** Christopher Paul and Miriam Matthews, "The Russian 'Firehose of Falsehood,' Propaganda Model," *RAND Corporation,* 2016, https://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/perspectives/PE100/PE198/RAND_PE198.pdf.

[redacted]

(U) Another notable example of Russia using social media platforms and news media to advance disinformation objectives occurred in Germany in 2016. At the center of the operation was a report that falsely accused Arab migrants of sexually assaulting a Russian-German girl. The incident originates with Lisa, a 13-year-old girl from Berlin, who was reported missing by her parents after failing to show up for school. Initially claiming to have been attacked by men of Middle Eastern or North African appearance, Lisa eventually admitted to having fabricated the entire story. Despite Lisa's admission to the police that her story was made up, her original account of kidnapping and rape catapulted across social media. While German law enforcement officials formally debunked the initial report, Russian state-controlled news media, including Channel One and later RT, promoted the social media-inspired and ardently anti-migrant fervor among the Russian-German populations, in particular on YouTube.

(U) Far-right political parties, some of whom are supported by the Kremlin, reacted to these false stories by protesting in Berlin, protests which were covered by RT cameras. Sputnik then claimed there was a potential police cover-up, citing reporting of its own claim as its only evidence. A few days later, as protests spread, Russian Foreign Minister Lavrov publicly disputed that Lisa's 30-hour disappearance was voluntary. Germany, he said, was "covering up reality in a politically correct manner for the sake of domestic politics."[66] The office of Chancellor Merkel was forced to respond, and the episode added to the confusion and fear surrounding the politically roiling migrant crisis in Germany.

(U) Speed. Speed is critical to Russia's use of disinformation. Online, themes and narratives can be adapted and trained toward a target audience very quickly. This allows Russia

[65] **(U)** FBI, Written response to SSCI inquiry of January 3, 2019, March 1, 2019.
[66] **(U)** Jim Rutenberg, "RT, Sputnik and Russia's New Theory of War," *The New York Times Magazine,* September 13, 2017.

to formulate and execute information operations with a velocity that far outpaces the responsivity of a formal decision-making loop in NATO, the United States, or any other western democracy. For example, within hours of the downing of Malaysian Airlines Flight 17 over Ukraine, Russian media had introduced a menu of conspiracy theories and false narratives to account for the plane's destruction, including an alleged assassination attempt against President Putin, a CIA plot, an onboard explosive, and the presence of a Ukrainian fighter jet in the area.[67,68] Dutch investigators with the Joint Investigation Team determined later the plane was shot down by a surface-to-air missile fired from a Russia-provided weapon system used in separatist-held territory in Ukraine.

(U) Use of Automated Accounts and Bots. The use of automated accounts on social media has allowed social media users to artificially amplify and increase the spread, or "virulence," of online content. Russia-backed operatives exploited this automated accounts feature and worked to develop and refine their own bot capabilities for spreading disinformation faster and further across the social media landscape. In January 2018, Twitter disclosed its security personnel assess that over 50,000 automated accounts linked to Russia were tweeting election-related content during the U.S. presidential campaign.[69]

(U) Russian actors are prolific users of automated accounts and bots. Phil Howard, citing the findings of a study done by the Oxford Internet Institute, concluded that Russian Twitter networks "are almost completely bounded by highly automated accounts, with a high degree of overall automation." His study assessed that "some 45 percent of Twitter activity in Russia is managed by highly automated accounts," and that Ukraine remains "the frontline of experimentation in computational propaganda with active campaigns of engagement" between Russian and Ukrainian botnets.[70] Early automation was fairly primitive and easier to detect and disrupt, but malicious bot activity has continued to grow in sophistication.

(U) Use of Paid Internet "Trolls." The act of "trolling" online has been a feature of the internet eco-system since the development of online chat rooms, blogs, internet forums, and other early communications platforms. An internet "troll" is a real person sitting behind a keyboard who posts inflammatory, aggressive, harassing, or misleading messages online in an attempt to provoke a response from other users of social media.[71] Kremlin-backed entities have spent years professionalizing a cadre of paid trolls, investing in large-scale, industrialized "troll

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[67] **(U)** Joel Gunter and Olga Robinson, "Sergei Skripal and the Russian disinformation game," *BBC News,* September 9, 2018.

[68] **(U)** Margaret Hartmann, "Russia's 'Conspiracy Theory': MH17 Shot Down by Ukrainian Fighter Jet or Missile," *New York Magazine,* July 22, 2014.

[69] **(U)** Twitter Public Policy Blog, "Update on Twitter's review of the 2016 US election," January 19, 2018.

[70] **(U)** Samuel Woolley and Phil Howard, "Computational Propaganda Worldwide: Executive Summary," Computational Propaganda Research Project, Oxford Internet Institute, University of Oxford, November 2017, http://comprop.oii.ox.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/89/2017/06/Casestudies-ExecutiveSummary.pdf.

[71] **(U)** The concept of a "troll" online is subjective and can encompass a range of differing motivations, tactics, and objectives. For the purposes of this paper, the Committee is focused on professional "trolls" who are paid to engage in dialogue online and provide commentary and content on various social media and news channels.

farms," in order to obscure Moscow's hand and advance the aims of Russia's information operations both domestically and abroad.

(U) While Russia's use of trolls has been more widely exposed in recent years, one of the first public exposures came through WikiLeaks in early 2012 and subsequent reporting by *The Guardian*. According to data and documents provided to WikiLeaks by a group operating under the moniker "Anonymous," the Kremlin-backed youth group Nashi was paying a network of bloggers and trolls to support President Putin and undermine his political opposition online. These Putin-supported commentators were paid to comment on articles, "dislike" anti-Putin YouTube videos, and support smear campaigns against opposition leaders.[72]

(U) In 2015, NATO's Strategic Communications Center of Excellence commissioned research on the use of trolling in hybrid warfare, publishing its conclusions in the spring of 2016. The study, which was largely focused on discussions surrounding the Ukraine-Russia conflict, outlined a variety of influence techniques employed by trolls online, including the aggressive use of offensive slurs and attacks; utilization of irony and sarcasm; peddling conspiracy theories; employing profile pictures of young, attractive men and women; diverting discourse to other problems; posting misleading information on information sources like *Wikipedia*; emphasizing social divisions; and presenting indigestible amounts of data without sources or verification.[73]

(U) In addition to the aggressive and persistent pushing of Kremlin-narrated themes and content, a principal objective of the Russian internet troll appears to be stifling the democratic debate entirely.

(U) As journalist Adrian Chen of *The New Yorker* reported, the objectives for Russia's troll army are primarily "to overwhelm social media with a flood of fake content, seeding doubt and paranoia, and destroying the possibility of using the Internet as a democratic space."[74] Leonid Volkov, a Russian politician and supporter of opposition leader Alexei Navalny, told Chen, "The point [of Russian disinformation] is to create the atmosphere of hate, to make it so stinky that normal people won't want to touch it." He stressed, "Russia's information war might be thought of as the biggest trolling operation in history, and its target is nothing less than the utility of the Internet as a democratic space."[75] Exemplifying the assertion, a 2015 analysis by the Finnish public broadcasting company concluded that many Finns elect to simply disengage from online discussions due to trolling, as "they did not see the use of fighting with masses of aggressive comments or threatening messages."[76]

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[72] **(U)** Miriam Elder, "Hacked emails allege Russian youth group Nashi paying bloggers," *The Guardian*, February 7, 2012.

[73] **(U)** Sanda Svetoka, et al., "Social Media as a Tool of Hybrid Warfare," NATO Strategic Communications Centre of Excellence, May 2016, https://www.stratcomcoe.org/social-media-tool-hybrid-warfare.

[74] **(U)** Adrian Chen, "The Real Paranoia-Inducing Purpose of Russian Hacks." *The New Yorker*, July 27, 2016.

[75] **(U)** *Ibid.*

[76] **(U)** Sanda Svetoka, et al., "Social Media as a Tool of Hybrid Warfare," NATO Strategic Communications Centre of Excellence, May 2016, https://www.stratcomcoe.org/social-media-tool-hybrid-warfare.

(U) Manipulating Real People and Events. Russian-backed trolls pushing disinformation have also sought to connect with and potentially coopt individuals to take action in the real world. From influencing unwitting Americans to retweet or spread propaganda, to convincing someone to host a real world protest, Russian disinformation agents employ online methods to attract and exploit a wide range of real people.

(U) In testifying to the Committee in 2017, Clint Watts outlined three different types of potential real-world targets for Russian influence operators.[77] A class of "useful idiots" refers to unwitting Americans who are exploited to further amplify Russian propaganda, unbeknownst to them; "fellow travelers" are individuals ideologically sympathetic to Russia's anti-western viewpoints who take action on their own accord; and "agent provocateurs" are individuals who are actively manipulated to commit illegal or clandestine acts on behalf of the Russian government. As Watts explains, "Some people are paid for. Some are coerced. Some are influenced. Some agree. Some don't know what they're doing. . . . Where they fall on that spectrum may not matter ultimately." What matters most, he argues, is the message they are carrying and whether its reach is growing.[78]

E. (U) Features of Russian Active Measures

(U) Although information warfare can target an opposing government, its officials, or its combat forces, Russian information warfare on social media is often aimed squarely at attacking a society and its relationship to its own democratic institutions.. Modern Russian active measures on social media exhibit several notable features.

(U) Attacking the Media. Information warfare, at its core, is a struggle over information and truth. A free and open press—a defining attribute of democratic society—is a principal strategic target for Russian disinformation. As Soviet-born author Peter Pomerantsev notes, "The Kremlin successfully erodes the integrity of investigative and political journalism, producing a lack of faith in traditional media." He concludes, "The aim of this new propaganda is not to convince or persuade, but to keep the viewer hooked and distracted, passive and paranoid, rather than agitated to action."[79]

(U) Jakub Kalensky, a former official with the European Union's rapid response team created to counter Russian disinformation, similarly argues, "It's not the purpose to persuade someone with one version of events. The goal for Russia is to achieve a state in which the

[77] **(U)** Clint Watts, Hearing before the Senate Armed Services Committee, April 27, 2017, available at https://www.fpri.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/Watts-Testimony-Senate-Armed-Services-email-distro-Final.pdf.
[78] **(U)** Denise Clifton, "A Murder Plot, a Twitter Mob and the Strange Unmasking of a Pro-Kremlin Troll," *Mother Jones,* June 5, 2018.
[79] **(U)** Peter Pomerantsev and Michael Weiss, "The Menace of Unreality: How the Kremlin Weaponizes Information, Culture and Money," *Institute of Modern Russia*, 2014, https://imrussia.org/media/pdf/Research/Michael_Weiss_and_Peter_Pomerantsev__The_Menace_of_Unreality.pdf.

average media consumer says, 'There are too many versions of events, and I'll never know the truth.'"[80]

(U) Fluid Ideology. Because the Kremlin's information warfare objectives are not necessarily focused on any particular, objective truth, Russian disinformation is unconstrained by support for any specific political viewpoint and continually shifts to serve its own self-interest. Provided the information space is rendered confused and clouded, Russia's information operatives are unencumbered and can support any and all perspectives.

(U) An August 2018 report on information manipulation commissioned by the French government notes that the Kremlin "can simultaneously support far right and far left movements, so long as they are in competition with one another." As examples, the report cites the downing of Malaysian Airlines Flight 17, the chemical attacks in the Syrian town of Douma, and the poisoning of Sergei and Yulia Skripal in Salisbury, England, as instances in which Kremlin-backed disinformation amplified far-fetched and mutually exclusive conspiracy theories on both sides of the political spectrum.[81] This key characteristic distinguishes modern day Russian operations from former Soviet Union-era active measures campaigns. Speaking to the resultant operational flexibility, Pomerantsev describes the transition: "Unlike in the Cold War, when Soviets largely supported leftist groups, a fluid approach to ideology now allows the Kremlin to simultaneously back far-left and far-right movements, greens, anti-globalists, and financial elites. The aim is to exacerbate divides and create an echo chamber of Kremlin support."[82]

(U) In sum, the modern-day Russian information warfare campaign combines the advantages of social media information delivery and the operational freedom of being ideologically agnostic.

(U) Exploiting Existing Fissures. Successful Russian active measures attempt to exploit societal divisions that already exist, rather than attempt to create new ruptures. Alexander Sharavin, the head of a military research institute and a member of the Academy of Military Sciences in Moscow, provides an illustrative example in relation to the Queen's popular appeal in the England: "If you go to Great Britain, for example, and tell them the Queen is bad, nothing will happen, there will be no revolution, because the necessary conditions are absent—there is no existing background for this operation." As Thomas Rid noted in his 2017 testimony to the Committee, "The tried and tested way of active measures is to use an adversary's existing weaknesses against himself, to drive wedges into pre-existing cracks: the more polarized a

[80] **(U)** *See* Joby Warrick and Anton Troianovski, "Agents of doubt," *Washington Post*, December 10, 2018.
[81] **(U)** Jean-Baptiste Jeangene Vilmer, et al., "Information Manipulation: A Challenge for our Democracies," Policy Planning Staff (CAPS) of the Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs and the Institute for Strategic Research (IRSEM) of the Ministry for the Armed Forces, Paris, August 2018, https://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/IMG/pdf/information_manipulation_rvb_cle838736.pdf.
[82] **(U)** Peter Pomerantsev and Michael Weiss, "The Menace of Unreality: How the Kremlin Weaponizes Information, Culture and Money," *Institute of Modern Russia*, 2014, https://imrussia.org/media/pdf/Research/Michael_Weiss_and_Peter_Pomerantsev__The_Menace_of_Unreality.pdf.

society, the more vulnerable it is."[83] Institutions and norms that define western liberal democracies—open and competitive elections, free flow of information, vibrant press freedoms, freedom of speech, and diverse societies—are conducive to exploitation by anti-Western propagandists.

(U) Indirect Objectives. As western governments grapple with addressing an internet operating environment that at present favors Russia, democratic institutions and constituencies must also weigh the potential indirect objectives of Russian active measures. As the August 2018 French disinformation report points out, the desired objectives of disinformation on a population can be two-fold. The direct objective, discussed earlier in this Volume, uses information manipulation to push the target audience in a preferred direction. The indirect objective entices overreach by the targeted country's government—in essence, baiting governments to respond in a heavy-handed or improper fashion that is irreconcilable with the nation's principles and civil liberties. The *indirect* objective, is, according to the French report, "not so much to convince a population of this or that story as to lead governments to take measures that are contrary to their democratic, liberal values, which, in turn, will provoke a reaction."[84]

(U) Similarly, even the fear of active measures being unleashed on a society risks societal damage, whether the foreign capability exists or not. Democratic governments and populations must balance the need for calling out and shining light on Russian activities with remaining realistic and sober about Moscow's actual capabilities and their effectiveness.

(U) The public needs to be made aware of the tactics being directed at them, but there also needs to be appreciation for the limitations of those tactics. As Massimo Calabresi reports in his 2017 *Time* article on Russia's social media war on America, "the fear of Russian influence operations can be more damaging than the operations themselves. Eager to appear more powerful than they are, the Russians would consider it a success if you questioned the truth of your news sources, knowing that Moscow might be lurking in your Facebook or Twitter feed."[85]

V. (U) THE INTERNET RESEARCH AGENCY

(U) The IRA is an entity headquartered in St. Petersburg, Russia, which since at least 2013 has undertaken a variety of Russian active measures campaigns at the behest of the Kremlin. The IRA has conducted virtual and physical influence operations in Russia, the United States, and dozens of other countries. The IRA conducted a multi-million dollar, coordinated

[83] **(U)** Thomas Rid, Hearing before the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, March 30, 2017, available at https://www.intelligence.senate.gov/hearings/open.

[84] **(U)** Jean-Baptiste Jeangene Vilmer, et al., "Information Manipulation: A Challenge for our Democracies," Policy Planning Staff (CAPS) of the Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs and the Institute for Strategic Research (IRSEM) of the Ministry for the Armed Forces, Paris, August 2018, https://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/IMG/pdf/information_manipulation_rvb_cle838736.pdf.

[85] **(U)** Massimo Calabresi, "Inside Russia's Social Media War on America," *Time*, May 18, 2017.

effort to influence the 2016 U.S. election as part of a broader information campaign to harm the United States and fracture its society.[86]

A. (U) Yevgeniy Prigozhin and the Kremlin

(U) The IRA is funded and directed by Yevgeniy Prigozhin, a Russia oligarch who works to conduct intelligence operations, military activities, and influence operations globally on behalf of the Kremlin. The IRA is one of several companies Prigozhin owns. He has also been linked to the financing and direction of the Wagner Group, a contract security organization that provides unofficial paramilitary support for Russian military operations.

[redacted]

(U) Prigozhin is a businessman and restauranteur who acquired the nickname "Putin's Chef," in part for the numerous catering contracts his company was awarded by the Russian government, including one for President Putin's 2012 inauguration. Prigozhin's companies have branched into areas including online propaganda, harassment of opposition leaders, and contracting a privatized military force to fight in Ukraine and Syria. *Fontanka*, a leading St. Petersburg news website, has also reported that Prigozhin's companies have secured oil revenues from Syrian oil fields in exchange for providing soldiers to protect those fields.[88]

[redacted]

[86] **(U)** Indictment, *United States v. Internet Research Agency, et al.*, Case 1:18-cr-00032-DLF (D.D.C. Feb. 16, 2018).

[87] [redacted]

[88] **(U)** Neil MacFarquhar, "Meet Yevgeny Prigozhin, the Russian Oligarch Indicted in U.S. Election Interference," *New York Times*, February 16, 2018.

[89] [redacted]

(U) Prigozhin was publicly exposed as the main financial supporter of the IRA as early as 2014,[90] and his close relationship with Putin has been reported in numerous media sources, with the two appearing together in public photographs."[91]

(U) Prigozhin and companies he controlled, along with nine other employees, were indicted in the District of Columbia for a number of criminal violations, including acting as unregistered foreign agents inside the United States.[92] Further, Prigozhin and his companies have been targeted by the U.S. Department of Treasury with sanctions for "interfering with or undermining election processes and institutions," with specific respect to the 2016 U.S. presidential election.[93] Demonstrating that IRA operations were related to the broader scope of the Kremlin's objectives, these sanctions were announced alongside additional designations against the FSB and the Russian military intelligence organization, the GRU. Both entities were also designated for their online efforts to target the U.S. Government and undermine the election.

(U) Despite these public connections to the Russian government, President Putin denies any knowledge of Prigozhin's trolling operation. The Committee finds this denial to be false.

[redacted]

B. (U) IRA Operations

[redacted]

[90] **(U)** Max Seddon, "Documents Show How Russia's Troll Army Hit America," *BuzzFeed*, June 2, 2014.
[91] **(U)** Neil MacFarquhar, "Yevgeny Prigozhin, Russian Oligarch Indicted by U.S., Is Known as Putin's Cook," New York Times, February 16, 2018.
[92] **(U)** Indictment, *United States v. Internet Research Agency, et al.*, Case 1:18-cr-00032-DLF (D.D.C. Feb. 16, 2018).
[93] **(U)** Department of Treasury, "Treasury Sanctions Russian Cyber Actors for Interference with the 2016 U.S. Elections and Malicious Cyber-Attacks," March 15, 2018, https://home.treasury.gov/news/press-releases/sm0312.
[94] [redacted]
[95] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[96] **(U)** *Ibid.*

[redacted]

(U) According to the Special Counsel's Office, the IRA was funded as part of a larger interference operation called "Project Lakhta," which was part of a global set of operations undertaken both within Russia and abroad. The monthly budget for Project Lakhta "exceeded 73 million Russian rubles (over 1,250,000 U.S. dollars), including approximately one million rubles in bonus payments."[103]

C. (U) The Role of the IRA Troll

(U) A 2015 article by Adrian Chen in *The New York Times Magazine* provides a detailed open source account of the IRA's operations. According to that article, in 2015 the IRA had an estimated 400 employees who worked 12-hour shifts, divided between numerous departments, filling nearly 40 rooms. The trolls would create content on nearly every social media network—including LiveJournal, VKontakte (a Russia-based social media platform modeled after Facebook), Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. Managers responsible for overseeing the trolls would monitor the workplace by CCTV and were "obsessed with statistics" like page views,

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[97] [redacted]

[98] **(U)** *Ibid.*

[99] **(U)** *Ibid.*

[100] [redacted]

[101] **(U)** *Ibid.*

[102] **(U)** *Ibid.*

[103] **(U)** Indictment, *United States v. Internet Research Agency, et al.*, Case 1:18-cr-00032-DLF (D.D.C. Feb. 16, 2018).

posts, clicks, and traffic. One IRA employee, Ludmila Savchuk, described work shifts during which she was required to meet a quota of five political posts, 10 nonpolitical posts, and 150 to 200 comments on other trolls' postings.[104]

> **(U)** *The first thing employees did upon arriving at their desks was to switch on an Internet proxy service, which hid their I.P. addresses from the places they posted; those digital addresses can sometimes be used to reveal the real identity of the poster. Savchuk would be given a list of the opinions she was responsible for promulgating that day. Workers received a constant stream of 'technical tasks' —point-by-point exegeses of the themes they were to address, all pegged to the latest news.*[105]

(U) Savchuk's description largely matches similar depictions outlined in a series of leaked documents from an unidentified Russian hacker organization in June 2014. The leaked documents, purported to be attached to internal emails from within the IRA, describe the responsibilities of the IRA teams. As reported by *BuzzFeed* at the time:

> *On an average working day, the Russians are to post on news articles 50 times. Each blogger is to maintain six Facebook accounts publishing at least three posts a day and discussing the news in groups at least twice a day. By the end of the first month, they are expected to have won 500 subscribers and get at least five posts on each item a day. On Twitter, the bloggers are expected to manage 10 accounts with up to 2,000 followers and tweet 50 times a day.*[106]

(U) As a member of the Special Projects department of the IRA, Savchuk was responsible for creating and maintaining believable, fake personas online that would eventually seed pro-Kremlin narratives into their otherwise normal-looking online activities. One former employee said: "We had to write 'ordinary posts,' about making cakes or music tracks we liked, but then every now and then throw in a political post about how the Kiev government is fascist, or that sort of thing." Instructions for those political posts would come to the bloggers every morning as "technical tasks," which would have a "news line, some information about it, and a 'conclusion' that the commenters should reach."[107] As described by Chen, "The point was to weave propaganda seamlessly into what appeared to be the nonpolitical musings of an everyday person."[108]

(U) According to two former employees who spoke to *The Guardian*, trolls were paid based on their capabilities and the expertise required to maintain their particular fake personas. One employee who signed a non-disclosure agreement was paid around 45,000 rubles a month (roughly $700), while others could make up to 65,000 rubles (roughly $1,000) monthly if they

[104] **(U)** Adrian Chen, "The Agency," *The New York Times Magazine,* June 2, 2015.
[105] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[106] **(U)** Max Seddon, "Documents Show How Russia's Troll Army Hit America," *BuzzFeed,* June 2, 2014.
[107] **(U)** Shaun Walker, "Salutin' Putin: Inside a Russian troll House," *The Guardian,* April 2, 2015.
[108] **(U)** Adrian Chen, "The Agency," *The New York Times Magazine,* June 2, 2015.

were able to join the most prestigious wing of the IRA, the English-language trolls. Penalties were instituted for employees who failed to reach their quota or were caught copying previous posts as opposed to creating new content. The trolls worked "round the clock to flood Russian internet forums, social networks and the comments sections of western publications with remarks praising the President, Vladimir Putin, and raging at the depravity and injustice of the west."[109]

(U) One former employee's description of his work at the IRA is notable:

> *I arrived there, and I immediately felt like a character in the book '1984' by George Orwell—a place where you have to write that white is black and black is white. Your first feeling, when you ended up there, was that you were in some kind of factory that turned lying, telling untruths, into an industrial assembly line. The volumes were colossal—there were huge numbers of people, 300 to 400, and they were all writing absolute untruths. It was like being in Orwell's world.*[110]

(U) The Special Counsel's Office description of the IRA's activities is consistent with much of the reporting derived from interviews of former employees. As an example, the IRA indictment alleges in detail how IRA employees, referred to as "specialists," were tasked with creating fake social media accounts that purported to be U.S. citizens engaged on social media:

> *The specialists were divided into day-shift and night-shift hours and instructed to make posts in accordance with the appropriate U.S. time zone. The [IRA] also circulated lists of U.S. holidays so that specialists could develop and post appropriate account activity. Specialists were instructed to write about topics germane to the United States such as U.S. foreign policy and U.S. economic issues. Specialists were directed to create "political intensity through supporting radical groups, users dissatisfied with [the] social and economic situation and oppositional social movements."*[111]

(U) The indictment indicates that IRA management made efforts to monitor and track the impact of its online efforts, through measurables such as comments, likes, reposts, changes in audience size, and other metrics.[112]

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[109] **(U)** Shaun Walker, "Salutin' Putin: Inside a Russian troll House," *The Guardian*, April 2, 2015.
[110] **(U)** Anton Troianovski, "A former Russian troll speaks: 'It was like being in Orwell's world,'" *Washington Post*, February 17, 2018.
[111] **(U)** Indictment, *United States v. Internet Research Agency, et al.*, Case 1:18-cr-00032-DLF (D.D.C. Feb. 16, 2018).
[112] **(U)** *Ibid.*

[redacted]

D. (U) Troll Narratives

(U) The IRA's trolls monitored societal divisions and were poised to pounce when new events provoked societal discord. For example, a former IRA troll interviewed by the *Guardian* in 2015 described his focus on race-related issues: "When there were black people rioting in the U.S. we had to write that U.S. policy on the black community had failed, Obama's administration couldn't cope with the problem, the situation is getting tenser. The negroes are rising up."[115]

[redacted]

(U) Leaked IRA documents from 2014 reveal a sophisticated approach to the various social media platforms aimed at ensuring trolls could evade online monitors. IRA employees were taught how to comment on each of the different websites so as to avoid being blocked or removed. As an example, one author outlined how to write for the fringe site WorldNetDaily: "Direct offense of Americans as a race are not published ('Your nation is a nation of complete idiots') . . . nor are vulgar reactions to the political work of Barack Obama."[117]

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[113] [redacted]

[114] (U) *Ibid.*

[115] (U) Shaun Walker, "Salutin' Putin: Inside a Russian troll House," *The Guardian*, April 2, 2015.

[116] [redacted]

[117] (U) Max Seddon, "Documents Show How Russia's Troll Army Hit America," *BuzzFeed*, June 2, 2014.

(U) Developing and applying a familiarity with the American political space was also a critical function of the IRA trolling operation. According to a former employee interviewed by the news outlet *Dozhd*, IRA personnel were required to study and monitor tens of thousands of comments in order to better understand the language and trends of internet users in the United States. The ex-troll indicated that they were taught to avoid crude and offensive language that would be off-putting to the typical online reader.[118] According to the former employee, the IRA office dedicated to inflaming sentiments in the United States was prohibited from promoting anything about Russia or President Putin—primarily because, in the IRA's assessment, Americans do not normally talk about Russia. "Our goal wasn't to turn the Americans toward Russia . . . . Our task was to set Americans against their own government: to provoke unrest and discontent, and to lower Obama's support ratings."[119] IRA employees were trained to understand and exploit the nuances of politically sensitive issues in America, including taxes, LGBT rights, and the Second Amendment. Once IRA employees better understood the political fault lines and how Americans naturally argued online, their job was to incite them further and try to "rock the boat."[120]

(U) More recent open source reporting has provided fresh insight into the inner workings and goals of the IRA operation. Marat Mindiyarov, a former IRA troll, outlined for the Washington Post in 2018 how important Facebook became to the IRA. Mindiyarov described how workers in the Facebook Department of the IRA were paid twice as much and included a younger, more pop culturally literate crowd. In order to graduate to the Facebook Department, these trolls had to take a test to prove their English language skills, their ability to comment on American political nuance, and to confirm they had the necessary opposition to the United States.[121]

VI. (U) IRA ACTIVITIES AGAINST THE UNITED STATES IN 2016

A. (U) Origins of IRA Activity in the United States

(U) The IRA's foray into influence operations targeting the 2016 election began with a 2014 intelligence-gathering mission to the United States undertaken by two female employees: Anna Bogacheva and Aleksandra Krylova.

(U) Bogacheva worked for the IRA from the spring of 2014 to the fall of 2016.[122] Krylova, who began her employment in St. Petersburg in the fall of 2013 at the latest, rose to

[118] (U) Meduza, "An ex-St. Petersburg 'troll' speaks out," October 15, 2017 (summarizing an interview with "Maxim" by *Dozhd*).
[119] (U) *Ibid.*
[120] (U) *Ibid.*
[121] (U) Anton Troianovski, "A former Russian troll speaks: 'It was like being in Orwell's world,'" *Washington Post,* February 17, 2018.
[122] (U) Scott Shane and Mark Mazzetti, "The Plot to Subvert an Election – Unraveling the Russia Story So Far," *The New York Times,* September 20, 2018: https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2018/09/20/us/politics/russia-interference-election-trump-clinton.html?rref=collection%2Fsectioncollection%2Fpolitics.

become the IRA's third-highest ranking employee by the spring of 2014. Both secured visas to visit the United States in June 2014, and the two made stops in "Nevada, California, New Mexico, Colorado, Illinois, Michigan, Louisiana, Texas, and New York," according to the IRA indictment.[123]

[redacted] Operating as a reconnaissance team for the IRA, the two were sent to collect intelligence to be used in the organization's information warfare against the United States. Prior to the trip, they had worked with their colleagues to plan itineraries and purchase equipment, including "cameras, SIM cards, and drop phones." They also worked on various "evacuation scenarios" and other security measures for their trip.[124] Their visit likely helped the IRA refine tactics to be used on social media, but the trip represents only a small part of the wider operational effort to track and study Americans' online activities, understand U.S. political and social divisions, impersonate U.S. citizens online, and ultimately engage in information warfare against the United States. [redacted]

(U) According to the Special Counsel's Office, by April 2014, the IRA had formed a new department inside the larger organization that was focused solely on the U.S. population. Referred to as the "translator project," and alternately as the "Translator Department," the American department of the operation would grow to over 80 employees by July 2016.[126] By the summer of 2016, at the height of the U.S. campaign season, the "translator project" employees were posting more than 1,000 pieces of content per week, reaching between 20 and 30 million people in the month of September alone.[127] In addition, the IRA employees began contacting unwitting U.S. persons to better refine their tactics and targets. In one communication, an IRA operative posed as an American and spoke with a Texas-based grassroots organization, learning from the conversation that they should focus their activities on "purple states like Colorado, Virginia & Florida."[128]

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[123] (U) Indictment, *United States v. Internet Research Agency, et al.*, Case 1:18-cr-00032-DLF (D.D.C. Feb. 16, 2018).

[124] (U) *Ibid.*

[125] [redacted]

[126] (U) Indictment, *United States v. Internet Research Agency, et al.*, Case 1:18-cr-00032-DLF (D.D.C. Feb. 16, 2018); Special Counsel Robert S. Mueller, III, *Report On The Investigation Into Russian Interference In The 2016 Presidential Election*, March 2019, Volume I, p. 26.

[127] (U) *See* Hannah Levintova, "Russian Journalists Just Published a Bombshell Investigation About a Kremlin-Linked 'Troll Factory,'" *Mother Jones*, October 18, 2017. Original report in Russian available at https://www.rbc.ru/magazine/2017/11/59e0c17d9a79470e05a9e6c1.

[128] (U) Indictment, *United States v. Internet Research Agency, et al.*, Case 1:18-cr-00032-DLF (D.D.C. Feb. 16, 2018).

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[129] [redacted]

[130] (U) *Ibid.*

[131] [redacted]

[132] (U) *Ibid.*

[redacted]

(U) The IRA built a wide-ranging information operation designed to complement these other Russian influence activities directed toward interfering with and undermining U.S. democracy in 2016. The expanse and depth of this effort would only be understood in the aftermath of that campaign.

B. (U) IRA Operations Explicitly Targeting the 2016 U.S. Election

(U) At the direction of the Kremlin, the IRA sought to influence the 2016 U.S. presidential election by harming Hillary Clinton's chances of success and supporting Donald Trump.[133]

(U) The overwhelming majority of the content disseminated by the IRA did not express clear support for one presidential candidate or another. Instead, and often within the context of the election or in reference to a candidate, most IRA content discreetly messaged narratives of disunity, discontent, hopelessness, and contempt of others, all aimed at sowing societal division. Nevertheless, a significant body of IRA content dealt with the election, and specifically the Republican and Democrat candidates. The TAG study led by Renee DiResta concluded that for all data analyzed, which included data captured before and after the 2016 U.S. election, roughly 6 percent of tweets, 18 percent of Instagram posts, and 7 percent of Facebook posts from IRA accounts mentioned Donald Trump or Hillary Clinton by name. On Facebook, that percentage translated to 1,777 posts that specifically mention Hillary Clinton (or a derivative moniker), which in turn generated over 1.7 million user interactions or engagements.[134]

(U) Numbers of posts are an imperfect and potentially misleading evidentiary base for drawing conclusions about motivations and objectives. The relatively low number of IRA Facebook and Twitter account posts that specifically mention either candidate is not dispositive of the IRA's intent to influence voters. In practice, the IRA's influence operatives dedicated the balance of their effort to establishing the credibility of their online personas, such as by posting innocuous content designed to appeal to like-minded users. This innocuous content allowed IRA influence operatives to build character details for their fake personas, such as a conservative Southerner or a liberal activist, until the opportune moment arrived when the account was used to deliver tailored "payload content" designed to influence the targeted user. By this concept of operations, the volume and content of posts can obscure the actual objective behind the influence operation. "If you're running a propaganda outfit, most of what you publish is factual so that

[133] **(U)** ODNI, "Assessing Russian Activities and Intentions in Recent US Elections," Intelligence Community Assessment (Declassified Version), January 6, 2017, https://www.dni.gov/files/documents/ICA_2017_01.pdf.; Report On The Investigation Into Russian Interference In The 2016 Presidential Election, Special Counsel Robert S. Mueller, III, March 2019.

[134] **(U)** Renee DiResta, Dr. Kris Shaffer, Becky Ruppel, David Sullivan, Robert Matney, Ryan Fox, Dr. Jonathan Albright, and Ben Johnson, "The Tactics and Tropes of the Internet Research Agency," *New Knowledge*, December 17, 2018, https://www.newknowledge.com/articles/the-disinformation-report/.

you're taken seriously," Graphika CEO and TAG researcher John Kelly described to the Commttee, "[T]hen you can slip in the wrong thing at exactly the right time."[135]

(U) The tactic of using select payload messages among a large volume of innocuous content to attract and cultivate an online following is reflected in the posts made to the IRA's "Army of Jesus" Facebook page. The page, which had attracted over 216,000 followers by the time it was taken down by Facebook for violating the platform's terms of service, purported to be devoted to Christian themes and Bible passages. The page's content was largely consistent with this façade. The following series of posts from the "Army of Jesus" page illustrates the use of this tactic, with the majority of posts largely consistent with the page's theme, excepting the November 1, 2016 post that represents the IRA's payload content:

- October 26, 2016: "There has never been a day when people did not need to walk with Jesus."
- October 29, 2016: "I've got Jesus in my soul. It's the only way I know. . . . Watching every move I make, guiding every step I take!"
- October 31, 2016: "Rise and shine—realize His blessing!"
- October 31, 2016: "Jesus will always be by your side. Just reach out to Him and you'll see!"
- November 1, 2016: "HILLARY APPROVES REMOVAL OF GOD FROM THE PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE."
- November 2, 2016: "Never hold on anything [sic] tighter than you holding unto God!"

(U) This pattern of character development, followed by confidence building and audience cultivation, punctuated by deployment of payload content is discernable throughout the IRA's content history.

(U) The IRA's ideologically left-leaning and right-leaning social media accounts posted content that was political in nature and made reference to specific candidates for President. Hillary Clinton, however, was the only candidate for President whose IRA-posted content references were uniformly negative. Clinton's candidacy was targeted by both the IRA's left and right personas, and both ideological representations were focused on denigrating her. As Renee DiResta notes, the political content of the IRA, "was unified on both sides in negativity towards Secretary Clinton."[136] The IRA's left-leaning accounts focused their efforts on denigrating

[135] **(U)** John Kelly, Hearing before the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, August 1, 2018, available at https://www.intelligence.senate.gov/hearings/open.
[136] **(U)** Renee DiResta, Written Statement, Hearing before the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, August 1, 2018, available at https://www.intelligence.senate.gov/hearings/open.

Clinton and supporting the candidacy of either fellow Democrat candidate Bernie Sanders or Green Party candidate Jill Stein, at the expense of Hillary Clinton. Posts from the IRA's right-leaning accounts were unvaryingly opposed to Clinton's candidacy.

(U) In contrast to the consistent denigration of Hillary Clinton, Donald Trump's candidacy received mostly positive attention from the IRA's influence operatives, though it is important to note that this assessment specifically applies to pre-election content. The Committee's analysis indicates that post-election IRA activity shifted to emphasize and provoke anti-Trump sentiment on the left. DiResta's team assesses that in relation to pre-election content: "The majority of the political content was anti-Hillary Clinton; there appeared to be a consistent preference for then-candidate Donald Trump, beginning in the early primaries. . . . There was no pro-Clinton content."[137]

(U) Evidence of an overarching pro-Trump and anti-Clinton bias leading up to Election Day 2016 is also found in information obtained by Special Counsel's Office. For instance, IRA employees were directed to focus on U.S. politics and to "use any opportunity to criticize Hillary and the rest (except Sanders and Trump—we support them)."[138] Another IRA employee was criticized internally for having a "'low number of posts dedicated to criticizing Hillary Clinton' and was told 'it is imperative to intensify criticizing Hillary Clinton' in future posts."[139] Content and hashtags produced by IRA employees included "#Trump2016," "#TrumpTrain," "#MAGA," "#IWontProtectHillary," and "#Hillary4Prison."[140]

(U) One communication obtained by the Committee details an IRA employee's description of Election Day 2016, from the vantage of an information warfare operative: "On November 9, 2016, a sleepless night was ahead of us. And when around 8 a.m. the most important result of our work arrived, we uncorked a tiny bottle of champagne . . . took one gulp each and looked into each other's eyes. . . . We uttered almost in unison: 'We made America great.'"[141]

(U) Further, the IRA's attempts to engage political activists by using false U.S. personas to "communicate with unwitting members, volunteers, and supporters of the Trump Campaign involved in local community outreach, as well as grassroots groups that supported then-candidate Trump."[142]

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[137] **(U)** Renee DiResta, SSCI Transcript of the Closed Briefing on Social Media Manipulation in 2016 and Beyond, July 26, 2018.

[138] **(U)** Indictment, *United States v. Internet Research Agency, et al.*, Case 1:18-cr-00032-DLF (D.D.C. Feb. 16, 2018).

[139] **(U)** *Ibid.*

[140] **(U)** *Ibid.*

[141] [redacted]

[142] **(U)** Indictment, *United States v. Internet Research Agency, et al.*, Case 1:18-cr-00032-DLF (D.D.C. Feb. 16, 2018).

(U) In addition to denigrating Hillary Clinton, voter suppression among left-leaning audiences appears to have been another political goal of the IRA's influence operatives. Young Mie Kim, a digital advertisement research expert from the University of Wisconsin, has closely analyzed the IRA's Facebook advertisements. On the basis of Kim's analysis, three types of voter suppression campaigns on Facebook and Instagram emerge, including: "a) turnout suppression/election boycott; b) third-candidate promotion; and c) candidate attack, all targeting nonwhites or likely Clinton voters."[143] Kim found no evidence of a comparable voter suppression effort that targeted U.S. voters on the ideological right.

(U) Renee DiResta found similar evidence:

> *Voter suppression narratives were in [the data], both on Twitter (some of the text-to-vote content) and within Facebook, where it was specifically targeting the Black audiences. So the groups that they made to reach out to Black people were specifically targeted with 'Don't Vote for Hillary Clinton,' 'Don't Vote At All,' 'Why Would We Be Voting,' 'Our Votes Don't Matter,' [and] 'A Vote for Jill Stein is Not a Wasted Vote.'*[144]

(U) TAG researcher Phil Howard's findings support DiResta's assessment. Howard found that while both the ideological right and left in America were targeted:

> *The main difference is that where Conservative and right-wing voters were actively encouraged to get behind Trump's campaign, other voters were encouraged to boycott the election, vote for someone other than Clinton, and become cynical of the political process in general.*[145]

(U) Underscoring the insidiousness of the IRA's information warfare campaign, influence operations were conducted in cognizance of the U.S. political schedule and political events. Modifying their tactics and strategy to reflect real-life occurrences, the IRA's operatives would increase their activity around events relevant to the campaign schedule. This included pre-election events, like "candidate debates, [the] Republican convention, [and] Trump crossing the delegate threshold."[146] For example, "significant bursts of IRA activity" coincided with the third Democratic primary debate in January 2016, the sixth Republican primary debate in January 2016, the presidential debates between Clinton and Trump in the fall of 2016, and on

[143] **(U)** Young Mie Kim, "Uncover: Strategies and Tactics of Russian Interference in US Elections," Project DATA, University of Wisconsin, Madison, September 4, 2018, https://journalism.wisc.edu/wp-content/blogs.dir/41/files/2018/09/Uncover.Kim_.v.5.0905181.pdf.

[144] **(U)** Renee DiResta, SSCI Transcript of the Closed Briefing on Social Media Manipulation in 2016 and Beyond, July 26, 2018.

[145] **(U)** Phil Howard, SSCI Transcript of the Closed Briefing on Social Media Manipulation in 2016 and Beyond, July 26, 2018.

[146] **(U)** Renee DiResta, SSCI Transcript of the Closed Briefing on Social Media Manipulation in 2016 and Beyond, July 26, 2018.

Election Day 2016.[147] More broadly, the volume of posts originating from IRA accounts on Facebook and Instagram increased over the period between the national political conventions in July 2016 and Election Day.[148]

(U) The IRA's information warfare campaign also responded to real-world political events. For example, the IRA promoted multiple stories and narratives calling into question the state of Hillary Clinton's health after she fell ill at a September 11 memorial service in New York City in September 2016. IRA influence operatives posted phrased content on Twitter using hashtags that made the content easily discoverable to other Twitter users searching for content related to Clinton's health, including #HillarySickAtGroundZero, #ClintonCollapse, #ZombieHillary, and #SickHillary. According to researchers at Clemson University, IRA accounts tweeted these hashtags hundreds of times. As one of those researchers, Darren Linvill, points out:

> *You can see the peak times they tweet. You can see that they shift from hour to hour. One hour, they'll tweet their left-wing accounts, and the next hour they'll tweet their right-wing accounts. . . . You can see very clearly that it is one organization, and it has applied human capital as is needed, depending on what's happening politically, what current events are.*[149]

[redacted] A particular spike in IRA activity on October 6, 2016, stands out as an anomaly deserving further scrutiny. As reported by the *Washington Post* and noted by the Clemson research team, IRA influence operatives posted, at a pace of about a dozen tweets per minute, nearly 18,000 messages from their Twitter accounts on October 6, 2016. This spike in activity came a day prior to WikiLeaks's publication of emails stolen by the Russian GRU from the account of Hillary Clinton's campaign chairman, John Podesta. According to the researchers, on October 6 and 7, IRA Twitter accounts—particularly those accounts emulating ideologically left-leaning personas—significantly increased the volume of their content posting, with 93 of the "Left Troll" accounts posting content that could have directly reached other Twitter accounts 20 million times on those two days.[150] While no clear connection between the spike in IRA Twitter activity and WikiLeaks' release of the emails has been established, the Clemson researchers speculate that the timing was not coincidental: "We think that they [the IRA] were trying to activate and energize the left wing of the Democratic Party, the Bernie wing basically, before the WikiLeaks release that implicated Hillary in stealing the Democratic primary."[151] [redacted]

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[147] **(U)** Phil Howard, Bharath Ganesh, Dimitra Liotsiou, John Kelly, and Camille Francois, "The IRA, Social Media and Political Polarization in the United States, 2012-2018," *Computational Propaganda Research Project, Oxford Internet Institute,* December 2018, https://int.nyt.com/data/documenthelper/534-oxford-russia-internet-research-agency/c6588b4a7b940c551c38/optimized/full.pdf.
[148] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[149] **(U)** Jim Galloway, "Clemson researchers crack open a Russian troll factory," *Associated Press,* August 7, 2018.
[150] **(U)** Craig Timberg and Shane Harris, "Russian operatives blasted 18,000 tweets ahead of a huge news day during the 2016 presidential campaign. Did they know what was coming?" *Washington Post,* July 20, 2018.
[151] **(U)** *Ibid.*

[redacted]

(U) As detailed by the Special Counsel's Office, IRA operations to support Trump also involved activities inside the United States. For example, IRA operatives were able to organize and execute a series of coordinated political rallies titled, "Florida Goes Trump," using the Facebook group "Being Patriotic," the Twitter account @March_for_Trump, and other fabricated social media personas. Masquerading as Americans, IRA operatives communicated with Trump Campaign staff, purchased advertisements promoting these rallies on Facebook and Instagram, contacted grassroots supporters of then-candidate Trump, solicited U.S. citizens to participate in these events, and even paid select participants to portray Hillary Clinton imprisoned in a cage that had been constructed on a flatbed truck for this purpose.[153]

C. (U) Other IRA Operations Targeting U.S. Politicians and Society

(U) The IRA targeted not only Hillary Clinton, but also Republican candidates during the presidential primaries. For example, Senators Ted Cruz and Marco Rubio were targeted and denigrated, as was Jeb Bush.[154] Even after the 2016 election, Mitt Romney—historically critical of Russia and who memorably characterized the country as the United States' "number one geopolitical foe" during a 2012 presidential debate—was targeted by IRA influence operatives while being considered for Secretary of State in the Trump administration. Content posted from IRA social media pages and accounts referred to Romney as a "two headed snake" and a "globalist puppet," and IRA operatives posted the hashtag "#NeverRomney," in an effort to undermine his potential nomination.[155] On November 28, 2016, over 216,000 followers of the IRA's "Being Patriotic" Facebook page received the following post in their News Feed: "Romney was one of the first men who started the NeverTrump movement. It will be a terrible mistake if Trump sets him as the next secretary of state."

(U) In addition, the IRA "had a strategic goal to sow discord in the U.S. political system," which included—but was not limited to—targeting the 2016 U.S. presidential election.[156] John Kelly found that "[i]t's a far more sophisticated an attack than just caring about an election. And it's not just one election they care about. They care about the electoral system."[157] Darren Linvill echoed this point, concluding "[I]n general, there's been too much

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[152] [redacted]

[153] **(U)** Indictment, *United States v. Internet Research Agency, et al.*, Case 1:18-cr-00032-DLF (D.D.C. Feb. 16, 2018).

[154] **(U)** *Ibid*; Renee DiResta, Dr. Kris Shaffer, Becky Ruppel, David Sullivan, Robert Matney, Ryan Fox, Dr. Jonathan Albright, and Ben Johnson, "The Tactics and Tropes of the Internet Research Agency," *New Knowledge*, December 17, 2018: https://www.newknowledge.com/articles/the-disinformation-report/.

[155] **(U)** Rob Barry and Shelby Holliday, "Russian Trolls Tried to Torpedo Mitt Romney's Shot at Secretary of State," *Wall Street Journal*, March 8, 2018.

[156] **(U)** Indictment, *United States v. Internet Research Agency, et al.*, Case 1:18-cr-00032-DLF (D.D.C. Feb. 16, 2018).

[157] **(U)** John Kelly, SSCI Transcript of the Closed Briefing on Social Media Manipulation in 2016 and Beyond, July 26, 2018.

focus on Russian interference in the election. It's much more than that. It's interference in our society, in our culture, in our political conversation."[158]

[redacted]

(U) No single group of Americans was targeted by IRA information operatives more than African-Americans. By far, race and related issues were the preferred target of the information warfare campaign designed to divide the country in 2016. Evidence of the IRA's overwhelming operational emphasis on race is evident in the IRA's Facebook advertisement content (over 66 percent contained a term related to race) and targeting (locational targeting was principally aimed at "African-Americans in key metropolitan areas with well-established black communities and flashpoints in the Black Lives Matter movement"), as well as its Facebook pages (one of the IRA's top-performing pages, "Blacktivist," generated 11.2 million engagements with Facebook users), its Instagram content (five of the top 10 Instagram accounts were focused on African-American issues and audiences), its Twitter content (heavily focused on hot-button issues with racial undertones such as the NFL kneeling protests), and its YouTube

[158] **(U)** Jim Galloway, "Clemson researchers crack open a Russian troll factory," *Associated Press,* August 7, 2018.
[159] [redacted]
[160] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[161] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[162] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[163] **(U)** *Ibid.*

activity (96 percent of the IRA's YouTube content was targeted at racial issues and police brutality).

(U) The IRA's exploitation of racial tensions in an attempt to sow societal discord in the United States is not a new tactic for Russian influence operations. Rather, it is the latest incarnation of a long-standing Russian focus. Historically, the KGB's active measures program also made race a central feature of its operational targeting. As KGB archivist Vasili Mitrokhin noted: "The attempt to stir up racial tensions in the United States remained part of Service A's stock-in-trade for the remainder of the Cold War." For example, before the Los Angeles Olympics in 1984, KGB officers mailed falsified communications from the Ku Klux Klan to the Olympic committees of African and Asian countries. KGB officers also forged letters that were "sent to sixty black organizations giving fictitious details of atrocities committed by the [Jewish Defense] League against blacks."[164]

(U) As the TAG study led by Renee DiResta concluded:

> *The most prolific IRA efforts on Facebook and Instagram specifically targeted Black American communities and appear to have been focused on developing Black audiences and recruiting Black Americans as assets. . . . While other distinct ethnic and religious groups were the focus of one or two Facebook Pages or Instagram accounts, the Black community was targeted extensively with dozens; this is why we have elected to assess the messaging directed at Black Americans as a distinct and significant operation.*[165]

(U) In March 2018, the *Wall Street Journal* was among the first to report on a series of elaborate efforts by IRA operatives to target, coopt, and incite African-Americans to participate in real world activities the IRA promoted online. African-Americans targeted on social media were asked to deepen their engagement with IRA operatives—from signing petitions to teaching self-defense training courses. In one instance cited by the *Wall Street Journal*, operatives used the IRA Facebook page, "Black4Black," to solicit from African-American-led businesses in Cleveland, Ohio personal information in exchange for free promotions on social media.[166] IRA operatives also spearheaded and funded a self-defense program that entailed African-American trainers being paid to teach courses in their communities. As part of this operation, an African-American activist was paid roughly $700 to teach 12 self-defense classes in a local park under the auspices of the IRA-administered "BlackFist" Facebook page.[167]

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[164] **(U)** Christopher M. Andrew and Vasili Mitrokhin, *The Sword and the Shield: The Mitrokhin Archive & the Secret History of the KGB*, Basic Books, 1985, p. 244.
[165] **(U)** Renee DiResta, Dr. Kris Shaffer, Becky Ruppel, David Sullivan, Robert Matney, Ryan Fox, Dr. Jonathan Albright, and Ben Johnson, "The Tactics and Tropes of the Internet Research Agency," *New Knowledge*, December 17, 2018, https://www.newknowledge.com/articles/the-disinformation-report/.
[166] **(U)** Shelby Holliday and Rob Barry, "Russian Influence Campaign Extracted Americans' Personal Data," *Wall Street Journal*, March 7, 2018.
[167] **(U)** *Ibid.*

(U) Although the specific objectives behind the IRA's efforts to animate American social media users to organize around political and cultural identification is not entirely evident from the available data, the general intent to foment and promote divisiveness and discord amongst the American populace is strongly evidenced, as are the desire and capability of the IRA to effectively coopt unwitting Americans.

D. (U) IRA Use of Paid Advertisements

(U) Paid advertisements were not key to the IRA's activity, and moreover, are not alone an accurate measure of the IRA's operational scope, scale, or objectives, despite this aspect of social media being a focus of early press reporting and public awareness. According to Facebook, the IRA spent a total of about $100,000 over two years on advertisements—a minor amount, given the operational costs of the IRA are estimated to have been around $1.25 million dollars a month. The nearly 3,400 Facebook and Instagram advertisements the IRA purchased are comparably minor in relation to the over 61,500 Facebook posts, 116,000 Instagram posts, and 10.4 million tweets that were the original creations of IRA influence operatives, disseminated under the guise of authentic user activity. Further, numerous high-profile U.S. persons, such as Roger Stone, Michael McFaul, and Sean Hannity, unwittingly spread IRA content by liking IRA tweets or engaging with other IRA social media content, enhancing the potential audience for IRA content by millions of Americans.

(U) An analysis of the audiences targeted for receipt of those advertisements on Facebook nonetheless indicates that the IRA's use of advertising was consistent with its overall approach to social media. In particular, the IRA targeted some election swing states with advertisements that leveraged socially incendiary and divisive subjects. According to the report produced by the TAG working group led by Phil Howard and John Kelly, Facebook users in swing states were targeted 543 times, out of 1,673 instances of location targeting by the IRA. Additionally, in 342 instances, areas with significant African-American populations were targeted by the IRA with Facebook advertisements. TAG researchers believe that the targeting had more to do with race than a state's role in the Electoral College or status as a swing state:

> *We found from the data that location targeting of ads was not used extensively by the IRA, with only 1,673 different instances of location targeting, by 760 ads. These ads were usually used to target African Americans in key metropolitan areas with well-established black communities and flashpoints in the Black Lives Matter movement. Some make reference, for example, to Ferguson, MO, and a smaller group of ads that marketed rallies and demonstrations to users living in particular places.*[168]

[168] **(U)** Phil Howard, Bharath Ganesh, Dimitra Liotsiou, John Kelly, and Camille Francois, "The IRA, Social Media and Political Polarization in the United States, 2012-2018," *Computational Propaganda Research Project, Oxford Internet Institute,* December 2018: https://int.nyt.com/data/documenthelper/534-oxford-russia-internet-research-agency/c6588b4a7b940c551c38/optimized/full.pdf.

[redacted]
COMMITTEE SENSITIVE – RUSSIA INVESTIGATION ONLY

(U) The parameters and key terms the IRA employed in targeting its Facebook advertisements suggests a sophisticated understanding of where the rawest social sensitivities lie beneath the surface of the American political debate. Darren Linvill noted that the IRA had a "keen understanding of American psychology," they knew "exactly what buttons to press," and operated with "industrial efficiency."[169] Even so, the IRA failed to take advantage of more sophisticated targeting capabilities available to Facebook advertising customers. For example, IRA operatives did not utilize the "Custom Audiences" feature which would have allowed them to upload outside data and contact information, and permitted more advanced micro-targeting of their advertisements.[170]

[redacted]

E. (U) The IRA Information Warfare Campaign

[redacted]

[169] (U) Scott Shane and Mark Mazzetti, "The Plot to Subvert an Election – Unraveling the Russia Story So Far," *New York Times,* September 20, 2018.

[170] (U) Colin Stretch, Responses by Facebook to SSCI Questions for the Record from hearing on November 1, 2017, submitted January 8, 2018, available at https://www.intelligence.senate.gov/sites/default/files/documents/Facebook%20Response%20to%20Committee%20QFRs.pdf ("The targeting for the IRA ads that we have identified and provided to the Committee was relatively rudimentary, targeting broad locations and interests, and did not use a tool known as Contact List Custom Audiences.")

[171] [redacted]

[172] (U) *Ibid.*

[173] [redacted]

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COMMITTEE SENSITIVE – RUSSIA INVESTIGATION ONLY

(U) Disinformation experts agree with Prigozhin's assessment. Clint Watts, in March 2017 testimony to the Committee: "Over the past three years, Russia has implemented and run the most effective and efficient influence campaign in world history."[174]

(U) Eugene Rumer elaborated on Watts' point in offering this summary in March 2017 testimony to the Committee:

> *Russian meddling in the 2016 U.S. Presidential election is likely to be seen by the Kremlin as a major success regardless of whether its initial goal was to help advance the Trump candidacy. The payoff includes, but is not limited to a major political disruption in the United States, which has been distracted from many strategic pursuits; the standing of the United States and its leadership in the world have been damaged; it has become a common theme in the narrative of many leading commentators that from the pillar of stability of the international liberal order the United States has been transformed into its biggest source of instability; U.S. commitments to key allies in Europe and Asia have been questioned on both sides of the Atlantic and the Pacific. And last, but not least, the Kremlin has demonstrated what it can do to the world's sole remaining global superpower.*[175]

(U) Thomas Rid echoed this conclusion before the Committee: "The great Active Measures campaign of 2016 will be studied in intelligence schools for decades to come, not just in Russia of course but in other countries as well."[176]

F. (U) Ongoing IRA Activities

(U) IRA activity on social media did not cease, but rather increased after Election Day 2016. Evidence from well-known IRA accounts confirms that Russia-based operatives continued to be actively exploiting divisive social issues in the United States well after the 2016 election. After Election Day, Left-leaning IRA accounts were promoting hashtags such as "#Impeach45," "#Resist," and "#GunReformNow." Complementary right-leaning IRA accounts were focused on the NFL kneeling controversy, as well as hashtags critical of the FBI, such as the "#ReleaseTheMemo" meme. After the election, IRA operatives orchestrated disparate political rallies in the United States both supporting president-elect Trump, and protesting the results of the election. A mid-November 2016 rally in New York was organized around the theme, "show your support for President-Elect Donald Trump," while a separate rally titled, "Trump is NOT my President," was also held in New York, in roughly the same timeframe.[177]

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[174] **(U)** Clint Watts, Hearing before the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, March 30, 2017, available at https://www.intelligence.senate.gov/hearings/open.
[175] **(U)** Eugene Rumer, Hearing before the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, March 30, 2017, available at https://www.intelligence.senate.gov/hearings/open.
[176] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[177] **(U)** Indictment, *United States v. Internet Research Agency, et al.*, Case 1:18-cr-00032-DLF (D.D.C. Feb. 16, 2018).

(U) More recent social media activity attendant to the 2018 midterm elections indicates ongoing influence operations emanating from Russia. A September 2018 criminal complaint brought by the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Eastern District of Virginia against Elena Alekseevna Khusyaynova, an employee of the IRA who allegedly served as the chief accountant for the IRA, alleges that Khusyaynova sought to "interfere with U.S. political and electoral processes, including the 2018 U.S. elections."[178]

[redacted]

VII. (U) IRA USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA BY PLATFORM

(U) Facebook. Russia's influence operatives have found appeal in the cost-effectiveness of Facebook pages as a targeted communications medium. Data provided to the Committee by Facebook indicates that the IRA used to its advantage many of Facebook's features, beyond purchased advertising and pages, including the "events," messenger," and "stickers" features. The IRA also exploited Instagram—a photo- and video-sharing social networking service owned by Facebook.

(U) The first specific public warning about Russian activity on the Facebook platform came in September 2017, when Facebook announced the discovery of "approximately $100,000 in ad spending from June of 2015 to May of 2017—associated with roughly 3,000 ads—that was

[178] **(U)** Indictment, *United States v. Elena Alekseevna Khusyaynova,* Case 1:18-MJ-464 (E.D. Va. Sept. 28, 2018).
[179] [redacted]
[180] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[181] [redacted]

connected to about 470 inauthentic accounts and pages in violation of [Facebook's] policies."[182] Though not explicitly identified by Facebook at the time, the platform later attributed the subject accounts, pages, and advertisements to the IRA. Ongoing scrutiny of activity on its platform eventually led Facebook to a significantly larger body of non-advertisement content ("organic activity") that originated from these same IRA accounts. This content had been engineered to appear American. Facebook's initial discovery of the IRA-purchased advertisements was an essential first step in uncovering the IRA's 2016 information warfare campaign.

(U) Facebook Advertisements

(U) The Committee's analysis of the IRA-purchased advertisements indicates that the vast majority neither mention expressly the U.S. presidential election, nor explicitly advocate voting for or against a particular presidential candidate. Roughly five percent of the advertisements viewed prior to the election (77 of 1,519) included text referencing Hillary Clinton or Donald Trump. Forty of the post-election advertisements tied to the IRA referenced one of these candidates. The Committee found the content of these advertisements to be substantially consistent with Facebook's public statements that the advertisements overwhelmingly pertained to divisive and inflammatory U.S. social issues. The subject of these advertisements spanned the ideological and political spectrum, ranging from race, sexuality, and gender identity, to immigration and Second Amendment rights. A number of the advertisements encouraged Facebook users to follow IRA-created pages dedicated to these issues, from which the IRA could manufacture and disseminate organic content on any number of politically charged subjects directly to their page followers. According to Committee analysis of materials provided by Facebook, almost all the advertisements were purchased with Russian rubles.

(U) Facebook estimates that 11.4 million people in the United States saw at least one of the 3,393 advertisements ultimately determined to have been purchased by the IRA.[183] Modelling conducted by Facebook indicates that 44 percent of the total user views of these advertisements ("impressions") occurred before the election on November 8, 2016, with 56 percent of the impressions taking place after the election. Roughly 25 percent of the ads were never seen by anyone.[184]

(U) The IRA used Facebook's geographic targeting feature to channel advertisements to intended audiences in specific U.S. locations. About 25 percent of the advertisements purchased by the IRA were targeted down to the state, city, or in some instances, university level. Specific content narratives emerge in connection with targeted locations. For instance, Michigan and Wisconsin (32 and 55 pre-election advertisements, respectively) were targeted with

[182] **(U)** Alex Stamos, "An Update on Information Operations on Facebook," Facebook, September 6, 2017, https://newsroom.fb.com/news/2017/09/information-operations-update/.
[183] **(U)** Colin Stretch, Responses by Facebook to SSCI Questions for the Record from hearing on November 1, 2017, submitted January 8, 2018, available at https://www.intelligence.senate.gov/sites/default/files/documents/Facebook%20Response%20to%20Committee%20QFRs.pdf.
[184] **(U)** *Ibid.*

advertisements overwhelmingly focused on the subject of police brutality. Facebook indicates that the IRA did not leverage the platform's Custom Audiences tool, which would have entailed uploading or importing an externally held list of advertisement targets or contact data, revealing the IRA's efforts were not as sophisticated or potentially effective as they could have been.[185]

(U) IRA-Generated Facebook Content

(U) While early media reporting on the IRA's Facebook activity focused on purchased advertising, the organic content generated by IRA influence operatives on their Facebook pages far surpassed the volume of targeted advertisements. That IRA organic content reached a significantly larger U.S. audience.

(U) Facebook's initial public disclosures about IRA activity identified 470 pages and accounts as originating with the IRA. The dataset furnished to the Committee includes over 60,000 unique organic posts from 81 of the pages Facebook associated with the IRA. An estimated 3.3 million Facebook users followed IRA-backed pages, and these pages are the predicate for 76.5 million user interactions, or "engagements," including 30.4 million shares, 37.6 million likes, 3.3 million comments, and 5.2 million reactions. Facebook estimates that as many as 126 million Americans on the social media platform came into contact with content manufactured and disseminated by the IRA, via its Facebook pages, at some point between 2015 and 2017. Using contrived personas and organizations, IRA page administrators masqueraded as proponents and advocates for positions on an array of sensitive social issues. The IRA's Facebook effort countenanced the full spectrum of American politics, and included content and pages directed at politically right-leaning perspectives on immigration policy, the Second Amendment, and Southern culture, as well as content and pages directed at left-leaning perspectives on police brutality, race, and sexual identity.

(U) Demonstrative of the range of themes the IRA targeted on its Facebook pages, the 10 most active IRA-administered Facebook pages include: "Stop A.I." (an abbreviation for "Stop All Invaders," the page was focused on illegal immigration); "Being Patriotic" (right-leaning themes, including Second Amendment rights); "Blacktivist" (targeted at African-Americans, and focused on African-American cultural issues and police brutality); "Heart of Texas" (right-leaning themes and Texas secession); "United Muslims of America" (targeted at refugee rights and religious freedom); "Brown Power" (targeted at Latino heritage and immigrant rights); "South United" (focused on Southern culture, conservative issues); "BM" (racial equality and police brutality); "LGBT United" (sexual and gender identity rights); and "Army of Jesus" (conservative, Christian themes). "BM" was a replacement page for the IRA's "Black Matters US" page, which Facebook took down in 2016. The IRA used the BM Facebook page to direct users to the Black Matters US website.[186]

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[185] (U) *Ibid.*

[186] (U) Craig Timberg and Tony Romm, "New report of Russian disinformation prepared for the Senate, shows the operation's scale and sweep," *Washington Post*, December 17, 2018.

(U) The IRA influence operatives responsible for these pages created fake online personas with a specific, readily discernible social agendas in order to attract similarly minded Facebook users. The operatives then used divisive content to anger and enrage the curated audience. The findings of the TAG study lead by Phil Howard and John Kelly explain the strategy behind the IRA's Facebook pages:

> *The IRA messaging [had] two strategies. The first involved appealing to the narratives common within a specific group, such as supporting veterans and police, or pride in race and heritage, as a clickbait strategy to drive traffic to the Facebook and Instagram pages the IRA set up. . . . Then the pages posted content that intended to elicit outrage from these groups.*[187]

(U) The IRA's development of Facebook pages and cultivation of followers was painstaking and deliberate. This resulted in the IRA creating top-performing pages that enabled sustained, long-term interaction with Americans on the very issues that drive Americans apart. The "Stop A.I." page eventually attracted nearly 12.5 million engagements, while the "Blacktivist" page garnered almost 11.2 million.

(U) The IRA's Facebook pages were not just channels for disseminating content across the social media platform. The IRA also used its Facebook presence to provoke real world events, including protests, rallies, and spontaneous public gatherings or "flashmobs." Facebook identified at least 130 events that were promoted on its platform as a result of IRA activity. These events were promoted by, and attributed to, 13 of the IRA's Facebook pages. Approximately 338,300 genuine Facebook user accounts engaged with content promoting these events. 62,500 Facebook users indicated their intention to attend the event, while another 25,800 users evinced interest in the event.[188]

(U) An early example of the IRA's experimentation with social media and real world events occurred in the spring of 2015, when IRA operatives attempted to induce a mass gathering in New York City by offering free hot dogs. According to the findings of an investigation into the IRA by Russian media outlet RosBiznesKonsalting (RBC), the success in attracting unwitting Americans to the IRA's promotion of the "event" on Facebook prompted the IRA's operatives to begin using the social media platform's "events" feature much more proactively. The RBC report concluded, "From this day, almost a year and a half before the election of the

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[187] **(U)** Phil Howard, Bharath Ganesh, Dimitra Liotsiou, John Kelly, and Camille Francois, "The IRA, Social Media and Political Polarization in the United States, 2012-2018," *Computational Propaganda Research Project, Oxford Internet Institute,* December 2018, https://int.nyt.com/data/documenthelper/534-oxford-russia-internet-research-agency/c6588b4a7b940c551c38/optimized/full.pdf.

[188] **(U)** Colin Stretch, Responses by Facebook to SSCI Questions for the Record from hearing on November 1, 2017, submitted January 8, 2018, available at https://www.intelligence.senate.gov/sites/default/files/documents/Facebook%20Response%20to%20Committee%20QFRs.pdf.

US President, the 'trolls' began full-fledged work in American society."[189] The RBC investigation assesses that the IRA eventually spent about $80,000 to support 100 U.S. activists, who organized 40 different protests across the United States.[190]

(U) Over the course of 2016, IRA influence operatives trained particular focus on agitating political events and protests in the United States. One August 20, 2016, event promoted by the "Being Patriotic" page (over 216,000 followers) attempted to instigate flashmobs across Florida in support of Republican candidate for president, Donald Trump. Actual events promoted as "Florida Goes Trump" gatherings took place in Ft. Lauderdale and Coral Springs, Florida.[191]

(U) A May 2016, real world event that took place in Texas illustrates the IRA's ideological flexibility, command of American politics, and willingness to exploit the country's most divisive fault lines. As publicly detailed by the Committee during a November 1, 2017 hearing, IRA influence operatives used the Facebook page, "Heart of Texas" to promote a protest in opposition to Islam, to occur in front of the Islamic Da'wah Center in Houston, Texas. "Heart of Texas," which eventually attracted over 250,000 followers, used targeted advertisements to implore its supporters to attend a "Stop Islamization of Texas" event, slated for noon, May 21, 2016. Simultaneously, IRA operatives used the IRA's "United Muslims for America" Facebook page and its connection to over 325,000 followers to promote a second event, to be held at the same time, at exactly the same Islamic Da'wah Center in Houston. Again, using purchased advertisements, the IRA influence operatives behind the "United Muslims for America" page beseeched its supporters to demonstrate in front of the Islamic Da'wah Center—this time, in order to "Save Islamic Knowledge." In neither instance was the existence of a counter-protest mentioned in the content of the purchased advertisement.

(U) The competing events were covered live by local news agencies, and according to the Texas Tribune, interactions between the two protests escalated into confrontation and verbal attacks. The total cost for the IRA's campaign to advertise and promote the concomitant events was $200, and the entire operation was conducted from the confines of the IRA's headquarters in Saint Petersburg. Social media researcher John Kelly characterized the IRA's operational intent as "kind of like arming two sides in a civil war so you can get them to fight themselves before you go and have to worry about them."[192]

(U) Analysis of the dataset made available to the Committee indicates that IRA operatives also took advantage of the Facebook recommendation algorithm, an assessment

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[189] **(U)** *See* Hannah Levintova, "Russian Journalists Just Published a Bombshell Investigation About a Kremlin-Linked 'Troll Factory,'" *Mother Jones*, October 18, 2017. Original report in Russian available at https://www.rbc.ru/magazine/2017/11/59e0c17d9a79470e05a9e6c1.

[190] **(U)** *Ibid.*

[191] **(U)** Ben Collins, Gideon Resnick, et al., "Exclusive: Russians Appear to Use Facebook to Push Trump Rallies in 17 U.S. Cities," *The Daily Beast,* September 20, 2017.

[192] **(U)** John Kelly, Hearing before the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, August 1, 2018, available at https://www.intelligence.senate.gov/hearings/open.

Facebook officials have corroborated. When asked by Senator Susan Collins whether Facebook's recommendation engine ever suggested content created by IRA operatives to Facebook users, Facebook officials admitted that "This happened in some cases," adding that IRA content was "sometimes recommended when people followed similar pages."[193]

(U) In order to maximize the speed and scale of Russia's information warfare campaign, IRA operatives utilized the Facebook platform, and almost the entirety of its suite of features and capabilities, exactly as it was engineered to be used.

(U) Instagram. The use of Instagram by the IRA, and Instagram's centrality as a channel for disseminating disinformation and societally divisive content, has escaped much of the media and public attention that has focused on other social media platforms.

(U) IRA influence operatives in St. Petersburg, Russia, first posted on Instagram in January 2015—at the same time as their first posts on Facebook. Ultimately, IRA activity and engagement with Americans through Instagram accounts dramatically eclipsed the comparable interaction achieved through Facebook pages.[194]

(U) Data provided to the Committee indicates that the IRA used 133 Instagram accounts to publish over 116,000 posts. By comparison, the IRA used Facebook pages to publish over 60,000 posts. Engagement with fellow platform users was also significantly greater on Instagram, where IRA accounts accumulated 3.3 million followers and generated 187 million total engagements. By comparison, the IRA's Facebook page audience of 3.3 million produced 76 million virtual interactions. As Renee DiResta assessed in testimony to the Committee, "Instagram dramatically outperformed Facebook in terms of reach and in terms of likes and in terms of engagement, on a per-post [basis]."[195]

(U) The tactics IRA operatives used on the Instagram platform were consistent with those employed on the Facebook platform. The IRA's Instagram accounts focused on both the political left and right in America, and exploited the social, political, and cultural issues most likely to incite impassioned response across the ideological spectrum. Significantly, a discernible emphasis on targeting African-Americans emerges from analysis of the IRA's Instagram activity.[196]

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[193] **(U)** Colin Stretch, Responses by Facebook to SSCI Questions for the Record from hearing on November 1, 2017, submitted January 8, 2018, available at https://www.intelligence.senate.gov/sites/default/files/documents/Facebook%20Response%20to%20Committee%20QFRs.pdf.

[194] **(U)** Renee DiResta, Dr. Kris Shaffer, Becky Ruppel, David Sullivan, Robert Matney, Ryan Fox, Dr. Jonathan Albright, and Ben Johnson, "The Tactics and Tropes of the Internet Research Agency," *New Knowledge*, December 17, 2018, https://www.newknowledge.com/articles/the-disinformation-report/.

[195] **(U)** Renee DiResta, SSCI Transcript of the Closed Briefing on Social Media Manipulation in 2016 and Beyond, July 26, 2018.

[196] **(U)** Renee DiResta, Dr. Kris Shaffer, Becky Ruppel, David Sullivan, Robert Matney, Ryan Fox, Dr. Jonathan Albright, and Ben Johnson, "The Tactics and Tropes of the Internet Research Agency," *New Knowledge*, December 17, 2018, https://www.newknowledge.com/articles/the-disinformation-report/.

(U) The size, scope, and intended U.S. audience of the IRA's Instagram activity is reflected in the account names of the top 10 IRA Instagram accounts by follower numbers:

- "@Blackstagram_" targeted African-American cultural issues, amassed over 300,000 followers, and generated over 28 million interactions on the Instagram platform.
- "@american.veterans" was aimed at patriotic, conservative audiences, collected 215,680 followers, and generated nearly 18.5 million engagements.
- "@sincerely_black_" built a following of 196,754 Instagram users.
- "@rainbow_nation_us" emphasized sexual and gender identity rights and built a following of 156,465 users.
- "@afrokingdom_" had 150,511 followers on Instagram.
- "@_american.made" focused on conservative and politically right-leaning issues, including Second Amendment freedoms, and built a following of 135,008.
- "@pray4police" amassed 127,853 followers.
- "@feminism_tag" had 126,605 followers.
- "@_black_business" built a following of 121,861 Instagram users.
- "@cop_block_us" was followed by 109,648 Instagram users.

(U) In total, over the course of more than two years spent as an instrument for foreign influence operations, 12 of the IRA's Instagram accounts amassed over 100,000 followers, and nearly half of the IRA's 133 Instagram accounts each had more than 10,000 followers. On the basis of engagement and audience following measures, the Instagram social media platform was the most effective tool used by the IRA to conduct its information operations campaign.[197]

(U) Despite the high Instagram engagement numbers reported to the Committee through the TAG social media research effort, in testimony to the Committee, Facebook representatives indicated that Instagram content reached just 20 million users. In relation to the Facebook estimate, the published findings of the working group led by TAG researcher Renee DiResta contest that "the Instagram number is likely lower than it should be" and advocate for additional

[197] **(U)** The IRA also purchased targeted advertisements on Instagram. The data associated with these purchases was included in the total Facebook advertisements production to the Committee in the fall of 2017. The 3,393 advertisements purchased by the IRA included both Facebook and Instagram buys. Because the Facebook and Instagram buys were produced together, the Committee's analysis has also grouped them together, and these advertisements are collectively addressed in the above treatment of the IRA's use of Facebook advertisements.

research on Instagram content and activities.[198] Additional data and analysis concerning IRA activity on Instagram are required to resolve this discrepancy.

(U) Twitter. Though Twitter has fewer U.S. users than Facebook (68 million monthly active users on Twitter in the United States compared to 214 million Facebook users), Twitter is an extremely attractive platform for malicious influence operations like those carried out by the IRA due to its speed and reach. In 2017 testimony to the Committee, disinformation expert Thomas Rid identified Twitter as one of the more influential "unwitting agents" of Russian active measures.[199] Available data on the IRA's activity on the Twitter platform reinforces this assessment. As of September 2018, Twitter had uncovered over 3,800 accounts tied to the IRA.[200] According to data provided to the Committee by Twitter, those accounts generated nearly 8.5 million tweets, resulting in 72 million engagements on the basis of that original content.[201,202] More than half (57 percent) of the IRA's posts on Twitter were in Russian, while over one-third (36 percent) were in English.[203] Twitter estimates that in total, 1.4 million users engaged with tweets originating with the IRA.

(U) The activity of IRA influence operatives on Twitter outpaced the IRA's use of Facebook and Instagram. TAG members Phil Howard and John Kelly noted in their publicly released analysis of IRA activity:

> *The volume of Twitter posts made available to us is much larger than the volume of Facebook ads, Facebook posts, and Instagram posts. The average monthly*

[198] **(U)** Renee DiResta, Dr. Kris Shaffer, Becky Ruppel, David Sullivan, Robert Matney, Ryan Fox, Dr. Jonathan Albright, and Ben Johnson, "The Tactics and Tropes of the Internet Research Agency," *New Knowledge*, December 17, 2018, https://www.newknowledge.com/articles/the-disinformation-report/.

[199] **(U)** Thomas Rid, Hearing before the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, March 30, 2017, available at https://www.intelligence.senate.gov/hearings/open.

[200] **(U)** Twitter provided the Committee with a significant amount of data (including tweet content, handle names, engagement activity, and other metadata) for each of the over 3,800 accounts they identified as being linked to the IRA. That unique dataset was provided in installments that began in the fall of 2017. In October 2018, Twitter published a large archive of this information for the public to examine, including all tweets from the IRA-linked accounts. The Committee commends Twitter for its decision to publicize the data from these accounts and urges Twitter leadership to continue to make available to the public any future influence operation activities. The Committee urges other social media companies to take comparable steps to increase transparency and allow the public, outside researchers, investigators, and media to more fully examine the scope and scale of these types of influence operations as a matter of corporate responsibility and public service.

[201] **(U)** Phil Howard, Bharath Ganesh, Dimitra Liotsiou, John Kelly, and Camille Francois, "The IRA, Social Media and Political Polarization in the United States, 2012-2018," *Computational Propaganda Research Project, Oxford Internet Institute,* December 2018, https://int.nyt.com/data/documenthelper/534-oxford-russia-internet-research-agency/c6588b4a7b940c551c38/optimized/full.pdf.

[202] **(U)** Renee DiResta, Dr. Kris Shaffer, Becky Ruppel, David Sullivan, Robert Matney, Ryan Fox, Dr. Jonathan Albright, and Ben Johnson, "The Tactics and Tropes of the Internet Research Agency," *New Knowledge*, December 17, 2018, https://www.newknowledge.com/articles/the-disinformation-report/.

[203] **(U)** Phil Howard, Bharath Ganesh, Dimitra Liotsiou, John Kelly, and Camille Francois, "The IRA, Social Media and Political Polarization in the United States, 2012-2018," *Computational Propaganda Research Project, Oxford Internet Institute,* December 2018, https://int.nyt.com/data/documenthelper/534-oxford-russia-internet-research-agency/c6588b4a7b940c551c38/optimized/full.pdf.

Twitter post volume is over fifty thousand tweets per month, while the average monthly volume of Facebook ads, Facebook posts, and Instagram posts is in the hundreds to low thousands, never exceeding the six thousand mark.[204]

(U) It appears from the data that the IRA, or a predecessor of the organization, began posting on Twitter in 2009, mostly in the Russian language and with a focus on the domestic Russian audience. These accounts continued to target Russia-internal issues and audiences until they were closed down in 2017.[205] It wasn't until 2013 that accounts tied to the IRA began to target a U.S. audience with English language tweets.[206]

(U) According to Phil Howard and John Kelly, the activity on Twitter constitutes the IRA's first use of a social media platform to conduct information warfare against the United States. The IRA effort shortly thereafter incorporated additional social media platforms including YouTube, Instagram, and Facebook:

It appears that the IRA initially targeted the US public using Twitter, which it had used domestically in Russia for several years. But as the IRA ramped up US operations toward the end of 2014, this dataset suggests that the IRA began leveraging other platforms in sequence: YouTube (here measured via Twitter citations of YouTube content), Instagram, and lastly Facebook.[207]

(U) Initially, the IRA's Twitter activity targeting a U.S. audience was constrained to a relatively low operational tempo, approximating an initial test phase. By 2014 and 2015, however, the IRA's U.S.-focused efforts had significantly intensified. The elevated level of activity was sustained all the way through the 2016 presidential election campaign period, and spiked with an anomalous peak in activity immediately following the election, in November 2016. By mid-2017, U.S.-focused IRA activity on Twitter surpassed the IRA's domestic, Russia-focused information operations on the platform.[208] All Twitter accounts known to be associated with the IRA were suspended by the company by late 2017, and data associated with these accounts was turned over to the Committee.

(U) The data furnished to the Committee suggests IRA influence operatives probably used automated accounts to amplify payload content by tweeting and retweeting selected Twitter messaging. DiResta elaborated on the IRA's use of automated bots: "In the course of a similarity analysis we discovered still-active bots that were likely part of a commercially acquired or repurposed botnet."[209]

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[204] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[205] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[206] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[207] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[208] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[209] **(U)** Renee DiResta, Dr. Kris Shaffer, Becky Ruppel, David Sullivan, Robert Matney, Ryan Fox, Dr. Jonathan Albright, and Ben Johnson, "The Tactics and Tropes of the Internet Research Agency," *New Knowledge*, December 17, 2018, https://www.newknowledge.com/articles/the-disinformation-report/.

(U) In addition to the Twitter accounts identified by the company as tied to the IRA, Twitter uncovered 50,258 automated accounts that they believe to be tied to Russia. These bot accounts were issuing tweets containing election-related content during the 2016 U.S. presidential election campaign period.[210] Although Twitter could not definitively link these bot accounts directly to the IRA, they illustrate the vulnerability of U.S. democratic processes to automated influence attacks, and the scale of the effort emanating from Russia to exploit that vulnerability. The coordinated activity of multiple bot accounts on social media represents an additional element of the foreign influence threat. According to platform monitoring reports prepared for officials in the United Kingdom, an estimated 2,800 automated accounts believed linked to Russia posted content concerning the 2018 poison attack on Sergei Skripal and his daughter in Salisbury, England, in an effort to provoke uncertainty over culpability for the attack.[211]

(U) The IRA's influence operatives dedicated significant effort to repurposing existing fake Twitter accounts, and creating new ones, that appeared to be owned by Americans. These accounts were used to build American audiences, accrue account followers, and amplify and spread content produced by the IRA. An analysis of the IRA's Twitter accounts illuminates the strategy and objectives behind its Twitter activity. Clemson researchers, led by Darren Linvill and Patrick Warren, collected all of the tweets from all the IRA-linked accounts between June 19, 2015, and December 31, 2017.[212] After removing from the sample all non-English accounts and those that did not tweet at all, the team was left with 1.875 million tweets associated with 1,311 IRA usernames.

(U) After conducting an analysis of all the content that IRA influence operatives manufactured, the Clemson researchers separated the IRA-affiliated accounts into five categories of social media platform activity. According to this analysis, "Within each type, accounts were used consistently, but the behavior across types was radically different." Characterizing the IRA Twitter effort as "industrial," the researchers described the campaign as "mass produced from a system of interchangeable parts, where each class of part fulfilled a specialized function."[213] The researchers named the account types: Right Troll, Left Troll, Newsfeed, Hashtag Gamer, and Fearmonger.

- **(U) Right Troll.** This was the largest and most active group of IRA-affiliated accounts. The 617 Right Troll Twitter accounts tweeted 663,740 times and cultivated nearly a million total followers. Clemson researchers characterized these accounts as focused on spreading "nativist and right-leaning populist messages." They strongly supported the

[210] **(U)** Jack Dorsey, Hearing before the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, September 5, 2018, available at https://www.intelligence.senate.gov/hearings/open.
[211] **(U)** Deborah Haynes, "Skripal attack: 2,800 Russian bots 'sowed confusion after poison attacks,'" *The Times UK*, March 24, 2018.
[212] **(U)** Darren Linvill and John Walker, "Troll Factories: The Internet Research Agency and State-Sponsored Agenda Building," Clemson University, https://www.rcmediafreedom.eu/Publications/Academic-sources/Troll-Factories-The-Internet-Research-Agency-and-State-Sponsored-Agenda-Building.
[213] **(U)** *Ibid.*

candidacy of Donald Trump, employed the #MAGA hashtag, and attacked Democrats. Although nominally "conservative," Clemson researchers found that the IRA accounts rarely promoted characteristically conservative positions on issues such as taxes, regulation, and abortion, and instead focused on messaging derisive of Republicans deemed "too moderate" (including at the time Senators John McCain and Lindsey Graham).[214] The accounts generally featured very little in the way of identifying information, but frequently used profile pictures of "attractive, young women."

- **(U) Left Troll.** The second largest classification of IRA-affiliated Twitter accounts, consisting of around 230 Twitter profiles that generated 405,549 tweets, was Left Troll. The focus of the Left Troll Twitter accounts was primarily issues relating to cultural identity, including gender, sexual, and religious identity. Left Troll accounts, however, were acutely focused on racial identity and targeting African-Americans with messaging and narratives that mimicked the substance of prominent U.S. activist movements like Black Lives Matter. Left Troll accounts directed derisive content toward moderate Democrat politicians. These accounts targeted Hillary Clinton with content designed to undermine her presidential campaign and erode her support on the U.S. political left.

- **(U) News Feed.** Designed to appear to be local news aggregators in the United States, News Feed Twitter accounts would post links to legitimate news sources and tweet about issues of local interest. Examples of the IRA's news-oriented influence operative accounts on Twitter include @OnlineMemphis and @TodayPittsburgh. About 54 IRA accounts share the characteristics of this classification of Twitter profile, and they were responsible for 567,846 tweets.

- **(U) Hashtag Gamer.** More than 100 of the IRA's Twitter accounts were focused almost exclusively on playing "hashtag games," a word game popular among Twitter users. At times, these games were overtly political and engineered to incite reactions on divisive social issues from both the left and the right ends of the ideological spectrum.

- **(U) Fearmonger.** Finally, the IRA's 122 Fearmonger Twitter accounts were specifically dedicated to furthering the spread of a hoax concerning poisoned turkeys during the Thanksgiving holiday of 2014. The Fearmonger Twitter accounts tweeted over 10,000 times.

(U) The IRA's influence operatives coordinated across these Twitter account classifications to attack and defend both sides of socially divisive issues, particularly with respect to race relations and cultural divisions. An example of the IRA's ability to capitalize on both sides of a public debate can be found in the issue of NFL players kneeling in protest of police brutality and racism. Twitter accounts tied to the IRA from both the left and right side of the ideological spectrum used the topic to channel inflammatory content toward targeted, and ideologically like-minded, audiences. A Left Troll account, @wokeluisa, tweeted in support of

[214] **(U)** Jim Galloway, "Clemson researchers crack open a Russian troll factory," *Associated Press,* August 7, 2018.

Colin Kaepernick and the NFL protests on March 13, 2018, prompting 37,000 forwarded retweets. Simultaneous to this, and in the direction of the ideologically opposite audience, @BarbaraForTrump, a Right Troll account, was tweeting content hostile to the protests.[215]

(U) The Twitter data provided to the Committee shows that the IRA's influence operatives used multiple false personas to incite division and antipathy along a host of ideological fissures, simultaneously taking and attacking all sides of the arguments, all from the same internet protocol (IP) address. As TAG consultant John Kelly uncovered:

> *It was literally the same computer that was registering and operating the America accounts, pretending to be right and pretending to be left. So imagine it's the same guy, and the same people, and they got their two little marionette things with their puppets dancing on either end of a string. And they are playing them together. They are inhabiting both sides and figuring out ways to play them off against each other.*[216]

(U) As was the case with IRA activity on Facebook and Instagram, influence operatives based in Russia spent months developing fake Twitter personas and cultivating networks of supporters and followers among sympathetic and agreeable Americans. For example, 118 accounts secured more than 10,000 followers, and six accounts built followings of over 100,000 Twitter users.

(U) One of the IRA's most successful fake Twitter profiles was the @TEN_GOP account. By the time Twitter shut down the @TEN_GOP account in August 2017, it had amassed over 150,000 followers. By contrast, the legitimate Twitter account for the Tennessee Republican Party (@tngop) had 13,400 followers. Despite three separate requests by the actual Tennessee Republican Party organization to take down the account, @TEN_GOP was successful in deceptively injecting its inflammatory content into the political mainstream throughout 2016 and 2017.[217] Quotes and content from IRA influence operatives using the @TEN_GOP Twitter account were widely cited in press articles and mainstream media, and retweeted by celebrities and politicians, including several Trump campaign affiliates, including Donald Trump Jr., Kellyanne Conway, and Lieutenant General Michael Flynn (U.S. Army, retired).[218]

(U) As Clint Watts has described, influence operations like the @TEN_GOP effort can be extremely successful once the content filters into the mainstream press: "If you can get

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[215] **(U)** Laura Rosenberger, Written Statement, Hearing before the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, August 1, 2018, available at https://www.intelligence.senate.gov/hearings/open.

[216] **(U)** John Kelly, SSCI Transcript of the Closed Briefing on Social Media Manipulation in 2016 and Beyond, July 26, 2018.

[217] **(U)** Kevin Collier, "Twitter Was Warned Repeatedly About This Fake Account Run By a Russian Troll Farm and Refused to Take it Down," *BuzzFeed News,* October 18, 2017.

[218] **(U)** Philip Bump, "At least five people close to Trump engaged with Russian Twitter trolls from 2015 to 2017," *Washington Post,* November 2, 2017.

indigenous content, turn that into a conspiracy, and filter that into the mainstream media, that's a textbook case. . . . As an information warfare missile, that was a direct hit."[219]

(U) Another example of an effective IRA influence operation carried out on Twitter was conducted using the @Jenn_Abrams account. The persona associated with @Jenn_Abrams had accounts on multiple platforms, but most notably amassed over 80,000 followers on Twitter. This persona would tweet about everything from segregation to the futility of political correctness, and she would eventually be cited by more than 40 U.S. journalists before being taken down by Twitter in late 2017. John Kelly was among those following @Jenn_Abrams on Twitter. In testimony during a closed Committee hearing, Kelly described the ability of IRA influence operatives to infiltrate entire swaths of the political ecosystem on Twitter, of either ideological persuasion, using the persona:

> *Now . . . we're lighting up Jenn Abrams' account and all of the people following her are lit up. . . . So she had almost the entirety of the activist right, a good bit of the activist left, because remember the IRA has puppets on both sides – they are actually the same people running the machines – building her credibility. And then down below she's managed to make inroads and followership among the mainstream conservative part of that network, and she's even got a few of the mainstream liberal folks following her.*[220]

(U) The IRA was also successful using Twitter accounts feigning left-leaning ideological sentiment. An example cited by Laura Rosenberger in testimony to the Committee, @wokeluisa – which was still active in 2018 and had over 50,000 followers – claimed to be an African-American political science major in New York. Content produced under the guise of this persona would eventually appear "in more than two dozen news stories from outlets such as BBC, USA Today, Time, Wired, Huffington Post, and BET."[221]

(U) While original content creation was a preoccupation largely reserved for IRA operatives on Facebook and Instagram, the IRA's Twitter accounts were used to amplify events and promote the dissemination of content already existing on social media. This distinction notwithstanding, the Twitter platform was an integral tool for IRA operatives. As Renee DiResta detailed in her team's report:

> *Our impression of the IRA's Twitter operation is that it was largely opportunistic real-time chatter; a collection of accounts, for example, regularly played hashtag games. There was a substantial amount of retweeting. By contrast, Facebook and Instagram were used to develop deeper relationships, to create a collection of*

[219] **(U)** Brandy Zadrozny and Ben Collins, "How a right-wing troll and a Russian Twitter account created 2016's biggest voter fraud story," *NBC News,* October 30, 2018.
[220] **(U)** John Kelly, SSCI Transcript of the Closed Briefing on Social Media Manipulation in 2016 and Beyond, July 26, 2018.
[221] **(U)** Laura Rosenberger, Written Statement, Hearing before the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, August 1, 2018, available at https://www.intelligence.senate.gov/hearings/open.

substantive cultural media pages dedicated to continual reinforcement of in-group and out-group ideals for targeted audiences. Twitter was, however, a part of the cross-platform brand building tactic; several of the Facebook, Instagram, Tumblr, and Reddit pages had associated Twitter accounts.[222]

(U) In a similar conclusion outlining the importance of Twitter to the IRA's effort to influence the thinking of Americans, Phil Howard and John Kelly found the following:

...the IRA Twitter data shows a long and successful campaign that resulted in false accounts being effectively woven into the fabric of online US political conversations right up until their suspension. These embedded assets each targeted specific audiences they sought to manipulate and radicalize, with some gaining meaningful influence in online communities after months of behavior designed to blend their activities with those of authentic and highly engaged US users.[223]

(U) Google. To a lesser but still critically important extent, Google and its numerous subsidiary platforms were also utilized and exploited by the IRA to the same end, in distinct ways. According to data provided to the Committee by Google, and additional public disclosures, numerous Google-affiliated platforms were utilized by IRA operatives, including YouTube, Google+, Gmail, Google's various advertisement platforms, Search, and Google Voice.

(U) There is little evidence that the IRA's operational efforts were as reliant on Google's products as they were on Facebook, Instagram, or Twitter to execute the most outwardly visible aspects of their information warfare campaign. The design, nature, and intended use of most Google products probably lies at the heart of this imbalance. Although Gmail accounts were used by IRA operatives to establish account profiles on other social media platforms, Google's products are generally not conducive to the rapid, expansive public dissemination of content that makes Facebook and Twitter attractive to influence operatives. Google's then-Senior Vice President and General Counsel, Kent Walker, testified to the Committee in November 2017, "Google's products didn't lend themselves to the kind of micro-targeting or viral dissemination that these [IRA] actors seemed to prefer."[224]

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[222] **(U)** Renee DiResta, Dr. Kris Shaffer, Becky Ruppel, David Sullivan, Robert Matney, Ryan Fox, Dr. Jonathan Albright, and Ben Johnson, "The Tactics and Tropes of the Internet Research Agency," *New Knowledge*, December 17, 2018, https://www.newknowledge.com/articles/the-disinformation-report/.

[223] **(U)** Phil Howard, Bharath Ganesh, Dimitra Liotsiou, John Kelly, and Camille Francois, "The IRA, Social Media and Political Polarization in the United States, 2012-2018," *Computational Propaganda Research Project, Oxford Internet Institute,* December 2018, https://int.nyt.com/data/documenthelper/534-oxford-russia-internet-research-agency/c6588b4a7b940c551c38/optimized/full.pdf.

[224] **(U)** Kent Walker, Hearing before the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence November 1, 2017, available at https://www.intelligence.senate.gov/hearings/open.

(U) IRA operatives were not, however, entirely absent from Google and its subsidiaries. Among the Google products that contributed to the wide-ranging character of the IRA's information warfare campaign, YouTube was by far the most utilized by operatives. In addition to IRA activity on YouTube, Google also uncovered evidence that Russian operatives utilized some of the company's advertisement products and services during the 2016 election campaign period. Using Gmail accounts connected to the IRA, influence operatives reportedly purchased $4,700 worth of search advertisements and more traditional display advertisements in relation to the 2016 presidential election.[225]

(U) Americans also engaged with a separate $53,000 worth of politically themed advertisements that either had a connection to a Russian internet or physical building address, or had been purchased with Russian rubles. It is unclear, however, whether these ads are tied to the Russian government. The content of these ads spans the political spectrum, and features messages alternately disparaging and supporting candidates from both major political parties, as well as the then incumbent U.S. President. The total amount of advertisement spending related to the election on Google AdWords was about $270 million, making the Russia-linked purchases on the Google platform miniscule by comparison. Gmail addresses and other Google applications were also utilized to establish accounts on both Facebook and Twitter. According to Renee DiResta, "YouTube, G+, and other properties were leveraged to either host content or to support personas."[226]

(U) As a tool of information warfare, the Google "Search" application presents a distinct method for broadly disseminating disinformation. Google's search engine is by far the most utilized on the internet, however Google has been criticized for its failure to address issues with its PageRank algorithm. Periodically, particularly in the context of fast breaking news, Google's algorithm can elevate extremist content or disinformation to the top of certain searches. Days after the 2016 presidential election, a falsified media account of President-elect Donald Trump having won the popular vote briefly ranked higher than stories that accurately reflected the U.S. popular vote result.[227]

(U) Google was quick in responding to and addressing the misleading 2016 popular vote search results, but the example illustrates that the Google platform's search results feature is not impervious to manipulation designed to spread deceptive and misleading information. Public statements by Google representatives emphasize that the company realizes no business interest or advantage in the selective promotion of falsified news stories, extremist content, and conspiracy theories.

(U) As Laura Rosenberger testified to the Committee, "Another way the Russian government distorts the information space is through manipulating search results. Just Google

[225] **(U)** *Ibid.*

[226] **(U)** Renee DiResta, Written Statement, Hearing before the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, August 1, 2018, available at https://www.intelligence.senate.gov/hearings/open.

[227] **(U)** Philip Bump, "Google's top news link for 'final election results' goes to a fake news site with false numbers," *Washington Post,* November 14, 2016.

any geopolitical issue of significance to Moscow—MH-17, the White Helmets, the Novichok poisonings in the UK—and you will be served up a set of top results consisting of outlandish conspiracy theories emanating from Russia."[228]

(U) Private sector entities around the world dedicate sustained effort to manipulating the Google Search algorithm for commercial benefit. "Search-engine optimization," which entails maximizing the likelihood of favored content appearing among the highest ranked query results, is a standard marketing firm capability routinely used in the promotion of businesses and products. The IRA's 2016 information warfare campaign featured some of the same capabilities. According to the Department of Justice indictment, the IRA devoted an entire department to search-engine optimization, the objective of which was the elevation of the IRA's content in the search results of Americans, in furtherance of the IRA's 2016 information warfare campaign.[229]

(U) YouTube. Distinct from Facebook and Twitter, the YouTube platform is not independently conducive to rapid and expansive content sharing. Achieving the "viral" spread of YouTube videos generally entails capitalizing on the reach and magnitude of Facebook and Twitter networks to spread links to the video hosted on YouTube.

(U) Data provided to the Committee by YouTube concerning IRA-associated content and accounts indicates that IRA influence operatives began posting videos to YouTube as early as September 2015. More than 1,100 videos, or 43 hours of content, were eventually posted on 17 YouTube channels the IRA established. Two of these channels were overtly political in character, and focused on the 2016 U.S. presidential election.[230]

(U) The overwhelming preponderance of the video content posted to the IRA's YouTube channels was aimed directly at the African-American population. Most of the videos pertained to police brutality and the activist efforts of the Black Lives Matter organization. Posted to 10 of the IRA's YouTube channels, were 1,063 videos—or roughly 96 percent of the IRA content—dedicated to issues of race and police brutality. The names of the IRA's YouTube channels were consistent with the posted video content and included "Black Matters," "BlackToLive," "Cop Block US," "Don't Shoot," and "PoliceState." The content of the videos posted to those channels exploits issues of extraordinary sensitivity inside the African-American community. It is difficult to reconcile this fact with public testimony to the Committee by a Google representative that, "The videos were not targeted to any particular sector of the US population as that's not feasible on YouTube."[231]

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[228] **(U)** Laura Rosenberger, Written Statement, Hearing before the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, August 1, 2018, available at https://www.intelligence.senate.gov/hearings/open.

[229] **(U)** Indictment, *United States v. Internet Research Agency, et al.*, Case 1:18-cr-00032-DLF (D.D.C. Feb. 16, 2018).

[230] **(U)** Renee DiResta, Dr. Kris Shaffer, Becky Ruppel, David Sullivan, Robert Matney, Ryan Fox, Dr. Jonathan Albright, and Ben Johnson, "The Tactics and Tropes of the Internet Research Agency," *New Knowledge*, December 17, 2018, https://www.newknowledge.com/articles/the-disinformation-report/.

[231] **(U)** Kent Walker, Hearing before the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence November 1, 2017, available at https://www.intelligence.senate.gov/hearings/open.

(U) Only 25 videos posted to the IRA's YouTube channels featured election-related keywords in the title. All of the IRA's politically-oriented videos were thematically opposed to the Democrat candidate for president, Hillary Clinton. Some of the videos featured expressly voter suppressive content intended to dissuade African-American voters from participating in the 2016 presidential election, while others encouraged African-Americans to vote for Jill Stein.

(U) YouTube continues to be the propaganda vehicle of choice for Russia's state-sponsored news organization, RT (formerly Russia Today). As of February 2019, RT had nearly 3.3 million global subscribers on its YouTube channel. In 2013, RT was the first self-described "news channel" to break 1 billion views on YouTube, and in 2017, RT's YouTube channel accumulated its five billionth view. RT's social media presence and activities were outlined in the January 6, 2017 Intelligence Community Assessment, in an annex to the unclassified version of the report.[232]

(U) **Reddit.** IRA influence operatives were active on the Reddit platform during the 2016 presidential election campaign period, in part it appears, to test audience reaction to disinformation and influence campaign content before its dissemination through other social media platform channels.

(U) Motivated by the fall 2017 revelations of significant IRA activity on the Facebook and Twitter platforms, Reddit conducted an internal investigation into whether IRA activity had taken place on its platform. The results of Reddit's internal investigation, which were shared with the Committee, indicate that IRA influence operatives were active on the platform and attempted to engage with American Reddit users. Internal investigators characterized 944 Reddit accounts as "suspicious," imparting that investigators judged there was a "high probability" that the accounts were linked to the IRA.[233] Analysis of the accounts indicates that nearly three-quarters (662 accounts) achieved zero karma points, indicative of minimal engagement by the broader Reddit user base.

(U) According to Reddit, the 944 evaluated accounts were responsible for around 14,000 posts. Of those posts that contained socially or politically divisive content, most were thematically focused on police brutality, issues of race, and the disparagement of Hillary Clinton. A Reddit account with the username Rubinjer, the most popular of the accounts Reddit investigators assessed as probably linked to the IRA, posted a video that falsely claimed to depict Hillary Clinton engaged in a sex act. The video, which was ultimately posted on a separate website dedicated to pornographic content and viewed more than 250,000 times, was created by the IRA's influence operatives.[234] The same Reddit account was used to promote a videogame titled Hilltendo, in which players maneuver an animated Hillary Clinton as the avatar deletes emails and evades FBI agents. IRA influence operatives attempted to achieve viral

[232] (U) ODNI, "Assessing Russian Activities and Intentions in Recent US Elections," *Intelligence Community Assessment (Unclassified Version),* January 6, 2017, https://www.dni.gov/files/documents/ICA_2017_01.pdf.
[233] (U) Reddit, Submission to SSCI, April 10, 2018.
[234] (U) Ben Collins, "Russia-Linked Account Pushed Fake Hillary Clinton Sex Video," *NBC News,* April 10, 2018.

dissemination of the video game across social media, weeks prior to the 2016 election.[235] IRA influence operatives also used Reddit as a platform for Russia-friendly narratives. As Laura Rosenberger testified to the Committee: "On Reddit, multiple IRA-generated memes posted to the 'r/funny' sub-reddit were targeted at discouraging United States support for Montenegrin-accession to NATO, attempting to portray Montenegrins either as free riders or as protestors resisting this move."[236]

(U) In Reddit's assessment, IRA information warfare activity on its platform was largely "unsuccessful in getting any traction." The company judges that most Russian-origin disinformation and influence content was either filtered out by the platform's moderators, or met with indifference by the broader Reddit user base. In an April 2018 statement, Reddit CEO, Steve Huffman, stated that the investigations had "shown that the efforts of [Reddit's] Trust and Safety Team and Anti-Evil teams are working," and that the "work of [Reddit] moderators and the healthy skepticism of [Reddit] communities" made Reddit a "difficult platform to manipulate."[237] Nevertheless, the largely anonymous and self-regulated nature of the Reddit platform makes it extremely difficult to diagnose and attribute foreign influence operations. This relative user autonomy and the dearth of information Reddit collects on its users make it probable that Reddit remains a testbed for foreign disinformation and influence campaigns.

(U) Tumblr. Following Facebook's September 2017 disclosures about IRA activity on the platform, Tumblr conducted an internal investigation to determine whether Russia-based operatives had also been active on Tumblr.[238] The ensuing investigation uncovered 84 accounts determined to be associated with the IRA. Most of the accounts were created in 2014 or 2015, and did not exhibit indications of automation. The IRA-associated Tumblr accounts generated about 100,000 posts, and were engaged significantly with authentic (non-IRA) user accounts on Tumblr. Tumblr estimates that IRA influence operatives used the platform to interact with 11.7 million unique U.S. users, and nearly 30 million unique users globally. Tumblr did not find any indication that IRA operatives purchased advertisements through the platform's advertising feature.[239]

(U) Tumblr's investigative findings indicate that content posted to the IRA's accounts was focused primarily on politics and divisive social issues. A discernible effort to focus content delivery toward African-Americans is evident in the Tumblr account names the IRA chose, and the content those accounts posted. Among the IRA's Tumblr profile names were:

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[235] **(U)** Jose Pagliery and Donie O'Sullivan, "Russians released anti-Clinton video game weeks before election," *CNN Business*, March 8, 2018.

[236] **(U)** Laura Rosenberger, Written Statement, Hearing before the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, August 1, 2018, available at https://www.intelligence.senate.gov/hearings/open.

[237] **(U)** Steve Huffman, "Reddit's 2017 transparency report and suspect account findings," Reddit, April 10, 2018, https://www.reddit.com/r/announcements/comments/8bb85p/reddits_2017_transparency_report_and_suspect/

[238] **(U)** Tumblr is a New York-based social networking and micro-blogging site that was created in 2007, and eventually acquired by Verizon and placed under the umbrella subsidiary, Oath, Inc. (later, renamed Verizon Media).

[239] **(U)** SSCI staff interview with Oath/Tumblr on Russian influence, April 20, 2018.

"aaddictedtoblackk," "black-to-the-bones," "blackness-by-your-side," "blacknproud," and "bleepthepolice."[240] Jonathan Albright, a researcher at the Tow Center for Digital Journalism at Columbia University, is unequivocal in concluding that on Tumblr, the IRA's influence operatives deliberately focused on messaging young African-American with narratives and payload content: "The evidence we've collected shows a highly engaged and far-reaching Tumblr propaganda-op targeting mostly teenage and twenty-something African-Americans."[241]

(U) As was the case on other social media platforms, IRA influence operatives used Tumblr accounts to build audiences of like-minded Americans, into which they would sow socially and politically divisive content. As reported in *BuzzFeed*, a Tumblr account named "4mysquad," which was later revealed by Tumblr to be operated by the IRA, dealt almost exclusively with issues of sensitivity to the African-American community. On occasion, political content promoting the presidential campaign of Bernie Sanders, or criticizing Hillary Clinton was posted to this account. As an example, "4mysquad" posted a video of Clinton calling young black gang members "superpredators," which generated more 50,000 engagements with authentic Tumblr users.[242] Over time, however, the IRA's influence operatives took the messaging broadcast via the "4mysquad" Tumblr account further than the credulity of some users would allow. As one former follower of the account was quoted, after "4mysquad" began posting content promoting the presidential campaign of Donald Trump, "I unfollowed him and the thing that was a red flag was that it was supposedly a black liberal blog that at some point started rooting for Trump to win."[243]

(U) Tumblr shared the results of the 2017 internal investigation with federal law enforcement. In the fall of 2018, law enforcement reciprocally alerted Tumblr to potential IRA operational activity tied to the U.S. 2018 mid-term elections taking place on the platform. On the basis of this insight, Tumblr identified 112 accounts tied to what was identified as an influence operation, indicating that Russia-based influence operatives continue to exploit the Tumblr platform targeting the United States.[244]

(U) In addition to the internal investigation into IRA activities on Tumblr, Oath's security team also searched the company's other digitally-based platforms, uncovering 484 Yahoo email accounts associated with other publicly identified IRA account information. Most of the Yahoo email accounts were used to establish profiles and enable commenting on other social media platforms.[245] Oath's internal security investigation also uncovered a small number

[240] **(U)** Tumblr, "Public record of usernames linked to state-sponsored disinformation campaigns," March 23, 2018, https://staff.tumblr.com/post/180179385310/keeping-our-promise-to-be-transparent-about.
[241] **(U)** Craig Silverman, "Russian Trolls Ran Wild on Tumblr and the Company Refuses to Say Anything About It," *BuzzFeed News,* February 6, 2018.
[242] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[243] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[244] **(U)** Tumblr Staff, "Keeping our promise to be transparent about state-sponsored disinformation campaigns," Tumblr, November 16, 2018, https://staff.tumblr.com/post/180179385310/keeping-our-promise-to-be-transparent-about.
[245] **(U)** SSCI staff interview with Oath/Tumblr on Russian influence, April 20, 2018.

of accounts with some indications of association with the IRA on Flickr, a photo and video hosting service. Only four of the seven Flickr accounts investigators found associated with the IRA had posted images.[246]

(U) LinkedIn. LinkedIn discovered that IRA-linked activity occurred on the platform during the period of the 2016 presidential election. In the course of an internal investigation initiated after the fall 2017 Facebook disclosures, LinkedIn uncovered 91 accounts and five fake company pages believed to be tied to the IRA. Most of the accounts were established in 2015. About 24 of the accounts never posted content to the platform. Eighty percent of the content posted from these accounts generated no engagement from any other LinkedIn users. None of the accounts is known to have purchased ads or any promoted content on the platform.[247] However a common IRA approach involved establishing credibility by creating multiple social media accounts across an array of platforms, under the same falsified American persona.

(U) Though foreign influence operational activity on LinkedIn appears to be limited, the platform and its users are a significant target for foreign intelligence services. LinkedIn users submit, and make publicly accessible, significant personal and professional data in the pursuit of networking opportunities and to attract potential employers. This renders the platform a valuable source of information on an array of sensitive intelligence targets—including the identities of government employees, active duty military personnel, cleared defense contractors, and others. As Director of the U.S. National Counterintelligence and Security Center William Evanina has stated, LinkedIn "makes for a great venue for foreign adversaries to target not only individuals in the government, formers, former CIA folks, but academics, scientists, engineers, anything they want. It's the ultimate playground for (intelligence) collection."[248]

(U) Other Platforms. Medium, a popular online publishing platform, and Pinterest, a photo- and image-focused social media platform with over 250 million active users, both publicly acknowledged the discovery of IRA influence operative activity on their platforms. The Committee's TAG researchers also discovered IRA activity on other popular internet sites, including Vine, Gab, Meetup, VKontakte, and LiveJournal. Even browser extensions, music applications, and games, like Pokémon Go were incorporated into the IRA's influence operation.[249] As Renee DiResta notes, the widespread use of numerous applications and platforms illustrates "the fluid, evolving, and innovative tactical approach the IRA leveraged to interfere in US politics and culture."[250]

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[246] **(U)** *Ibid.*

[247] **(U)** Blake Lawit, General Counsel, LinkedIn, *Letter to SSCI,* December 21, 2018.

[248] **(U)** Jonathan Landay and Warren Strobel, "Exclusive: U.S. Accuses China of "Super Aggressive" Spy Campaign on LinkedIn," *Reuters,* August 31, 2018.

[249] **(U)** Renee DiResta, Dr. Kris Shaffer, Becky Ruppel, David Sullivan, Robert Matney, Ryan Fox, Dr. Jonathan Albright, and Ben Johnson, "The Tactics and Tropes of the Internet Research Agency," *New Knowledge*, December 17, 2018, https://www.newknowledge.com/articles/the-disinformation-report/.

[250] **(U)** *Ibid.*

VIII. (U) OTHER RUSSIAN SOCIAL MEDIA INFORMATION WARFARE EFFORTS

A. (U) Main Intelligence Directorate (GRU)

(U) Other Russian government-funded and -directed entities, particularly the Russian intelligence services, also conducted social media efforts directed at the 2016 U.S. election. The Russian GRU conducted a wide variety of activities on social media. In January 2018 written responses to Committee inquiries, Facebook confirmed the presence of activity attributed to the GRU (also known as Fancy Bear or APT28) on its platform: "We have also tracked activity from a cluster of accounts we have assessed to belong to a group, APT28, that the U.S. government has publicly linked to Russian military intelligence services and the 'DCLeaks' organization."[251]

(U) Much of the activity related to APT28 found by Facebook in 2016 appeared to Facebook security experts as consistent with more typical offensive cyber activities, generally attributed to foreign intelligence services, including the targeting and attempted hacking of "employees of major U.S. political campaigns." However, Facebook later detected the APT28 group's engagement in what they described as "a new kind of behavior" later in the summer of 2016. Facebook uncovered GRU attempts to engage in influence activities, namely, "the creation of fake personas that were then used to seed stolen information to journalists." As Facebook notes, "These fake personas were organized under the banner of an organization that called itself 'DCLeaks.'"[252]

(U) The GRU's direct role in the 2016 information warfare campaign was publicly exposed in yet another indictment obtained in July 2018 by the Special Counsel's Office. This indictment against the GRU ("the GRU indictment") outlined very specific details about the GRU's online influence operations.

(U) The GRU indictment charged a number of GRU operatives, including Aleksandr Vladimirovich Osadchuk, a colonel in the Russian military and the commanding officer of the GRU's unit 74455. The Special Counsel's Office described Unit 74455's role in the GRU's influence operation: "Unit 74455 assisted in the release of stolen documents through the DCLeaks and Guccifer 2.0 personas, the promotion of those releases, and the publication of anti-Clinton content on social media accounts operated by the GRU."

(U) The public accounting from the Special Counsel's Office also reveals the cross-platform character of these information operations, which involved several of the social media companies, including Facebook and Twitter.[253]

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[251] **(U)** Colin Stretch, Responses by Facebook to SSCI Questions for the Record from hearing on November 1, 2017, submitted January 8, 2018, available at https://www.intelligence.senate.gov/sites/default/files/documents/Facebook%20Response%20to%20Committee%20QFRs.pdf

[252] **(U)** *Ibid.*

[253] **(U)** Indictment, *United States v. Viktor Borisovich Netyksho, et al.*, Case 1:18-cr-00215-ABJ (D.D.C. July 13, 2018).

(U) On *or about June 8, 2016, and at approximately the same time that the dcleaks.com website was launched, the Conspirators created a DCLeaks Facebook page using a preexisting social media account under the fictitious name "Alice Donovan." In addition to the DCLeaks Facebook page, the Conspirators used other social media accounts in the names of fictitious U.S. persons such as "Jason Scott" and "Richard Gingrey" to promote the DCLeaks website.*[254]

(U) *On or about June 8, 2016, the Conspirators created the Twitter account @dcleaks_. The Conspirators operated the @dcleaks_ Twitter account from the same computer used for other efforts to interfere with the 2016 U.S. presidential election. For example, the Conspirators used the same computer to operate the Twitter account @BaltimoreIsWhr, through which they encouraged U.S. audiences to "[j]oin our flash mob" opposing Clinton and to post images with the hashtag #BlacksAgainstHillary.*[255]

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[254] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[255] **(U)** *Ibid.*

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(U) According to FBI:

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(U) A 2017 analysis by cybersecurity company FireEye outlined additional personas assessed to be associated with Kremlin-linked organizations. From FireEye's report: "We assess, with varying respective degrees of confidence, that Russian state-sponsored actors leveraged at least six false 'hacktivist' personas over the course of 2016 to conduct a series of information operations designed to further Russian political interests."[258] Personas attributed to Russian state sponsors included Guccifer 2.0, DCLeaks, @anpoland (Anonymous Poland), Fancy Bears' Hack Team, @pravsector (Pravvy Sektor), and Bozkurt Hackers.[259]

(U) According to the 2017 analysis by FireEye: "Personas engaged in highly organized, systematized, and in some cases semi-automated social media dissemination campaigns to promote leaks and associated political narratives to media outlets and other influencers, in order to generate mainstream coverage and public attention." The activities included "cadres of Twitter accounts repetitively publishing identical tweets promoting threat activity. [The accounts were] [d]esigned to further spread awareness of incidents and boost the credibility of the personas by creating a grassroots impression that more genuine Twitter users are talking about incidents than is accurate."[260]

(U) Even as late as the fall of 2018, Facebook continued to find activity attributed to the GRU. In August 2018, Facebook announced additional actions against "Pages, groups and accounts that can be linked to sources the US government has previously identified as Russian military intelligence services."[261] As detailed by this enforcement of Facebook's terms of service, Russian-backed influence operations did not stop after the 2016 U.S. election.

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[257] **(U)** FBI, Written response to SSCI inquiry of January 3, 2019, March 1, 2019.
[258] **(U)** FireEye, "Anatomy of Russia's 2016 Influence Operations: Hacks, leaks, and the manipulation of political opinion," FireEye, Inc., October 2017.
[259] **(U)** The *New York Times* reported in September 2017 about activity sponsored by Anonymous Poland Twitter accounts that were involved in spreading political disinformation during the 2016 U.S. election. Their article noted "last October [2016], hundreds of Anonymous Poland Twitter accounts posted a forged letter on the stationery of the conservative Bradley Foundation . . . purporting to show that it had donated $150 million to the Clinton campaign. The foundation denied any such contribution, which would have been illegal and . . . highly unlikely."
[260] **(U)** FireEye, "Anatomy of Russia's 2016 Influence Operations: Hacks, leaks, and the manipulation of political opinion," FireEye, Inc., October 2017.
[261] **(U)** Facebook Newsroom, "Taking Down More Coordinated Inauthentic Behavior," Facebook, August 21, 2018, https://newsroom.fb.com/news/2018/08/more-coordinated-inauthentic-behavior/.

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[262]
[263] (U) *Ibid.*
[264] (U) *Ibid.*
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[266] (U) *Ibid.*
[267] (U) *Ibid.*

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C. (U) Other Russian Government Activities

(U) In fall 2016, an FBI contractor analyzed a pro-Russian network of 13 Twitter accounts. The account @TeamTrumpRussia was the central node in this network. According to FBI:

> (U) *@TeamTrumpRussia and the other 12 accounts had a total of 1,504,511 followers at the time the contractor collected its data (17 to 19 October 2016). Four of the 13 accounts had a reciprocal relationship with Sergey Nalobin, an employee of Russia's Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), whose Twitter profile states he is responsible for "digital diplomacy and social media." In August 2015, the United Kingdom refused to extend Nalobin's visa because of his involvement with a UK political group called "Conservative Friends of Russia," according to open source reporting.*
>
> (U) *The FBI contractor found over 70 percent of the network's Tweets contained links to Websites "outside of the mainstream US press, and are known to be*

[268] [redacted]

[269] [redacted]

[270] (U) *Ibid.*

[271] [redacted]

[272] (U) *Ibid.*

highly supportive of the Trump campaign. Of those sites, a number are also known to overtly draw content from Russian disinformation sites or are suspected of more covert connections to the Kremlin."

[redacted] *A second report produced by the contractor examined the network's efforts to promote allegations of voter fraud in advance of the election,* [redacted]

[redacted]

IX. (U) U.S. GOVERNMENT RESPONSE

(U) Throughout the 2016 U.S. presidential election campaign period, the IRA was a largely obscure entity operating far from America's borders inside a stand-alone building in St. Petersburg, Russia. Despite the fact that the IRA began planning and implementing its electoral interference as early as 2014, its existence and activities were not well known to the wider American public and the U.S. Government until well after the election had passed. Even the January 6, 2017 Intelligence Community Assessment, authored as the Intelligence Community's comprehensive account of Russia's attack on the U.S. election, made no more than a passing reference to the cadre of professional trolls housed in the IRA.[275] In early September 2017, Facebook—under significant pressure from this Committee and the broader United States Congress—disclosed a collection of accounts linked to the IRA, beginning to bring the scope of

[273] **(U)** FBI, Written response to SSCI inquiry of January 3, 2019, March 1, 2019.

[274] [redacted]

[275] [redacted]

the IRA's electoral activities into focus.[276] The criminal nature of the IRA's interference crystallized with the Special Counsel's public indictment in February 2018.[277]

(U) Some of the starkest early insights into IRA activities for western audiences were reported by *The Guardian*'s Shaun Walker in his April 2015 report, "Salutin' Putin," and by Adrian Chen in *The New York Times Magazine* investigative report on the IRA, "The Agency."[278] These investigative reports take on new significance in light of the Committee's work.

(U) The U.S. Intelligence Community's ability to identify and combat foreign influence operations carried out via social media channels has improved since the 2016 U.S. presidential election. Communication and information sharing between government agencies and the social media companies has been a particular point of emphasis, and the Committee strongly supports these efforts. Characterizing the company's present relationship with Federal law enforcement, Twitter representatives have informed the Committee, "We now have well-established relationships with law enforcement agencies active in this arena, including the Federal Bureau of Investigation Foreign Influence Task Force and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Election Security Task Force."[279] Facebook has made similar representations to the Committee:

> *After the election, when the public discussion of 'fake news' rapidly accelerated, we continued to investigate and learn more about the new threat of using fake accounts to amplify divisive material and deceptively influence civic discourse. We shared what we learned with government officials and others in the tech industry. Since then, we also have been coordinating with the FBI's Counterintelligence Division and the DOJ's National Security Division. We are also actively engaged with the Department of Homeland Security, the FBI's Foreign Influence Task Force, and Secretaries of State across the US on our efforts to detect and stop information operations, including those that target elections.*[280]

(U) This progress notwithstanding, it is important to memorialize the state of information sharing between law enforcement and the social media companies in fall 2016. The FBI was examining social media content for its potential as a means of effectuating foreign influence operations in 2016, but mostly through contractors:

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[276] **(U)** Alex Stamos, Facebook, "An Update on Information Operations on Facebook," September 6, 2017: https://newsroom.fb.com/news/2017/09/information-operations-update/.

[277] **(U)** The first publicly available insight into the IRA, however, came several years prior as a result of the efforts of a small number of diligent and prescient reporters. By 2015, Russian reporters, including Andrei Soshnikov who went undercover as a troll in the IRA in 2013, had begun to expose the inner workings of the IRA.

[278] **(U)** Shaun Walker, "Salutin' Putin: Inside a Russian troll House," *The Guardian*, April 2, 2015; Adrian Chen, "The Agency," *The New York Times Magazine,* June 2, 2015.

[279] **(U)** Sean Edgett, Letter to SSCI Chairman Richard Burr and Vice Chairman Mark Warner, January 25, 2019.

[280] **(U)** Facebook, Letter to SSCI Chairman Richard Burr and Vice Chairman Mark Warner, February 26, 2019

> **(U)** *In October 2016, the Counterintelligence Division tasked a contractor to identify Russian influence activity on Twitter. The FBI contractor collected and analyzed a sample of Twitter activity conducted by an overtly pro-Russian network of 13 Twitter accounts and their followers, including automated accounts, which promoted US election-related news and leaked Democratic party emails published by WikiLeaks.*[281]

(U) The apparently outsourced nature of this work is troubling: it suggests FBI either lacked resources or viewed work in this vein as not warranting more institutionalized consideration. None of the resulting analysis or even notice of the underlying activity appears to have been communicated to the social media company in question prior to the election. Twitter's General Counsel told the Committee in January 2019: "To the best of our knowledge, Twitter received no information from the U.S. government in advance of the 2016 election about state sponsored information operations."[282]

(U) Facebook, however, had more robust information exchange with law enforcement in 2016: "In several instances before the 2016 U.S. election, our threat intelligence team detected and mitigated threats from actors with ties to Russia and reported them to US law enforcement officials, and they subsequently shared useful feedback with us."[283] Still, it was incumbent on Facebook to initiate the dialogue with law enforcement, and the exchange of information was predicated on Facebook bringing foreign influence activity directed at Americans to the attention of the FBI.

[redacted]

[redacted] Reflecting on the U.S. Government's handling of social media in the context of Russia's influence operations, former Deputy National Security Advisor for Strategic Communications Ben Rhodes commented [redacted]

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[281] **(U)** FBI, Written response to SSCI inquiry of January 3, 2019, March 1, 2019.
[282] **(U)** Sean Edgett, Letter to SSCI Chairman Richard Burr and Vice Chairman Mark Warner, January 25, 2019.
[283] **(U)** Facebook, Letter to SSCI Chairman Richard Burr and Vice Chairman Mark Warner, February 26, 2019
[284] **(U[redacted])** Committee transcript of September 15, 2017 interview of [redacted] CIA.

[redacted] Commenting on the [redacted] Former Homeland Security Advisor Lisa Monaco offered a [redacted]

(U) Further increasing this challenge, detecting foreign influence operations on social media becomes more difficult as enabling technologies improve. In addition to the growing number of actors engaged in social media-facilitated, online manipulation efforts, the technology that aids in developing more realistic and convincing propaganda material also continues to advance.

(U) The ongoing development of artificial intelligence and improvements to false video and image "Deepfake" techniques are making it more difficult to spot fake content, manipulated videos, and forged recordings online. "Deepfakes" entail using artificial intelligence-based technology to create or alter video content so that it appears to present something that did not actually occur. Although these capabilities are relatively nascent, they are being perfected at a pace that eclipses the effort to create the technology for detecting and mitigating fraudulent media content.

(U) Advanced micro-targeting in the commercial sector is also rapidly becoming more effective. Propagandists will be able to continue to utilize increasingly advanced off-the-shelf capabilities to target specific individuals with highly targeted messaging campaigns.

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[285] **(U)** SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Benjamin J. Rhodes, Former Deputy National Security Adviser for Strategic Communications, July 25, 2017.
[286] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[287] **(U)** SSCI transcript of the Closed Hearing on White House Awareness of and Response to Russian Active Measures, July 17, 2018.
[288] **(U)** SSCI Transcript of the Interview with John Carlin, Former Assistant Attorney General for National Security, September 25, 2017.

(U) Automation is also getting better. Bots—already advanced in sophistication relative to predecessor generations—are becoming harder and harder to detect. Researchers, including Emilio Ferrara and his team from the University of Southern California and the University of Indiana, have studied the increasing sophistication of automated accounts. Their research suggests a detection "arms race," between the purveyors of automated activity and those intent on its reliable identification, similar to the fight against the indiscriminate dissemination of commercial content to vast unsoliciting audiences, or "spam," in the past.[289]

(U) In addition, as the larger social media platforms begin to increase their detection capabilities, disinformation tactics have begun to shift to accommodate those changes. Influence operatives have begun to move away from targeting Facebook and Twitter newsfeeds, transitioning to messaging platforms like WhatsApp, Telegram, and WeChat. These direct interactions are much harder to detect and if these tactics are scaled, they could have a significant effect on target audiences.

(U) The evolution and proliferation of the core influence techniques used by the IRA could jeopardize facets of American society that have yet to be attacked by influence operatives. The same bots, trolls, click-farms, fake pages and groups, advertisements, and algorithm-gaming the IRA used to conduct an information warfare campaign can be repurposed to execute financial fraud, stock-pumping schemes, digital advertising manipulation, industrialized marketing of counterfeit prescription drugs, and scaled deceptions that spread malware.

[redacted] Facebook CEO Sheryl Sandberg testified to the Committee in 2018 that, "Our focus is on inauthenticity, so if something is inauthentic, whether it's trying to influence domestically or trying to influence on a foreign basis—and actually a lot more of the activity is domestic—we take it down."[291] But as the IRA's approach suggests, the current constructs for removing influence operation content from social media are being surpassed by foreign influence operatives, who adapt their tactics to either make their inauthenticity indiscernible, their automated propagation too rapid to control, or their operations compliant with terms of service.

(U) An October 2018 report provided to the Committee by social media analytics firm Graphika indicates that Russian disinformation efforts may be focused on gathering information and data points in support of an active measures campaign targeted at the 2020 U.S. presidential

[289] **(U)** Emilio Ferrara, et al., "The Rise of Social Bots," *Communications of the ACM*, July 2016, Volume 59, Number 7, 96-104, https://cacm.acm.org/magazines/2016/7/204021-the-rise-of-social-bots/fulltext#R22.

[290] [redacted]

[291] **(U)** Sheryl Sandberg, Hearing before the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, September 5, 2018, available at https://www.intelligence.senate.gov/hearings/open.

election. The USA Really website and its affiliated social media channels, which have been linked to the IRA on the basis of technical findings, have "engaged in a number of campaigns seemingly focused on gathering personal information (emails, phone numbers, and bank details) of US-based audiences sympathetic to Russian disinformation topics."[292]

X. (U) THE COMMITTEE'S REVIEW OF RUSSIA'S USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

(U) Throughout 2017, 2018, and 2019, in addition to its review of classified information on the topic, the Committee worked to elevate public awareness of the threat posed by Russia online, an effort that included applying pressure on social media companies to more fully examine their platforms for suspected Russian government activities.

(U) On March 30, 2017, the Committee held a public hearing for the purpose of discussing Russian malign influence efforts. The hearing, entitled "Disinformation: A Primer in Russian Active Measures and Influence Campaigns," included testimony from a number of expert witnesses who provided insights into the mechanics of Russian influence operations and warned that Russian social media manipulation "has not stopped since the election in November and continues fomenting chaos amongst the American populace."[293] Committee Members joined witnesses in calling on social media companies to do more to uncover the Russian active measures activities occurring on their platforms. In the wake of the hearing, the Committee publicly and privately pressed social media companies to release more information about the activity of Russian actors on social media in the lead-up to the 2016 election.

(U) On April 27, 2017, Facebook released a white paper detailing an array of malicious information operations by organized actors on the Facebook social media platform.[294] Though the paper implicitly attributed the operations to Russian intelligence actors, the company had yet to uncover the substantial operational activity of the IRA.[295] Finally, in late summer 2017, Facebook notified the Committee of its findings from an internal information security investigation which uncovered 470 accounts, groups, and pages linked to the IRA.[296]

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[292] **(U)** Graphika Strategic Assessment, *USA Really Shows a New Face of Russian Disinformation Efforts Against the US*, October 10, 2018.

[293] **(U)** Clint Watts, Written Testimony, Hearing before the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, March 30, 2017, available at https://www.intelligence.senate.gov/hearings/open.

[294] **(U)** Jen Weedon, William Nuland, and Alex Stamos, "Information Operations and Facebook," Facebook Newsroom, April 27, 2017, https://fbnewsroomus.files.wordpress.com/2017/04/facebook-and-information-operations-v1.pdf.

[295] **(U)** The Facebook white paper specifically stated that Facebook was not in a position to make "definitive attribution" to the actors sponsoring this activity. However, it was willing to publicly say that the data it uncovered "does not contradict the attribution provided by the U.S. Director of National Intelligence in the report dated January 6, 2017." This is a clear reference to Russian-linked activity. Alex Stamos, one of the authors of the white paper, also made clear to SSCI staff in a briefing around that time that indicators pointed to Russian-linked intelligence activity.

[296] **(U)** Facebook briefed Committee staff on its findings on September 6, 2017, and publicized those same findings later that day.

(U) The subsequent September 2017 release of IRA-linked account information by Facebook publicly confirmed the existence of IRA-purchased advertisements. This precipitated audits at Twitter, Google, YouTube, Reddit, and other social media companies, which uncovered additional accounts and activity originating with the IRA. As more and more information became public, the wide-ranging and cross-platform nature of the attack emerged. The Committee made formal requests to multiple social media companies for any data associated with these operations, in order to better assess Russia's tactics and objectives. On the basis of negotiations with the Committee, several companies—including Facebook, Twitter, and Google—furnished varying quantities of data not previously released.

(U) Beginning with an initial delivery of metadata and content in late 2017, Facebook, Twitter, and Google provided the Committee with information relating to a number of IRA-affiliated social media accounts, including advertisements purchased in connection with those accounts, consisting of:

- Metadata and content associated with 81 Facebook Pages, including approximately 61,500 unique Facebook organic posts and 3,393 paid advertisements;
- Similar information from nearly 116,000 Instagram posts across 133 Instagram accounts;
- Metadata and content of approximately 10.4 million tweets across 3,841 Twitter accounts, as well as unique account information; and,
- Approximately 1,100 YouTube videos (43 hours of video) across 17 account channels.

(U) Each of these accounts and their associated activities were determined to be connected to the IRA by the social media companies themselves, based on the companies' internal investigations.[297] This cooperation by the social media companies secured for the Committee a significant and unique dataset on which to base further study into IRA activities. Much of the analysis in this report derives from that initial dataset.[298] The datasets provided to the Committee demonstrate the IRA's tactics and capabilities, and add depth to the public's understanding of how the IRA conducted its information warfare campaign against the United States in 2016.

(U) In order to thoroughly examine this sizeable aggregation of technical data, the Committee sought assistance from the TAG. At the Committee's request, the two TAG working

[297] **(U)** The Committee has not attempted to make an independent determination as to the accuracy of the social media companies' internal investigations or the true provenance of the accounts themselves, though the Committee does believe that the data provided is almost certainly not the entirety of the IRA's activity on these platforms. Subsequent reporting and additional research from outside analysts have corroborated much of the original attribution from the companies.

[298] **(U)** Twitter has since published its entire dataset on IRA-linked activity. On October 17, 2018, Twitter publicly released all the accounts and related content it has identified so far as associated with the activities of the IRA, dating back to 2009.

groups each conducted an independent, expert analysis of the social media company-provided dataset. Combining this dataset with the TAG's own internal research and data analytic capabilities, the TAG working groups studied U.S. social media platforms for indications of additional and undiscovered Russian foreign influence activity. Ultimately, the three TAG working group leads provided their findings and analysis to the Committee in a series of presentations that included staff briefings, a closed Member briefing, and a full Committee public hearing held on August 1, 2018.

(U) The TAG working groups each published their findings in two public reports that were released on December 17, 2018. The efforts of the TAG working groups, and the team leads specifically, resulted in two valuable publications that have significantly informed the Committee's understanding of Russia's social media-predicated attack against our democracy. The Committee supports the general findings of the TAG working groups, and notes that much of this Volume's analysis is derived from their work. The two reports are attached as addendums to this Volume.

XI. (U) RECOMMENDATIONS

(U) This challenge requires an integrated approach that brings together the public and private sectors. This approach must be rooted in protecting democratic values, including freedom of speech and the right to privacy. The Federal government, civil society, and the private sector, including social media and technology companies, each have an important role to play in deterring and defending against foreign influence operations that target the United States.

A. (U) Industry Measures

(U) The Committee recommends that social media companies work to facilitate greater information sharing between the public and private sector, and among the social companies themselves about malicious activity and platform vulnerabilities that are exploited to spread disinformation. Formalized mechanisms for collaboration that facilitate content sharing among the social media platforms in order to defend against foreign disinformation, as occurred with violent extremist content online, should be fostered. As researchers have concluded: "Many disinformation campaigns and cyber threats do not just manipulate one platform; the information moves across various platforms or a cyber-attack threatens multiple companies' network security and data integrity. There must be greater cooperation within the tech sector and between the tech sector and other stakeholders to address these issues."[299] The Committee agrees.

(U) This should not be a difficult step. Models for cooperation already exist and can be developed further:

[299] **(U)** *Harmful Content: The Role of Internet Platform Companies in Fighting Terrorist Incitement and Politically Motivated Disinformation*, Stern Center for Business and Human Rights, New York University, November 3, 2017, http://www.stern.nyu.edu/experience-stern/faculty-research/harmful-content-role-internet-platform- companies-fighting-terrorist-incitement-and-politically.

- **(U)** Google, Facebook, Twitter, and Microsoft already maintain a common database of digital fingerprints identifying violent extremist videos. These four companies also participate in a Cyberhate Problem-Solving Lab run by the Anti-Defamation League's Center for Technology and Society.

- **(U)** Dozens of tech companies participate in the Global Network Initiative, a tech policy forum devoted to protecting digital rights globally.

- **(U)** Other examples include the Global Internet Forum to Counter Terrorism, whose goal is to substantially disrupt terrorists' ability to disseminate violent extremist propaganda, and glorify real-world acts of violence; and the National Cyber Forensics and Training Alliance, a nonprofit partnership between industry, government, and academia that enables cooperation to disrupt cyber-crime.

- **(U)** Two models from the world of financial intelligence are the UK's Joint Money Laundering Intelligence Taskforce and the United States' Financial Crimes Enforcement Exchange.

(U) At the urging of the Committee, social media companies have begun to share indicators, albeit on an ad hoc basis.

(U) The Committee further recommends that social media companies provide users with:

- **(U)** Greater transparency about activity occurring on their platforms, including disclosure of automated accounts (i.e., bots);

- **(U)** Greater context for users about why they see certain content;

- **(U)** The locational origin of content; and,

- **(U)** Complete and timely public exposure of malign information operations.

(U) Social media platforms are not consistent in proactively, clearly, and conspicuously notifying users that they have been exposed to these efforts, leaving those who have been exposed to the false information or accounts without the knowledge they need to better evaluate future social media content that they encounter. Notifications to individual users should be clearly stated, device neutral, and provide users all the information necessary to understanding the malicious nature of the social media content or accounts they were exposed to.

(U) Finally, the analytic and computational capabilities of outside researchers should be put to greater use by the social media companies. Although social media companies have released some data about the manipulation of their platforms by foreign actors, the Committee recommends that social media companies be more open to facilitating third-party research

designed to assist them in defending their platforms from disinformation campaigns. The results of collaboration with outside researchers should be shared with users who have been exposed to disinformation.

B. (U) Congressional Measures

(U) The Committee recommends that Congress consider ways to facilitate productive coordination and cooperation between U.S. social media companies and the pertinent government agencies and departments, with respect to curtailing foreign influence operations that target Americans—to include examining laws that may impede that coordination and cooperation. Information sharing between the social media companies and law enforcement must improve, and in both directions. Data must be shared more quickly and in a more useful manner. This will improve the ability of social media companies to quickly identify and disclose malign foreign influence operations to the appropriate authorities, and it will improve the ability of law enforcement agencies to respond in a timely manner.

(U) Informal channels of communication may not be sufficient to accomplish this goal. As part of its examination, Congress must assess whether formalized information sharing between law enforcement and social media companies is useful and appropriate. Certain statutory models already exist, such as U.S. Code, Title 18, Section 2258A (Reporting requirements of providers). That section requires social media companies to report any apparent violations of laws relating to child sexual exploitation to the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC). NCMEC is a private, non-profit entity that serves a statutorily authorized clearinghouse role: it receives the providers' reports, assesses the reports for criminality and threats to children, and refers them to the appropriate law enforcement authorities for action. Formalizing a relationship between social media companies and the government does present some legal considerations,[300] but these should not be prohibitive.

(U) Further, the Committee recommends that Congress examine legislative approaches to ensuring Americans know the sources of online political advertisements. The Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971 requires political advertisements on television, radio and satellite to disclose the sponsor of the advertisement. The same requirements should apply online. This will also help to ensure that the IRA or any similarly situated actors cannot use paid advertisements for purposes of foreign interference.

(U) Finally, Congress should continue to examine the full panoply of issues surrounding social media, particularly those items that may have some impact on the ability of users to masquerade as others and provide inauthentic content. Issues such as privacy rules, identity

[300] **(U)** For example, courts have considered whether NCMEC and providers should be considered state actors and therefore subject to Constitutional requirements such as the Fourth Amendment when identifying and sharing child exploitation material with law enforcement. *See, e.g., United States v. Reddick*, 900 F.3d 636 (5th Cir. 2018) (holding that provider acted in a private capacity when identifying and reporting child exploitation images to NCMEC); *United States v. Ackerman*, 831 F.3d 1292 (10th Cir. 2016) (holding that NCMEC was a state actor when reviewing and reporting child exploitation material to law enforcement).

validation, transparency in how data is collected and used, and monitoring for inauthentic or malign content, among others, deserve continued examination. In addition, Congress should monitor the extent to which social media companies provide users with the information laid out in section A and, if necessary, take remedial steps.

C. (U) Executive Branch Measures

(U) The Committee recommends that the Executive Branch should, in the run up to the 2020 election, reinforce with the public the danger of attempted foreign interference in the 2020 election.

(U) Addressing the challenge of disinformation in the long-term will ultimately need to be tackled by an informed and discerning population of citizens who are both alert to the threat and armed with the critical thinking skills necessary to protect against malicious influence. A public initiative—propelled by federal funding but led in large part by state and local education institutions—focused on building media literacy from an early age would help build long-term resilience to foreign manipulation of our democracy. Such an effort could benefit from the resources and knowledge of private sector technology companies.

(U) Additionally, and in concert with initiatives that heighten public awareness about disinformation, media organizations should establish guidelines for using social media accounts as sources, to guard against quoting falsified accounts or state-sponsored disinformation.

(U) The Committee further recommends that the Executive Branch stand up an interagency task force to continually monitor and assess foreign country's use of social media platforms for democratic interference. The task force should periodically advise the public and Congress on its findings and issue annual reports providing recommendations to key actors, including executive branch departments and agencies, industry, and civil society. The task force should also develop a deterrence framework to inform U.S. Government responses to foreign influence efforts using social media.

(U) The Committee further recommends that the Executive Branch develop a clear plan for notifying candidates, parties, or others associated with elections when those individuals or groups have been the victim of a foreign country's use of social media platforms to interfere in an election. The plan should provide standards for deciding who to notify and when, and should clearly delineate which agencies are responsible for making the notifications and to whom.

D. (U) Other Measures

(U) The Committee recommends that candidates, campaigns, surrogates for campaigns, and other public figures engaged in political discourse on social media be judicious in scrutinizing the sources of information that they choose to share or promote online. Such public figures, precisely because of the reach of their networks, are valuable targets for adversaries, and can quickly be co-opted into inadvertently promoting a foreign influence operation.

(U) Amplification of foreign content, intentional or otherwise, is celebrated by those like the IRA, who wish to enflame our differences in order to advance their own interests. The Committee recommends that all Americans, and particularly those with a public platform, take on the responsibility of doing due diligence in their use of social media, so as to not give greater reach to those who seek to do our country harm.

(U) The Committee recommends the implementation of a Public Service Announcement (PSA) campaign, potentially by the social media industry or by government actors, that promotes informed social media behavior and raises awareness about various types of foreign influence and interference activity that is targeting American citizens, businesses, and institutions. Foreign influence campaigns that target social media users in the United States should receive similar attention to the dangers of smoking and the environmental risks of pollution. Broader exposure of specific foreign government linkages to social media content and influence activities would handicap the effectiveness of information operations.

[redacted]

XII. (U) Additional Views of Senator Wyden

(U) If American democracy is going to withstand the onslaught of foreign government influence campaigns targeting U.S. elections, our government must address the problem of targeted ads and other content tailored to consumers' demographic and political profiles. Targeted influence campaigns can weaponize personal information about Americans, not just to manipulate how, or whether they vote, but to identify and use real individuals to amplify content and influence like-minded followers. Targeted influence campaigns are far more effective and cost-efficient than blanket dissemination of propaganda. They are also more deceptive and substantially harder to identify and expose.

(U) While the Committee's description of Russia's 2016 influence campaign is deeply troubling, even more sophisticated and effective options are available to adversaries who buy, steal, or otherwise obtain information about the Americans they are seeking to influence. This threat is increased due to the availability of ad micro-targeting services offered by social media and online advertising companies, particularly those that deliver ads to specific Americans based on a list of email addresses or telephone numbers provided by an advertiser. Such ad targeting systems are highly prone to abuse when coupled with private information about Americans, which is widely available because of weak corporate data security and privacy practices, the absence of strong privacy laws, and the booming market for commercial data brokers, whose practices are largely unregulated. Each of these problems demands an effective response.

(U) The Committee report states that, in 2016, IRA operators did not take advantage of all of Facebook's targeting capabilities, including "Custom Audiences," which would have allowed the Russians to use outside data and contact information to conduct "advanced micro-targeting."[1] The danger posed by these services is magnified by the ease with which personal data can be purchased or stolen by a foreign adversary with advanced cyber capabilities. Indeed, as the Department of Justice's indictment against the IRA revealed, the IRA used stolen identities of real Americans to create accounts and post content, purchase advertising on social media sites and finance their influence activities through Pay Pal.[2]

(U) In the wake of the 2016 influence campaign by Russia, the social media companies announced transparency measures that allow the recipients of targeted ads to understand how they were selected to see the ads. However, these transparency measures only apply when the tech companies are doing the targeting on behalf of the advertiser, for example when an advertiser asks Facebook to deliver its ads to a particular age and gender demographic. The companies' ad transparency systems do not apply to services like Custom Audiences through which the platform merely serves as a messenger for ads directed according to a list of targets obtained by the malign influencer from a data broker or a hacked database. I have already publicly called on the social media platforms to voluntarily suspend the use of Custom Audiences and other micro-targeting services for political and issue ads, and I repeat that call

[1] (U) Facebook has acknowledged that the IRA used custom audiences based on user engagement with certain IRA pages. *See* Responses by Facebook to Questions for the Record from Senator Wyden from hearing on September 5, 2018, submitted October 26, 2018, p. 45.

[2] (U) Indictment, *United States of America v. Internet Research Agency et al.*, Case 1:18-cr-00032-DLF (D.D.C. February 16, 2018).

[redacted]

[redacted]

here.[3] Until Facebook, Google, and Twitter have developed effective defenses to ensure that their ad micro-targeting systems cannot be exploited by foreign governments to influence American elections, these companies must put the integrity of American democracy over their profits.

(U) At the Committee's September 5, 2018, hearing, I asked Facebook's Chief Operating Officer Sheryl Sandberg and Twitter's Chief Executive Officer Jack Dorsey whether increased protections and controls to defend personal privacy should be a national security priority. Both witnesses answered in the affirmative. Weak data privacy policies increase the ability of foreign adversaries to micro-target Americans for purposes of election interference. Facebook's total failure to prevent Cambridge Analytica and Aleksandr Kogan from obtaining sensitive personal data about Facebook users, as well as Facebook's troubling data-sharing partnerships with Chinese smart phone manufacturers, demonstrate clear gaps in federal data privacy laws and highlight obvious weaknesses that could be exploited in future influence campaigns.[4]

(U) Broad, effective data security and privacy policies, implemented across the platforms and enforced by a tough, competent government regulator, are necessary to prevent the loss of consumers' data and the abuse of that data in election influence campaigns. Congress should pass legislation that addresses this concern in three respects. First, the Federal Trade Commission must be given the power to set baseline data security and privacy rules for companies that store or share Americans' data, as well as the authority and resources to fine companies that violate those rules. Second, companies should be obligated to disclose how consumer information is collected and shared and provide consumers the names of every individual or institution with whom their data has been shared. Third, consumers must be given the ability to easily opt out of commercial data sharing.

(U) Companies that hold private information on Americans also must do far more to protect that information from hacking. That includes telecommunications companies that hold information about customers' communications, web browsing, app usage and location. Too much of this information is held for too long, increasing the risk that it will be hacked. Besides strengthening their cyber security practices, companies can take steps to delete consumer information as soon as it is not absolutely necessary for business purposes.

(U) Increased transparency is another critical priority if the United States is to defend itself against foreign election influence campaigns. A clear lesson from 2016 is that the U.S. public needs information about influence campaigns prior to the election itself. That includes information about U.S. adversaries' attempts to undermine some candidates while assisting others. In 2016, the specific intent of the Russians was not made public during the election. Intelligence related to Russian intent was not even made available to the full Committee until after the election, at which point I and other members called for its declassification. And it was not until the publication of the Intelligence Community Assessment in January 2017 that the public was finally provided this information.

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[3] **(U)** Donie O'Sullivan, "Senator calls on Facebook and Google to ban political ad targeting," *CNN*, August 14, 2019.

[4] **(U)** *See* Responses by Facebook to Questions for the Record from Senator Wyden from hearing on September 5, 2018, submitted October 26, 2018, pp. 46-55.

[redacted]

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[redacted][5] Between now and the 2020 election, the Intelligence Community must find ways to keep the U.S. public informed not only of individual influence operations, but the Community's assessment of the goals and intent of Russia and other foreign adversaries.

[5] [redacted] National Intelligence Council, Sense of the Community Memorandum, "[redacted]," September 13, 2019.

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VOLUME III
U.S. GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO RUSSIAN ACTIVITIES

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I. (U) INTRODUCTION

(U) Senior U.S. Government officials in both the Executive and Legislative Branches believed they were in uncharted territory in the second half of 2016. They became aware of aspects of Russian interference in U.S. elections over the summer and fall, but these officials had incomplete information on the scope of the threat. In the fall, the Obama administration responded with several warnings to Moscow, but tempered its response over concerns about appearing to act politically on behalf of one candidate, undermining public confidence in the election, and provoking additional Russian actions. Further, administration officials' options were limited by incomplete information about the threat and having a narrow slate of response options from which to draw. After the election, President Obama took action to punish Moscow for its interference, including instituting sanctions, expelling Russian government personnel, and shuttering Russian diplomatic facilities inside the United States.

(U) While this summary will focus on the events above, understanding the broader geopolitical context is important. In 2013, about four years after President Obama gave a speech at Moscow's New Economic School announcing his intent to "reset" relations with Russia, Moscow granted political asylum to Edward Snowden after he illegally stole and disclosed classified U.S. Government information. In 2014, Russia unlawfully invaded and occupied the Crimean Peninsula and parts of eastern Ukraine. In 2015, Russian troops landed on the ground in Syria, propping up a struggling Assad regime that had perpetuated widespread human rights violations and used unconscionable force against its own population. In 2016, Russian security forces harassed numerous U.S. diplomats in Russia, including assaulting an American diplomat in front of the U.S. Embassy in Moscow. As the administration was engaging Russia to deescalate the conflict in Syria and calm tensions in Ukraine, Russia was directing its well-honed cyber capabilities and influence operations in a multi-front campaign to interfere in the elections of the United States and a number of allied nations.

(U) With the benefit of hindsight and additional information, the Committee now knows far more about the scope of Russian activity than the administration knew at the time. While it was clear to administration officials the Committee interviewed that Russia was taking steps to interfere in the election, the extent of Russian activity to influence voters, sow discord in U.S. society, and undermine confidence in democratic institutions only emerged later. In addition, while the U.S. Government's understanding of Russian activity against state election infrastructure has improved over time, the extent of Russian cyber activity against state and local election systems was unclear in the fall of 2016.

(U) Senior administration officials told the Committee that they assessed that their warnings to Russia before the election had the desired effect, and that Russia undertook little to no additional action once the warnings were delivered. However, it is now clear that at least some aspects of Russian activity continued through the fall of 2016 and after the election; notably, Russia's use of social media and its attempts to penetrate vulnerable state and local election infrastructure.

(U) The Committee examined the Obama administration's actions and the constraints it faced. From this review, the Committee has made a series of findings and recommendations that are outlined below.

II. (U) FINDINGS

1. (U) The Committee found that the U.S. Government was not well-postured to counter Russian election interference activity with a full range of readily-available policy options. One aspect of the administration's response—high-level warnings of potential retaliation—may or may not have tempered Moscow's activity. The Committee found that after the warnings, Russia continued its cyber activity, to include further public dissemination of stolen emails, clandestine social media-based influence operations, and penetration of state voting infrastructure through Election Day 2016.

2. (U) The Committee found that the administration was constrained in its response to Russian meddling by (1) the heavily politicized environment; (2) the concern that public warnings would themselves undermine public confidence in the election, thereby inadvertently helping the Russian effort; (3) the unknown extent to which the Russians could target and manipulate election systems; (4) the delay in definitive attribution of some efforts to Russia; (5) the time and resources required to compose policy options prior to execution; and (6) challenges in how to address WikiLeaks. These constraints affected the response options available, as well as the timing and sequencing of their implementation.

3. [redacted] The Committee found that policymakers in 2016 were not concerned with Russian electoral interference directly targeting the United States until [redacted] CIA Director John Director Brennan reported [redacted] information through a series of oral briefings to a restricted group of senior policymakers. Intelligence on Russian activity related to the U.S. election before [redacted] was limited, and the Committee saw no evidence that policymakers with access to intelligence reports were focused on the election threat before [redacted].

4. (U) The Committee found that the administration handled the cyber and geopolitical aspects of the Russian active measures campaign as separate issues until August 2016. The Committee believes this bifurcated approach may have prevented the administration from seeing a more complete view of the threat, limiting its ability to respond.

5. (U) The Committee found that decisions to limit and delay the information flow regarding the 2016 Russian active measures campaign, while understandable, inadvertently constrained the administration's ability to respond.

III. (U) AWARENESS OF THE INTRUSION INTO THE DNC NETWORK

A. (U) Policymakers' Awareness

(U) Most administration officials the Committee interviewed recalled first learning about the Russian cyber penetration of the Democratic National Committee (DNC) from the news media. In fact, had the DNC not approached and cooperated with the *Washington Post* to publish a June 14, 2016, article, senior administration leadership probably would not have been aware of the issue until later, in all likelihood when WikiLeaks, Guccifer 2.0, and DCLeaks began to publish emails taken from the DNC's network. Witnesses told the Committee that the initial reaction of administration officials and the Intelligence Community (IC) was that Russia's cyber activity targeting the DNC fell within the bounds of traditional espionage and was not understood immediately to be a precursor to an active measures campaign.

(U) DNC leadership had approached the *Washington Post* to publish the story about the Russian cyber intrusion into the DNC "to make sure that people were aware of what really happened," according to the DNC's Chief Executive Officer, Amy Dacey. The story was released only days after the DNC had remediated its network with the assistance of Crowdstrike, a private cyber security firm.[1] Noting the apparent absence of criminal intent and that "no financial, donor or personal information" appeared to have been accessed or taken, the article summarized the prevailing view that "the breach was traditional espionage" and cited it as "an example of Russia's interest in the U.S. political system and its desire to understand the policies, strengths, and weaknesses of a potential future president—much as American spies gather similar information on foreign candidates and leaders."[2]

[redacted] Ambassador Susan Rice, the Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs, as well as Lisa Monaco, the Assistant to the President for Homeland Security and Counter Terrorism, both recalled first learning about the intrusion into the DNC in June 2016, via the news media.[3] [redacted]

(U) According to Michael Daniel, Special Assistant to the President and White House Cybersecurity Coordinator, his first awareness of the intrusion into the DNC similarly came from the *Washington Post* article. Mr. Daniel believed the intrusion was unsurprising, citing previous espionage efforts directed at previous presidential campaigns. Because the intrusion was thought

[1] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Amy Dacey, September 20, 2017, pp. 20-21; SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Yared Tamene, January 19, 2018, p. 57.
[2] (U) Ellen Nakashima, "Russian government hackers penetrated DNC, stole opposition research on Trump," *Washington Post,* June 14, 2016.
[3] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Susan Rice, July 12, 2017, p. 4; SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Lisa Monaco, August 10, 2017, pp. 5-6.
[4] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Susan Rice, July 12, 2017, p. 6.

to be espionage-related (i.e., intelligence collection to inform Russia's understanding of the U.S. presidential election), Mr. Daniel believed that the breach was "a[n] [FBI] issue to go work with the campaigns on and not something [the National Security Council] was going to get involved with directly."[5]

B. (U) The U.S. Intelligence Community's Awareness

[redacted]

(U) FBI approached DNC staff numerous times throughout 2015 and 2016 to advise them that a malicious cyber actor was either targeting or had compromised their networks. FBI

[5] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with J. Michael Daniel, August 31, 2017, pp. 18-20. Mr. Daniel stated he confirmed FBI was working with the DNC as a measure of due diligence.

[6] [redacted] SSCI Transcript of the Interview with [redacted], Cyber Branch, Washington Field Office, FBI, May 14, 2018, p. 5. [redacted]

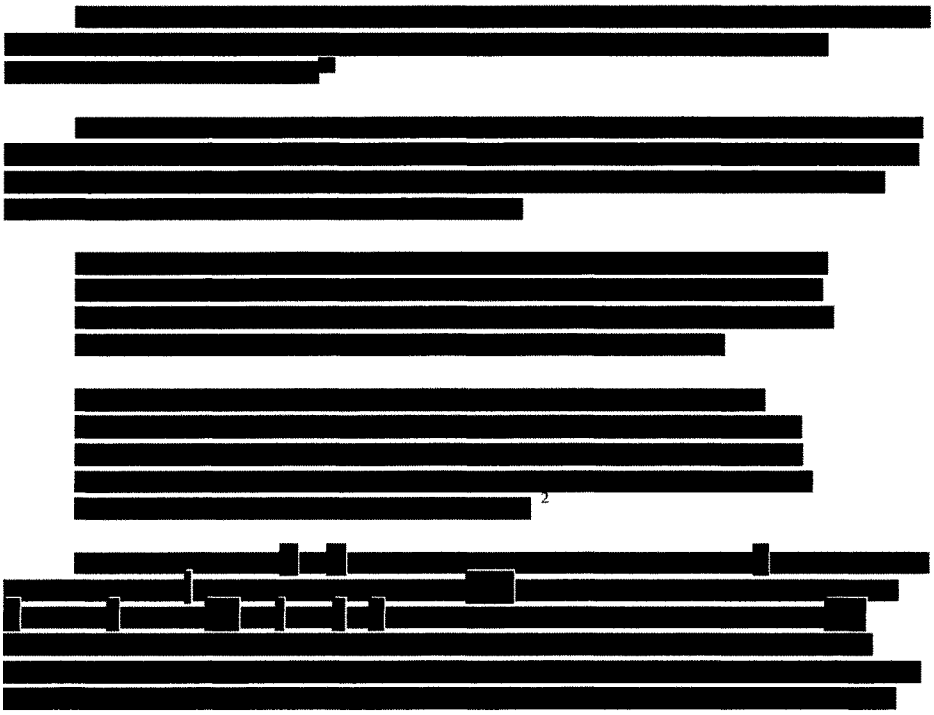
[7] (U) *Ibid.*

[8] [redacted]

[9] (U[redacted]) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with [redacted], Cyber Branch, Washington Field Office, FBI, May 14, 2018, p. 47; Indictment, *United States v. Viktor Borisovich Netyksho, et al.*, Case 1:18-cr-00215-ABJ (D.D.C. July 13, 2018).

attempted to engage the information technology (IT) staff and eventually the leadership of the DNC.[10]

[redacted]



(U) Director of National Intelligence James Clapper publicly alluded to the threat of cyber attacks against presidential campaigns during a May 18, 2016, event at the Bipartisan Policy Center, stating that the IC had seen some indications that hackers had targeted campaign computers, but he did not provide any details.[13] Subsequently, the Director of Public Affairs at the Office of the Director of National Intelligence (ODNI) released a statement which said,

[10] (U) SSCI Timeline of FBI-DNC interactions, March 15, 2019; FBI, Cyber Division DNC Notification Summary, April 24, 2019; *see also* Eric Lipton, David E. Sanger, and Scott Shane, "The Perfect Weapon: How Russian Cyberpower Invaded the U.S.," *New York Times*, December 13, 2016. A more comprehensive account of the FBI's engagements with the DNC will be provided in a forthcoming volume of the Committee's review.

[11] (U[redacted]) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with [redacted], Cyber Branch, Washington Field Office, FBI, May 14, 2018, p. 59.

[12] [redacted]

[13] (U) Brian Bennett, "U.S. intelligence official says foreign spy services are trying to hack presidential campaign networks," *Los Angeles Times*, May 18, 2016.

"We're aware that campaigns and related organizations and individuals are targeted by actors with a variety of motivations—from philosophical differences to espionage—from defacements to intrusions. We defer to FBI for specific incidents."[14]

[redacted]

- [redacted][15]

- [redacted][16]

[redacted]

C. (U) The Weaponization of Information

(U) One day after the publication of the *Washington Post* article tying the cyber intrusion of the DNC to actors associated with the Russian government, a self-proclaimed hacker using the moniker "Guccifer 2.0" started to publicly release documents obtained from the DNC's network.[17]

(U) On June 15, 2016, Guccifer 2.0 published a blog article titled, "Guccifer 2.0 DNC's Servers Hacked By A Lone Hacker," which included links to several documents including a

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[14] (U) ODNI, Tweet on May 18, 2016, 8:54 a.m., https://twitter.com/ODNIgov/status/732962479983185920.
[15] [redacted] NIC [redacted] January 19, 2016.
[16] [redacted] NIC, [redacted] April 1, 2016.
[17] (U) Indictment, *United States v. Viktor Borisovich Netyksho, et al.*, Case 1:18-cr-00215-ABJ (D.D.C. July 13, 2018).

December 2015 report prepared by the DNC on then-candidate Donald Trump and a purported list of donors to the DNC.[18] The post also includes the statement, "The main part of the papers, thousands of files and mails, I gave to Wikileaks. They will publish them soon."[19]

(U) Guccifer 2.0 published seven additional blog posts between June 18, 2016, and July 14, 2016, highlighting additional documents obtained from the DNC's networks or providing additional background on the self-proclaimed hacker.[20] Guccifer 2.0's blog activity continued through the election.

(U) Starting in mid-June 2016, documents from entities and individuals associated with the Democratic Party were published by the GRU-controlled online personas Guccifer 2.0 and DCLeaks.[21] Despite this, as of mid-July 2016, both the IC and policymakers were generally not under the impression that Russia was engaged in an active measures campaign targeting the 2016 election.

(U) FBI announced on Monday, July 25, 2016, three days after WikiLeaks posted approximately twenty thousand e-mails from the DNC, that "[t]he FBI is investigating a cyber intrusion involving the DNC and are working to determine the nature and scope of the matter" and furthermore "[a] compromise of this nature is something that we take very seriously, and the FBI will continue to investigate and hold accountable those who pose a threat in cyberspace."[22]

(U) Witnesses interviewed by the Committee consistently said that Russian cyber activity was a well-known issue within the administration, however hardly any administration officials had considered the threat of information collected through cyber espionage being weaponized when assessing the consequences of the Russian cyber intrusions into the DNC and DCCC networks.

- [redacted][3]

[18] (U) "Guccifer 2.0 DNC's Servers Hacked By A Lone Hacker." June 15, 2016. web.archive.org/web/20160615212118/https://guccifer2.wordpress.com/.

[19] (U) *Ibid.*

[20] (U) "Guccifer 2.0." web.archive.org/web/20160721114432/https://guccifer2.wordpress.com/.

[21] (U) Raphael Satter, Jeff Donn, and Chad Day, "Inside Story: How Russians Hacked the Democrats' Emails." *US News*, November 4, 2017; Special Counsel Robert S. Mueller, III. Report On The Investigation Into Russian Interference In The 2016 Presidential Election. March 2019. Volume I, p. 36.

[22] (U) Andrea Peterson, "Wikileaks posts nearly 20,000 hacked DNC emails online," *Washington Post*, July 22, 2016; Mike Levine, Rick Klein, and Shushannah Walshe, "FBI Confirms Investigation Into Massive Hack of DNC," ABC News, July 25, 2016.

[3] (U) SSCI Memorandum for the Record: Interview with Former Secretary of State, John Kerry, November 8, 2017, p. 6.

- [redacted][24]

- (U) FBI Deputy Director Andrew McCabe told the Committee that the weaponization of information from the DNC by the Russians was occurring "in a way that we've never seen before."[25]

(U) Despite the unprecedented scale and sophistication of the 2016 Russian active measures campaign, Moscow has a decades-long history of conducting active measures campaigns against the United States. Among these efforts, Russia previously conducted active measures operations to discredit U.S. diplomatic personnel, as well as officials in allied nations, using leaked information.

(U) Special Assistant to the President and Deputy National Security Advisor for Strategic Communications Ben Rhodes told the Committee that he was involved with the response to the 2014 incident when the Russians captured a January 28, 2014, phone call between Assistant Secretary of State for European and Eurasian Affairs Victoria Nuland and U.S. Ambassador to Ukraine Geoffrey Pyatt. A recording of that conversation was posted on YouTube one week later.[26]

(U) Mr. Rhodes also told the Committee that, "[t]he Russians also engaged in influence operations against our Ambassador [to Russia], Mike McFaul, where YouTube videos would be posted or innuendo would be spread on social media."[27]

(U) Speaking about the 2014 phone call involving U.S. officials that was released, former Deputy Secretary of State Antony Blinken stated:

> *[I]t sort of fed the larger concern that we had that we were in a new world of misinformation . . . a new world where information warfare was really the new front line, and that the Russians were using it in increasingly aggressive ways. And it was one of the ways where they could have an asymmetric advantage.*[28]

[redacted]

[24] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Rick Ledgett, June 15, 2017, pp. 23-24.
[25] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Andrew McCabe, February 14, 2018, p. 36.
[26] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Benjamin J. Rhodes, July 25, 2017, p. 13-14; BBC, "Ukraine crisis: Transcript of leaked Nuland-Pyatt call," February 7, 2014.
[27] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Benjamin J. Rhodes, July 25, 2017, p. 14.
[28] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Antony Blinken, August 18, 2017, p. 64.

[redacted]

[redacted][29]

(U) Despite Moscow's history of leaking politically damaging information, and the increasingly significant publication of illicitly obtained information by coopted third parties, such as WikiLeaks, which historically had published information harmful to the United States, previous use of weaponized information alone was not sufficient for the administration to take immediate action on the DNC breach. The administration was not fully engaged until some key intelligence insights were provided by the IC, which shifted how the administration viewed the issue.

IV. [redacted] INTELLIGENCE WAS THE "WAKE UP" CALL

[redacted]

[29] [redacted]

[30] **(U)** SSCI Transcript of the Interview with John Brennan, June 23, 2017, pp. 24-26.

(U) Ambassador Rice recalled:

[redacted]

(U) Within an hour or two of learning of the information, Ambassador Rice advocated for the material to be briefed to President Obama.[32] "The President's reaction was of grave concern," Ambassador Rice recalled, which prompted her to call the first of a series of restricted small-group Principals Committee (PC) meetings on the topic.[33] During the meeting with the President, Director Brennan also advised the President of a plan to brief key individuals, including congressional leadership, but not to disseminate the intelligence via routine reporting channels.[34]

(U) Soon thereafter, a PC meeting resulted in the decision to share the information briefed by Director Brennan with Congressional leadership and specifically the "Gang of Eight," which comprises the Speaker of the House, House Minority Leader, the Chairman and Ranking Member of the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence (HPSCI), the Senate Majority and Minority Leaders, and the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence (SSCI).[35]

(U) According to Director Brennan, he recommended that the intelligence be briefed to the Gang of Eight, stating, "I think it's important that this be a personal briefing."[36] Director Brennan did not describe the reaction of any of the individual Gang of Eight members in his testimony to the Committee.

(U) According to Ms. Monaco, Director Brennan was dispatched to brief Congressional leadership in early August 2016, which he immediately began to do in a series of one-on-one engagements, due to the sensitive nature of the intelligence.[37] Ms. Monaco further stated that Director Brennan had worked his way through the leadership briefings, completing the last briefing with Leader McConnell close to the Labor Day holiday in 2016.[38]

(U) According to CIA and Senate records, Director Brennan briefed House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi on August 11, 2016, HPSCI Ranking Member Adam Schiff on August 17,

[31] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Susan Rice, July 12, 2017, p. 7.
[32] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 9.
[33] (U) *Ibid.*
[34] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with John Brennan, June 23, 2017, p. 39.
[35] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Susan Rice, July 12, 2017, p. 11.
[36] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with John Brennan, June 23, 2017, p. 39.
[37] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Lisa Monaco, August 10, 2017, p. 17.
[38] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 17-18.

2016, and Senate Minority Leader Harry Reid on August 25, 2016. The remainder of the Gang of Eight—Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, SSCI Chairman Richard Burr, SSCI Vice-Chairman Dianne Feinstein, HPSCI Chairman Devin Nunes, and Speaker of the House Paul Ryan—were each briefed individually on September 6, 2016.[39]

(U) The Committee notes that typically Gang of Eight member notifications occur as a group, rather than individually. Because these events unfolded in August, concurrent with the August congressional recess, the opportunity to convene a Gang of Eight session in a classified setting as a group would not have occurred until September.

V. (U) DEBATE ON HOW TO RESPOND

A. (U) The "Small Group"

(U) According to multiple administration officials, the receipt of the sensitive intelligence prompted the NSC to begin a series of restricted PC meetings to craft the administration's response to the Russians' active measures campaign. These restricted "small group" PC meetings, and the corresponding Deputies Committee (DC) meetings, were atypically restricted, and excluded regular PC and DC attendees such as the relevant Senior Directors within the NSC and subject matter experts that normally accompanied the principals and deputies from U.S. Government departments and agencies.

(U) According to former NSC Senior Director for Intelligence Programs, Brett Holmgren, no one other than the principals participated in the initial PC meetings, due to the sensitivity of the intelligence reporting.[40] Mr. Holmgren further stated that the "reports were briefed verbally, often times by Director Brennan. So I didn't get access to a lot of those reports until the November or December time frame."[41]

(U) According to Director Clapper and U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations Samantha Power, the extraordinarily restricted nature of the meetings and departure from routine methods of disseminating intelligence were reminiscent of the highly restricted meetings employed prior to the U.S. military operation to capture Osama bin Laden.[42] Deputy Attorney General Sally Yates told the Committee that DC meetings related to the Russian interference issue would not always be identified in internal scheduling or agenda documents because it was considered so sensitive and characterized the meetings as "[v]ery cloak and dagger."[43]

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[39] (U) Response to CapNet E-Mail: Transmittal Form, June 28, 2019; SSCI Transcript of the Closed Hearing: White House Awareness of and Response to Russian Active Measures, July 17, 2018, p. 39.
[40] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Brett Holmgren, November 13, 2017, p. 12.
[41] (U) *Ibid.*
[42] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Samantha Power, July 28, 2017, p. 15; SSCI Transcript of the Interview with James Clapper, July 17, 2017, p. 59.
[43] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Sally Yates, August 15, 2017, pp. 28-29.

[redacted]

(U) Attendance at the "small group" PCs was restricted to a handful of members of the President's cabinet whom Ambassador Rice deemed necessary for the conversation, and consisted of the following, though the last two individuals were not included in the first meeting: Deputy Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs Avril Haines; Assistant to the President for Homeland Security and Counterterrorism Lisa Monaco; White House Chief of Staff Denis McDonough; Attorney General Loretta Lynch; Director of National Intelligence (DNI) James Clapper; CIA Director John Brennan; FBI Director James Comey; Secretary of the Department for Homeland Security (DHS) Jeh Johnson; and NSA Director Admiral Michael Rogers.[46]

(U) This list excluded several cabinet level officials who would normally be present for national security and policy response activities, including the Secretary of State, the Secretary of Defense, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and the Secretary of the Treasury. In early September the group was expanded to include the Departments of Defense, State, and Treasury, to ensure that the full range of response options was being appropriately considered.[47]

(U) Several NSC officials who would normally be included in discussions of importance, such as the NSC Senior Director for Russia, the Senior Director for Intelligence Programs, and the White House Cybersecurity Coordinator were neither included in the discussions nor exposed to the sensitive intelligence until after the election.[48]

[redacted] According to White House Chief of Staff Denis McDonough, although only a small number of people were aware of the sensitive [redacted] intelligence, the "small group" attendees engaged a larger group of people within their departments and agencies to develop potential response options for consideration.[49]

(U) The Committee inquired about public reports that Mr. Daniel and the NSC cyber directorate were told to "stand down," and found that the instructions given were consistent with Ambassador Rice's desire to keep the group working on response options to the Russian interference extremely small.

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[44] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Susan Rice, July 12, 2017, pp. 15-16.
[45] (U) *Ibid.*
[46] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 10-18; SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Denis McDonough, July 18, 2017, pp. 7-8.
[47] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Susan Rice, July 12, 2017, p. 28.
[48] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Celeste Wallander, August 23, 2017, pp. 20-21.
[49] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Denis McDonough, July 18, 2017, p. 19.

(U) Ambassador Rice testified to the committee that:

> [redacted] *Michael Daniel's team had been requested back in June by Lisa [Monaco] in the context of the DNC hack to work the cyber response group, which is customary, like we did after Sony or in the context of Chinese hacks or whatever, to look at potential response options. It was in late August when I understood that Michael Daniel* [redacted], *a list of potential response options [] that was separate and apart from the very small-group process that we were running.* [redacted]. *He was not part of that small-group process that I and my colleagues were running. He had simply worked up these options coming out of Lisa [Monaco]'s tasking, had disseminated them very widely within the inter-agency, as well as within the NSC, to a bunch of people who had no business seeing them. And it was separate from my effort to do what my job was, which was to bring together policy options that are well-coordinated, well-planned, well-conceived for the President's decision.*[50]

(U) Rice further stated that she was concerned that too many people were exposed to the information and that Mr. Daniel's efforts were not synchronized with the other efforts because he was not aware of the restricted small-group activities.[51]

(U) When asked about whether the NSC cyber directorate was told to "stand down," Mr. Daniel told the Committee:

> *I think there was a concern on the part of the senior level at the White House that some of the discussions had gotten frankly over-broad, and too many people had been brought into those discussions, and so part of that work was to restrict—shrink down—the number of people that were involved in developing the response options. . . . I would say essentially we were told to focus on the defensive work and that we basically put other activities on hold.*[52]

B. (U) Debate Over Options

[redacted]

[50] **(U)** SSCI Transcript of the Closed Hearing: White House Awareness of and Response to Russian Active Measures, July 17, 2018, pp. 22-23.
[51] **(U)** *Ibid.*, p. 23.
[52] **(U)** *SSCI Transcript of the Closed Hearing: Policy Response to Russian Interference in the 2016 U.S. Elections, June 20, 2018*, pp. 32-34.

[redacted][53]

(U) Mr. McDonough told the Committee:

[redacted]

(U) Ms. Monaco, speaking hypothetically about cyber attacks against election infrastructure such as voter registration databases, stated, "[M]y worry was, if any of these things happen at such scale, you're going to have . . . chaos and even leading to potential unrest in some precincts."[55]

(U) Ambassador Rice categorized those fears into two main categories. The first related to future information disclosures, regardless of whether they were based on real or forged material, that could be disruptive in terms of manipulating perceptions. The second, and more important fear from the NSC perspective, was any Russian effort to "mechanically mess with the election infrastructure," to include voter registration and vote tallying in addition to state and local infrastructure involved in conducting an election.[56]

[redacted][58]

(U) Regarding voting machines and other election infrastructure, Ambassador Rice feared a range of additional actions Putin could take such as affecting votes, altering or deleting voter registration data, or falsifying and releasing information online that appeared to be authentic. She stated that Secretary Johnson, as the head of DHS, decided to alert states and urge the secretaries of state to harden systems associated with their respective election infrastructure.[59]

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[53] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Lisa Monaco, August 10, 2017, p. 31.
[54] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Denis McDonough, July 18, 2017, pp. 13-14.
[55] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Lisa Monaco, August 10, 2017, p. 33.
[56] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Susan Rice, July 12, 2017, pp. 13-14.
[57] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 12.
[58] (U) *Ibid.*
[59] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 11-14.

(U) Ms. Monaco also stated that the national security team within the White House received clear guidance from President Obama that "first and foremost our priorities were to protect the integrity of the election and make sure that any vulnerabilities in the election infrastructure and the process, that we do our best to address, working with state and local governments."[60] The responsibility to shepherd the election integrity effort was Ms. Monaco's to execute with DHS.

(U) Ultimately, the direction outlined by Ambassador Rice translated into the actions that the administration undertook, focusing largely on protecting election infrastructure and castigating the Russians prior to the election, saving punitive responses until after Moscow's ability to affect the 2016 election had passed.

C. (U) Perceived Constraints

(U) Administration officials described to the Committee the evolution of policy discussions behind the decisions they made during the summer of 2016 in responding to the Russian active measures campaign. In total, the Committee found that the administration operated within the following six general categories of constraints, which affected the response options available as well as the timing and sequencing of their implementation: (1) the heavily politicized environment; (2) the concern that public warnings would themselves undermine public confidence in the election, thereby inadvertently helping the Russian effort; (3) the unknown extent to which the Russians could target and manipulate election systems; (4) the delay in definitive attribution of some efforts to Russia; (5) the time and resources required to compose policy options prior to execution; and (6) challenges in how to address WikiLeaks.

1. (U) Heavily Politicized Environment

(U) Administration officials told the Committee that they did not want the response to Russian election interference to be seen as a politically motivated action in an already highly political environment. They were concerned that warning the public about Russian efforts would be interpreted as the White House siding with one candidate. They pointed out in interviews that candidate Trump was, at the time, publicly saying that the election would be "rigged."

- (U) On October 16, 2016, then-candidate Donald Trump publicly tweeted, "The election is absolutely being rigged by the dishonest and distorted media pushing Crooked Hillary – but also at many polling places – SAD."[61] The next day, he followed up with a tweet stating, "Of course there is large scale voter fraud happening on and before election day," and further reiterated these claims at a campaign rally in Green Bay, Wisconsin that

[60] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Lisa Monaco, August 10, 2017, p. 15.
[61] (U) Donald J. Trump, Tweet on October 16, 2016, 1:01 p m., https://twitter.com/realDonaldTrump/status/787699930718695425.

evening, stating, "[r]emember, we're competing in a rigged election. This is a rigged election process."[62]

(U) Mr. McDonough noted that President Obama was traveling nearly every day in September and October 2016 in support of candidate Clinton. To emphasize the separation between politics and policy, the NSC "went out of [its] way to ensure that there was not a partisan veneer to any of the work."[63] Mr. McDonough further stated that the direction issued to government agencies, pursuant to White House-convened meetings on Russian interference in the 2016 election, included an instruction to handle the issue in a nonpartisan manner.[64]

(U) According to Ms. Monaco, the NSC recognized the IC and law enforcement community's professional aversion to partisan matters. Ms. Monaco told the Committee that she called the Deputy Director of the FBI upon learning of the penetration into the DNC network because she was concerned about FBI's "justifiable and appropriate concern when dealing in a political climate with a political entity in a political campaign."[65] Ms. Monaco recalled that she requested that the FBI "not be so cautious that they not raise that up and engage more actively" while ensuring that the DNC not be "treated differently" from any other victim of a breach.[66]

(U) Secretary Kerry told the Committee that there was extensive discussion in the White House Situation Room, particularly among those who had previously run for office, about how to keep politics out of statements made by the White House, especially since President Obama was actively campaigning for candidate Clinton. Secretary Kerry also noted that candidate Trump was making public assertions about the election being rigged.[67]

(U) Avril Haines, the Deputy Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs, recalled that administration officials quickly discarded any thought of legislation to amplify economic sanctions against Russia, and focused on options that could be pursued by executive order "[b]ecause we didn't think we would get bipartisan support for legislation, and we didn't think that was going to be doable in the time period that we had."[68]

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[62] (U) Donald J. Trump, Tweet on October 17, 2016, 8:33 a.m., https://twitter.com/realDonaldTrump/status/787995025527410688; Donald Trump Campaign Event in Green Bay, Wisconsin, October 17, 2016, https://www.c-span.org/video/?417019-1/donald-trump-campaigns-green-bay-wisconsin, 00:13:30.

[63] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Denis McDonough, July 18, 2017, p. 25.

[64] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 27.

[65] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Lisa Monaco, August 10, 2017, p. 90.

[66] (U) *Ibid.*

[67] (U) SSCI Memorandum for the Record: Interview with Former Secretary of State, John Kerry, November 8, 2017, p. 5.

[68] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Avril Haines, August 10, 2017, p. 49.

2. (U) Concern that Public Warnings Could Undermine Confidence in the Election

(U) Several administration officials told the Committee that they felt constrained by worries that warning the American public would trigger the very thing they were trying to prevent: the public questioning the integrity of the election. Some in those policy debates argued for exposing Russian activities to reduce their effectiveness. Others, including some in the administration and some in Congress, worried that such warnings would create the public impression that the elections were compromised and would essentially amplify Russia's tactics.

- (U) Mr. McDonough stated that the administration had to be careful about "not doing the Russians' dirty work for them."[69] He also expressed concern that any actions taken by the administration prior to the election might be perceived as partisan in nature and reduce the American people's confidence in the election process. These concerns influenced the White House's decision to not take any overt action in response to Russia's activities.[70]

- (U) Ambassador Rice similarly stated that the administration was "very concerned about doing the Russians' dirty work for them . . . to sow concern, confusion, distrust in our electoral institutions and the integrity of our election, that for us to take such actions would only play into their desire to scare people, basically, about the election."[71]

- (U) Ms. Monaco told the Committee that the administration was very concerned about not sowing distrust in the electoral system "because we did not want to, as we described it, do the Russians' work for them by sowing panic about the vulnerability of the election."[72]

- (U) Director Clapper told the Committee that:

  The major concern I think in the White House was, if we do something or say something, particularly publicly, about this, are we amping it up? Are we then dignifying what the Russians are doing and hyping it even more in the minds of the public? And as well, I think, concern about putting a hand on the scale by saying something public, that the Russians were clearly trying to manipulate the election and do so in favor of one of the candidates, and of course, the political firestorm that that could generate.[73]

[69] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Denis McDonough, July 18, 2017, p. 52.
[70] (U) *Ibid.*
[71] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Susan Rice, July 12, 2017, p. 51.
[72] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Lisa Monaco, August 10, 2017, p. 29.
[73] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with James Clapper, July 17, 2017, p. 18.

3. [redacted]

(U) In late summer 2016, DHS was just beginning to understand the threat Russia posed to state election systems, and the absence of a comprehensive awareness of Russian activity mandated that they assume the worst-case scenario. Several officials told the Committee that, at the time, they were deeply concerned about the possibility that Russia had the capability to change individual votes or modify vote totals. Compounding those concerns, some officials raised the prospect that Moscow could retaliate for any U.S. punitive measures by using that capability. The administration decided to confront Putin directly, threaten retaliation for additional interference, and then to retaliate if evidence was discovered that Moscow continued its activities.

- [redacted] Ambassador Rice told the Committee that [redacted] that "much more could be done [by Russia], and therefore we wanted to deter Putin from doing more and all that he could."[74] She further stated that the administration was concerned about the Russians leaking falsified information, further public dissemination of illicitly obtained information, and [redacted] that Moscow could use against election infrastructure. "We didn't want to preemptively poke the hornet's nest and prompt them to do more."[75]

- (U) One of Ms. Monaco's primary fears was that the Russians would modify voter registration databases to invalidate voters, which if performed on a large enough scale, could lead to chaos and confusion at polling places as well as a lack of confidence in the voting system.[76]

- (U) Ms. Monaco and Ambassador Rice were not alone in their concerns. Director Brennan told the Committee:

  I was concerned about what the Russians might have up their sleeve and what they could do, because it's not just dealing in a foreign theater, where we make a chess move and they make a chess move. . . . I didn't know what the Russians might stoop to and so I did not have great ideas at all about if we do this it's really going to have that salutary effect.[77]

4. (U) Delay in Publicly Attributing Some Efforts to Russia

[redacted] Senior administration officials told the Committee that they hesitated to publicly attribute the cyber efforts to Russia until they had sufficient information on the penetration of the DNC network and the subsequent disclosure of stolen information via WikiLeaks, DCLeaks, and

[74] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Susan Rice, July 12, 2017, p. 13.
[75] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 13-14.
[76] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Lisa Monaco, August 10, 2017, p. 28.
[77] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with John O. Brennan: July 23, 2017, pp. 56-57.

Guccifer 2.0. [redacted][78]

[redacted][79]

[redacted][80]

(U) Ambassador Rice stated that the NSC, via the restricted PC and DC meetings, was encouraging the IC to "come to a unified, high-confidence conclusion as to what this interference was and wasn't." She noted, "[t]hat took longer than we would have hoped or anticipated. But you couldn't have it bad; you had to have it when it was done and ready, and that was the IC's to determine."[81]

(U) Ms. Haines told the Committee that in the restricted NSC meetings:

> *[E]verybody knew we had to find a way to make this as public as possible and do so sensitive to all the equities that everybody had, but also do it at a time when the Intelligence Community actually had something to say with confidence, because really you don't want to put something like that out there and then have to walk any aspect of it back. There were already enough credibility issues in the context of the political season. So we wanted it to be absolutely solid.*[82]

(U) Ms. Monaco recalled several officials including herself, Director Brennan, and Secretary Johnson answering questions in several public forums regarding intrusions into U.S.

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[78] **(U)** SSCI Transcript of the Closed Hearing: Russian Active Measures, November 17, 2016, p. 73.
[79] **(U)** SSCI Transcript of the Interview with James R. Clapper, July 17, 2017, pp. 18-19.
[80] **(U)** SSCI Transcript of the Interview with John O. Brennan, June 23, 2017, pp. 78-79.
[81] **(U)** SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Susan Rice, July 12, 2017, pp. 37-38.
[82] **(U)** SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Avril Haines, August 10, 2017, p. 66.

election processes and systems during the summer of 2016. She recalled that administration officials issued largely general responses, stating that the answer was frequently "intrusions into our election process would be a very significant event and that the process of attribution is one that [the United States] takes very seriously."[83]

(U) Mr. Daniel noted for the Committee that conflicting cultures at member agencies of the IC commonly result in delays in the release of attribution statements, particularly with respect to ascribing the confidence level with which a statement can be made.[84]

(U) Secretary Johnson recalled that, as of October 1, 2016, "[a]s an administration we had not reached the conclusion, yes, we will attribute to Russia, and who's going to do it."[85]

5. (U) Time and Resources Required to Compose Policy Options Prior to Execution

(U) While some policy options were ready to execute on short notice—in part because they had been developed, but not used, in response to earlier acts of Russian aggression—a more comprehensive set of options took time to formulate and prepare. The extremely restricted nature of the discussions by cabinet level officials hampered the administration's ability to prepare complex response options. Policymakers were also concerned about escalation and believed their options for sending a nuanced message to Moscow prior to the election were limited.

(U) Mr. McDonough stated that he did not recall any specific proposals for pre-election response actions though he noted that "it was a decision to not act before the election . . . although there was work that we had to do, which obviously informed then the timing of when we do take the steps we take in December."[86]

(U) Ambassador Rice told the Committee that in the fall of 2016, the interagency process "continued to work up these potential response options" to have "them sufficiently baked so that if we had to . . . punish the Russians prior to the election . . . we were going to be in a position to do so relatively quickly."[87] She went on to state that in October 2016, the administration was continuing to prepare response options, consciously deciding that "absent further indications of Russian interference, we would bake these options to 300 [degrees] and take them to 375 [degrees] after the election, and then they'd be done."[88]

[83] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Lisa Monaco, August 10, 2017, pp. 13-14.
[84] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with J. Michael Daniel, August 31, 2017, p. 78.
[85] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Jeh Johnson, June 12, 2017, p. 30.
[86] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Denis McDonough, July 18, 2017, p. 38.
[87] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Susan Rice, July 12, 2017, p. 36.
[88] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 55.

[redacted]

6. (U) WikiLeaks

(U) The executive branch struggled to develop a complete understanding of WikiLeaks. Some officials viewed WikiLeaks as a legitimate news outlet, while others viewed WikiLeaks as a hostile organization acting intentionally and deliberately to undermine U.S. or allies' interests.

- [redacted][91]
- [redacted][92]
- [redacted][93]
- [redacted] General Paul Selva, Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, told the Committee that, [redacted][94]

[redacted]

[89] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 61.
[90] [redacted]
[91] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Closed Hearing: White House Awareness of and Response to Russian Active Measures, July 17, 2018, p. 119.
[92] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Benjamin J. Rhodes, July 25, 2017, p. 51.
[93] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with J. Michael Daniel, August 31, 2017, pp. 94-95.
[94] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with General Paul Selva, September 15, 2017, p. 26.

[redacted]

- [redacted][95]
- [redacted][96]

[redacted]

[redacted]

VI. (U) PRE-ELECTION ACTIONS

(U) Actions undertaken prior to the November 8, 2016, presidential election were limited to admonishing the Russians at various levels, providing federal assistance to secure state election infrastructure, and issuing a public statement attributing the penetration of the DNC and the disclosure of illicitly obtained information to Moscow.

(U) Several administration officials told the Committee that they believed they had exhausted the non-escalatory actions they could take prior to the election, primarily because they did not know the full range of Moscow's capabilities and were fearful that the Russians might attempt to affect electoral infrastructure. For example, Ambassador Rice told the Committee:

> *[M]y view was that we were right to put emphasis on trying to take the partisanship out of this very charged set of revelations in a very difficult atmosphere. I think we were right to put emphasis on hardening the states and making sure that the mechanics of our system were maximally defended. I think we were right to try to deter the Russians from doing more, and my understanding*

[95] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Admiral Michael S. Rogers, March 19, 2018, pp. 17-18.
[96] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Closed Hearing: Russian Active Measures, November 17, 2016, pp. 23-26.
[97] [redacted]

is, as I said, that we had reason to believe they were in a position to do more and decided not to, which would lead me to conclude, although one can't be 100 percent sure of this, that our deterrence had some effect.[98]

A. (U) Warnings to Moscow

(U) The administration delivered at least five direct warnings to various levels of the Russian government. Two of those warnings were direct messages from President Obama to President Putin, including an in-person confrontation at the G20 summit in Hangzhou, China, on September 5, 2016. Another in-person warning was issued by Ambassador Rice to the Russian ambassador to the United States on October 7, 2016, accompanied by the delivery of an additional written message from President Obama to be passed directly to President Putin. An additional two warnings occurred on the margins of already scheduled, senior bilateral engagements, one involving Secretary Kerry and the other involving Director Brennan. A final warning involved using the "cyber hotline," a communications channel between the U.S. and Russian governments that had not previously been used.

1. (U) Secretary Kerry and Minister Lavrov

[redacted][99]

2. (U) Directors Brennan and Bortnikov

(U) Director Brennan publicly testified that he spoke with Alexander Bortnikov, the head of Russia's Federal Security Service (FSB), on August 4, 2016, during a previously scheduled phone call to discuss Syria and counterterrorism issues. On the call, Brennan raised the issue of "the continued mistreatment and harassment of U.S. diplomats in Moscow," which he described as "irresponsible, reckless, intolerable, and needed to stop."[100] Director Brennan also raised the issue of Russia's attempts to interfere in the 2016 presidential election and recalled "[he] warned Mr. Bortnikov that if Russia pursued this course, it would destroy any near-term prospect for improvement in relations between Washington and Moscow and would undermine constructive engagement even on matters of mutual interest." Director Brennan stated that Mr. Bortnikov

[98] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Susan Rice, July 12, 2017, p. 87.
[99] (U) SSCI Memorandum for the Record: Interview with Former Secretary of State, John Kerry, November 8, 2017, p. 4.
[100] (U) Transcript, House Permanent Select Intelligence Committee Holds Hearing on Russia Investigation, May 23, 2017, http://www.cq.com/doc/congressionaltranscripts-5108530.

denied that Russia was doing anything to influence the election and also accused Washington of conducting similar activities against elections in Russia.[101] When Director Brennan repeated the warning, Brennan recalled that Mr. Bortnikov "again denied the charge but said that he would inform President Putin of my comments."[102]

3. (U) Presidents Obama and Putin

(U) Ambassador Rice, with input from other senior administration officials, recommended to President Obama that he issue a warning to Russian President Vladimir Putin at the G20 Summit in Hangzhou, China. She recalled that the G20 summit was:

> *the best target of opportunity to put the finger right into Putin's chest and tell him that we knew what he was doing, that it needs to stop, and that if there were further indications that they had taken steps beyond what we knew they had already done, that there would be serious consequences for the Russians.*[103]

[redacted][104] The message was carefully crafted and coordinated with members of the small group of principals. It was ultimately delivered by President Obama to President Putin at the conclusion of a bilateral meeting held during the G20 summit, with only interpreters and the two heads of state present.[105] While subsequent news media reporting claims specific threats were made, Ambassador Rice told the Committee that the consequences for the Russians were purposely left ambiguous by the President in an effort to intimate that a range of diplomatic, economic, [redacted] options were available to use in response to Russia.[106]

(U) Ambassador Rice stated that, "[t]he President characterized Putin as being dishonest and obfuscating, denying any Russian involvement, criticizing the United States for interfering in Russian electoral processes and fomenting Orange revolutions in their territory." She further stated that Putin's response was an "energetic" and "non-substantive" denial.[107]

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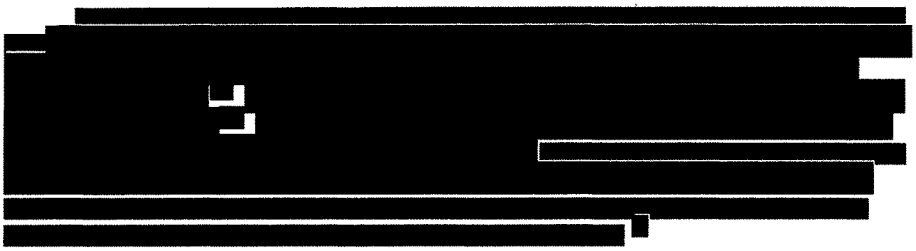
[101] (U) *Ibid.*
[102] (U) *Ibid.*
[103] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Susan Rice, July 12, 2017, p. 24.
[104] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 26.
[105] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 26; SSCI Memorandum for the Record: Interview with Former Secretary of State, John Kerry, November 8, 2017, p. 4.
[106] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Susan Rice, July 12, 2017, pp. 27-28.
[107] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Closed Hearing: White House Awareness of and Response to Russian Active Measures, July 17, 2018, pp. 91-92.

4. (U) Ambassadors Rice and Kislyak

(U) On the same day as the issuance of the ODNI-DHS public statement on October 7, 2016 (*see infra*), Ambassador Rice called Sergey Kislyak, the Russian Ambassador to the United States, to her office to deliver a verbal message and pass a written message from President Obama to President Putin. The written message was a more specific warning that contained "the kinds of consequences that he could anticipate would be powerfully impactful to their economy and far exceed anything that he had seen to date."[108] According to Ambassador Rice, such a meeting was not a regular occurrence, nor was the passage of a written note from President Obama to be delivered directly to President Putin. The exchange was scheduled to occur just prior to the release of the ODNI-DHS statement.[109]



(U) Approximately a week after the October 7, 2016, meeting, Ambassador Kislyak asked to meet with Ambassador Rice to deliver Putin's response. The response, as characterized by Ambassador Rice, was "denial and obfuscation," and "[t]he only thing notable about it is that Putin somehow deemed it necessary to mention the obvious fact that Russia remains a nuclear power."[113]

5. (U) The Cyber Hotline

[redacted] According to Ambassador Rice, in the fall of 2016 the administration passed another warning to the Russian government [redacted][114]

[108] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Susan Rice, July 12, 2017, p. 46.
[109] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 47.
[110] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 48.
[111] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Closed Hearing: White House Awareness of and Response to Russian Active Measures, July 17, 2018, pp. 92-93.
[112] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Susan Rice, July 12, 2017, p. 48.
[113] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 55-56.
[114] (U) In June 2013, the U.S. and Russian governments agreed to strengthen relations between the two countries as it relates to Information and Communications Technologies (ICTs). The two governments concluded an agreement which included three confidence building measures between the two countries: (1) the creation of a communications channel and information sharing agreements between the countries' computer emergency response teams; (2)

Ambassador Rice viewed the use of this particular communications line as not escalatory, but rather a means to address the frequent Russian objection that standard, official channels were not being used to convey messages. From the U.S. side, however, the message was considered delivered when President Obama met with President Putin in September 2016.[115]

(U) The initial undated message sent via the cyber hotline alluded to information contained in the October 7, 2016, ODNI-DHS statement, as well as the scanning of state election infrastructure. It further stated:

[redacted][116]

(U) In total, the Committee is aware of eight messages transmitted, four by each side, as part of the exchange, but only three messages contain substantive information. In addition to the first message, the United States sent Russia additional technical information regarding the malicious cyber activity.[117]

(U) In responding, Moscow denied any connection between the activities raised in the U.S. messages and Russia, adding that it too had been victim to some of the same cyber activity.[118]

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authorization to use the existing direct communications link between the two countries' Nuclear Risk Reduction Centers; and (3) establishment of a direct communications link between senior White House and Kremlin officials to manage potentially dangerous situations from ICT-related events. *See* Barack Obama and Vladimir Putin, "Joint Statement by the Presidents of the United States of America and the Russian Federation on a New Field of Cooperation in Confidence Building", June 17, 2013, https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/2013/06/17/joint-statement-presidents-united-states-america-and-russian-federatio-0.

[115] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Susan Rice, July 12, 2017, pp. 44-45.

[116] (U) Department of State letter to Chairman Burr and Vice-Chairman Warner, Cyber Hotline Production, July 27, 2018, pp. 3-4 also marked as CDP-2017-00011G-000183—CDP-2017-00011G-000184.

[117] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 3-21 also marked as CDP-2017-00011G-000183—CDP-2017-00011G-000201.

[118] (U) *Ibid.*

B. (U) Protecting Election Infrastructure

(U) In line with President Obama's mandate to protect the integrity of the election, Secretary Johnson first broached the idea of designating election infrastructure as a "critical infrastructure" sector at a press breakfast sponsored by the *Christian Science Monitor* on August 3, 2016.[119]

(U) Secretary Johnson subsequently had a conference call with representatives from all 50 states, including secretaries of state or other senior election officials, on August 15, 2016.[120] During that call, Secretary Johnson informed state election officials that while DHS did not currently have a specific or credible threat targeting the election systems themselves, DHS was in a heightened state of awareness regarding election infrastructure and recommended that they each "do everything you can for your own cyber security leading up to the election."[121]

(U) Secretary Johnson also raised the possibility of designating election infrastructure as critical infrastructure, but recalled that he received opposition from a number of states.[122] Some state election officials, in rejecting the idea, cited federal government interference in a state function as a major concern over the potential designation. Secretary Johnson was taken aback by these responses, stating that, "among those that spoke up, I was surprised and disappointed that there was this resistance."[123]

(U) Based on the negative feedback he received, Secretary Johnson concluded that "it was better for our cyber security around the election system if I put the critical infrastructure designation on the back burner" and instead continued to urge the states to request DHS services.[124]

(U) Following Secretary Johnson's phone call, DHS issued a public statement recapping the conversation with members of the National Association of Secretaries of State and other Chief Election Officials. The statement reinforced DHS's recommendation that states focus on securing election infrastructure and offered cybersecurity support from DHS's National Cybersecurity and Communications Integration Center. The statement did not include any mention of threats posed by Russia against electoral infrastructure and carefully touched on the topic of designating election infrastructure as critical infrastructure, stating:

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[119] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Jeh Johnson; June 12, 2017, p. 10.
[120] (U) The Committee notes that Secretary Johnson's engagements with state officials occurred prior to the September 8, 2016, congressional briefing where the issue of state election security was raised.
[121] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Jeh Johnson, June 12, 2017, p. 13.
[122] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Susan Rice, July 12, 2017, p. 21; for more information on Secretary Johnson's designation of election infrastructure as critical infrastructure, *see Volume 1: Russian Efforts Against Election Infrastructure,* July 25, 2019.
[123] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Jeh Johnson, June 12, 2017, p. 14.
[124] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Jeh Johnson, June 12, 2017, p. 15.

DHS is exploring all ways to deliver more support to the sector in a collaborative and non-prescriptive manner, and would be examining whether designating certain electoral systems as critical infrastructure would be an effective way to offer this support.[125]

(U) While Secretary Johnson decided to not proceed with the designation of election infrastructure as critical infrastructure, DHS devised a plan to provide similar services without necessitating the designation. According to Secretary Johnson, under this plan DHS could "deliver to the states almost everything that you could if there was a critical infrastructure designation."[126]

(U) In addition to DHS efforts to protect state election infrastructure, and perhaps in response to the reaction received by Secretary Johnson in his earlier attempts to engage the states, the administration decided in early September to engage Congress on the issue to help assuage states' concerns about federal reach into the election process.

(U) Secretary Johnson also continued to issue public statements on election security throughout the fall of 2016.

- (U) On September 16, 2016, Secretary Johnson released a statement concerning the Cybersecurity of the Nation's Election Systems. In the statement, Secretary Johnson acknowledged the existence of "cyber intrusions involving political institutions and personal communications," as well as "some efforts at cyber intrusions of voter registration data maintained in state election systems."[127] Similar to the statement issued after the call with the state election officials, the statement reinforced that "DHS assistance is strictly voluntary and does not entail regulation, binding directives, and is not offered to supersede state and local control over the process."[128]

- (U) On October 1, 2016, Secretary Johnson issued a statement thanking the House of Representatives and Senate leadership for sending a letter to the National Association of State Election Directors.[129] This statement again reinforced that DHS's assistance does not entail federal regulation or "binding federal directives over state systems of any kind."[130] The statement again confirmed that DHS had observed malicious cyber activity, including successful intrusions into some state systems. The statement closed

[125] (U) "Readout of Secretary Johnson's Call with State Election Officials on Cybersecurity," August 15, 2016, https://www.dhs.gov/news/2016/08/15/readout-secretary-johnsons-call-state-election-officials-cybersecurity.
[126] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Jeh Johnson, June 12, 2017, p. 18.
[127] (U) "Statement by Secretary Johnson Concerning the Cybersecurity of the Nation's Election Systems," September 16, 2016, https://www.dhs.gov/news/2016/09/16/statement-secretary-johnson-concerning-cybersecurity-nation's-election-systems.
[128] (U) *Ibid.*
[129] (U) "Statement by Secretary Johnson About Election Systems' Cybersecurity," October 1, 2016, https://www.dhs.gov/news/2016/10/01/statement-secretary-johnson-about-election-systems-cybersecurity.
[130] (U) *Ibid.*

with an advisement to state and local election officials to seek the assistance of DHS, indicating that 21 states had contacted DHS thus far.

- (U) On October 10, 2016, Secretary Johnson issued a statement which indicated that 33 state and 11 county or local election agencies had sought DHS assistance.[131] The statement also sought to raise awareness of cybersecurity threats, highlighting that there were only 29 days until Election Day and that the process by which DHS could conduct a scan and assist local officials in mitigating any discovered vulnerabilities would take at least three weeks.[132]

(U) Secretary Johnson told the Committee that he also called the Chief Executive Officer of the Associated Press (AP) to ensure their systems were protected from any cyber meddling the Russians might try to conduct on Election Day because he believed the AP had an effective monopoly on delivering election night returns to the news organizations. According to Secretary Johnson, the Chief Executive Officer assured him that the AP had enough redundancy in its communications systems that reporting could still be transmitted, even if by courier, if internet communications were unavailable.[133]

(U) DHS also established a crisis action response team to address any problem or incidents that may have arisen on Election Day.[134]

C. (U) Congressional Statements

(U) Administration officials who spoke to the Committee repeatedly stressed their attempts to be scrupulously nonpartisan in their approach with Congress and state election officials due to the highly charged political environment of the 2016 presidential election, an aspiration complicated by the fact that the President and Vice President were actively campaigning in support of one candidate.

- (U) Ambassador Rice stated, "[W]e were hell-bent and determined to try to do this in a way that was apolitical as possible. Again, that's why we put such emphasis on trying to invest and enlist the leadership of Congress to reinforce the messages that we were trying to deliver, particularly to the states."[135]

- (U) Mr. McDonough told the Committee the administration needed a bipartisan statement from Congress to help state and local authorities understand the threat and

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[131] (U) "Update by Secretary Johnson on DHS Election Cybersecurity Services," October 10, 2016, https://www.dhs.gov/news/2016/10/10/update-secretary-johnson-dhs-election-cybersecurity-services.
[132] (U) *Ibid.*
[133] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Jeh Johnson, June 12, 2017, pp. 40-41.
[134] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 41.
[135] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Susan Rice, July 12, 2017, p. 23.

engage with the federal government to protect their election systems.[136] These engagements occurred after Secretary Johnson's phone call with state officials on August 15, 2016, during which Secretary Johnson's raising the possibility of designating election infrastructure as critical infrastructure was met with resistance.

(U) On September 8, 2016, Ms. Monaco, Director Comey, and Secretary Johnson briefed the Gang of Eight and the Chairmen and Ranking Members of the Homeland Security Committees from the House of Representatives and the Senate.[137] Secretary Johnson told the Committee that although the briefing provided to the group was not at the highest classification level (i.e., it did not contain the details of the sensitive intelligence collection which had only been briefed to the Gang of Eight), it was clear to him that certain members were receiving the classified intelligence briefing from the IC and law enforcement for the first time.[138] It was during this briefing that administration officials discussed the issuance of a bipartisan statement, which they hoped would convince state and local officials to avail themselves of the cybersecurity services being offered by DHS to secure and protect election infrastructure.[139] Director Comey briefed on what FBI was observing and "described in some detail specific Russian malicious activity," and Secretary Johnson detailed assistance that DHS could provide to state and local election infrastructure operators, including those services potentially available as a result of a designation of election infrastructure as critical infrastructure.[140]

(U) Numerous administration officials stated some members of Congress that attended the September 8, 2016, meeting resisted the administration request that a bipartisan statement be made regarding Russia being responsible for interference activities.

[redacted] Ms. Monaco recalled Senate Majority Leader McConnell stating "[y]ou security people should be careful that you're not getting used," which she interpreted as suggestive that the intelligence regarding Russian efforts to interfere in the 2016 elections was being inflated or used for partisan ends.[141] According to Ms. Monaco, the interaction with Senate Majority

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[136] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Denis McDonough, July 18, 2017, pp. 14-16.
[137] (U) *Ibid.*; SSCI Transcript of the Closed Hearing: White House Awareness of and Response to Russian Active Measures, July 17, 2018, p. 40.
[138] [redacted]
[139] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Denis McDonough, July 18, 2017, p. 10; SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Jeh Johnson, June 12, 2017, p. 21.
[140] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Lisa Monaco, August 10, 2017, pp. 45-46; SSCI Transcript of the Closed Hearing: White House Awareness of and Response to Russian Active Measures, July 17, 2018, pp. 39-42.
[141] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Lisa Monaco, August 10, 2017, pp. 47-48.

Leader McConnell comported with Director Brennan's account of his interaction with Senate Majority Leader McConnell when briefing the [redacted][142]

(U) In a July 17, 2018, closed Committee hearing examining the Obama administration's response to Russian interference in the 2016 election, Senator Burr, who was present for the September 8, 2016, meeting as the Committee's Chairman, responded to Ms. Monaco and stated, "[T]he question that [Senate Majority Leader McConnell] raised was: Would this not contribute to Russia's efforts at creating concerns about our election process, if the leadership of the Congress put that letter out?"[143]

(U) Following his trip to the G20 summit in China, and in the second week of September, President Obama met with House and Senate leadership at the White House.[144] The publicly stated purpose for the meeting was to discuss the government's budget and to provide the congressional leadership with a back-brief on the G20 summit.[145] However, according to Ambassador Rice, the primary purpose of the meeting was to bring the leaders together to discuss Russian interference in the election and tell them that "we need to come together and address this as two branches and two parties," with the goal of having them collectively issue a joint public statement.[146]

(U) Prior to the issuance of a bipartisan statement to election officials, Senator Feinstein, then serving as Vice Chairman of the Committee, and Representative Adam Schiff, the Ranking Member of the HPSCI, issued a statement on September 22, 2016, stating that they both "concluded that Russian intelligence agencies are making a serious and concerted effort to influence the U.S. election" and that the "effort is intended to sow doubt about the security of our election and may well be intended to influence the outcomes of the election."[147] Their statement was the first government communication publicly attributing cyber activity to Russian actors, and until December 29, 2016, when DHS and FBI issued a Joint Analysis Report and President Obama amended Executive Order (EO) 13964 to authorize sanctions on individuals who "tamper with, alter, or cause a misappropriation of information with the purpose or effect of interfering with or undermining election processes or institutions," the only public statement of attribution linking the election influence effort to Russia's intelligence services.[148,149]

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[142] (U) *Ibid.*
[143] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Closed Hearing: White House Awareness of and Response to Russian Active Measures, July 17, 2018, p. 45.
[144] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 9.
[145] (U) *Ibid.*
[146] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Susan Rice, July 12, 2017, p. 37.
[147] (U) Dianne Feinstein and Adam Schiff, "Feinstein, Schiff Statement on Russian Hacking," September 22, 2016, https://www.feinstein.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/press-releases?ID=A04D321E-5F86-4FD6-AD8E-7F533E1C2845.
[148] (U) DHS and FBI, *GRIZZLY STEPPE – Russian Malicious Cyber Activity*, December 29, 2016, https://www.us-cert.gov/sites/default/publications/JAR_16-20296A_GRIZZLY%20STEPPE-2016-1229.pdf.
[149] (U) The White House, Office of the Press Secretary, Statement by the President on Actions in Response to Russian Malicious Cyber Activity and Harassment, December 29, 2016.

(U) The leaders of the House of Representatives and the Senate eventually wrote a letter to the president of the National Association of State Election Directors on September 28, 2016, highlighting the "challenge of malefactors that are seeking to use cyberattacks to disrupt the administration of our elections" and further encouraged states to take advantage of public and private sector resources to protect network infrastructure from cyber attacks.[150] The letter further made clear that DHS was ready to provide assistance to states that requested it, and that the assistance would not be encumbered with federal regulation or federal directives.[151] The letter, however, also stated, "[W]e oppose any effort by the federal government to exercise any degree of control over the states' administration of elections by designating these systems as critical infrastructure."[152] The letter did not reference Russian cyber activities.

(U) According to Avril Haines, the Deputy Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs, the perceived difficulty in obtaining a bipartisan leadership letter from Congress to get the states to engage on the issue of protecting electoral infrastructure left the NSC "disappointed." As a result, Ms. Haines said, "we tempered our response options."[153]

D. (U) The October 7, 2016, ODNI-DHS Statement

(U) As the restricted PC meetings occurred through September 2016, participants continued to believe a public statement that attributed the cyber activity to the Russian government had to be made.[154] In addition to determining how to present the content, the question that senior advisors debated was who would issue such a statement.[155]

- (U) Secretary Johnson characterized the decision to release a statement on attribution was a "very, very big decision."[156] He further stated that the intent of the statement would be the IC publicly attributing the cyber activity to the Russian government, coupled with DHS addressing how the interference would be defended against. Secretary Johnson believed that DHS should do more than just alerting the public, but should provide direction, i.e., "here's what you should do about it, here's what we are doing about it."[157]

- (U) During one meeting in the White House Situation Room, Director Clapper passed Secretary Johnson a written note suggesting that the two of them issue a joint statement,

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[150] (U) Paul Ryan, Nancy Pelosi, Mitch McConnell, and Harry Reid, Letter to Todd Valentine, President of the National Association of State Election Directors, September 28, 2016, http://www.documentcloud.org/documents/3872866-Read-McConnell-and-other-congressional-leaders.html.
[151] (U) *Ibid.*
[152] (U) *Ibid.*
[153] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Avril Haines, August 10, 2017, p. 94.
[154] (U) SSCI Transcript of Interview with Jeh Johnson, June 12, 2017, p. 26.
[155] (U) *Ibid.*
[156] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Jeh Johnson, June 12, 2017, p. 31.
[157] (U) *Ibid.*

rather than issuing parallel ones.[158] This moment was the genesis for the October 7, 2016, joint statement by the DNI and DHS Secretary, with the first paragraph written by the IC and the second paragraph written by DHS.[159]

(U) According to Ambassador Rice, Director Comey wanted to issue an op-ed in September on the topic of Russian interference in the election.[160] After a series of discussions, the restricted PC group decided that it was best to release a joint statement from ODNI and DHS, mainly because the ODNI represented the entire IC, rather than a single element, and because a public statement seemed to be more appropriate than an op-ed. By October, however, while the senior officials would have preferred that FBI join the ODNI-DHS joint statement, the FBI Director thought it would be "untimely and probably inappropriate for FBI to sign onto such a statement," even though he supported both the content and issuance of the statement.[161]

(U) Deputy Director McCabe told the Committee that he believed "Director Comey felt that [the op-ed] was important to do when he suggested it." However, "[b]y the time he kind of got around to thinking about it seriously, he felt like the opportunity had passed and we were too close [to the election] at that point to have the intended effect on the electorate."[162]

[redacted] Ms. Monaco testified to the Committee that the proposed op-ed by Director Comey would have been focused on attributing the penetration of the DNC network, [redacted]. She also stated, however, that the proposed op-ed did not comport with FBI's previous history of issuing formal statements regarding attribution of cyber actors, such as when FBI attributed the cyber attack on Sony Pictures Entertainment to the DPRK.[163]

(U) The DNI and DHS Secretary issued an unprecedented joint statement on October 7, 2016, stating:

> *The U.S. Intelligence Community is confident that the Russian Government directed the recent compromises of e-mails from US persons and institutions, including from US political organizations. . . . Some states have also recently seen scanning and probing of their election-related systems, which in most cases originated from servers operated by a Russian company. However, we are not now in a position to attribute this activity to the Russian Government. The USIC and the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) assess that it would be*

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[158] (U) *Ibid.*
[159] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 33.
[160] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Susan Rice, July 12, 2017, p. 39.
[161] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 40.
[162] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Andrew McCabe, February 14, 2018, p. 217.
[163] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Lisa Monaco, August 10, 2017, pp. 65-67.

extremely difficult for someone, including a nation-state actor, to alter actual ballot counts or election results by cyber attack or intrusion.[164]

(U) Secretary Johnson was convinced that the statement would be "above-the-fold news" because the United States had "never before accused a superpower of meddling in our political system" and doesn't "normally speak in such blunt terms."[165] The public reaction compared to what the administration anticipated, however, was muted.

(U) According to open source information, the joint ODNI-DHS statement was issued at approximately 3:30 p.m. EDT on October 7, 2016. At 4:03 p.m. EDT, the Washington Post released the *Access Hollywood* videotape. Approximately 30 minutes later, WikiLeaks released e-mails purportedly from John Podesta, Hillary Clinton's campaign manager.

E. (U) Effects of Pre-Election Actions

(U) Following the delivered warnings, particularly the one issued by President Obama at the G20 summit, the administration sought to ascertain whether the Russians would continue their actions and further interfere in the 2016 presidential election process.[166] According to Ambassador Rice, "[W]e did not see any indications in the run-up to and including the election that they had hacked more stuff [or] falsified information."[167] She further told the Committee that she believed that the release of information by WikiLeaks, including John Podesta's e-mails, was information already in the possession of the Russians: "The horse had left the barn."[168] She also stated that if additional intrusions had been detected, the United States would have responded with a combination of actions that had been developed through the restricted PC process.

(U) According to Ambassador Rice, the restricted PC group did discuss taking punitive action prior to the election, regardless of whether additional Russian cyber activity was detected. The administration decided, however, to not proceed out of concern about provoking the Russians to undertake additional activity.[169]

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[164] (U) James Clapper and Jeh Johnson, "Joint Statement from the Department of Homeland Security and Office of the Director of National Intelligence on Election Security," October 7, 2016, https://www.dni.gov/index.php/newsroom/press-releases/press-releases-2016/item/1635-joint-dhs-and-odni-election-security-statement.

[165] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Jeh Johnson, June 12, 2017, p. 35.

[166] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Susan Rice, July 12, 2017, p. 50.

[167] (U) *Ibid.*

[168] (U) *Ibid.*

[169] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 51.

(U) Ms. Haines told the Committee that she similarly judged that the warning message from President Obama to President Putin had a deterrent effect on stopping the Russians moving forward with "actually manipulating the vote and the voting process."[170]

(U) Subsequent to the 2016 election, however, intelligence and other information has revealed that Russian cyber actors did in fact engage in significant additional cyber activity following the warning delivered by President Obama to President Putin during the G20 summit in early September and prior to the election.

- (U) As late as October, GRU cyber actors conducted penetration testing on state and county election infrastructure. For example, GRU cyber actors visited the websites of counties in Georgia, Iowa, and Florida to identify vulnerabilities.[171]

- (U) Days before the election, GRU cyber actors sent over 100 spearphishing emails to election officials and organizations in numerous Florida counties. These emails contained malware designed to look like a legitimate election infrastructure vendor.[172]

- [redacted]

VII. (U) POST-ELECTION ACTIONS

(U) Following the election, administration officials told the Committee that they were no longer constrained by fears that the Russians would further meddle in the election. The NSC continued to convene policy meetings to discuss response options, and ultimately executed a series of actions.[174]

[redacted]

(U) The Committee heard from several administration officials that the response options were still being debated and calibrated post-election to maximize effectiveness while minimizing

[170] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Closed Hearing: White House Awareness of and Response to Russian Active Measures, July 17, 2018, pp. 30-31.
[171] (U) Indictment, *United States v. Viktor Borisovich Netyksho, et al.*, Case 1:18-cr-00215-ABJ (D.D.C. July 13, 2018).
[172] (U) *Ibid.* For a more comprehensive account of Russian activity against state and local election infrastructure, *see Volume 1: Russian Efforts Against Election Infrastructure*, July 25, 2019.
[173] (U) DHS briefing for SSCI staff, March 5, 2018.
[174] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Staff Interview with Celeste Wallander, August 23, 2017, pp. 49-50.

blowback on the United States and its allies, and that process took several weeks to finalize.[175] However, at least one administration official, Secretary Kerry, did not fully understand the rationale behind why the response actions occurred late in December, rather than immediately following the election.[176]

(U) When the PC met to discuss which responses to levy against Russia, Ambassador Rice stated that the government exhibited typical "rice bowl behavior, where the various elements of the interagency [were] happy to see somebody else's rice bowl broken, but they were protective of their own."[177] As Ambassador Rice recalled:

- (U) The Department of State expressed concern about the number of Russians that the U.S. would declare *persona non grata*, expecting a similar expulsion of U.S. diplomats from Russia and knowing that the number of U.S. diplomatic staff in Russia was already smaller in comparison to the official Russian presence in the United States.[178]

- (U) The IC expressed concern about naming Russian intelligence elements in a sanctions order, and the Department of Defense was similarly concerned about naming the military intelligence entity in a sanctions order.[179]

- (U) The Department of Defense and the NSA expressed concern about cyber actions that could be taken against Russia, due to the fact that some of the actions could reveal cyber operations tradecraft to the Russians that they wanted to keep undetectable.[180]

A. (U) Expulsion of Russian Diplomats

(U) On December 29, 2016, the Department of State announced that 35 Russian government officials from the Russian Embassy in Washington, D.C. and the Russian Consulate in San Francisco, California were declared *persona non grata* and given 72 hours to depart the United States. According to the Department of State's announcement, this was in response to the harassment of U.S. diplomatic personnel. Furthermore, the Department of State declared that the Russian government would be denied access to two Russian government-owned compounds, one in Maryland and one in New York.[181]

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[175] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Susan Rice, July 12, 2017, pp. 29-31; SSCI Transcript of the Interview with General Paul Selva, September 15, 2017, p. 43.
[176] (U) SSCI Memorandum for the Record: Interview with Former Secretary of State, John Kerry, November 8, 2017, p. 5.
[177] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Susan Rice, July 12, 2017, pp. 94-95.
[178] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 95.
[179] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 95-96.
[180] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 96.
[181] (U) The White House, Office of the Press Secretary, FACT SHEET: Actions in Response to Russian Malicious Cyber Activity and Harassment, https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/2016/12/29/fact-sheet-actions-response-russian-malicious-cyber-activity-and, December 29, 2016.

[redacted][182]

B. (U) Modifying the EO and Sanctions

(U) On December 29, 2016, President Obama amended Executive Order (EO) 13964 to authorize sanctions on individuals who "tamper with, alter, or cause a misappropriation of information with the purpose or effect of interfering with or undermining election processes or institutions."[183] This amendment of EO 13964 enabled the administration to sanction nine Russian entities and individuals, including the GRU, the FSB, three companies that supported the GRU, Chief and Deputy Chief of the GRU, and two additional GRU officers.[184]

(U) Ms. Monaco told the Committee that the IC and the Departments of the Treasury and Justice had sanctions packages that were ready to execute, but "[t]hese were not individuals that we could link to the 2016 active measures campaign" and that she asked participants in the interagency process to "link any individuals or entities for the cyber activity related to 2016."[185] She reported that Director Brennan committed to examining all available intelligence "to develop potential sanctions targets with some link to the cyber activity as related to the active measures campaign."[186]

[redacted]

C. [redacted]

[redacted]

[182] **(U)** SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Denis McDonough, July 18, 2017, p. 48.
[183] **(U)** The White House, Office of the Press Secretary, FACT SHEET: Actions in Response to Russian Malicious Cyber Activity and Harassment, https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/2016/12/29/fact-sheet-actions-response-russian-malicious-cyber-activity-and, December 29, 2016. Executive Order 13964 was issued on April 1, 2015, and created a new authority for the U.S. government to block property of individuals engaging in significant malicious cyber-enabled activities.
[184] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[185] **(U)** SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Lisa Monaco, August 10, 2017, p. 76.
[186] **(U)** *Ibid.*, p. 77.
[187] [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[188] [redacted]

[189] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Susan Rice, July 12, 2017, pp. 69-70.
[190] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Celeste Wallander, August 23, 2017, pp. 60-63.
[191] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Susan Rice, July 12, 2017, pp. 70-71.
[192] [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

D. (U) Cybersecurity Action

(U) On December 29, 2016, DHS and FBI issued a Joint Analysis Report (JAR) that contained declassified technical information on Russian government cyber capabilities, including tools, tactics, and infrastructure used by Russian intelligence services. The JAR referred to the Russian intelligence activity targeting networks and endpoints, particularly those associated with the 2016 U.S. election, as GRIZZLY STEPPE. This was the first JAR to attribute cyber activity to a specific country.[194]

(U) On February 10, 2017, DHS's National Cybersecurity and Communications Integration Center published an analytical report, titled *Enhanced Analysis of GRIZZLY STEPPE Activity*. The analytical report included additional signatures to be used by cybersecurity practitioners to detect a number of capabilities associated with GRIZZLY STEPPE.[195]

E. (U) Tasking the ICA

(U) On December 6, 2016, President Obama tasked the IC, through Director Clapper, to assemble all the information held by the IC relating to Russian attempts to interfere in the 2016 election, along with other historical references, in a single document. According to Ambassador Rice:

> *The President felt strongly that it was important to leave a record for the public, Congress, and for the incoming administration of everything that the [IC] had found in its heretofore relatively piecemeal assessments, so that we had basically put in one place the sum total of our understanding. He thought that was necessary for the public's information and necessary for the incoming administration to be able to pick up where we left off, and our responsibility as well to Congress.*[196]

[redacted] According to Ms. Monaco, the document was not simply a "rollup of everything we saw until Election Day,"[197] but rather included all information available to the IC as of the date of publication, [redacted]

[193] **(U)** SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Susan Rice, July 12, 2017, p. 72.
[194] **(U)** DHS and FBI, *GRIZZLY STEPPE – Russian Malicious Cyber Activity*, December 29, 2016, https://www.us-cert.gov/sites/default/publications/JAR_16-20296A_GRIZZLY%20STEPPE-2016-1229.pdf.
[195] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[196] **(U)** SSCI Transcript of the Closed Hearing: White House Awareness of and Response to Russian Active Measures, July 17, 2018, p. 131.
[197] **(U)** *Ibid.*, p. 134.

[redacted][198] Monaco further explained that "[t]he desire was also to put in context everything we'd been seeing and have one place. . . . We've now seen a series of these things and an escalation, so let's have one record."[199]

(U) Secretary Kerry told the Committee that he submitted a written memo to President Obama advocating for a national, bipartisan commission, similar to the Warren Commission, to dig deeply into every aspect of Russia's attempts to interfere with the 2016 elections.[200] He stated that he was disappointed that the idea was not endorsed and moved forward, and that rather President Obama issued the tasking to create the ICA.[201]

(U) Working together, ODNI, CIA, NSA, and FBI completed the task with three versions of the same intelligence product, including a highly classified memorandum to the President completed on December 30, 2016, a Top Secret ICA published on January 5, 2017, and an unclassified ICA made publicly available on January 6, 2017. The Committee's review of the IC's response to President Obama's tasking are captured in the Committee's review of the ICA, *Volume 4: Review of the Intelligence Community Assessment.*

F. (U) Protecting Election Infrastructure

(U) On January 5, 2017, Secretary Johnson convened a phone call, similar to the August 15, 2016, call, where he once again raised the issue of designating election infrastructure as critical infrastructure for the purposes of providing federal assistance. Based on the feedback he received, Secretary Johnson proceeded with his plan to bolster protection of election infrastructure.[202]

(U) On the same day the DNI released the unclassified ICA, January 6, 2017, Secretary Johnson designated election infrastructure as a subsector of the existing Government Facilities critical infrastructure sector, which enables states to leverage the full scope of cybersecurity services offered by DHS, provided they request them. The issues surrounding states' ability to administer elections, however, were still in the foreground. Secretary Johnson's public statement was explicit in asserting that: "[t]his designation does not mean a federal takeover, regulation, oversight or intrusion concerning elections in this country."[203]

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[198] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 134-135.
[199] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 135.
[200] (U) The "Warren Commission" was the commission established via Executive Order 11130 by President Lyndon B. Johnson on November 29, 1963 to investigate and report on the November 22, 1963 assassination of President John F. Kennedy. The Chief Justice of the United States, Earl Warren, served as the chairman of the commission.
[201] (U) SSCI Memorandum for the Record: Interview with Former Secretary of State, John Kerry, November 8, 2017, pp. 5-6.
[202] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Jeh Johnson, June 12, 2017, pp. 44-46.
[203] (U) "Statement by Secretary Jeh Johnson on the Designation of Election Infrastructure as a Critical Infrastructure Subsector," January 6, 2017, https://www.dhs.gov/news/2017/01/06/statement-secretary-johnson-designation-election-infrastructure-critical.

VIII. (U) OPTIONS CONSIDERED BUT NOT EXECUTED

(U) Administration officials provided insight into response options that were considered, but not executed for various reasons.

(U) According to Ambassador Rice, the response options being considered were heavily slanted towards economic measures, meaning the Department of Treasury's assessments "bore a lot of weight in our deliberations, as we'd been sanctioning Russia for years."[204] Ambassador Rice noted that while Treasury's position had often been "hawkish" on Russia, it assessed that previous sanctions applied against Russia had exhausted economic options that would impact Russia in a meaningful way but would not harm the United States or its allies. Treasury assessed that the remaining economic options would incur significant blowback to either the United States or its allies, notably the Europeans.[205]

(U) Some administration officials indicated that uncertainty about the future Russia policy of the incoming administration, combined with uncertainty about the level of commitment from European allies, factored into considerations regarding more aggressive punitive sanctions. Christina Segal-Knowles, who served as the Senior Director for Global Economics and Finance, stated that sanctions "relied on psychology to be effective" and recalled concerns about credibility and continuity. Ms. Segal-Knowles said, "I think the possibility of reversal—I'm not sure that it was necessarily 'we know what the [incoming] administration will do,' but it certainly weighed on the constraints that we were facing, in that we couldn't promise what the next administration's policy would be."[206] Ambassador Rice told the Committee, "[w]e were trying to punish the Russians without losing the Europeans, without causing some unforeseen reaction by the new administration."[207]

[redacted][208]

[redacted][210]

[204] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Susan Rice, July 12, 2017, p. 74.
[205] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 74-75.
[206] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Christina Segal-Knowles, May 10, 2018, pp. 23-24.
[207] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Susan Rice, July 12, 2017, p. 75.
[208] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 75-76.
[209] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Samantha Power, July 28, 2017, pp. 34-35.
[210] (U) *Ibid.*

[redacted][12]

IX. (U) RECOMMENDATIONS

1. (U) Strengthen Partnerships

(U) The executive branch should bolster partnerships with Russia's "near abroad." Russia uses countries on its periphery as a laboratory for refining its active measures campaigns. The United States should establish and expand partnerships with those countries to identify new Russian active measures and assist these partners' ability to defend against them. Such partnerships will help to prepare defenses for the eventual expansion of interference techniques targeting the West.

2. (U) Support Cyber Norms

(U) The United States should lead the way on creating international cyber norms. Russia and China are actively promoting their view of cyber norms to international forums, redefining the cyber battlefield and writing the rules in their favor. Much as with other agreements, U.S. leadership is needed to balance any formalized international agreement on acceptable uses of cyber capabilities.

3. (U) Prepare for the Next Attack

(U) The executive branch should be prepared to face an attack on U.S. elections in a highly politicized environment, either from the Russia or from elsewhere. This preparation should include developing a range of standing response options that can be rapidly executed, as appropriate, if a clandestine foreign influence operation is directed at the United States.

(U) The DNI, as the country's senior intelligence representative, should provide a regular, apolitical assessment of foreign intelligence threats to U.S. elections, including clandestine foreign influence campaigns, prior to regularly scheduled federal elections, as first proposed in Section 608 of the *Intelligence Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2018*, S. 1761 (115th Cong., 1st Sess.) (introduced, Aug. 18, 2017).

(U) Executive and legislative branch officials, regardless of party affiliation, should jointly and publicly reinforce the DNI's findings, particularly if a foreign influence effort is directed at specific candidates seeking office.

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[211] **(U)** SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Celeste Wallander, August 23, 2017, pp. 25-26.
[212] **(U)** *Ibid.*

(U) The President of the United States should take steps to separate himself or herself from political considerations when handling issues related to foreign influence operations. These steps should include explicitly putting aside politics when addressing the American people on election threats and marshalling all the resources of the U.S. Government to effectively confront the threat.

(U) Sitting officials and candidates should use the absolute greatest amount of restraint and caution if they are considering publicly calling the validity of an upcoming election into question. Such a grave allegation can have significant national security and electoral consequences, including limiting the response options of the appropriate authorities, and exacerbating the already damaging messaging efforts of foreign intelligence services.

4. (U) Integrate Responses to Cyber Incidents

(U) Cyber events, especially those undertaken by a nation state that go beyond traditional intelligence collection, must be assessed within the geopolitical context to identify and understand both the potential intent and impact of an attack. Current and future administrations should align and synchronize cyber as an integral part of foreign policy activity, rather than treating cyber as an isolated domain.

5. (U) Prioritize Collection on Information Warfare

(U) The IC should prioritize resources to better collect on and analyze information warfare and the influence capabilities of hostile nations. The IC should also contextualize cyber events with this information to better understand adversary capability and intent.

6. (U) Increasing Information Sharing on Foreign Influence Efforts

(U) Once credible information is obtained about a foreign influence or active measures operation, that information at the appropriate classification level should be shared as broadly as appropriate within government, including Congress, while still protecting sources and methods. This information should also be shared with relevant state and local authorities, and relevant private sector partners, as appropriate. For operations specifically targeting election infrastructure and systems, federal engagement with state and local election officials, as well as relevant private sector partners, must be substantive and timely.

(U) In the event that such a campaign is detected, the public should be informed as soon as possible, with a clear and succinct statement of the threat, even if the information is incomplete. Delaying the release of information allows inaccurate narratives to spread, which makes the task of informing the public significantly harder. Mechanisms for issuing public warnings related to threats to elections should be put in place to allow for any warning to be made in a timely and non-partisan manner.

7. (U) Clarify Roles, Responsibilities, and Authorities

(U) The lack of clear authorities and responsibilities within the IC for detecting and mitigating Russian influence operations conducted via social media inhibited the ability to provide early warning to policymakers, or quickly formulate a complete set of response options. The Committee addresses its findings and recommendations regarding election security and social media in separate volumes of this report.

(U) List of Classification Sources:

- [redacted]

ADDITIONAL VIEWS OF SENATORS RISCH, RUBIO, COTTON, CORNYN, and SASSE

(U) Volume 3 of the Select Committee on Intelligence's "Report on Russian Active Measures Campaigns and Interference in the 2016 U.S. Election," exposes in great detail the Obama administration's inept response to Russia's persistent and complex campaign to influence and interfere in the most recent U.S. presidential election. In its report, the Committee found that administration officials felt constrained in its response to Russian malign activity due to a number of factors including the heavily politicized environment that existed in 2016, and the fear that public warnings about such activity could undermine confidence in the election, the very thing Russia was trying to accomplish. Such factors do not excuse the administration's failures to heed clear intelligence warnings, establish an effective deterrent, or take effective action to counter Russia's activities before, and after November 8, 2016.

(U) Available Intelligence

(U) As detailed in the Committee's report, there was intelligence available as far back as 2015 that indicated significant Russian malign activity targeted at our civil society. For example, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) attempted to warn the Democratic National Committee (DNC) on several occasions throughout 2015 and 2016 that malign actors had or sought to penetrate its networks. Former Director of National Intelligence James Clapper "publicly alluded to the threat of cyberattacks against presidential campaigns during a May, 2016, event." Despite this intelligence reporting, which was apparently known at the highest levels of the intelligence community for quite some time, former administration officials interviewed by the Committee claimed they were unaware of the Russian cyber penetration of the DNC until it was reported in the *Washington Post* on June 14, 2016. Even after the information was published, the administration believed this to be "within the bounds of traditional espionage," not indicators of the active measures campaign it actually was. It was not until additional information was obtained by senior administration officials in late July 2016 that the administration received what it called its "wake up call" on Russian operations.

(U) Warnings Did Not Work

(U) Once senior administration officials became aware of the threat, warnings were delivered to the highest levels of the Russian government—its president, foreign minister, intelligence chief, and ambassador to the U.S. In chronological order, Former Secretary of State John Kerry told the Committee that the first such confrontation was on July 26, 2016, with a warning that Russian interference in the U.S. elections was serious, and that such behavior posed risks to the bilateral relationship. Former CIA Director John Brennan confirmed that on August 4, 2016, á warning was provided that if Russia pursued this course, it would destroy any near-term prospect for improvement in relations between Washington and Moscow. President Obama, on recommendation from Ambassador Susan Rice and others, delivered a carefully crafted message to Putin in early September 2016, on the sidelines of the G20 Summit in Huangzhou, China. In a meeting on October 7, 2016, between Ambassador Rice and the Russian Ambassador to the U.S., a verbal message was delivered to the Russian Ambassador, along with a

written one from President Obama to Putin, which outlined the kinds of consequences that Putin could anticipate would be powerfully impactful to Russia's economy and far exceed anything he had seen to date.

(U) The Committee's report notes that senior administration officials "assessed that their warnings to Russia before the election had the desired effect, and that Russia undertook little to no additional action once the warnings were delivered." Rice testified, "[W]e did not see any indications in the run-up to and including the election that they had hacked more stuff [or] falsified information." Information released by WikiLeaks after warnings from the administration, in Rice's view, was information that had already been stolen and was in possession of the Russians, therefore, "the horse had left the barn."

(U) But in reviewing intelligence reporting available during that time as part of this investigation, the Committee found that "at least some aspects of Russian activity continued through the fall of 2016 and after the election; notably, Russia's use of social media and its attempts to penetrate vulnerable state and local election infrastructure." Assertions made by former administration officials that they believed their warnings had been heeded ring especially hollow because it was after these warnings were issued that WikiLeaks posted the first tranche of thousands of emails from the Clinton campaign. Another tranche of emails stolen from the DNC were released on November 6, 2016. From August through October 2016, Russian trolls and Russians posing as Americans organized campaign rallies in Florida and Pennsylvania; published fake advertisements designed to sow dissent amongst Americans; and used Twitter accounts to post accusations of voter fraud under false identities. What appeared to be genuine American political activity was in fact an active measures campaign bought and paid for by the Russians. It remains unclear whether reporting attributing such activity to Russia made its way up to senior administration officials through the regular channels, but it is baffling that the administration did not aggressively seek any information available from the intelligence community to verify that its warnings to Moscow had their intended effect.

(U) Post-Election Response

(U) In interviews with the Committee, former Obama administration officials expressed that after the election they no longer felt constrained in responding to Russia the way they had before November 8. And yet, the United States did not respond for weeks and weeks following Election Day. In addressing this delay to the Committee, Rice attributed it to the various disagreements that took place in the interagency over the suite of proposed options. We remain baffled as to why these options – expelling diplomats, levying sanctions, and publicly revealing Russian cyber activities targeted at our election were not prepared months beforehand, following the administration's discovery of Russian activity in late July 2016, so that they could be operationalized as soon as necessary. Waiting until after the election to debate the merits and second-order impacts of expelling diplomats or sanctioning individuals involved in Russia's malign activity enabled continued Russian meddling. Hollow threats and slow, hapless responses from the administration translated to perceived weakness on the part of the U.S., and Putin exploited that weakness with impunity. It appears to us that either the Obama administration was woefully unprepared to address a known and ongoing national security threat, or even worse, that the administration did not take the threat seriously.

(U) Missed Opportunity

(U) Intelligence pointing towards malign Russian activity aimed at our civil society existed [redacted] That there was no recognition of this activity by senior Obama administration officials until late July 2016 is appalling. The administration missed important opportunities to deter Russian operations before they escalated, and that is inexcusable.

(U) When the administration finally recognized Russia'a malign activity three months before the election, its response, or lack thereof, failed to stop Russia's efforts. Even worse, senior Obama administration officials seemed to believe their warnings had in fact deterred Russia without taking any steps to prove that was the case. Without consequences, Putin was free to continue to wreak havoc on our democratic process, and further imperil our democracy. These warnings were yet another red line that the Obama administration drew but refused to enforce, emboldening Moscow to continue its malign activities aimed at our democratic process and sow discord in our society.

(U) While we understand some of the constraints by which the administration felt bound in the lead-up to the election, these constraints did not inhibit or preclude a strong response from Washington. When it comes to protecting American democracy against our most capable and malicious adversaries, there should be nothing but a strong response. We now know what happens when an administration fail to take such actions.

MINORITY VIEWS OF SENATOR WYDEN

(U) The Committee's report on the U.S. Government's response to Russian interference lacks critical information, leaving the American people in the dark about key events leading up to the 2016 election. In 2016, the Obama Administration withheld information from the congressional intelligence committees, preventing members from conducting oversight, developing policy responses, or advocating for transparency with the public. In addition, the so-called "Gang of Eight" briefings did not involve formal recordkeeping. As a result, the Committee's report denies the American public an opportunity for historical accountability – for the refusal of some members to inform the public about Russian interference and for public statements denying the existence of intelligence indicating that Russia was seeking to help Donald Trump.

(U) The report includes several recommendations with which I strongly agree, particularly with regard to the need for transparency. As the Committee urges, information on foreign influence campaigns should be shared as widely as possible, including with state and local officials, the private sector, and Congress. The public should be informed of foreign influence campaigns as soon as possible, even if the information is incomplete. And, members of Congress from both parties should "jointly and publicly reinforce the DNI's findings, particularly if a foreign influence effort is directed at specific candidates seeking office."

(U) There are multiple reasons why these principles were not adhered to in 2016, but many of them begin with the Obama Administration's decision to severely limit its briefings to Congress on Russian interference. Intelligence of this magnitude should have been briefed to the full congressional intelligence committees and to the committees' full complement of staff with its range of responsibilities and expertise. Complex policy and legal issues could have been discussed and debated. Questions could have been asked of the administration, not just during an initial briefing but in written follow-up questions and subsequent staff and member briefings. Members could have developed positions, individually, with other members, or perhaps even as a Committee. Members could also have weighed in on what information should be downgraded or declassified, for release to the full Congress, state and local officials, and the public.

(U) But none of that happened. Instead, at a moment when the country's democracy was under direct attack and the administration was hoping for support from Congress, it refused to engage the congressional intelligence committees.[1] How might things have turned out differently? Historically, the full committees have reacted to information differently than have the "Gang of Eight." For example, only when the committees learned of the CIA's torture program and the NSA's warrantless wiretapping program was there meaningful oversight and legislative responses. And while the response of the full committees to a hypothetical pre-election briefing on Russian interference may be unknown, the fact remains that, shortly after the election, when the full Senate Intelligence Committee was briefed for the first time, a number of members called for declassification of information. Much of that information would later be made public through the January 2017 *Intelligence Community Assessment*.

[1] The National Security Act of 1947, as amended, which establishes statutory reporting requirements, recognizes the "Gang of Eight" briefings only with regard to covert action and not to collection or analysis.

(U) Engaging the full congressional intelligence committees prior to the election would also have left a documentary record. Briefings and hearings would have been transcribed. Written questions would have been submitted and responded to. Follow up staff briefings would have been documented. And letters from members would have been drafted and sent. The result would have been historical accountability, for an administration legally obligated to keep the congressional intelligence committees fully and currently informed, and for members of Congress responsible to their constituents and their oaths of office. The public would know how their representatives responded to the attack. Historians would have a basis for future judgments. This report would have been very different.

(U) But among the insidious aspects of "Gang of Eight" briefings is the lack of a paper trail, which is why this report leaves so many questions largely unanswered. What, precisely, was shared with members of the "Gang of Eight" between August 11 and September 6, 2016? What was shared at the September 8, 2016, briefing with the "Gang of Eight" and the leaders of the homeland security committees? What did the administration ask of these members? How did members respond? Did members of Congress question classification decisions that impeded sharing with the full intelligence committees, the full Congress, state and local officials, and the public? And were members' subsequent public statements consistent with what they were briefed on?

(U) The report provides little information on what then-CIA Director John Brennan briefed the members of the "Gang of Eight." In 2017, Director Brennan testified publicly about the briefings:

> *The substance of those briefings was entirely consistent with the main judgments contained in the January [2017] classified and unclassified assessments namely, that Russia's goals were to undermine public faith in the U.S. democratic process, denigrate Secretary Clinton and harm her electability and potential presidency, and help President Trump's election chances.*[2]

(U) Absent a transcript, however, it is difficult to confirm what, exactly was conveyed to the members of the "Gang of Eight," or even whether the same information was provided at each of the separate individual briefings. The content of these briefings is critically important, however, as a measure both of the administration's adherence to statutory notification requirements and of members' responses to learning of this ongoing attack.

(U) The report provides a little more information about the September 8, 2016, briefing for the "Gang of Eight" and the leadership of the homeland security committees, but that information derives from interviews conducted almost a year after the fact. This briefing, which, despite the inclusion of additional members and the exclusion of key details, was still not provided to the full congressional intelligence committees, was not transcribed. The absence of a transcript is particularly troublesome because of the administration's request in that briefing for a public, bipartisan statement about Russian interference and the response to that request. The report conveys only that "some members" resisted and cites only the views of Senate Majority

[2] Testimony to the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, May 23, 2017

Leader McConnell. Otherwise, the public record is limited to subsequent statements and letters from the attendees of the briefing.

(U) The missing details of these interactions are critically important because of what happened next. As the report describes, the Obama Administration believed that any public statements about Russian interference it might make would be seen as partisan, a concern that would be mitigated if members of Congress were to publicly support the available intelligence. I believe that warning the public about a foreign influence campaign should not depend on the support of both parties, particularly when one of the parties stands to gain politically from that campaign. But that is how the Obama Administration felt. As Avril Haines, the Deputy Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs noted, as a result of the failure to elicit a bipartisan letter related to Russian interference, the administration "tempered our response options."

(U) The immediate result of the Republican refusal to publicly acknowledge Russian interference was the watered down letter to the president of the National Association of State Election Directors on September 28, 2016. That letter cited only "malefactors," a word that in no way conveyed the threat posed by a sophisticated nation state adversary like Russia. The letter, which also opposed the designation of election systems as critical infrastructure, failed to prompt a response proportional to the seriousness of the threat.

(U) The lack of a bipartisan public acknowledgment of the ongoing attack by Russia had other implications. If the Administration had informed the public of Russian hacking and dumping earlier than October 7, and had there been bipartisan condemnation of these operations, the public and the press may have reacted differently to the WikiLeaks releases. At the least, stories about Democratic emails might have mentioned that their release was part of a Russian influence campaign and that Donald Trump's repeated references to the releases, his stated adoration of WikiLeaks, and his solicitation of Russian assistance were taking place in the context of an ongoing influence campaign to assist him. Bipartisan public warnings of Russian interference might have alerted the public and the private sector to Russian social media influence operations and helped inoculate the public against those operations. Finally, clear, fact-based bipartisan statements about Russia's actions would have changed the public's understanding of how the very issue of Russian influence was being debated by the candidates ("No puppet. You're the puppet.")

(U) An acknowledgment of Russian influence operations, particularly operations intended to help Donald Trump, would have reflected poorly on the candidate and his campaign. But that should not have been a reason for the administration and members of Congress to withhold from the public warning of an ongoing attack by a foreign adversary. Nor should a political environment in which one candidate was questioning the legitimacy of the election with falsehoods ("large scale voter fraud") have been a reason to keep the public in the dark about real threats to America's democracy.

(U) The Committee's report describes a number of understandable challenges facing the Obama administration, including those related to understanding the relevant intelligence. But the administration's interactions with Congress, the public response –or lack thereof from

Republican leadership, and the paucity of public information represent a serious political breakdown. There are lessons to be learned from this history, many of which are reflected in the report's recommendations. But one must be explicit: when the country is under threat, the government has a particular responsibility to provide all relevant intelligence to the full congressional intelligence committees. Meaningful engagement between the two branches of government offers the best opportunity for bipartisan resistance to an attack from a foreign adversary and, absent that, accountability for any failures to defend the country.

(U) Finally, the concerns that I raised in my minority views in Volume I related to the lack of access by most Committee staff to relevant investigative materials have not been resolved. In this report, the Committee recommends that information about foreign influence campaigns be shared as broadly as possible. It is bizarre that the Committee would not heed its own recommendation and grant access to this information to its own staff, thereby remedying some of the very concerns I have identified in these views.

ADDITIONAL VIEWS OF SENATOR HEINRICH

(U) I voted to adopt Volume III of the Committee's Report on Russian Interference in the 2016 U.S. Election, which focuses on the U.S. government response to Russian activities. I also voted to publicly release the unclassified version of this volume. I commend the Committee's professional staff for their work and especially for their efforts to make sense of the tumultuous events that unfolded in the months before and after the 2016 U.S. election.

(U) As the report notes, the Committee knows far more about the scope of Russian activity now – with the benefit of hindsight and additional information – than the Obama administration knew in 2016. This volume is an attempt to bring together information drawn from interviews with key administration officials and classified and unclassified documents to tell the story of how Russia's interference was understood and addressed in real-time.

(U) While this volume might be one of the more robust publicly available accounts of the administration's actions in response to Russian interference, it should not be mistaken for a thorough historical record, as Sen. Wyden's minority views point out. The decision to limit engagement with Congress through the "Gang of Eight" mechanism meant that no formal records were kept of the various interactions between administration principals and congressional leaders. As a consequence, we cannot know precisely what was shared in these meetings or how members of Congress reacted.

(U) Limiting information only to a handful of members of Congress also constrained the administration's ability to build the bipartisan support necessary to credibly push back against Russian interference. While the administration was understandably worried that actions taken prior to the election might be perceived as partisan and undermine confidence in the election process, a show of broad bipartisan support for the validity of the intelligence could have alleviated some of those concerns.

(U) Finally, the volume includes recommendations to defend against Russian or other attempts to interfere in elections in 2020 and beyond. I agree with all of them. In particular, as discussed above, I agree that it is critical to share as broadly and as quickly as possible credible information about a foreign influence or active measures operation.

(U) I also agree wholeheartedly that "executive and legislative branch officials, regardless of party affiliation, should jointly and publicly reinforce the DNI's findings" regarding foreign intelligence threats to elections. As administration officials have warned publicly, these threats are evolving and increasing in sophistication – at the same time as political polarization in this country deepens. One way to reinforce the Intelligence Community's findings of foreign election interference is for Congress to work together to pass bipartisan election security legislation and other legislative measures that would signal a joint commitment to protecting our democratic institutions. Americans of all political affiliations deserve elected representatives who understand and act meaningfully on the threat of foreign election interference to our democracy.

VOLUME IV
REVIEW OF THE INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT

[redacted]
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I. (U) INTRODUCTION

(U) The Senate Select Committee on Intelligence acknowledges the impressive accomplishment in drafting and coordinating of the Intelligence Community Assessment (ICA), which was completed as a "Memorandum for the President" on December 30, 2016, [redacted] and a declassified version dated January 6, 2017, and made available to the public on the Office of the Director of National Intelligence (ODNI) website. The Committee's review focused on the highly compartmented "Memorandum to the President."

II. (U) FINDINGS

1. **(U)** The Committee found the ICA presents a coherent and well-constructed intelligence basis for the case of unprecedented Russian interference in the 2016 U.S. presidential election. On the analytic lines of the ICA, the Committee concludes that all [redacted] analytic lines are supported with all-source intelligence, although with varying substantiation. The Committee did not discover any significant analytic tradecraft issues in the preparation or final presentation of the ICA.

   (U) The ICA reflects proper analytic tradecraft despite being tasked and completed within a compressed timeframe. The compact timeframe was a contributing factor for not conducting formal analysis of competing hypotheses.

   (U) The differing confidence levels on one analytic judgment are justified and properly represented. Those in disagreement all stated that they had the opportunity to express differing points of view. The decision regarding the presentation of differing confidence levels was the responsibility of the Director of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) John Brennan and the Director of the National Security Agency (NSA) Admiral Michael Rogers, both of whom independently expressed to the Committee that they reached the final wording openly and with sufficient exchanges of views.

   (U) Multiple intelligence disciplines are used and identified throughout the ICA. Where the Committee noted concerns about the use of specific sources, in no case did the Committee conclude any analytic line was compromised as a result.

   (U) In all the interviews of those who drafted and prepared the ICA, the Committee heard consistently that analysts were under no politically motivated pressure to reach specific conclusions. All analysts expressed that they were free to debate, object to content, and assess confidence levels, as is normal and proper for the analytic process.

[redacted]

[redacted]

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[redacted]

2. **(U)** The Committee found that the agencies responsible for the ICA—CIA, NSA, and FBI, under the aegis of ODNI—met the primary tasking as directed by President Obama, which was to assemble a product that reflected the intelligence available to the Intelligence Community (IC) regarding Russian interference in the 2016 election.

3. **(U)** The Committee found that the ICA provides a proper representation of the intelligence collected by CIA, NSA, and FBI on Russian interference in 2016, and this body of evidence supports the substance and judgments of the ICA.

[redacted] Regarding FBI, the ICA states, in its "Scope and Sourcing" introduction, that "[w]e also do not include information from ongoing investigations." [redacted] The Committee found that the information provided by Christopher Steele to FBI was not used in the body of the ICA or to support any of its analytic judgments. However, a summary of this material was included in Annex A as a compromise to FBI's insistence that the information was responsive to the presidential tasking.

4. **(U)** The Committee found the ICA makes a clear argument that the manner and aggressiveness of the Russian interference was historically unprecedented. However, the ICA and its sources do not provide a substantial representation of Russian interference in the 2008 and 2012 presidential elections, as the Committee understands was part of the President's original tasking.

5. **(U[redacted])** The Committee found that the ICA did not provide a set of policy recommendations on how to respond to future Russian active measures, which was part of the tasking the President conveyed to the Director of National Intelligence (DNI) James Clapper. The ICA did include, in the compartmented version, an unclassified section independently produced by DHS, FBI, and the Department of Commerce's National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), "DHS/FBI/NIST Recommendations: Options to Protect and Defend US Election Infrastructure and US Political Parties."

(U) The absence of policy recommendations was deliberate, due to the well-established norm that the IC provides insight and warning to policy makers, but does not itself make policy.

[redacted]

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[redacted]

6. **(U)** The Committee found the ICA would benefit from a more comprehensive presentation of how Russian propaganda—as generated by Russia's multiple state-owned platforms—was used to complement the full Russian influence campaign.

   (U) Open source collection is a long-standing discipline for CIA and other elements of the IC, and open source reporting is used throughout the ICA to support specific analytic assertions. However, open source reporting on RT and Sputnik's coverage of WikiLeaks releases of Democratic National Committee (DNC) information would have strengthened the ICA's examination of Russia's use of propaganda. On this point, the Committee finds that Annex [redacted] of the ICA—"Open Source Center Analysis: Russia: Kremlin's TV Seeks to Influence Politics, Fuel Discontent in US," published December 12, 2012—should have been updated to provide a summary of Kremlin propaganda in 2016, thereby making a more relevant contribution to the ICA. An update to this assessment was not produced by the Open Source Enterprise until after the publication of the ICA.

7. **(U)** [redacted] The role of social media has been a significant focus by the Committee and is discussed in a separate volume of this report.

III. (U) BACKGROUND

(U) The Obama Administration released two versions of the ICA, a classified version on January 5 and a declassified version on January 6, 2017, both titled *Assessing Russian Activities and Intentions in Recent US Elections*.[1]

[redacted][3]

1 [redacted]

2 [redacted]

3 **(U)** The "Gang of Eight" is an informal term used to refer to House and Senate leadership and the leadership of the House and Senate intelligence committees.

[redacted] The Committee held two hearings on January 10, 2017—one open hearing in the morning and one closed hearing in the afternoon—to take testimony on the ICA from Director Clapper, FBI Director James Comey, Director Brennan, and Admiral Rogers.[4]

(U) On January 23, Committee Chairman Burr and Vice Chairman Warner of the Committee convened a business meeting to discuss plans for the Committee's oversight on the issue of Russian activities during the 2016 presidential election cycle.[5]

(U) At the business meeting, the Committee unanimously agreed to initiate a formal inquiry into the subject of Russian involvement in the 2016 elections. The Committee agreed to Terms of Reference delineating the lines of inquiry.

[redacted]

(U) The Committee conducted its examination of the ICA through document reviews of source documents and related materials and through interviews with IC officials involved in the direction, preparation, writing, editing, and review of the ICA.

[redacted]

4 **(U)** SSCI Open and Closed Hearings on Russian Active Measures Against the U.S. Political System, January 10, 2017.

5 **(U)** Throughout 2017 the Committee held numerous hearings and briefings on the subject of Russian active measures, and Committee staff organized briefings on this topic as part of regular oversight activities.

[redacted]

[redacted]

In the case of FBI documentation for [redacted], FBI did not provide the correct underlying report until January 29, 2018.

IV. [redacted]

[redacted]

A. [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

- [redacted]
- **(U)** On July 22, 2016, WikiLeaks began to disseminate material exfiltrated from the DNC.[7]
- [redacted]
- [redacted]

[redacted] Also [redacted] Director Brennan spoke with Director Comey and learned that FBI had an open investigation into potential ties between Moscow and U.S. persons associated with the Trump Campaign.[10]

[redacted]

6 [redacted]
7 [redacted]
8 **(U)** *Ibid.*
9 **(U)** *Ibid.*
10 [redacted] The Committee notes that FBI opened its formal investigation into potential U.S. person coordination with Russia on election interference, codenamed CROSSFIRE HURRICANE, on July 30, 2016. [redacted]
11 [redacted]

[redacted]

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12 [redacted]

13 [redacted]

14 [redacted]

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B. [redacted]

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21 [redacted]

22 [redacted]

23 [redacted]

24 [redacted]

25 [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

26 (U) *Ibid.*, p. 35.
27 (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 17-19.
28 (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 20-21.
29 (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 16-17.
30 (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 21-23.
31 (U) *Ibid.*, p. 18.

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

32 (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 36-38, 43.
33 (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 26-27.
34 (U) *Ibid.*, p. 26.
35 (U) *Ibid.*, p. 52. [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

36 [redacted]
37 **(U)** *Ibid.*, pp. 80-84.
38 **(U)** *Ibid.*, p. 35.
39 **(U)** *Ibid.*, pp. 64-65.

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

C. [redacted]

[redacted]

40 (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 71-72.
41 (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 97-98.
42 [redacted]

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1. [redacted]

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2. [redacted]

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3. [redacted]

4. [redacted]

5. [redacted]

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44 [redacted]

[redacted]

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6. [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

7. [redacted]

[redacted]

45 [redacted]
46

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

8. [redacted]

[redacted]

47 [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

9. [redacted]

[redacted]

10. [redacted]

48 **(U)** The public statement refers to the joint public statement by ODNI and DHS on October 7, 2016.

49 [redacted]

50 [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

COMMITTEE SENSITIVE – RUSSIA INVESTIGATION ONLY

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51 [redacted]

[redacted]

COMMITTEE SENSITIVE – RUSSIA INVESTIGATION ONLY

[redacted]

[redacted]

D. [redacted]

[redacted]

V. (U) ICA REVIEW: TASKING TO PUBLICATION

A. (U) Tasking and Drafting

[redacted] In a meeting of the NSC on December 6, 2016, President Obama instructed Director Clapper to have the Intelligence Community prepare a comprehensive report on Russian interference in the 2016 presidential election.[53] Director Clapper told the Committee: "I don't think we would have mounted the effort we did, probably, to be honest, in the absence of presidential direction, because that kind of cleared the way on sharing all the accesses."[54]

[redacted] The President directed that the report include everything the IC knew about Russian interference in the 2016 elections. In addition, the tasking included providing the IC's understanding of the historical context of Russian interference in U.S. political processes, focusing on the 2008 and 2012 elections. The presidential tasking also requested recommendations on how to prevent interference in the future and how to strengthen electoral systems.[55] Finally, the instruction was to have a version available to brief Congress, and also a declassified version releasable to the public. The President requested this product be completed

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52 [redacted]

53 **(U)** Chronology and dates for the drafting of the ICA draw from many interviews conducted by the Committee.

54 **(U)** SSCI Transcript of the Interview with James Clapper, Former Director of National Intelligence, July 17, 2017, p. 53.

55 **(U)** SSCI Transcript of the Interview with [NIO for Russia and Eurasia] and [NIO for Cyber Issues], May 9, 2017, p. 8.

[redacted]

by the end of his Administration, January 20, 2017. There was no document memorializing this presidential direction.

[redacted] The same day, Director Clapper passed the President's verbal direction to the National Intelligence Council (NIC), specifically the National Intelligence Officer (NIO) for Russia and Eurasia, Julia Gurganus, and the NIO for Cyber Issues, Vinh Nguyen. [redacted][56]

[redacted] The NIO for Russia and Eurasia and the NIO for Cyber Issues held a community meeting [redacted] to discuss the tasking, assignment of responsibilities, outline, scope, and approach for the project. [redacted][57]

56 **(U)** SSCI Transcript of the Interview with [NIO for Russia and Eurasia] and [NIO for Cyber Issues], May 9, 2017, p. 10.
57 **(U)** SSCI Transcript of the Interview with [NIO for Russia and Eurasia] and [NIO for Cyber Issues], May 9, 2017, pp. 22-23, 32.

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

FBI assigned two counterintelligence analysts to the ICA team, [redacted][58]

[redacted][59]

[redacted]

- [redacted]
- [redacted]
  - [redacted]
  - [redacted]
  - [redacted]
  - [redacted]
  - [redacted]
- [redacted]

58 **(U)** Interview with Bill Priestap, Assistant Director, Counterintelligence Division, FBI, April 13, 2017; Interview with [Section Chief, Counterintelligence Analysis Section, CD-1, FBI] April 21, 2017. The Section Chief of Analysis was Jonathan Moffa.

59 [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

- [redacted][60]

[redacted]

60 **(U)** *Ibid.*

61 [redacted]

62 **(U)** SSCI Transcript of the Interview with [NIO for Russia and Eurasia] and [NIO for Cyber Issues], May 9, 2017, pp. 38-39, 48-49.

63 [redacted]

64 [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

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[redacted]

65 **(U)** NIO for Russia and Eurasia, SSCI Transcript of the Interview with [NIO for Russia and Eurasia] and [NIO for Cyber Issues], May 9, 2017, p. 86.
66 **(U)** *Ibid.*, pp. 38-39.
67 **(U)** SSCI Transcript of the Interview with National Security Agency Panel, May 18, 2017, p. 50.
68 **(U)** *Ibid.*, pp. 66-73.
69 **(U)** NIO for Russia and Eurasia, *ibid.*, May 9, 2017, pp. 72-73.
70 **(U)** NIO for Cyber Issues, *ibid.*, May 9, 2017, p. 65.
71 **(U)** NIO for Cyber Issues, *ibid.*, pp. 74.

[redacted]

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[redacted][74]

[redacted][75]

[redacted] CIA reported to the Committee that on the same day, December 20, FBI first informed the CIA's team that FBI wanted to include material derived from what became known as the "Steele dossier." This information was from a former [redacted] officer now operating a private commercial intelligence firm, who had an

72 **(U)** SSCI Transcript of the Interview with National Security Agency Panel, May 18, 2017, pp. 52-55.

73 [redacted]

74 [redacted]

75 [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

established relationship with FBI. This material eventually became Annex A of the ICA, but its placement in the ICA was not resolved until December 29.

[redacted]

B. (U) Confidence Level Debate Over One Judgment

[redacted]

76 [redacted]

77 **(U)** SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Admiral Michael S. Rogers, USN, Director, National Security Agency, and Commander, U.S. Cyber Command, March 19, 2018, p. 58.
78 **(U)** *Ibid.*, pp. 62-65.
79 **(U)** *Ibid.*, p. 61.
80 **(U)** *Ibid.*, p. 60.

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

81 **(U)** *Ibid*., p. 53. ("One guy speaks for NSA.")
82 **(U)** *Ibid*., p. 82.
83 **(U)** SSCI Transcript of the Interview with James Clapper, Former Director of National Intelligence, July 17, 2017, p. 54. In November 2016, the transition team invited Admiral Rogers to New York to interview for the DNI position. Admiral Rogers told the Committee that he met with the President-elect ("did a job interview, went back to my job . . . [w]hich had zero impact on anything I have ever done)." Admiral Rogers also told the Committee that he consulted with his lawyer and spoke with the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff before going to the interview. *See* SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Admiral Michael S. Rogers, USN, Director, National Security Agency, and Commander, U.S. Cyber Command, March 19, 2018, p. 104.
84 [redacted]
85 [redacted]
86 [redacted]
87 **(U)** SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Admiral Michael S. Rogers, USN, Director, National Security Agency and Commander, U.S. Cyber Command, March 19, 2018, p. 54.

[redacted]

[redacted]

88 (U) *Ibid.*, p. 61.
89 (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with National Security Agency Panel, May 18, 2017, pp. 52-53.
90 [redacted]
91 [redacted]
92 (U) *Ibid.*

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

93 [redacted]
3, *ibid.*, p. 88.
94 [redacted]
95 [redacted]
96 [redacted]
97 [redacted]
98 [redacted]
99 [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

100 [redacted]

101 [redacted] *Ibid.*, p. 72.

102 [redacted] *Ibid.*, p. 70.

103 **(U)** SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Admiral Michael S. Rogers, USN, Director, National Security Agency, and Commander, U.S. Cyber Command, March 19, 2018, p. 66.

104 **(U)** *Ibid.*, p. 67.

105 **(U)** *Ibid.*, p. 68.

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

106

[redacted]

109

[redacted]

106 [redacted]

107 [redacted]

108 (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 57-58, 71-72.

109 [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted][10]

C. (U) Discussion of the "Steele Reporting" in the ICA

[redacted] The CIA team working on the ICA first learned on December 20, 2016, of information the FBI held and wanted to include in the ICA. Despite the fact that the ICA explicitly excluded ongoing investigations, FBI sought to introduce a summary of the material from former [redacted] officer Christopher Steele.[111]

[redacted] The Committee reviewed the debate over whether and where to include the Steele materials with all participants to the drafting of the ICA. In the first meeting of the Committee with Assistant Director for the Counterintelligence Division (AD/CD) of the FBI, he articulated the FBI's concerns. First was the directive from the President to include all the information the IC had on Russian involvement in the 2016 presidential election, and this included material that FBI held. Even though the Assistant Director suggested that "the FBI didn't want to stand behind it," it qualified for this directive. Second, the question immediately became how to handle this information in the drafting of the ICA. This was ultimately resolved by including the information as Annex A, a two-page summary attached only to the most classified version of the ICA (i.e., the "Memorandum to the President" version).[112] FBI officials told the Committee that they "would have had a major problem if Annex A had not been included," and that FBI believed they "had to put everything in."[113]

[redacted] The Assistant Director for [redacted] recounted a conversation with FBI Assistant Director for CD on December 22, and recalled the FBI's interest in "weaving their dossier in the actual text of the report." Assistant Director for [redacted] stated there was no "visibility, at the time of the writing of the report, into the sub-sourcing dynamic for that dossier . . . because of the sub-sourcing, I felt [it] was not appropriate for inclusion in the report and would detract from the report." The Assistant Director for [redacted] told the Committee that when she asked the FBI Assistant Director for CD for more information on the sources for the dossier, the Assistant Director for CD told her that the FBI's primary source "had not provided information regarding

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110 [redacted]

111 (U) [redacted] Analyst 2, SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Analysts Panel, July 18, 2017, p. 151.
112 (U) Interview with Bill Priestap, Assistant Director, Counterintelligence Division, FBI, April 13, 2017.
113 (U) Interview with [Section Chief, Counterintelligence Analysis Section, CD-1, FBI] April 21, 2017.



the sub-sources, but that [FBI was] able to independently corroborate some of the sub-sourcing. But he did not provide the names or reliability for the sub-sources." Assistant Director for [redacted] said the FBI Assistant Director told her, "We feel very strongly that it should be included and woven into the text," to which Assistant Director for [redacted] stated they would have to "agree to disagree" and that her recommendation would be that the information "not be included in the report. At a minimum, I was thinking it should be pulled out and put in an annex."[114]

[redacted] When asked to comment on Annex A as it appears in the ICA, Assistant Director for [redacted] stated that she concurred with most of the language on the first page of what became Annex A of the ICA.[115] However, from where the text in Annex A begins with "the most politically sensitive claims by the FBI source alleging a close relationship between the President-elect and the Kremlin," the Assistant Director for [redacted] stated "from there on down, I can tell you that there is no information coming from [redacted] sources that would corroborate any of that."[116]

[redacted] The Assistant Director for [redacted] also noted the FBI insisted on including the Steele reporting because "they didn't want to look like they were hiding anything," and that "[t]o me, that sounded fair."[117] The Assistant Director for [redacted] and her deputy reviewed the material and sent a copy to Director Brennan and Deputy Director Cohen.[118] The Assistant Director for [redacted] told the Committee that her understanding was that "the analysts were very much against" putting the FBI material in the ICA.[119] "[I]t was very unvetted information," according to the Assistant Director for [redacted] and "some of it made sense."[120] "[I]f you look at the theme, are the Russians trying to mess with our elections, that theme is certainly accurate. But the details were really—we wouldn't be able to come up with a good analytic confidence in them before the ICA was due."[121] Ultimately, "[e]verybody agreed that it would just be an annex, and then it was agreed there would be a big caveat put on top of the annex, that this is totally unvetted, unverified."[122]

[redacted] The CIA analysts interviewed by the Committee recalled "at one point the FBI wanted [the Steele reporting] in the text [of the ICA]. The FBI wanted it in one form. We had it in a big text box on page 4. . . . We had a bitter argument with the FBI to put it in an annex."[123] One analyst acknowledged that the material was already circulating, and that "[i]f we hadn't

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114 **(U)** SSCI Transcript of the Interview with [AD[redacted], May 25, 2017, pp. 48-51, 53-54, 61.
115 [redacted] "Memorandum to the President" version of the ICA only, p. 27.
116 **(U)** SSCI Transcript of the Interview with [AD[redacted], May 25, 2017, pp. 53-54.
117 **(U)** SSCI Transcript of the Interview with [AD[redacted], May 15, 2017, pp. 77-78.
118 **(U)** *Ibid.*, pp. 76, 78.
119 **(U)** *Ibid.*, p. 77.
120 **(U)** *Ibid.*
121 **(U)** *Ibid.*
122 **(U)** *Ibid.*, p. 78.
123 **(U)** [redacted] Analyst 1, SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Analysts Panel, July 18, 2017, p. 155.





addressed it, it would have either created the impression among people who didn't go through the sourcing that we had relied on it, which we didn't, or that we were unaware of it."[124]

Deputy Director for Analysis stated, "We would have never included that report in a CIA-only assessment because the source was so indirect. And we made sure we indicated we didn't use it in our analysis, and if it had been a CIA-only product we wouldn't have included it at all."[125]

Director Clapper later reiterated to the SSCI in a closed hearing in May 2018:

> *I don't think you'll find in any of the footnotes in the ICA any reference to the dossier. We thought it important to include a summary description of it, but it was not included as an organic part of the ICA. Maybe a difference without a distinction, but to us that was a very important point. For our part, particularly the CIA and ODNI, since we could not validate the second and third-order assets, that's why we did not use it as part of the assessment. We felt—and the whole reason particularly for Jim Comey's part—that we had a duty to warn the President-elect that it was out there, and that was the whole point. But it was not included as an organic part of the assessment.*[126]

Director Brennan reiterated the CIA's reservations about the FBI's Steele material, noting that the DDA "was very concerned about polluting the ICA with this material," and that "there was stiff opposition, especially from CIA, to include that material either in essence or in substance in that report," which "was not used in any way as far as the judgments in the ICA were concerned."[127] Director Brennan stated:

> *Jim Comey and the FBI felt strongly that, here is a very sensitive document that is being produced by CIA, NSA, and FBI about Russian attempts to interfere in the election and Russian attempts to denigrate one candidate and promote prospects of the other. The FBI has acquired this information that comes from a former foreign intelligence officer from a pretty respectable service, that includes information of potential kompromat related to Donald Trump. So Jim Comey, with some elegance said: How can we have this report and deliver it to the outgoing President and the incoming President and for he, Jim Comey, to be completely silent on this dossier that a lot of people have seen and that the FBI*

124 **(U)** Analyst, *ibid.*, p. 152.
125 **(U)** Deputy Director for Analysis, *ibid.*
126 **(U)** Closed SSCI Hearing with Former Intelligence Directors, May 16, 2018, pp. 33-34.
127 **(U)** SSCI Transcript of the Interview with John Brennan, former Director, Central Intelligence Agency, June 23, 2017, pp. 60-65.



was following up on and doesn't know whether or not Mr. Trump is aware or not?[128]

When Brennan appeared before the SSCI in a closed hearing in 2018, he stated:

Initially FBI wanted it incorporated into the assessment itself. We all pushed back on that. They wanted it to be included as the last portion of the assessment if it wasn't even going to be used as a finding. We pushed back against that. But Jim Comey made a very strong case, which we didn't object to, that it needed to accompany the assessment because it was related to the issue, and we didn't know where the FBI's investigation was as far as some of those things.[129]

Director Brennan volunteered to the Committee that around the time he received a call from who said that:

[H]e wanted to make sure that I understood and that others in the senior officialdom of the U.S. government understood that that officer, Steele, had been a former officer, but had no current relationship with , and that dossier was not put together in any way with support. So he wanted to make sure there was a separation there.[130]

Director Comey addressed the question of the dossier and its placement when asked by SSCI Chairman Burr whether he "insisted that the dossier be part of the ICA in any way, shape, or form?" Director Comey replied:

I insisted that we bring it to the party, and I was agnostic as to whether it was footnoted in the document itself, put as an annex. I have some recollection of talking to John Brennan maybe at some point saying: I don't really care, but I think it is relevant and so ought to be part of the consideration.[131]

NSA played no role in the debate over the Steele reporting and the ICA. NSA analysts told the Committee they had "no role in drafting, nor role in its inclusion, no role in reviewing the source material, became aware of it as it was appended."[132] NSA analysts first

128 **(U)** *Ibid.*, pp. 60-61.
129 Closed SSCI Hearing with Former Intelligence Directors, May 16, 2018, pp. 34-35.
130 SSCI Transcript of the Interview with John Brennan, former Director, Central Intelligence Agency, June 23, 2017, p. 65. When Brennan appeared before the SSCI in 2018, he added that *see* Closed SSCI Hearing with Former Intelligence Directors, May 16, 2018, p. 44.
131 **(U)** SSCI Transcript of the Closed SSCI Hearing with James Comey, Former Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, June 8, 2017, p. 49.
132 **(U)** SSCI Transcript of the Interview with National Security Agency Panel, May 18, 2017, p. 86.

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heard of the information on December 29 and had no insights into Steele's source network, and the Steele material had no effect on NSA's views of the Key Judgments of the ICA.[133]

Admiral Rogers recalled that he heard of this from his team of analysts on December 29 while reviewing a draft of the ICA to which this material had been appended. Admiral Rogers's initial reaction was that the Steele information ought not be in the body of the ICA, but "let's put it in the appendix."[134]

Director Clapper said he "first heard" of the Steele material in a conversation with Director Brennan "around the 15th of December."[135] The NIOs were witting of some of the conversations regarding the Steele material, but "had almost no say in this," and recalled a "unanimous sense that this was not germane to the judgments and findings in the paper" and "did not add value."[136] The NIO for Russia and Eurasia said that they were "comfortable placing it in the annex" because "that remained true to the task."[137]

On December 27, a SVTC was held between the four deputies of CIA, NSA, FBI, and ODNI, in order to reach an agreement on where to place the Steele materials in the ICA, with the FBI insisting it remain in the body of the ICA. No agreement was reached and, according to the CIA senior officer assigned to the ICA, Director Brennan left it to the analysts to make the call on where to put it. On December 28, Director Comey was still insisting the document be in the body. On December 29, Deputy Director Cohen and Deputy Director McCabe agreed to place the material in an annex.[138]

Director Brennan recalled to the Committee: "So as long as it was separated from the ICA's substance and judgments and as long as it was not going to be part of the formal briefing we gave on the ICA, we felt, ok, Jim [Comey], you want to do it, okay. We're not going to object."[139]

D. (U) Finalizing the ICA

With the placement of the Steele material resolved, the ICA was formalized as a Memorandum to the President, dated December 30, 2016, and handed to the NIOs at the NIC.

133 **(U)** *Ibid*.
134 **(U)** SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Admiral Michael S. Rogers, USN, Director, National Security Agency, and Commander, U.S. Cyber Command, March 19, 2018, pp. 69, 71.
135 **(U)** SSCI Transcript of the Closed Hearing: Former Intel Directors Panel on Russian Interference, May 16, 2018, p. 107.
136 **(U)** NIO for Russia and Eurasia, SSCI Transcript of the Interview with [NIO for Russia and Eurasia] and [NIO for Cyber Issues], May 9, 2017, pp. 90, 92.
137 **(U)** *Ibid.*, p. 93.
138 Interview with April 13, 2017.
139 **(U)** SSCI Transcript of the Interview with John Brennan, former Director, Central Intelligence Agency, June 23, 2017, p. 62.

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[redacted][141]

[redacted] From December 30, 2016, through January 5, 2017, the NIOs hosted several meetings and SVTCs to produce the [redacted] of the Memorandum to the President.

[redacted][142]

[redacted][143]

(U) While noting details of disagreement in content and confidence levels as reviewed above, the Committee heard no significant criticisms or objections to the ICA process, or the resulting paper, from all the analysts, managers, and agency heads interviewed. Every witness interviewed believed the collaboration was transparent and professionally candid, including disagreements over confidence levels. Every witness interviewed by the Committee stated that he or she saw no attempts or pressure to politicize the findings.

(U) The Committee asked about the lack of recommendations, how the process compared with other ICA productions, how additional time would have benefited this ICA

140 [redacted]
141 [redacted]
142 **(U)** NIO for Russia and Eurasia, SSCI Transcript of the Interview with [NIO for Russia and Eurasia] and [NIO for Cyber Issues], May 9, 2017, pp. 121-122.
143 **(U)** *Ibid.*, p. 124.

exercise, and how and whether the counterintelligence question was handled during the ICA process.

[redacted] The President's original tasking included a request for recommendations about protecting electoral infrastructure and responding to foreign interference in the future. All witnesses interviewed by the Committee stated the position that the IC does not make policy recommendations. The NIO for Russia and Eurasia stated, "that's an area we don't touch," while noting that the final "Memorandum to the President" included, as a separate document (but not an annex), an unclassified, eleven-page paper produced by DHS, FBI, and the Department of Commerce's National Institute for Standards and Technology (NIST), titled "Recommendations: Options to Protect and Defend US Election Infrastructure and US Political Parties." NIO for Russia and Eurasia stated there was no input to this document from anyone writing the ICA.[144]

[redacted] The NIO for Russia and Eurasia was mindful of the President's full direction and stated that she reached out to both the National Security Council (NSC) and the Department of State's Bureau of Intelligence and Research (INR) in the period after the first complete draft was presented on December 19 and presented a deadline to submit policy recommendations by December 27. The NIO received no responses.[145]

[redacted]

[redacted] The other key difference in this process, according to the NIO for Russia and Eurasia, was dealing with discussion of U.S. persons. The NIO noted, "[d]ay to day, we do not deal with U.S persons in any way." The participants in the process even debated whether to

144 **(U)** *Ibid.*, p. 112.
145 **(U)** *Ibid.*, p. 113.
146 **(U)** NIO for Cyber Issues, *ibid.*, pp. 61-64.

name the two leading candidates. Regarding the option of leaving the candidates unidentified, NIO for Russia and Eurasia concluded this made "no sense . . . but that felt uncomfortable, I think, for a lot of us."[147]

Noting the imperative of the tight deadline, the Committee asked how additional time would have affected the quality of the ICA. The NIO for Russia and Eurasia responded that it would have allowed the opportunity to [148]

NIO for Cyber Issues stated:

> *[More time would have helped] to collate FBI information in terms of the changes because their reporting and the reporting from private industry and states takes a long time. . . . You can see in the paper the line where we say because we . And if we had , we could have something more complete.*[149]

NIO for Russia and Eurasia also believed more time would have allowed for:

[150]

[151]

147 **(U)** NIO for Russia and Eurasia, *ibid.*, p. 102.
148 **(U)** *Ibid.*, pp. 103-104.
149 **(U)** NIO for Cyber Issues, *ibid.*, p. 103.
150 **(U)** NIO for Russia and Eurasia, *ibid.*

[redacted]

[redacted][57]

[redacted] The Committee asked the NIOs who worked on the ICA how they handled the question of whether activities were being coordinated between the Russian government and the Trump Campaign. The NIO for Russia and Eurasia responded that "it did not come up. . . . We didn't have any evidence for that. There was not information that pointed us in that direction." The NIO for Cyber Issues stated "[w]e rely on our FBI colleagues to bring it up. But it was not discussed."[153] As noted elsewhere, neither the Fusion Cell members nor the ICA authors were read into the FBI's investigation.

[redacted]

VI. (U) ICA REVIEW: KEY JUDGEMENTS

(U) The Committee finds that the IC met President Obama's primary tasking and that the ICA is a sound intelligence product. While the Committee had to rely on the agencies that the sensitive information and accesses had been accurately reported, as part of its review the Committee examined analytic procedures and interviewed analysts, managers, and senior intelligence officers who wrote and oversaw the production and who were well-versed with the information. These findings are based on these interviews as well as a detailed review of the entire body of finished intelligence reporting used to substantiate the ICA.

(U) In all the interviews of those who drafted and prepared the ICA, the Committee heard consistently that analysts were under no politically motivated pressure to reach specific conclusions. All analysts expressed that they were free to debate, object to content, and assess confidence levels, as is normal and proper for the analytic process.

A. (U) On the Key Judgments of the December 2016 ICA

1. (U) Russian Efforts to Influence the 2016 Election

(U) The ICA states:

Russian efforts to influence the 2016 presidential election represent the most recent expression of Moscow's longstanding desire to undermine the U.S.-led liberal democratic order, but these activities demonstrated a significant

151 [redacted]

152 **(U)** NIO for Russia and Eurasia, *ibid.*, p. 61.
153 **(U)** NIO for Cyber Issues, *ibid.*, p. 116-117.

[redacted]

escalation in directness, level of activity, and scope of effort compared to previous operations.

(U) The ICA revealed the elements of a comprehensive and multifaceted Russian campaign against the United States as it was understood by the U.S. Intelligence Community at the end of 2016. The intelligence presented supports the judgment that the Russian campaign "demonstrated a significant escalation in directness, level of activity, and scope of effort compared to previous operations."

(U) However, the Committee found the ICA's treatment of the historical context of Russian interference in U.S. domestic politics limited.

2. (U) Russian Leadership Intentions

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

(U) The Committee found that the ICA provided a range of all-source reporting to support these assessments.

(U) The Committee found that specific intelligence as well as open source assessments support the assessment that President Putin approved and directed aspects of this influence campaign.

(U) Further, a body of reporting, to include different intelligence disciplines, open source reporting on Russian leadership policy preferences, and Russian media content, showed that Moscow sought to denigrate then-candidate Clinton.

(U) The Committee found that the ICA presents information from public Russian leadership commentary, Russian state media reports, and specific intelligence reporting to support the assessment that Putin and the Russian Government demonstrated a preference for candidate Trump.

(U) Russia leadership intentions is the only assessment in the ICA that had different confidence levels between the participating agencies—the CIA and FBI assessed with "high confidence" and the NSA assessed with "moderate confidence"—so the Committee gave this section additional attention. The Committee finds that the analytic disagreement was reasonable, transparent, and openly debated among the agencies and analysts, with analysts, managers, and agency heads on both sides of the confidence level reasonably justifying their positions.

3. (U) Multifaceted Russian Influence Operations

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

(U) The Committee found that the ICA presents a detailed assessment of the elements that comprised the influence campaign, [redacted]

(U) While the ICA cites examples of Russian media in 2016, its analysis of RT (formerly Russia Today) and Sputnik is dated, and the ICA does not provide an updated assessment of this Russian capability in 2016, which the Committee found to be a shortcoming in the ICA, as this is information that was available in open sources.

4. (U) The Threat from Future Russian Influence Operations

[redacted]

(U) Since January 2017, the Committee has discovered additional examples of Russia's attempt to sow discord, undermine democratic institutions, and interfere in U.S. elections. The Committee also has reviewed intelligence demonstrating Russia's efforts to interfere in the elections of our allies as well as countries Russia perceives to be in its sphere of influence.

B. (U) Counterintelligence Investigations

(U) The ICA did not attempt to address ongoing investigations, to include whether Russian intelligence services attempted to recruit sources with access to any campaign. All individuals the Committee interviewed stated that the Steele material did not in any way inform the analysis in the ICA—including the key judgments—because it was unverified information and had not been disseminated as serialized intelligence reporting. The material was instead included in Annex A of the compartmented ICA.

C. (U) The Unfinished Work of Intelligence

[redacted]

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(U) The Committee notes that, as is the case with all intelligence questions, information continues to be gathered and analyzed. The Committee finds the conclusions of the ICA are sound, and is reassured by the fact that collection and analysis subsequent to the ICA's publication continue to reinforce its assessments.

D. (U) Intelligence Cited in the ICA

(U) The ICA has [redacted] footnotes. Source documents for the footnotes include:[154]

- [redacted]
- [redacted][157]
- [redacted] From FBI—intelligence reports cited fifty-one times, including FBI Intelligence Information Reports (IIRs) [redacted] "Letterhead Memorandum" (LHM), which is an FBI manner for formally assembling intelligence reporting on various topics; and records of victim notifications.

154 [redacted]

155 [redacted]

156 [redacted] SSCI Transcript of the Closed Hearing on Russian Active Measures Against the U.S. Political System, January 10, 2017, pp. 16-19. [redacted]

157 **(U)** *Ibid.*, pp. 10-13.

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[redacted]

- [redacted]
- [redacted]
- [redacted]

VII. (U) ICA Review: Section-by-Section

[redacted]

- [redacted] Analytic Line [redacted]: *Putin Ordered Campaign To Influence U.S. Election* [redacted]
- [redacted] Analytic Line [redacted]: *Russian Campaign Was Multifaceted* [redacted] This section had five sub-headings:
  - *Cyber Espionage Against U.S. Political Organizations* [redacted]
  - *Public Disclosures of Russian-Collected Data* [redacted]
  - *Russian Cyber Intrusions Into State Electoral Infrastructure* [redacted]
  - *Russian Propaganda Efforts* [redacted]
  - [redacted]

158 [redacted]

[redacted]

- [redacted] Analytic Line [redacted]: *Influence Effort Was Boldest Yet in the U.S.* [redacted]
- [redacted]
- [redacted] Analytic Line [redacted]: *Election Operation Signals "New Normal" In Russian Influence Efforts* [redacted]

A. [redacted] Analytic Line [redacted]: Putin Ordered Campaign to Influence U.S. Election

(U) The Committee found that reporting from multiple intelligence disciplines was used as evidence to support this analytic line, and that the analytic tradecraft was transparent.

[redacted]

159 [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

1. (U) Discussion

[redacted]

a. (U) Open Source Reporting

[redacted]

160 [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

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[redacted]

- [redacted][161]
- [redacted][162]
- [redacted][163]
- [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

161 [redacted]
162 (U) DNI, [redacted] April 5, 2016
163 [redacted]
164 [redacted]

[redacted]

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[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted][166]

b. [redacted]

[redacted]

- [redacted]
- [redacted]
- [redacted]

[redacted]

165 [redacted]
166 [redacted]
167 [redacted]
168 [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

c. (U) NSA Reporting

[redacted]

- [redacted]
- [redacted]

[redacted]

169 [redacted]

170 [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

- [redacted]

[redacted]

d. (U) FBI Reporting

[redacted]

171 [redacted]
172 [redacted]
173 (U) NIO for Cyber Issues, SSCI Transcript of the Interview with [NIO for Russia and Eurasia] and [NIO for Cyber Issues], May 9, 2017, p. 40.
174 (U) FBI, IIR 4 212 0834 17, November 2, 2016 [redacted] FBI, IIR 4 212 0168 17, October 11, 2016 [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

d. (U) CIA Reporting

[redacted]

i. [redacted]

[redacted]

175 [redacted]

176 [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

177 [redacted]
178 [redacted]
179 [redacted]
180 [redacted]
181 [redacted]
182 [redacted]
183 [redacted]
184 [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

185 [redacted]
186 [redacted]
187 [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

188 [redacted]
189 [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

ii. [redacted]

[redacted]

190 [redacted]
191
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193
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[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

iii. [redacted]

[redacted]

195 [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

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[redacted]

196 [redacted]
197 [redacted]
198 [redacted]
199 [redacted]

[redacted]

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[redacted]

[redacted]

200 [redacted]
201 (U) *Ibid.*
202 [redacted]
203 [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

2. (U) On Putin Directing the Active Measures

[redacted]

204 [redacted]

205 [redacted]

206 [redacted]

207 [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

COMMITTEE SENSITIVE – RUSSIA INVESTIGATION ONLY

[redacted]

- [redacted]

[redacted]

- [redacted]

- [redacted]

[redacted]

208 [redacted]
209

[redacted]

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[redacted]

b. [redacted]

[redacted]

- [redacted]
- [redacted]

[redacted]

- [redacted]

[redacted]

210 [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

211 [redacted]
212

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

213 [redacted]

214 (U) NIO for Cyber Issues, SSCI Transcript of the Interview with [NIO for Russia and Eurasia] and [NIO for Cyber Issues], May 9, 2017, pp. 77-78.

215 (U) NIO for Russia and Eurasia, *ibid.*, p. 79.

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

216 **(U)** NIO for Cyber Issues, *ibid.*, p. 81.
217 **(U)** NIO for Russia and Eurasia, *ibid.*, pp. 82-83.
218 **(U)** SSCI Transcript of the Interview with National Security Agency Panel, May 18, 2017, pp. 29-30.
219 [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

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[redacted]

220

221
222

[redacted]

COMMITTEE SENSITIVE – RUSSIA INVESTIGATION ONLY

[redacted]

COMMITTEE SENSITIVE – RUSSIA INVESTIGATION ONLY

[redacted]

223 [redacted]

[redacted]

COMMITTEE SENSITIVE – RUSSIA INVESTIGATION ONLY

[redacted]

[redacted]

224 [redacted]

225 [redacted]

226 [redacted]

227 [redacted]

228 [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

c. [redacted]

[redacted]

- [redacted]

229 [redacted]
230 [redacted]
231 [redacted]
232 [redacted]
233 [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

COMMITTEE SENSITIVE – RUSSIA INVESTIGATION ONLY

[redacted]

- [redacted]

[redacted]

- [redacted]

[redacted]

234 [redacted]

235 [redacted]

[redacted]

COMMITTEE SENSITIVE – RUSSIA INVESTIGATION ONLY

[redacted]

[redacted]

- [redacted]

[redacted]

- [redacted]
- [redacted]
- [redacted]

236 [redacted]
237

[redacted]

[redacted]

COMMITTEE SENSITIVE – RUSSIA INVESTIGATION ONLY

[redacted]

238 [redacted]
239

[redacted]

COMMITTEE SENSITIVE – RUSSIA INVESTIGATION ONLY

[redacted]

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[redacted]

d. [redacted]

[redacted]

* [redacted]

[redacted]

240 [redacted]
241 [redacted]

[redacted]

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[redacted]

[redacted]

242 [redacted]

243 [redacted]

244 [redacted]

[redacted]

B. [redacted] Analytic Line [redacted]: Russian Campaign Was Multifaceted

- [redacted]
- [redacted]
- [redacted]
- [redacted]

1. [redacted] Introduction

[redacted]

[redacted]

(U) The Committee found that this section is supported and substantiated by multiple intelligence disciplines. The cited sources support logically defensible conclusions, and their use is consistent with proper analytic standards.

[redacted] The Committee found that the analysis does not exceed the evidence presented [redacted] [252]

251 [redacted]
252 [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

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a. [redacted] On Putin's Role

[redacted]

- [redacted]

[redacted]

- [redacted]

[redacted]

253 [redacted]
254 [redacted]
255 [redacted]

[redacted]

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[redacted]

COMMITTEE SENSITIVE – RUSSIA INVESTIGATION ONLY

[redacted]

- [redacted]

[redacted]

- [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

256 [redacted]
257 [redacted]
258 [redacted]

[redacted]

COMMITTEE SENSITIVE – RUSSIA INVESTIGATION ONLY

[redacted]

[redacted]

259 [redacted]

260 [redacted]

[redacted]

261 [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

259 [redacted]

260 [redacted]

261 [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted] The term "neighbors" is nomenclature the Russian intelligence services have used to refer to each other going back to the 1930s.[263]

[redacted]

262 [redacted]

263 **(U)** *See, e.g.*, Weinstein and Vassiliev, *The Haunted Wood* (1999) (describing Soviet intelligence activities in the U.S. during the Stalin era and drawing on Soviet intelligence services archives accessible in the 1990s).
264 **(U)** SSCI Transcript of the Closed Hearing on Russian Active Measures Against the U.S. Political System, January 10, 2017, pp. 14-15.
265 **(U)** NIO for Russia and Eurasia, SSCI Transcript of the Interview with [NIO for Russia and Eurasia] and [NIO for Cyber Issues], May 9, 2017, pp.79-80.

[redacted]

[redacted]

b. (U) On Russia's Influence Capabilities

[redacted]

"Moscow's campaign aimed at the U.S. election reflected years of investment in its capabilities, which Moscow has honed in the former Soviet states." [redacted]

[redacted]

266 **(U)** *Ibid.*, p 52.
267 [redacted]
268 [redacted]
269 **(U)** *Ibid.* p. 85.
270 [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

271 [redacted]
272
273 [redacted]
274

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

c. (U) On the Challenge of Attributing Moscow's Actions

[redacted]

275 [redacted]
276 [redacted]
277 [redacted]
278 [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

2. [redacted] Sub-topic: Cyber Espionage Against U.S. Political Organizations

(U) The Committee found that this sub-topic is supported and substantiated by multiple intelligence disciplines. The cited sources support logically defensible conclusions, and their use is consistent with proper analytic standards.

[redacted]

279 [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

a. [redacted]

[redacted]

b. (U) GRU Operations

[redacted]

280 [redacted]

281 [redacted]

282 [redacted]

283 [redacted]

284 [redacted]

285 [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

COMMITTEE SENSITIVE – RUSSIA INVESTIGATION ONLY

[redacted]

286 [redacted]

287 [redacted]

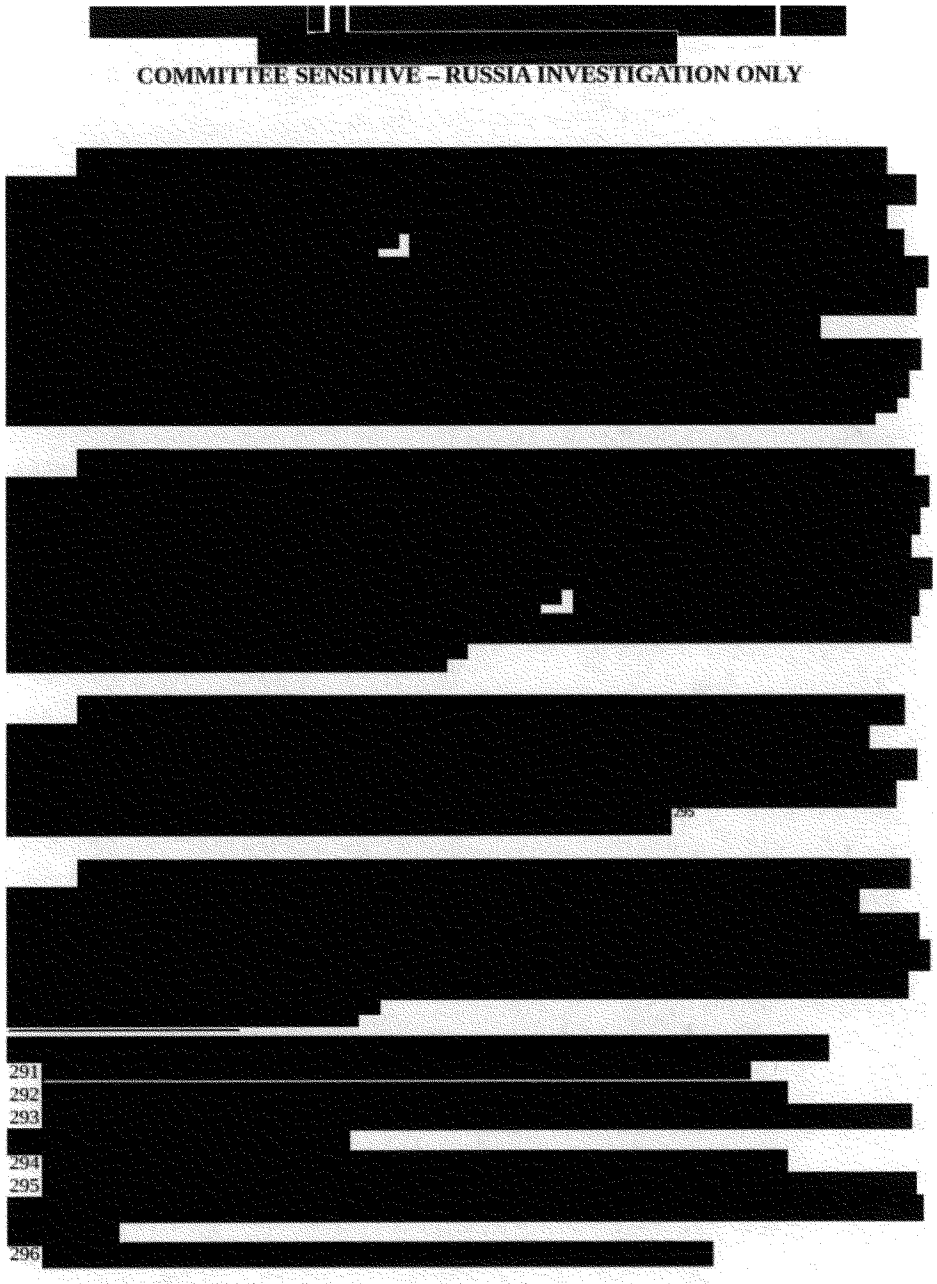
288 [redacted]

289 [redacted]

290 [redacted]

[redacted]

COMMITTEE SENSITIVE – RUSSIA INVESTIGATION ONLY



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[redacted]

[redacted]

297 [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[300]

3. [redacted]

(U) The Committee found that this sub-topic is supported and substantiated by multiple intelligence disciplines. The cited sources support logically defensible conclusions, and their use is consistent with proper analytic standards.

[redacted]

a. (U) NSA Reporting

[redacted]

298 [redacted]

299 [redacted]

300 **(U)** Department of Justice, Office of Inspector General, *A Review of Various Actions by the Federal Bureau of Investigation and Department of Justice in Advance of the 2016 Election*, classified Appendix One, July 2018.

301 [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

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[redacted]

302 [redacted]

303 [redacted]

304 [redacted]

306 [redacted]

302 [redacted]
303 [redacted]
304 [redacted]
305 [redacted]
306 [redacted]

[redacted]

COMMITTEE SENSITIVE – RUSSIA INVESTIGATION ONLY

[redacted]

[redacted]

b. (U) Open Source Reporting

[redacted]

307 [redacted]

308 [redacted]

309 [redacted]

310 [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted][312]

[redacted]

c. (U) CIA Reporting

[redacted]

311 [redacted]

312 [redacted]

313 [redacted]

314 [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted] is the [redacted] discussed above under the first analytic line of the ICA.

[redacted]

4. [redacted] Sub-topic: Russian Cyber Intrusions Into State Electoral Infrastructure

(U) The Committee found that this sub-topic cites multiple intelligence disciplines. With the limited exception of certain FBI materials, the sources cited support logically defensible conclusions that are consistent with proper analytic standards.

[redacted] The Committee found that while FBI material is used for most citations, some FBI reports referenced vary in relevance and transparency, and one FBI report is missing.

[redacted]

315 [redacted]
316 [redacted]
317 [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

a. (U) CIA Reporting

[redacted]

318 [redacted]
319 [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

b. (U) NSA Reporting

[redacted]

c. (U) FBI Reporting

[redacted] Nine FBI reports are used to support language about specific Russian intelligence activities targeting the U.S. electoral system as well as cyber intrusions in the U.S. The most extensive report supports the ICA assessment that [redacted]

320 [redacted]
321 [redacted]
322 [redacted]
323 [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

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[redacted] This report is an LHM dated October 21 from the FBI to [redacted] This six-page LHM has twenty-one footnotes citing FBI case investigations, [redacted] This LHM states:

[redacted][24]

[redacted]

[redacted][25]

[redacted] Other FBI reports submitted for this section include four reports cited for the ICA bullet, which states:

[redacted]

324 [redacted]

325 [redacted]

326 [redacted]

[redacted]

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[redacted]

[redacted]

One FBI IIR cited identifies [redacted]

[redacted] The FBI reporting cited includes an unclassified email with an unprinted zip file attachment, and therefore cannot be judged to support the ICA language.[328] The other footnote to this statement cites a document missing in both copies of supporting materials provided to the Committee.[329] Therefore, the Committee cannot verify if the information cited supports the ICA language.

d. [redacted]

[redacted]

327 (U[redacted] FBI, IIR 4 213 3763 16, March 21, 2016, [redacted]

328 (U// [redacted] FBI, Electronic Communication, *Log Files Provided by [Redacted]*, October 26, 2016. [redacted]

329 The [redacted] is to [redacted] The Committee was not provided the underlying document.

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

330 [redacted]

331 (U) *Ibid.*

332 (U) *Ibid.*

333 [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

5. [redacted] Sub-topic: Russian Propaganda Efforts

(U) The Committee found that analysts draw inferences from open source reporting in this sub-topic.

(U) The Committee found that CIA, FBI, and NSA reporting is properly used to support this section, and this sub-topic expounds on the propaganda element in the Russian influence campaign in 2016. The use of sources, except where noted, supports logically defensible conclusions that are consistent with proper analytic standards.

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

338

(U) Throughout this section, open source reporting supports the text in the ICA, with the following notable exceptions.

[redacted]

339

[redacted]

b. (U) CIA Reporting

[redacted]

338

339

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

340 [redacted]

341 (U) *Ibid.*

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

342

c. (U) NSA Reporting

[redacted]

343

[redacted]

345

d. [redacted]

[redacted]

342 [redacted]
343 [redacted]
344 [redacted]
345 [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

346 [redacted]
347 [redacted]
348 [redacted]
349 [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[353]

C. [redacted] Analytic Line [redacted]: Influence Effort Was Boldest Yet in the US

(U) The Committee found that this section logically follows Analytic Line [redacted], and is supported and substantiated by multiple intelligence disciplines. As above, the cited sources support logically defensible conclusions, and their use is consistent with proper analytic standards.

(U) The Committee acknowledges that the purpose of the ICA was not to present a comprehensive historical perspective, and that the authors were working under significant time constraint, yet the direction received from the President asked for context for the 2016 election by looking at foreign interference in the 2008 and 2012 elections.

(U) The Committee notes there is no historical precedent for the use of cyber intrusions followed by release of stolen information (i.e., hacks and leaks) used in combination with other elements of state activity for the purposes of an active measures campaign against the United States. However, the ICA's treatment of the historical context of Russian interference in U.S.

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350 [redacted]

351 [redacted]

352 (U[redacted] is FBI IIR 4 212 0318 17, published October 17, 2016; [redacted] is FBI IIR 4 212 8709 16, published September 23, 2016; [redacted] is FBI IIR 4 212 0405 17, published October 20, 2018.

353 (U[redacted] FBI IIR 4 212 0405 17, published October 20, 2018.

[redacted]

domestic politics is limited, and the over-redacted FBI references in the ICA source book make the assessments in this section difficult to substantiate.

[redacted]

354

354 [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted][355]

[redacted][356]

[redacted] Of the other four separate FBI reports, three are heavily redacted. In each case, the reports put in the source book include several blank pages with no dates or headings, and isolated paragraphs that refer obliquely to the examples of possible historic active measures cited in this section of the ICA, ranging from 1984 to 1999.[357]

[redacted][358]

[redacted]

D. [redacted]

[redacted]

355 **(U)** *Ibid.*

356 **(U** [redacted] FBI, IIR 4212366812, February 27, 2012 [redacted]

357 [redacted] FBI, Internal report, November 16, 1999 [redacted] FBI, Internal report, October 8, 1991; FBI, Internal report, March 12, 1984. The document provided to the Committee for the November 16, 1999 reference and the October 8, 1991 reference are each seven pages, five of which are blank and two of which include an excerpted paragraph of text. The March 12, 1984 reference includes nine blank pages and two pages which have an excerpted paragraph.

358 **(U** [redacted] FBI, IIR 4 212 2510 09, January 13, 2009 [redacted] Scott Shane and Charlie Savage, "In Ordinary Lives, U.S. Sees the Work of Russian Agents," *New York Times*, June 28, 2010 [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

1. (U) NSA Reporting

[redacted]

359 [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

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2. (U) FBI Reporting

[redacted][362]

[redacted] The sentence summarizes a key point in this analytic line, which is that [redacted] This citation, to FBI reporting, resulted in significant confusion in the Committee's review of the ICA. The original set of ICA source documents made available to the Committee in March 2017 included a December 27, 2016, FBI Letterhead Memorandum supporting footnote 222. This LHM did not match the document cited in the footnotes of the ICA, which referred to an LHM of the same date with a different heading.[362]

360 FBI, [redacted], October 18, 2016 [redacted]

361 The LHM submitted to the ICA source book reviewed by the Committee [redacted] all of which are also redacted.

362 FBI, LHM *FBI* [redacted] *Review for POTUS Tasking on Russian Influence in the 2016 Presidential Tasking*, December 27, 2016 (ICA footnote 222). [redacted] For background, see also SSCI Transcript of [redacted] August 22, 2017, pp. 12-17.

[redacted]

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The LHM originally submitted to the Committee was an FBI summary of materials FBI had received from Christopher Steele.[363] The LHM specifically cites the various "company reports" that are included in the Steele material, which are a compilation of reports all titled (and numbered as) "company reports." Submission of this memo for footnote 222 appears to have been an FBI error, as the LHM did not support the ICA language cited. When the Committee noted this anomaly to the FBI in repeated conversations, as well as noting repeated statements by FBI and CIA that no Steele material was used in the ICA, the FBI withdrew this document.

It was not until January 28, 2018, that the FBI submitted to the Committee the LHM cited in the ICA footnotes, "FBI Review for POTUS Tasking on Russian Influence in the 2016 Presidential Election."

[364]

3. (U) CIA Reporting

363 As previously discussed, the Steele material was summarized in Annex A of the ICA, "Additional Reporting From an FBI Source on Russian Influence Efforts." The reports in the Steele material are labeled "company reports," which the FBI cite as such in their LHM under the designation "CROWN."

364 FBI, LHM *FBI Review for POTUS Tasking on Russian Influence in the 2016 Presidential Tasking*, December 27, 2016 (ICA footnote 222).

[redacted]

[redacted]

365

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370

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

E. [redacted] Analytic Line [redacted]: Election Operation Signals "New Normal" In Russian Influence Efforts

(U) The Committee found that multiple intelligence disciplines are used to support this analytic line, the analytic tradecraft is transparent, and the sources support the language of the ICA, except where noted.

(U) While the Committee notes that "new normal" is an imprecise term, the Committee found that this section convincingly argues that Russia's use of active measures to target

371 [redacted]

[redacted]

elections has been widely applied outside the United States over the past decade.

(U) The analytic line on "new normal" serves as both prediction and warning, and the Committee notes that IC and open source reporting has revealed much evidence to reinforce the IC's 2016 assessments.

[redacted]

[redacted] The [redacted] final analytic line of the ICA states:

> *We assess Moscow will apply lessons learned from its campaign aimed at the U.S. presidential election to future influence efforts in the U.S. and worldwide. We assess the Russian intelligence services would have seen their election influence as at least a qualified success* [redacted] *because of their perceived ability to impact public discussion in the U.S.* [redacted]

[redacted][372]

1. (U) CIA Reporting

372 [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

373 [redacted]
374
375 [redacted]
376
377
378

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

379 [redacted]
380 (U) *Ibid.*
381 [redacted]
382 [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

383 (U) *Ibid.*

384 [redacted]

385 [redacted]

386 [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

2. (U) NSA Reporting

[redacted]

387 [redacted]
388 [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

3. (U) DIA Reporting

[redacted]

389 [redacted]
390
391
392
393

[redacted]

[redacted]

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4. (U) Open Source Reporting

(U) Four open source articles are cited in this section, beginning with a reprise of the article [redacted][394]

[redacted]

[redacted][395]

[redacted][396]

[redacted][397]

[redacted]

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[redacted]

[redacted]

398

5. (U) Department of State Reporting

[redacted]

399

6. (U) DHS Reporting

[redacted]

400

VIII. [redacted]

[redacted]

- [redacted]

398 [redacted]

399 [redacted]

400 [redacted]

401 [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

- [redacted]
- [redacted]

IX. (U) The ICA Annexes

(U) The ICA includes an unclassified, twelve-page addendum that provides recommendations jointly prepared by DHS, FBI, and the NIST to protect U.S. election infrastructure and political entities.

(U) The addendum represents a partial response to the original presidential tasking for the ICA, which included a request for recommendations. According to Director Clapper, "[w]hat we ended up doing was focusing on the cyber things that could be done. That's what generated separately on an unclassified basis the best practices paper that DHS and FBI did."[402]

(U) The Committee addresses election security issues in Volume 1 of this report, including some of the recommendations made in this annex.

A. [redacted] Annex A: Additional Reporting from an FBI Source on Russian Influence Efforts

[redacted] Annex A represents a summary of information provided to the FBI by Christopher Steele. The annex cites [redacted] reports, and [redacted] FBI. The [redacted] FBI references cite two LHMs, one of which is a summary of [redacted] FBI reports. The second LHM, "Additional CROWN Reporting for USIC Tasking," was erroneously provided to the Committee

402 **(U)** SSCI Transcript of the Interview with James Clapper, Former Director of National Intelligence, July 17, 2017, p. 42.

[redacted]

as the supporting material for footnote 222. The final citation is an open source reference to an October 31, 2016, piece in Mother Jones.

[redacted] Annex A includes qualifiers for the Steele material, but does not mention the private clients who paid for Steele's work. The Committee found no evidence that analysts working on the ICA were aware of the political provenance of the Steele material.

[redacted] CIA shared drafting responsibility for the first portion of Annex A, which states, "Some of the FBI source's reporting is consistent with the judgments in this assessment," and the first three footnotes of the ICA are reprised.

[redacted] The annex language notes, however, that one aspect of the Steele material [redacted]. The assertion that the Kremlin "regretted its decision to intervene" [redacted][403]

[redacted] The Committee asked [redacted] whether they had any "intelligence that [redacted] responded, "We had no reporting of that at all."[404] (For more information on this material, see elsewhere in the Committee's report.)

B. [redacted]

[redacted]

403 [redacted]

404 [redacted] SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Analysts Panel, July 18, 2017, p. 34. For Steele material reference, *see* [redacted] *Putin Now Regrets U.S. Presidential Election Influence Operation*, [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

405 [redacted]

406 [redacted]

407 [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

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[redacted]

408 [redacted]

409 [redacted]

410 [redacted]

411 [redacted]

412 [redacted]

413 [redacted]

[redacted]

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[redacted]

[redacted]

414 [redacted]

415 [redacted]

416 [redacted]

417 [redacted]

418 [redacted]

419 [redacted]

420 [redacted]

421 [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

C. (U[redacted] Annex [redacted]: Open Source Center Analysis: Russia—Kremlin's TV Seeks To Influence Politics, Fuel Discontent in US, Published December 12, 2012

(U) Annex [redacted] is referred to in the section in the ICA on "Russian Propaganda Efforts." [redacted] It is a nine-page unclassified report produced by the Open Source Center (OSC, now Open Source Enterprise, OSE) in 2012. The NIO for Russia and Eurasia characterized this report to the Committee as an "off-the-shelf OSE product from 2012."[424] It was not updated until after the publication of the ICA.[425]

(U) Annex [redacted] introduces the role of Russian social media only near the end, and provides a graphic of "comparative social media footprint" contrasting RT and RT America with Al Jazeera English, BBC World, CNN, and CNN International social media broadcasting. However, it does so without proper contextualization for the platforms highlighted (YouTube, Twitter, Facebook). Further, the product includes statements such as, "[a]ccording to market research company Nielsen, RT had the most rapid growth (40%) among all international news channels in the United States over the past year." [redacted] This statement could be interpreted to imply media prominence greater than it actually was, as this was only a measure of YouTube views, which are a distinct subcategory of "all informational news channels." This product makes no mention of the Internet Research Agency or Russia's use of social media trolls, the latter of which the Russian Government had already developed by 2012.

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422 [redacted]

423 (U[redacted] FBI, Electronic Communication, [redacted], August 22, 2016 [redacted] FBI, Electronic Communication, [redacted], December 2, 2016 [redacted]

424 (U) NIO for Russia and Eurasia, SSCI Transcript of the Interview with [NIO for Russia and Eurasia] and [NIO for Cyber Issues], May 9, 2017, p. 99.

425 [redacted]

[redacted]

(U) The Committee believes this annex, while providing a historical snapshot of one aspect of Russian propaganda in 2012, does not contribute to understanding Russian interference in the 2016 election. Recognizing that the ICA's authors were working under a compressed time table, the presentation of the multifaceted aspects of the Russian interference campaign—specifically, the use of RT, Sputnik, other Russian media platforms, social media, and trolls, as part of the propaganda element of the influence campaign—would have been much stronger with an updated OSE annex.

D. [redacted]

E. [redacted]

F. [redacted]

G. [redacted]

426 **(U)** NIO for Russia and Eurasia, SSCI Transcript of the Interview with [NIO for Russia and Eurasia] and [NIO for Cyber Issues], May 9, 2017, p. 16.

427 [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

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[redacted]

H. (U) Annex [redacted]: Estimative Language

(U) Annex [redacted] is standard language that is attached to NIC products.

[redacted]

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[redacted]

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[redacted]

[redacted]

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[redacted]

[redacted]

428 [redacted]
429 **(U)** *Ibid.*, pp. 35-37.
430 **(U)** SSCI Transcript of the Closed Hearing: Former Intel Directors Panel on Russian Interference, May 16, 2018, pp. 18-19.

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

431 [redacted]
432 *Ibid.*, pp. 81-82.
433 *Ibid.*, p. 82.
434 [redacted]
435 *Ibid.*, pp. 46-47, 49.

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

436 [redacted]
437 [redacted]
438 [redacted]
439 (U) *Ibid.*, p. 45.
440 [redacted]
441 [redacted]
442 [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

443 [redacted]
444 **(U)** *Ibid.*, pp. 29-30.
445 **(U)** *Ibid.*, p. 59.
446 **(U)** *Ibid.*, p. 60.

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

447 **(U)** *Ibid.*
448 **(U)** *Ibid.*, pp. 61-62.
449 **(U)** *Ibid.*, pp. 59-63.
450 [redacted]
451 [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

452 [redacted]

453 [redacted]

454 (U) *Ibid.*, p. 43-44.

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

455 [redacted]
456 [redacted]
457 (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 10-15.

[redacted]

[redacted]

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[redacted]

458 [redacted]

[redacted]

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[redacted]

(U) APPENDIX B: CIA ANALYSIS ON RUSSIAN ACTIVE MEASURES—1981-1991, 2016

A. (U) Historical Analysis—1981-1991

[redacted] As noted in the Committee's report, the Committee believes that the ICA and its supporting sources do not provide a satisfactory representation of Russian interference in the two previous presidential elections, as requested in the original POTUS tasking. Noting the lack of information provided to support the ICA on this issue, the Committee could not determine whether this was due to a lack of collection, or the failure of the three agencies, particularly the FBI, which holds primary responsibility for counterintelligence threats to U.S. domestic targets, to access historical reporting or produce finished analysis. As noted in the Committee's report, FBI support for the historical record presented in the ICA is so redacted as to be largely meaningless to anyone reviewing these reports for the ICA.

(U) The authors of the ICA used popular and academic open source reporting for this annex, [redacted][459, 460]

(U) During this review, the Committee requested that CIA's Center for the Study of Intelligence (CSI) search CIA's holdings for analytic products on Russian active measures. [redacted] These reports demonstrate a body of information known to the IC about Russian active measures, including definitions, organization, goals, types of activities, and leadership direction. None are referenced in the ICA.

(U) The following products were provided to the Committee by CSI, and are attached to the Committee's report:

- [redacted]
- **(U)** ***The Soviet Foreign Propaganda Apparatus***, Research Paper, Directorate of Intelligence, Office of Soviet Analysis, April 1986.

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459 [redacted]

460 [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

- [redacted]
- [redacted]
- [redacted]
- [redacted]
- [redacted]
- [redacted]

[redacted]

(U) For the purpose of highlighting what the CIA knew about the history of Russian active measures, this section organized select excerpts from these products under four themes:

- **(U)** *Definitions and Activities* of Russian Active Measures;
- **(U)** *Leadership Direction and Cost Assessment* for Russian Active Measures;
- **(U)** *Goals* of Russian Active Measures; and,
- **(U)** *Understanding* Russian Active Measures.

(U) Nb: All text under each heading is quoted directly from the product.

[redacted] *Definitions and Activities*

- [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

- [redacted]
- [redacted]
- [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

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[redacted]

- [redacted]
- [redacted]
- [redacted]
- [redacted]
- [redacted]
- [redacted]
- [redacted]

[redacted] *Leadership Direction and Cost Assessment*

- [redacted]

[redacted]

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[redacted]

[redacted]

- [redacted]
- [redacted]
- [redacted]
- [redacted]

[redacted] *Goal of Active Measures*

- [redacted]
- [redacted]
- [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

- [redacted]

[redacted] *Understanding Active Measures*

- [redacted]
- [redacted]
- [redacted]
- [redacted]
- [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

- [redacted]
- [redacted]
- [redacted]
- [redacted]

B. (U) National Intelligence Council Report—2016

[redacted] Nearly 15 years later, the National Intelligence Council prepared the following paper on Russian active measures:

- [redacted] National Intelligence Council Report, [redacted] January 19, 2016.

[redacted]

[redacted]

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[redacted] All products previously cited in this appendix are historical intelligence products on Russian active measures from the period 1981-1991, covering the period from when the U.S. made its last concerted effort to confront Russia's use of active measures through the end of the Cold War. This NIC product was produced at the beginning of 2016, with no specific anticipation of the Russian interference to come that year. [redacted] All text below is quoted directly from the 2016 NIC product.

- [redacted]
(2016, p. i)
- [redacted] (2016, p. i)
- [redacted] (2016, p. ii)
- [redacted]
(2016, p. ii)

[redacted]

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[redacted]

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- [redacted] (2016, p. 1)
- [redacted] (2016, p. 2)
- [redacted] (2016, p. 3)
- [redacted] (2016, p. 3)
- [redacted] (2016, p. 5)

[redacted]

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[redacted]

(U) Appendix C: THE COMMITTEE REVIEW PROCESS

(U) Committee Access

[redacted]

461 [redacted]

462 [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted] The Committee's access to FBI intelligence reports characterized as [redacted] as well as LHMs, was also beyond the norm of regular Committee oversight. While FBI did not [redacted] during several Committee interviews related to the ICA, [redacted] to the FBI went beyond the level typically shared by FBI in the course of normal oversight.

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

463 [redacted]
464 (U) *Ibid.*
465 [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted] The Committee's review of the ICA involved studying the underlying source documents, interviewing all the relevant directors, managers, and analysts involved in the production of the ICA [redacted], and conducting a structured review of the analytic lines of the ICA.

(U) The Committee conducted twenty-five interviews and hearings with over forty intelligence officers from the across the IC involved in the ICA process, including the directors of ODNI, CIA, NSA, and FBI. The Committee undertook these interviews for the purpose of evaluating the ICA and the ICA process. Interviews were conducted in SSCI secure spaces and at CIA Headquarters and always included bipartisan representation by the Committee. Almost all interviews were transcribed. The Committee also conducted follow-up discussions and emails on many points for better understanding and clarification, and held other interviews with CIA, FBI, and NSA officers, [redacted] for better understanding about collection and operating environments on the Russia target.[469]

(U) Committee Methodology

(U) The Committee evaluated the ICA along two lines. First, the Committee determined whether the ICA met the tasking from the President on December 6, 2016. Second, the Committee reviewed the analytic lines within the ICA, asking the following questions:

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466 [redacted]
467 [redacted]
468 [redacted]
469 [redacted]

- **(U)** Was the analysis supported by the intelligence presented?
- **(U)** Was the analytic tradecraft sound?
- **(U)** Does the Committee accept the analytic line?

(U) This report volume represents the detailed examination and conclusions the Committee reached on these questions.

[redacted]

ADDITIONAL VIEWS OF SENATOR WYDEN

(U) Over the course of nearly 20 years at the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, I have refused to assume the accuracy of intelligence assessments and have endeavored to always ask the hard questions. That is what this report does, painstakingly scrutinizing every piece of intelligence that went into the Intelligence Community Assessment and allowing the Committee to independently verify the findings of that assessment. The findings are not a "hoax." They are not in doubt because, as Donald Trump stated, Vladimir Putin "very strongly" denies them. Russian interference in the 2016 election is a fact and Donald Trump's deference to Putin only serves to further Russian disinformation and undermine efforts to defend the United States against ongoing attacks.

(U) This report also provides additional evidence against Donald Trump's false assertions regarding Ukraine. For example, the Committee conducted an extensive examination of the intelligence demonstrating Russia's intrusions into DNC networks. That review, which confirmed the ICA's findings, is fundamentally incompatible with Trump's conspiracy theories about Ukrainian involvement, for which there is no supporting evidence of any kind.

[redacted] One aspect of the ICA calls for more commentary. The ICA cites DHS's assessment that "the types of systems we observed Russian actors targeting or compromising are not involved in vote tallying." In my Minority Views to Volume I of the Committee's investigation, I discussed confidence levels in and gaps related to DHS's assessment, as acknowledged at the Committee's June 21, 2017, hearing. This report adds additional context, quoting a DHS email that requested that the Department's assessment be "couched with references to intelligence gaps and ongoing forensic investigations," caveats that were not included in the public version of the ICA.

(U) The limitations associated with this aspect of the ICA provide important lessons regarding intelligence collection and analysis and the topic of election security. All-source intelligence must be integrated with information collected by DHS to produce coordinated IC-wide assessments. Analytic tradecraft related to confidence levels and dissents must be applied. And limits on DHS's ability to track attacks must be addressed. I have previously discussed the need for nation-wide mandated paper ballots, risk-limiting audits and minimum cyber security standards for all election systems. The ongoing failure to require these basic security measures across the country is not just a threat to our democracy, it damages the ability of DHS and the IC to assess whether, or to what extent U.S.

[redacted]

[redacted]

election systems have been compromised. It is the job of the IC to seek to address intelligence gaps, particularly when those gaps hinder assessments related to our most urgent and serious national security priorities. The actions of our adversaries challenge our intelligence capabilities. In this case, in which audits are inadequate, state and local election officials lack the expertise and resources to identify sophisticated cyber-attacks, and DHS lacks comprehensive, nation-wide information, the harm is partly self-inflicted.

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted][74]

[redacted][75]

[redacted] CIA reported to the Committee that on the same day, December 20, FBI first informed the CIA's team that FBI wanted to include material derived from what became known as the "Steele dossier." This information was from a former [redacted] officer now operating a private commercial intelligence firm, who had an

72 **(U)** SSCI Transcript of the Interview with National Security Agency Panel, May 18, 2017, pp. 52-55.

73 [redacted]

74 [redacted]

75 [redacted]

established relationship with FBI. This material eventually became Annex A of the ICA, but its placement in the ICA was not resolved until December 29.

B. (U) Confidence Level Debate Over One Judgment

76

77 **(U)** SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Admiral Michael S. Rogers, USN, Director, National Security Agency, and Commander, U.S. Cyber Command, March 19, 2018, p. 58.
78 **(U)** *Ibid.*, pp. 62-65.
79 **(U)** *Ibid.*, p. 61.
80 **(U)** *Ibid.*, p. 60.

[redacted]

[redacted][110]

C. (U) Discussion of the "Steele Reporting" in the ICA

[redacted] The CIA team working on the ICA first learned on December 20, 2016, of information the FBI held and wanted to include in the ICA. Despite the fact that the ICA explicitly excluded ongoing investigations, FBI sought to introduce a summary of the material from former [redacted] officer Christopher Steele.[111]

(U) The Committee reviewed the debate over whether and where to include the Steele materials with all participants to the drafting of the ICA. In the first meeting of the Committee with Assistant Director for the Counterintelligence Division (AD/CD) of the FBI, he articulated the FBI's concerns. First was the directive from the President to include all the information the IC had on Russian involvement in the 2016 presidential election, and this included material that FBI held. Even though the Assistant Director suggested that "the FBI didn't want to stand behind it," it qualified for this directive. Second, the question immediately became how to handle this information in the drafting of the ICA. This was ultimately resolved by including the information as Annex A, a two-page summary attached only to the most classified version of the ICA (i.e., the "Memorandum to the President" version).[112] FBI officials told the Committee that they "would have had a major problem if Annex A had not been included," and that FBI believed they "had to put everything in."[113]

[redacted] The Assistant Director for [redacted] recounted a conversation with FBI Assistant Director for CD on December 22, and recalled the FBI's interest in "weaving their dossier in the actual text of the report." Assistant Director for [redacted] stated there was no "visibility, at the time of the writing of the report, into the sub-sourcing dynamic for that dossier . . . because of the sub-sourcing, I felt [it] was not appropriate for inclusion in the report and would detract from the report." The Assistant Director for [redacted] told the Committee that when she asked the FBI Assistant Director for CD for more information on the sources for the dossier, the Assistant Director for CD told her that the FBI's primary source "had not provided information regarding

110 [redacted]

111 **(U)** [redacted] Analyst 2, SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Analysts Panel, July 18, 2017, p. 151.
112 **(U)** Interview with Bill Priestap, Assistant Director, Counterintelligence Division, FBI, April 13, 2017.
113 **(U)** Interview with [Section Chief, Counterintelligence Analysis Section, CD-1, FBI] April 21, 2017.



the sub-sources, but that [FBI was] able to independently corroborate some of the sub-sourcing. But he did not provide the names or reliability for the sub-sources." Assistant Director for said the FBI Assistant Director told her, "We feel very strongly that it should be included and woven into the text," to which Assistant Director for stated they would have to "agree to disagree" and that her recommendation would be that the information "not be included in the report. At a minimum, I was thinking it should be pulled out and put in an annex."[114]

When asked to comment on Annex A as it appears in the ICA, Assistant Director for stated that she concurred with most of the language on the first page of what became Annex A of the ICA.[115] However, from where the text in Annex A begins with "the most politically sensitive claims by the FBI source alleging a close relationship between the President-elect and the Kremlin," the Assistant Director for stated "from there on down, I can tell you that there is no information coming from sources that would corroborate any of that."[116]

The Assistant Director for also noted the FBI insisted on including the Steele reporting because "they didn't want to look like they were hiding anything," and that "[t]o me, that sounded fair."[117] The Assistant Director for and her deputy reviewed the material and sent a copy to Director Brennan and Deputy Director Cohen.[118] The Assistant Director for told the Committee that her understanding was that "the analysts were very much against" putting the FBI material in the ICA.[119] "[I]t was very unvetted information," according to the Assistant Director for , and "some of it made sense."[120] "[I]f you look at the theme, are the Russians trying to mess with our elections, that theme is certainly accurate. But the details were really—we wouldn't be able to come up with a good analytic confidence in them before the ICA was due."[121] Ultimately, "[e]verybody agreed that it would just be an annex, and then it was agreed there would be a big caveat put on top of the annex, that this is totally unvetted, unverified."[122]

The CIA analysts interviewed by the Committee recalled "at one point the FBI wanted [the Steele reporting] in the text [of the ICA]. The FBI wanted it in one form. We had it in a big text box on page 4. . . . We had a bitter argument with the FBI to put it in an annex."[123] One analyst acknowledged that the material was already circulating, and that "[i]f we hadn't

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114 (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with [AD], May 25, 2017, pp. 48-51, 53-54, 61.
115 "Memorandum to the President" version of the ICA only, p. 27.
116 (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with [AD], May 25, 2017, pp. 53-54.
117 (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with [AD], May 15, 2017, pp. 77-78.
118 (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 76, 78.
119 (U) *Ibid.*, p. 77.
120 (U) *Ibid.*
121 (U) *Ibid.*
122 (U) *Ibid.*, p. 78.
123 (U) Analyst 1, SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Analysts Panel, July 18, 2017, p. 155.





addressed it, it would have either created the impression among people who didn't go through the sourcing that we had relied on it, which we didn't, or that we were unaware of it."[124]

[redacted] Deputy Director for Analysis stated, "We would have never included that report in a CIA-only assessment because the source was so indirect. And we made sure we indicated we didn't use it in our analysis, and if it had been a CIA-only product we wouldn't have included it at all."[125]

(U) Director Clapper later reiterated to the SSCI in a closed hearing in May 2018:

> [redacted] *I don't think you'll find in any of the footnotes in the ICA any reference to the dossier. We thought it important to include a summary description of it, but it was not included as an organic part of the ICA. Maybe a difference without a distinction, but to us that was a very important point. For our part, particularly the CIA and ODNI, since we could not validate the second and third-order assets, that's why we did not use it as part of the assessment. We felt—and the whole reason particularly for Jim Comey's part—that we had a duty to warn the President-elect that it was out there, and that was the whole point. But it was not included as an organic part of the assessment.*[126]

[redacted] Director Brennan reiterated the CIA's reservations about the FBI's Steele material, noting that the DDA [redacted] "was very concerned about polluting the ICA with this material," and that "there was stiff opposition, especially from CIA, to include that material either in essence or in substance in that report," which "was not used in any way as far as the judgments in the ICA were concerned."[127] Director Brennan stated:

> *Jim Comey and the FBI felt strongly that, here is a very sensitive document that is being produced by CIA, NSA, and FBI about Russian attempts to interfere in the election and Russian attempts to denigrate one candidate and promote prospects of the other. The FBI has acquired this information that comes from a former foreign intelligence officer from a pretty respectable service,* [redacted] *that includes information of potential kompromat related to Donald Trump. So Jim Comey, with some elegance said: How can we have this report and deliver it to the outgoing President and the incoming President and for he, Jim Comey, to be completely silent on this dossier that a lot of people have seen and that the FBI*

124 **(U)** [redacted] Analyst, *ibid.*, p. 152.
125 **(U)** Deputy Director for Analysis, *ibid.*
126 **(U)** Closed SSCI Hearing with Former Intelligence Directors, May 16, 2018, pp. 33-34.
127 **(U)** SSCI Transcript of the Interview with John Brennan, former Director, Central Intelligence Agency, June 23, 2017, pp. 60-65.





was following up on and doesn't know whether or not Mr. Trump is aware or not?[128]

[redacted] When Brennan appeared before the SSCI in a closed hearing in 2018, he stated:

Initially FBI wanted it incorporated into the assessment itself. We all pushed back on that. They wanted it to be included as the last portion of the assessment if it wasn't even going to be used as a finding. We pushed back against that. But Jim Comey made a very strong case, which we didn't object to, that it needed to accompany the assessment because it was related to the issue, and we didn't know where the FBI's investigation was as far as some of those things.[129]

[redacted] Director Brennan volunteered to the Committee that around the time he received a call from [redacted] who said that:

[H]e wanted to make sure that I understood and that others in the senior officialdom of the U.S. government understood that that officer, Steele, had been a former [redacted] officer, but had no current relationship with [redacted] and that dossier was not put together in any way with [redacted] support. So he wanted to make sure there was a separation there.[130]

(U) Director Comey addressed the question of the dossier and its placement when asked by SSCI Chairman Burr whether he "insisted that the dossier be part of the ICA in any way, shape, or form?" Director Comey replied:

I insisted that we bring it to the party, and I was agnostic as to whether it was footnoted in the document itself, put as an annex. I have some recollection of talking to John Brennan maybe at some point saying: I don't really care, but I think it is relevant and so ought to be part of the consideration.[131]

(U) NSA played no role in the debate over the Steele reporting and the ICA. NSA analysts told the Committee they had "no role in drafting, nor role in its inclusion, no role in reviewing the source material, became aware of it as it was appended."[132] NSA analysts first

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128 **(U)** *Ibid.*, pp. 60-61.

129 [redacted] Closed SSCI Hearing with Former Intelligence Directors, May 16, 2018, pp. 34-35.

130 [redacted] SSCI Transcript of the Interview with John Brennan, former Director, Central Intelligence Agency, June 23, 2017, p. 65. When Brennan appeared before the SSCI in 2018, he added that [redacted] *see* Closed SSCI Hearing with Former Intelligence Directors, May 16, 2018, p. 44.

131 **(U)** SSCI Transcript of the Closed SSCI Hearing with James Comey, Former Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, June 8, 2017, p. 49.

132 **(U)** SSCI Transcript of the Interview with National Security Agency Panel, May 18, 2017, p. 86.



heard of the information on December 29 and had no insights into Steele's source network, and the Steele material had no effect on NSA's views of the Key Judgments of the ICA.[133]

(U) Admiral Rogers recalled that he heard of this from his team of analysts on December 29 while reviewing a draft of the ICA to which this material had been appended. Admiral Rogers's initial reaction was that the Steele information ought not be in the body of the ICA, but "let's put it in the appendix."[134]

[redacted] Director Clapper said he "first heard" of the Steele material in a conversation with Director Brennan "around the 15th of December."[135] The NIOs were witting of some of the conversations regarding the Steele material, but "had almost no say in this," and recalled a "unanimous sense that this was not germane to the judgments and findings in the paper" and "did not add value."[136] The NIO for Russia and Eurasia said that they were "comfortable placing it in the annex" because "that remained true to the task."[137]

[redacted] On December 27, a SVTC was held between the four deputies of CIA, NSA, FBI, and ODNI, in order to reach an agreement on where to place the Steele materials in the ICA, with the FBI insisting it remain in the body of the ICA. No agreement was reached and, according to the CIA senior officer assigned to the ICA, Director Brennan left it to the analysts to make the call on where to put it. On December 28, Director Comey was still insisting the document be in the body. On December 29, Deputy Director Cohen and Deputy Director McCabe agreed to place the material in an annex.[138]

[redacted] Director Brennan recalled to the Committee: "So as long as it was separated from the ICA's substance and judgments and as long as it was not going to be part of the formal briefing we gave on the ICA, we felt, ok, Jim [Comey], you want to do it, okay. We're not going to object."[139]

D. (U) Finalizing the ICA

[redacted] With the placement of the Steele material resolved, the ICA was formalized as a Memorandum to the President, dated December 30, 2016, and handed to the NIOs at the NIC.

133 **(U)** *Ibid*.

134 **(U)** SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Admiral Michael S. Rogers, USN, Director, National Security Agency, and Commander, U.S. Cyber Command, March 19, 2018, pp. 69, 71.

135 **(U)** SSCI Transcript of the Closed Hearing: Former Intel Directors Panel on Russian Interference, May 16, 2018, p. 107.

136 **(U)** NIO for Russia and Eurasia, SSCI Transcript of the Interview with [NIO for Russia and Eurasia] and [NIO for Cyber Issues], May 9, 2017, pp. 90, 92.

137 **(U)** *Ibid*., p. 93.

138 [redacted] Interview with [redacted] April 13, 2017. [redacted]

139 **(U)** SSCI Transcript of the Interview with John Brennan, former Director, Central Intelligence Agency, June 23, 2017, p. 62.

[redacted]

2. (U) FBI Reporting

[redacted][361]

[redacted] The sentence summarizes a key point in this analytic line, which is that [redacted] This citation, to FBI reporting, resulted in significant confusion in the Committee's review of the ICA. The original set of ICA source documents made available to the Committee in March 2017 included a December 27, 2016, FBI Letterhead Memorandum supporting footnote 222. This LHM did not match the document cited in the footnotes of the ICA, which referred to an LHM of the same date with a different heading.[362]

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360 [redacted] FBI, [redacted] October 18, 2016 [redacted]

361 [redacted] The LHM submitted to the ICA source book reviewed by the Committee [redacted] all of which are also redacted.

362 [redacted] FBI, LHM *FBI* [redacted] *Review for POTUS Tasking on Russian Influence in the 2016 Presidential Tasking*, December 27, 2016 (ICA footnote 222). [redacted] For background, *see also* SSCI Transcript of [redacted] August 22, 2017, pp. 12-17.

[redacted]

[redacted] The LHM originally submitted to the Committee was an FBI summary of materials FBI had received from Christopher Steele.[363] The LHM specifically cites the various "company reports" that are included in the Steele material, which are a compilation of reports all titled (and numbered as) "company reports." Submission of this memo for footnote 222 appears to have been an FBI error, as the LHM did not support the ICA language cited. When the Committee noted this anomaly to the FBI in repeated conversations, as well as noting repeated statements by FBI and CIA that no Steele material was used in the ICA, the FBI withdrew this document.

[redacted] It was not until January 28, 2018, that the FBI submitted to the Committee the LHM cited in the ICA footnotes, "FBI [redacted] Review for POTUS Tasking on Russian Influence in the 2016 Presidential Election." [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted][364]

3. (U) CIA Reporting

[redacted]

363 [redacted] As previously discussed, the Steele material was summarized in Annex A of the ICA, "Additional Reporting From an FBI Source on Russian Influence Efforts." The reports in the Steele material are labeled "company reports," which the FBI cite as such in their LHM under the designation "CROWN."

364 [redacted] FBI, LHM *FBI [redacted] Review for POTUS Tasking on Russian Influence in the 2016 Presidential Tasking*, December 27, 2016 (ICA footnote 222).

[redacted]

COMMITTEE SENSITIVE – RUSSIA INVESTIGATION ONLY

- [redacted]
- [redacted]

IX. (U) The ICA Annexes

(U) The ICA includes an unclassified, twelve-page addendum that provides recommendations jointly prepared by DHS, FBI, and the NIST to protect U.S. election infrastructure and political entities.

(U) The addendum represents a partial response to the original presidential tasking for the ICA, which included a request for recommendations. According to Director Clapper, "[w]hat we ended up doing was focusing on the cyber things that could be done. That's what generated separately on an unclassified basis the best practices paper that DHS and FBI did."[402]

(U) The Committee addresses election security issues in Volume 1 of this report, including some of the recommendations made in this annex.

A. [redacted] Annex A: Additional Reporting from an FBI Source on Russian Influence Efforts

[redacted] Annex A represents a summary of information provided to the FBI by Christopher Steele. The annex cites [redacted] reports, and [redacted] and FBI. The [redacted] FBI references cite two LHMs, one of which is a summary of [redacted] FBI reports. The second LHM, "Additional CROWN Reporting for USIC Tasking," was erroneously provided to the Committee

402 **(U)** SSCI Transcript of the Interview with James Clapper, Former Director of National Intelligence, July 17, 2017, p. 42.

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[redacted]

as the supporting material for footnote 222. The final citation is an open source reference to an October 31, 2016, piece in Mother Jones.

[redacted] Annex A includes qualifiers for the Steele material, but does not mention the private clients who paid for Steele's work. The Committee found no evidence that analysts working on the ICA were aware of the political provenance of the Steele material.

[redacted] CIA shared drafting responsibility for the first portion of Annex A, which states, "Some of the FBI source's reporting is consistent with the judgments in this assessment," and the first three footnotes of the ICA are reprised.

[redacted] The annex language notes, however, that one aspect of the Steele material [redacted]. The assertion that the Kremlin "regretted its decision to intervene" [redacted][403]

[redacted] The Committee asked [redacted] whether they had any "intelligence that [redacted] responded, "We had no reporting of that at all."[404] (For more information on this material, see elsewhere in the Committee's report.)

B. [redacted]

[redacted]

403 [redacted]

404 [redacted] SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Analysts Panel, July 18, 2017, p. 34. For Steele material reference, *see* [redacted] *Putin Now Regrets U.S. Presidential Election Influence Operation*, [redacted]

[redacted]

VOLUME V
COUNTERINTELLIGENCE THREATS AND VULNERABILITIES

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I. (U) FINDINGS

(U) The Committee found that the Russian government engaged in an aggressive, multi-faceted effort to influence, or attempt to influence, the outcome of the 2016 presidential election. Parts of this effort are outlined in the Committee's earlier volumes on election security, social media, the Obama Administration's response to the threat, and the January 2017 Intelligence Community Assessment (ICA).

(U) The fifth and final volume focuses on the counterintelligence threat, outlining a wide range of Russian efforts to influence the Trump Campaign and the 2016 election. In this volume the Committee lays out its findings in detail by looking at many aspects of the counterintelligence threat posed by the Russian influence operation. For example, the Committee examined Paul Manafort's connections to Russian influence actors and the FBI's treatment of reporting produced by Christopher Steele. While the Committee does not describe the final result as a complete picture, this volume provides the most comprehensive description to date of Russia's activities and the threat they posed. This volume presents this information in topical sections in order to address coherently and in detail the wide variety of Russian actions. The events explained in these sections in many cases overlap, and references in each section will direct the reader to those overlapping parts of the volume. Immediately below is a summary of key findings from several sections.

[redacted]

[redacted]

Paul Manafort

(U) Paul Manafort's connections to Russia and Ukraine began in approximately late 2004 with the start of his work for Oleg Deripaska and other Russia-aligned oligarchs in Ukraine. The Committee found that Deripaska conducts influence operations, frequently in countries where he has a significant economic interest. The Russian government coordinates with and directs Deripaska on many of his influence operations.

(U) From approximately 2004 to 2009, Manafort implemented these influence operations on behalf of Deripaska, including a broad, multi-million dollar political influence campaign directed at numerous countries of interest to Deripaska and the Russian government. Pro-Russian Ukrainian oligarchs with deep economic ties to Russia also paid Manafort tens of millions of dollars and formed strong ties with Manafort independent of Deripaska.

(U) Manafort hired and worked increasingly closely with a Russian national, Konstantin Kilimnik. Kilimnik is a Russian intelligence officer. Kilimnik became an integral part of Manafort's operations in Ukraine and Russia, serving as Manafort's primary liaison to Deripaska and eventually managing Manafort's office in Kyiv. Kilimnik and Manafort formed a close and lasting relationship that endured to the 2016 U.S. elections and beyond.

(U) Prior to joining the Trump Campaign in March 2016 and continuing throughout his time on the Campaign, Manafort directly and indirectly communicated with Kilimnik, Deripaska, and the pro-Russian oligarchs in Ukraine. On numerous occasions, Manafort sought to secretly share internal Campaign information with Kilimnik. The Committee was unable to reliably determine why Manafort shared sensitive internal polling data or Campaign strategy with Kilimnik or with whom Kilimnik further shared that information. The Committee had limited insight into Kilimnik's communications with Manafort and into Kilimnik's communications with other individuals connected to Russian influence operations, all of whom used communications security practices. The Committee obtained some information suggesting Kilimnik may have been connected to the GRU's hack and leak operation targeting the 2016 U.S. election.

[redacted] Beginning while he was Campaign chairman and continuing until at least 2018, Manafort discussed with Kilimnik a peace plan for eastern Ukraine that benefited the Kremlin. [redacted]

[redacted] After the election, Manafort continued to coordinate with Russian persons, particularly Kilimnik and other individuals close to Deripaska, in an effort to undertake activities on their behalf. Manafort worked with Kilimnik starting in 2016 on narratives that sought to undermine evidence that Russia interfered in the 2016 U.S. election. [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

(U) The Committee found that Manafort's presence on the Campaign and proximity to Trump created opportunities for Russian intelligence services to exert influence over, and acquire confidential information on, the Trump Campaign. Taken as a whole, Manafort's high-level access and willingness to share information with individuals closely affiliated with the Russian intelligence services, particularly Kilimnik and associates of Oleg Deripaska, represented a grave counterintelligence threat.

Hack and Leak

(U) The Committee found that Russian President Vladimir Putin ordered the Russian effort to hack computer networks and accounts affiliated with the Democratic Party and leak information damaging to Hillary Clinton and her campaign for president. Moscow's intent was to harm the Clinton Campaign, tarnish an expected Clinton presidential administration, help the Trump Campaign after Trump became the presumptive Republican nominee, and undermine the U.S. democratic process.

[redacted] WikiLeaks actively sought, and played, a key role in the Russian influence campaign and very likely knew it was assisting a Russian intelligence influence effort. The Committee found significant indications that [redacted] At the time of the first WikiLeaks releases, the U.S. Government had not yet declared WikiLeaks a hostile organization and many treated it as a journalistic entity.

(U) While the GRU and WikiLeaks were releasing hacked documents, the Trump Campaign sought to maximize the impact of those leaks to aid Trump's electoral prospects. Staff on the Trump Campaign sought advance notice about WikiLeaks releases, created messaging strategies to promote and share the materials in anticipation of and following their release, and encouraged further leaks. The Trump Campaign publicly undermined the attribution of the hack-and-leak campaign to Russia and was indifferent to whether it and WikiLeaks were furthering a Russian election interference effort. The Committee found no evidence that Campaign officials received an authoritative government notification that the hack was perpetrated by the Russian government before October 7, 2016, when the ODNI and DHS issued a joint statement to that effect. However, the Campaign was aware of the extensive media reporting and other private sector attribution of the hack to Russian actors prior to that point.

(U) Trump and senior Campaign officials sought to obtain advance information about WikiLeaks's planned releases through Roger Stone. At their direction, Stone took action to gain

[redacted]

[redacted]

inside knowledge for the Campaign and shared his purported knowledge directly with Trump and senior Campaign officials on multiple occasions. Trump and the Campaign believed that Stone had inside information and expressed satisfaction that Stone's information suggested more releases would be forthcoming. The Committee could not reliably determine the extent of authentic, non-public knowledge about WikiLeaks that Stone obtained and shared with the Campaign.

The Agalarovs and the June 9, 2016 Trump Tower Meeting

(U) The Committee found that the connection between Trump and the Agalarovs began in 2013 with planning for the Miss Universe Moscow pageant. Aras Agalarov is a prominent oligarch in Russia, and his son, Emin Agalarov, is a musician and businessman in Moscow. The connection evolved in 2014 and focused on an effort to build a Trump Tower in Moscow that never came to fruition. During that time communications further extended to Agalarov associates and family members and to Trump associates and family members. The relationship with the Agalarovs, which continued through the 2016 U.S. election, included business and personal communications, in person meetings, and gifts.

(U) The Committee found that Aras Agalarov was personally involved in pushing for both the June 9, 2016 meeting between Natalia Veselnitskaya and senior members of the Campaign and for a second meeting following the election, also with Veselnitskaya, that did not take place. Agalarov likely did this on behalf of individuals affiliated with the Russian government, judging from his ties with Russian officials who have pursued a repeal of the U.S. sanctions under the Magnitsky Act.

(U) The Committee found evidence suggesting that it was the intent of the Campaign participants in the June 9, 2016 meeting, particularly Donald Trump Jr., to receive derogatory information that would be of benefit to the Campaign from a source known, at least by Trump Jr., to have connections to the Russian government. The Committee found no reliable evidence that information of benefit to the Campaign was transmitted at the meeting, or that then-candidate Trump had foreknowledge of the meeting. Participants on both sides of the meeting were ultimately disappointed with how it transpired.

(U) The information that Natalia Veselnitskaya, the Russian lawyer, offered during the June 9, 2016 meeting and planned to offer again at the follow up meeting requested by Aras Agalarov was part of a broader influence operation targeting the United States that was coordinated, at least in part, with elements of the Russian government. That Russian effort was focused on U.S. sanctions against Russia under the Magnitsky Act. The Committee assesses that some of the same information used by Veselnitskaya at the June 9, 2016 meeting was also used in an influence operation earlier in 2016 by individuals in Moscow who have ties to Russian intelligence and to Putin. The Committee found no evidence that the meeting participants from

[redacted]

[redacted]

the Campaign were aware of this Russian influence operation when accepting the meeting or participating in it.

(U) The Committee assesses that at least two participants in the June 9, 2016 meeting, Veselnitskaya and Rinat Akhmetshin, have significant connections to the Russian government, including the Russian intelligence services. The connections the Committee uncovered, particularly regarding Veselnitskaya, were far more extensive and concerning than what had been publicly known, and neither Veselnitskaya nor Akhmetshin were forthcoming with the Committee regarding those connections. Both Veselnitskaya and Akhmetshin may have sought, in some cases, to obfuscate the true intent of their work in the United States.

[redacted]

Trump Tower Moscow

(U) During the 2016 U.S. presidential election cycle, Donald Trump and the Trump Organization pursued a business deal in Russia. Michael Cohen, then an executive vice president at the Trump Organization and personal attorney to Trump, primarily handled and advanced these efforts. In September 2015, Trump authorized Cohen to pursue a deal in Russia through Felix Sater, a longtime business associate of Trump. By early November 2015, Trump and a Russia-based developer signed a Letter of Intent laying out the main terms of a licensing deal that promised to provide the Trump Organization millions of dollars upon the signing of a deal, and hundreds of millions of dollars if the project advanced to completion.

(U) Cohen kept Trump updated on the progress of the deal. While these negotiations were ongoing, Trump made positive public comments about Putin in connection with his presidential campaign. Cohen and Sater sought to leverage Trump's comments, and subsequent comments about Trump by Putin, to advance the deal.

(U) Sater told Cohen about high-level outreach to Russian businessmen and officials that Sater claimed to have undertaken related to the deal. While Sater almost certainly inflated some of these claims, the Committee found that Sater did, in fact, have significant senior-level ties to a number of Russian businessmen and former government officials, and was in a position, through intermediaries, to reach individuals close to Putin.

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[redacted]

(U) By the end of 2015, Cohen reached out to the Kremlin directly to solicit the Russian government's assistance. Cohen made contact in January 2016 with a Russian Presidential Administration aide to Dmitri Peskov, a senior Kremlin official and key advisor to Putin. Cohen discussed the project in detail and reported to Trump that he had done so. As a result of this direct outreach to the Russian Presidential Administration and Sater's separate efforts to conduct outreach to individuals in Russia, the Committee found that senior Russian government officials (including, almost certainly, President Vladimir Putin) were aware of the deal by January 2016.

(U) Cohen and Sater continued negotiations through the spring of 2016. Their conversations largely focused on efforts to travel to Russia to advance the deal, but the Committee found no evidence of other concrete steps to advance the deal during this time. On June 14, 2016, Cohen and Sater met in person in Trump Tower, and Cohen likely relayed that he would not be able to travel to Russia at that time. During the summer, attempts to advance the deal stopped.

George Papadopoulos

(U) George Papadopoulos joined the Trump Campaign as part of a foreign policy advisory team created to blunt criticism that the Campaign lacked foreign policy advisors. Although Papadopoulos had limited—if any—influence on the Campaign's policies, he parlayed his association with the Trump Campaign to attempt to establish ties with foreign capitals as well as advance his personal goals of having increased influence in foreign energy circles. Despite efforts by certain individuals to remove him from the Campaign, Papadopoulos continued to assert his affiliation with the Campaign and remained in contact with senior staff such as Stephen Bannon and Michael Flynn.

(U) The Committee found George Papadopoulos used multiple avenues to pursue a face-to-face meeting between Trump and President Putin. Papadopoulos believed that he was operating with the approval—or at least not the explicit disapproval—of Campaign leadership, who he kept apprised of his efforts. Papadopoulos never successfully scheduled a meeting between Putin and Trump.

(U) The Committee further found that Papadopoulos's efforts introduced him to several individuals that raise counterintelligence concerns, due to their associations with individuals from hostile foreign governments as well as actions these individuals undertook. The Committee assesses that Papadopoulos was not a witting cooptee of the Russian intelligence services, but nonetheless presented a prime intelligence target and potential vector for malign Russian influence.

(U) The Committee found evidence that Papadopoulos likely learned about the Russian active measures campaign as early as April 2016 from Joseph Mifsud, a Maltese academic with longstanding Russia ties, well before any public awareness of the Russian effort. The Committee

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[redacted]

further found Papadopoulos communicated the information he learned from Mifsud to at least two separate foreign governments. The Committee could not determine if Papadopoulos informed anyone on the Trump Campaign of the information, though the Committee finds it implausible that Papadopoulos did not do so.

Carter Page

(U) Carter Page was likely a subject of interest to Russian officials during the 2016 election, given that he was the only member of the Trump Campaign's foreign policy advisory team publicly identified as a Russia expert. Page had previously lived in Russia and had worked on Russia policy and energy issues. Russian intelligence officers had in previous years interacted with Page.

(U) The Committee found no evidence that Page made any substantive contribution to the Campaign or ever met Trump. Prior to Page being added to the Campaign's advisory committee, he indicated to senior Campaign officials that he was in contact with individuals who were close to the Kremlin and were interested in arranging a meeting between Trump and Putin. Page later repeated the suggestion of a Trump-Putin meeting to senior Campaign staff. The Committee was not able to corroborate Page's claimed contacts, and found no indication that the Campaign took action on Page's offers.

(U) In the summer of 2016, Page was invited to make two addresses in Russia, including an address during the commencement ceremonies at Moscow's New Economic School (NES). This invitation was extended because of the Russian sponsors' perception of his role in the Trump Campaign. Page returned to Moscow and NES in December 2016, after his role with the Campaign had ended, but while he was seeking a position with the new administration. During these visits, Page met briefly with a figure about whom the Intelligence Community has counterintelligence concerns, and the Committee was unable to obtain a complete picture from Page or his document production about his itinerary in Moscow. Page did not explain to the Committee, for example, how he spent the bulk of several days. Many allegations in the media regarding Page's activities in Russia in 2016 as well as almost all assertions about Page in the "Steele Dossier" remain unverified. In addition, Page's claims to the Campaign regarding his activities and influence in Moscow remain unsubstantiated.

Trump's Foreign Policy Speech at the Mayflower Hotel

(U) The Committee found no evidence that anyone associated with the Trump Campaign had any substantive private conversations with Russian Ambassador Sergey Kislyak during the April 27, 2016, Trump speech held at the Mayflower Hotel. Although Kislyak did meet Trump and other senior officials associated with the Campaign, these short interactions consisted of general statements about improved relations with Russia. As the first major foreign policy

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speech by the candidate, the event drew wide but typical attention, including by the Russian ambassador.

Maria Butina and Alexander Torshin

(U) Starting in 2013, and continuing over a several year period, Maria Butina, founder of a Russian gun rights organization who attended graduate school in the United States, and Alexander Torshin, a high ranking Russian banker, government official, and politician with Kremlin ties, established a broad network of relationships with the leaders of the National Rifle Association (NRA), conservative political operatives, Republican government officials, and individuals connected to the Trump Campaign. They took steps to establish informal communications channels to influence the U.S. Government's policy towards Russia. The Committee did not find that either Butina or Torshin was able to establish consistent contact with Trump Campaign officials or senior staff.

[redacted]

Influence for Hire

(U) The Committee found that highly evolved tools used to shape popular sentiment were utilized in support of the Trump Campaign during the 2016 election season, and Russia has made use of such tools in its influence operations, but a link between Russian efforts and the Campaign's use of these tools was not established. These commercially available services—many of which are based overseas—rely on an array of personal information to build targeted messaging profiles. Russia applied these same technologies and methodologies to its influence campaign during the 2016 election and, in doing so, conducted foreign influence operations against the United States with a speed, precision, and scale not previously seen. The commoditization of these influence capabilities by for-profit firms working in the political and particularly electoral space, coupled with deeply concerning foreign government and intelligence service ties to some organizations, were troubling enough to warrant additional Committee scrutiny.

Transition

(U) Russia took advantage of members of the Transition Team's relative inexperience in government, opposition to Obama Administration policies, and Trump's desire to deepen ties with Russia to pursue unofficial channels through which Russia could conduct diplomacy. Russia was not alone in these efforts—U.S. allies and adversaries also sought

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[redacted]

inroads with the Transition. The existence of a cadre of informal advisors to the Transition Team with varying levels of access to the President-elect and varying awareness of foreign affairs presented attractive targets for foreign influence, creating notable counterintelligence vulnerabilities. The lack of vetting of foreign interactions by Transition officials left the Transition open to influence and manipulation by foreign intelligence services, government officials, and co-opted business executives.

(U) The Transition Team repeatedly took actions that had the potential, and sometimes the effect, of interfering in the Obama Administration's diplomatic efforts. This created confusion among U.S. allies and other world leaders, most notably surrounding negotiations over a UN Security Council Resolution on Israel. Russia may have deferred response to the sanctions the Obama Administration put in place in late December because of Flynn's intervention and promise of a new relationship with the Trump administration.

(U) Also during the transition, several Russian actors not formally associated with the Russian Government attempted to establish contact with senior members of the Transition Team. In mid-December, Sergey Gorkov, the head of a U.S. sanctioned Russian bank, met with Jared Kushner and discussed diplomatic relations. Kirill Dmitriev, the CEO of U.S.-sanctioned Russian Direct Investment Fund, used multiple business contacts to try to make inroads with Transition Team officials. One such contact was Rick Gerson, a hedge fund manager and friend of Kushner's. Gerson and Dmitriev constructed a five-point plan on how to improve relations between Russia and the U.S. and presented it to the Transition Team and the Kremlin, respectively. Dmitriev also made contact with Erik Prince, who passed on the contents of the discussions to Steve Bannon. Separately, Bob Foresman, an American businessman living in Moscow who sought a position in the Trump Administration, conveyed brief messages between the Trump Campaign and several Kremlin-linked individuals, including Putin confidant Matthias Warnig, and provided other information relating to the U.S.-Russia relationship during the Transition.

Executive Branch Investigations

(U) The Committee found that certain FBI procedures and actions in response to the Russian threat to the 2016 elections were flawed, in particular its interactions with the DNC about the hacking operation and its treatment of the set of memos referred to as the Steele Dossier.

(U) The Committee found the FBI lacked a formal or considered process for escalating its warnings about the DNC hack within the organization of the DNC. Additionally, the FBI's "victim-driven" response paradigm, whereby hacked entities and organizations are treated as victims and the FBI relies on their cooperation to access and navigate targeted computer systems, hindered FBI's ability to investigate the cyberattack with appropriate urgency. The Committee understands that the FBI operates with limited resources and currently follows this victim-driven

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[redacted]

model when responding to cyber threats. However, the Committee found that the FBI could have, and should have, escalated its communications to the DNC much sooner than it did, but also that the DNC interlocutors did not assign appropriate weight to the FBI's warnings. To this point, the Committee found that communication on both sides was inadequate, further confusing an already complex situation.

(U) Regarding the Steele Dossier, FBI gave Steele's allegations unjustified credence, based on an incomplete understanding of Steele's past reporting record. FBI used the Dossier in a FISA application and renewals and advocated for it to be included in the ICA before taking the necessary steps to validate assumptions about Steele's credibility. Further, FBI did not effectively adjust its approach to Steele's reporting once one of Steele's subsources provided information that raised serious concerns about the source descriptions in the Steele Dossier. The Committee further found that Steele's reporting lacked rigor and transparency about the quality of the sourcing.

(U) The Russian attack on the 2016 U.S. elections presented a new, quickly-evolving, and complex set of circumstances for the FBI. However, the Committee found that FBI overly adhered to the letter of its procedures in dealings with the DNC, rather than recognizing the gap between those procedures and effective the pursuit of its mission, and did not follow its procedures closely enough in the handling of Christopher Steele. During both of these matters, FBI did not quickly identify the problem and adjust course when it became clear its actions were ineffective.

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II. (U) METHODOLOGY

A. (U) The Committee's Authority and Focus

(U) On January 24, 2017, the Committee formally initiated its inquiry into Russian active measures in the 2016 elections and the Intelligence Community Assessment (ICA) relating to Russian involvement in the 2016 elections. The Terms of Reference designated a Russian Active Measures Working Group from Committee staff to conduct the inquiry on behalf of the Committee. The five volumes of the Committee's Report capture the results of three years of investigative activity, hundreds of witness interviews and engagements, millions of pages of document review, and open and closed hearings. This Report presents the Committee's findings and recommendations as a result of its investigation.

1. (U) The Committee's Power to Investigate

(U) The Committee's power to investigate Russian interference in the 2016 U.S. elections derives from its jurisdiction over the Intelligence Community (IC) and Congress's broad investigative powers. The Supreme Court has recognized that Congress has broad power to investigate, because investigation is "inherent in the legislative process."[1] Congress's "power of inquiry . . . is as penetrating and far-reaching as the potential power to enact and appropriate under the Constitution."[2] Congress also plays a long-established "informing function" that the Supreme Court has described as "indispensable."[3]

(U) The Senate created the Select Committee on Intelligence in 1976 to "provide vigilant legislative oversight over the intelligence activities of the United States" and to ensure that intelligence activities were "in conformity with the Constitution and laws of the United States."[4] The Committee is tasked with oversight of the IC, which includes 17 different intelligence elements and numerous intelligence programs. An assessment of the IC's response to the foreign intelligence threat from Russia, and by necessity the nature of that threat, fell within the Committee's jurisdiction. The Report's five volumes—covering topics of election security, social media, policy response, the ICA, and counterintelligence concerns[5] surrounding the 2016

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[1] (U) *Watkins v. United States*, 354 U.S. 178, 187 (1957).

[2] (U) *Eastland v. United States Serviceman's Fund*, 421 U.S. 491, 504 (1975) (citing *Barenblatt v. United States*, 360 U.S. 109, 111 (1959)). *See generally* Garvey, Todd and Oleszek, Walter J., "Congressional Oversight and Investigations," Congressional Research Service, December 1, 2014.

[3] (U) *Watkins*, 354 U.S. at 200; *United States v. Rumely*, 345 U.S. 41, 43 (1953). *See, e.g.*, Final Report of the Select Committee on Presidential Campaign Activities, Report No. 93-981, 96th Cong., 2d Sess., June 1974, p. XXIV.

[4] (U) S. Res. 400, 94th Cong. (1976).

[5] (U) Executive Order No. 12333, as amended, defines counterintelligence as "information gathered and activities conducted to identify, deceive, exploit, disrupt, or protect against espionage, other intelligence activities, sabotage,

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elections—address areas of oversight and potential legislative action for the Committee or Congress. The Committee has already taken legislative action based on its investigation.

(U) The Committee understood obstruction of its investigation to also be within its investigative purview, as efforts to obstruct the Committee could potentially stem from additional counterintelligence concerns, interfere with its oversight responsibilities, or form the basis of additional legislative action.

(U) The Committee reviewed relevant intelligence products, conducted voluntary witness interviews, and compelled both testimony and the production of documents when necessary. The Committee's investigative power was bounded by the tools available to the Legislative Branch and the statute governing the enforcement of Senate subpoenas, both of which informed the Committee's approach to obtain voluntary cooperation wherever possible.[6] If a witness refused to comply with a subpoena without asserting any valid legal privilege, the Committee could choose to pursue either criminal or civil contempt.

(U) As the Supreme Court has recognized, the power to compel testimony and evidence is a necessary component to Congress's ability to fulfill its constitutional role.[7] However, holding a witness in contempt of Congress is a multi-step, time-consuming process, requiring action both within Congress and the courts. To pursue civil contempt, the Committee would begin by issuing a valid subpoena to a witness and providing the witness an opportunity to assert legitimate privileges, along with legal authorities and rationale for any privilege assertions. After a ruling by the Chairman and Vice Chairman that the witness had failed to comply or to assert a valid legal privilege, the Committee could override the objection and direct the witness to comply. If the witness failed to comply, the Committee could then vote to report a resolution to the Senate, accompanied by a report explaining the facts at issue, and the reasons the Committee was pursuing civil contempt as opposed to criminal contempt. Reporting a resolution to the Senate is considered a privileged motion, and would trigger a vote of the full chamber. If the Senate agreed to the enforcement resolution, the Senate would direct Senate Legal Counsel to represent the Committee before a federal court, seeking an order directing the witness to appear, produce documents, or to answer specific questions. The federal court could then decide to direct the witness to answer, and the court could impose sanctions to further compel compliance if it determined them to be necessary.[8]

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or assassinations conducted for or on behalf of foreign powers, organizations, or persons, or their agents, or international terrorist organizations or activities." In this Report, the Committee has, at times, also used "counterintelligence" to represent the broad range of threats presented by foreign powers, including intelligence services and their agents, to U.S. elections, campaigns, and national assets that are critical to the democratic process.

[6] (U) *See* 28 U.S.C. § 1365.

[7] (U) *McGrain v. Daugherty*, 273 U.S. 135 (1927).

[8] (U) For criminal contempt, the Committee would vote to report to the Senate (or the President Pro Tempore if the Senate is not in session) a resolution referring the witness for criminal prosecution, which the Senate (or President

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(U) Title 28, United States Code § 1365 gives the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia original jurisdiction over civil enforcement of Senate subpoenas.[9] However, § 1365 does not apply—and the court would not have jurisdiction under the statute to consider an enforcement action—if the subpoena is to "an officer or employee of the executive branch of the Federal Government" and the refusal to comply is "based on a governmental privilege or objection the assertion of which has been authorized by the executive branch of the Federal Government."[10]

(U) This limitation had important practical implications for the Committee's investigation. During the Committee's investigation, if a subpoenaed witness was a government official and asserted a claim of executive privilege, no matter how specious that claim appeared, the Committee was effectively foreclosed from pursuing civil contempt under § 1365.[11] The Committee interviewed several witnesses who refused to answer questions based on potential claims of executive privilege during the presidential Transition, involving the White House counsel's office (WHCO), which further complicated the potential for enforcement. For more on the Trump Administration's novel theories of executive privilege during the Transition, *see infra* Vol. 5, Sec. II.C.2.

(U) In some cases, the Committee's ability to obtain voluntary document production—including vast amounts of electronic communications, some of which would have been encrypted—appeared to outstrip the tools of law enforcement. But in other cases, it was clear that the limited tools available to the Legislative Branch hindered a more thorough effort. For example, the Committee spent months trying to obtain email communications hosted on a domain related to one of Paul Manafort's businesses, DMP International, LLC. Despite subpoenas issued to individuals and corporate entities, including DMP International LLC and

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Pro Tempore) concurred would be referred to the U.S. Attorney's Office in Washington, D.C., "whose duty it shall be to bring the matter before the grand jury for its action." *See* 2 U.S.C. § 194. Despite this mandatory language, the U.S. Attorney's Office regards its duty as discretionary and is not likely to prosecute an Executive Branch official asserting privileges.

[9] (U) 28 U.S.C. § 1365(a).

[10] (U) *Ibid.*

[11] (U) Since the statute's enactment in 1978, the Senate has exclusively relied on 28 U.S.C. § 1365 in seeking civil enforcement of its subpoenas, although use of 28 U.S.C. §1331 is not foreclosed. The House of Representatives, which is not covered by § 1365, has been successful in relying on the general federal question jurisdictional grant found in 28 U.S.C. § 1331 in two recent district court cases seeking subpoena enforcement in the face of executive privilege or immunity claims. *See Comm. on the Judiciary of the U.S. House of Representatives v. Miers,* 558 F. Supp. 2d 53 (D.D.C. 2008); *Comm. on Oversight & Government Reform of the U.S. House of Representatives v. Holder,* 979 F. Supp. 2d 1 (D.D.C. 2013). At the time of this writing, the issue of a court's role in ruling on information disputes between Congress and the executive branch is pending before an *en banc* U.S. Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit. *See* Order, *Comm. on the Judiciary of the U.S. House of Representatives v. McGahn,* No. 19-5331 (D.C. Cir. March 13, 2020).

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Rackspace (which hosted the DMP email server during the relevant time frame), the Committee failed to obtain the email communications. Conversely, law enforcement would have been able to—and did—use its criminal investigative authorities to access the content of those email communications directly and without delay.[12]

(U) Locating witnesses also proved to be complicated in some cases. Witnesses were spread across the globe, and often used different names, or changed lawyers in a manner that made engagement with them increasingly challenging. The Committee is grateful to the U.S. Marshals Service for its assistance in locating and serving several witnesses throughout the investigation.

2. (U) The Committee's Counterintelligence Focus

(U) The Committee's investigation focused on the counterintelligence threat posed by the Russian intelligence services and whether the IC was appropriately positioned to meet that threat during the 2016 election cycle. The Committee's years of work on Russian active measures, including its open and closed hearings, illustrate its focus on counterintelligence concerns. In presenting the factual record, the Committee did not apply the standard of proof applicable to criminal trials, that of beyond a reasonable doubt, but rather endeavored to convey a detailed accounting of relevant events, and sometimes included conflicting information that the Committee could not reliably resolve.[13]

(U) By comparison, the report by the Special Counsel's Office (SCO), "Report On The Investigation Into Russian Interference In The 2016 Presidential Election" (hereinafter "*SCO Report*"), was focused on criminal activity: to "explain[] the prosecution or declination decisions reached."[14] As then-Acting Attorney General for the Special Counsel Rod Rosenstein stated in a June 27, 2018 letter about the Special Counsel's appointment and authority: "Special Counsel Mueller is authorized to investigate potential criminal offenses. Counterintelligence investigations involving any current or future Russian election interference are not the Special Counsel's responsibility."[15]

(U) When witnesses presented both counterintelligence and criminal concerns, the Committee's priority was the counterintelligence threat.[16] Where counterintelligence concerns

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[12] (U) For more on the Committee's approach to obtaining electronic communications metadata from providers, *see infra* Vol. 5, Sec. II.C.6.

[13] (U) This approach is in keeping with prior congressional reports. *See, e.g.*, Final Report of the Select Committee on Presidential Campaign Activities, Report No. 93-981, 96th Cong., 2d Sess., June 1974, pp. XXIII–XXV.

[14] (U) 28 C.F.R. § 600.8(c).

[15] (U) Letter, Rosenstein to Grassley, June 27, 2018.

[16] (U) For example, the Committee's work with respect to Michael Cohen centered on whether Cohen was a vector for Russian influence rather than whether Cohen properly reported all of his taxable income.

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and criminal activity overlapped, the Committee worked with law enforcement stakeholders to find an appropriate way forward that would best serve the Committee's investigative purpose without jeopardizing ongoing investigations or prosecutions. Where the two goals were in conflict, the Committee accommodated law enforcement imperatives.

i. (U) Referrals

(U) The Committee did not specifically seek to investigate crime or facilitate the apprehension of criminals: if the Committee became aware of information related to potential criminal activity during the course of its investigation, that information was referred to the appropriate law enforcement entity for whatever action it deemed appropriate, to include further investigation. In its referrals, the Committee expressed the view that crimes may have been committed and that further investigation might be warranted. The referral did not require law enforcement authorities to undertake any further action—a decision left solely to their discretion.

(U) The Committee made referrals for potential criminal activity uncovered during the course of the investigation. A list of these referrals is provided in Annex A to this Report.[17]

B. (U) A Bipartisan Investigation

(U) To conduct the investigation, the Committee assigned a subset of its professional staff members and counsel to an investigative team. Staff were assigned from the majority and the minority. Investigative decisions were made by the Chairman and Vice Chairman. Staff jointly reviewed the information obtained in the course of the investigation, drafted document requests, questioned witnesses, and drafted the Report. All of these practices helped to maintain the bipartisan nature of the investigation, one focused on the goal stated by the Chairman and Vice Chairman: delivering a factual record to the American people about Russian interference in the 2016 U.S. elections.

(U) The Committee's practice was to initially seek witness testimony and document production voluntarily, and some witnesses were immediately willing to cooperate with the Committee. However, other witnesses were hesitant to cooperate and required extensive assurances about a range of topics before they would agree to appear. These negotiations often took weeks or months, and sometimes resulted in a witness not appearing until many months after the request, which prolonged the investigation. In addition, on several occasions, witnesses developed excuses for delaying or cancelling interviews. It was the Committee's practice not to discuss witness engagements publicly and to ask witnesses to keep engagements confidential.

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[17] (U) *See infra* Vol. 5, Sec. VI.

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However, the Committee was unable to prevent witnesses from disclosing their own information or engagements to the media either before, during, or after their interviews.

(U) When credible safety issues were raised by a witness, proffers and *in camera* review were considered as an alternative. In limited circumstances, either due to witness security concerns, to conduct minimal follow-ups, or because of the limited nature of the Committee's focus, written questions were used in lieu of in-person testimony. Generally, written questions proved to be a poor substitute for a live interview. Responses were frequently cursory and left out pertinent information; answers were channeled through counsel for additional edits rather than coming directly from the witness; and the Committee was unable to ask follow-up questions to challenge or probe the witness's responses.

(U) The Committee generally requested documents to be produced within 14 days of a request, but provided reasonable extensions of that deadline. Even so, witness counsel often prolonged document production for months by engaging in delay tactics. Because the investigation was focused on sometimes sensitive counterintelligence concerns, some document requests were deliberately phrased in broad language to capture all relevant materials. At times this created the need to negotiate over the scope of witness productions to avoid overproduction of irrelevant documents. Voluminous productions—which were not uncommon—arrived on a rolling basis, but only after continuing pressure from the Committee. Some productions arrived on the eve of witness interviews, in hard copy, which made it difficult to use the information effectively during the engagement.

(U) The Committee's document processing presented its own challenges, in part due to the varied nature of materials that were produced, and because of the Committee's dedication to maintaining documents in a restricted system to the extent possible. The most common manner of production consisted of emails or documents in PDF format. However, files were also sometimes produced in native format, including Microsoft Excel spreadsheets and Outlook Data Files (i.e., .pst files). On some occasions, the Committee received an image copy of the witness's hard drive. In addition, several witnesses produced documents through their attorneys using e-discovery platforms to which the Committee did not have access. The Committee encountered messages and emails in foreign languages, mobile phone screenshots of communications, and proprietary data productions from companies. Government records presented additional complications. Intake of these materials with appropriate technical restrictions involved a significant, ongoing effort by administrative and technical staff. Eventually, for review and drafting purposes, the Committee obtained licenses for analytical software to help synthesize and cull out relevant information from the voluminous investigative file.

(U) Staff prepared for interviews using all available sources of information, including witness document productions, government records, and publicly available information. Most interviews were held in a closed setting, either in the Committee conference room or in its closed

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hearing room. In some cases, the interviews were classified. On other occasions, staff traveled to accommodate the witness and conducted interviews off site, including locations outside of the United States. Outlines and exhibits were prepared and agreed upon ahead of time to guide the interview. Staff did not identify by political party during the interview, and questioning was done in a conversational manner, with multiple staff participating. Nearly all interviews were transcribed.[18] The Committee gave all witnesses the opportunity to consult with counsel, or respond to questions off the record. Following the interviews, witnesses were unable to identify which staff worked for the majority and which worked for the minority. Although Committee Members were generally not present, transcripts and documents from all witness interviews were made available for Members to review.

(U) The Committee conducted follow-up interviews with five witnesses: Michael Cohen, Jared Kushner, Donald Trump Jr., John Podesta, and Jonathan Winer. The Committee held the follow-up interviews with Cohen, Kushner, and Trump Jr. in the Committee's closed hearing room with Members present. At the Chairman's direction, investigative counsel asked questions that had been prepared in advance and agreed upon by staff; Members also submitted questions for witnesses to be asked by counsel. These three witnesses had been interviewed early in the Committee's efforts, and the Committee developed additional information since the initial interview that required clarification from the witnesses. All three of these follow-up interviews occurred only after extensive negotiation between the Committee and the respective parties. In the case of both Cohen and Trump Jr., the Committee issued a subpoena to secure this second day of testimony. Cohen appeared pursuant to the subpoena. Trump Jr. did not initially appear in response to the subpoena, but later changed his position and appeared when it became clear that the Committee was considering a contempt resolution.

(U) When witnesses declined voluntary cooperation and an interview was essential to the investigation, the Committee exercised its subpoena authority to compel testimony and document production. Subpoenas were usually served electronically, when agreed to by witness counsel. On several occasions, however, the Committee relied on the assistance of the U.S. Marshals Service to serve subpoenas on some witnesses. Although the Chairman and Vice Chairman were granted authority by the Committee to jointly issue subpoenas for witnesses on which they agreed, the whole Committee considered and authorized several subpoenas that were issued to sensitive witnesses who it believed might resist compliance. The Committee experienced some additional limits to its authority, as discussed below.

C. (U) Legal Issues Encountered

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[18] (U) For example, the Committee's interviews with former Secretary of State John Kerry and former FBI employee Randy Coleman were not transcribed, due to the constraints of the spaces in which the interviews took place and prior negotiation with witness counsel.

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(U) Throughout the course of its investigation, the Committee encountered a spectrum of cooperation: some witnesses testified voluntarily and provided useful document production in a timely manner, and some witnesses stalled, forced the Committee to compel their appearances, and then asserted privileges in response to some of the Committee's questions. Witnesses claimed several common law and Constitutional privileges, including traditional claims of executive privilege; potential claims of executive privilege during the presidential Transition; attorney-client privilege; First Amendment privileges (related to both freedom of the press and freedom of association); and spousal privilege. The Committee was also confronted with certain statutory limitations in its requests to communications service providers for digital evidence. The Committee's strategies in navigating these issues are detailed below but were generally driven by its priorities to get the most information possible, to respect Committee and Senate equities, and to move forward without engaging in time-consuming litigation.

1. (U) Executive Privilege

(U) The time period for the Committee's document requests and interview questions for government officials generally did not go beyond noon on January 20, 2017, in part to anticipate and minimize any potential claims of executive privilege. The concept of executive privilege—which is not written anywhere in the Constitution, but derives from Constitutional considerations[19]—is itself amorphous, encompassing several varieties of potentially legitimate governmental interests: the confidentiality of a president's communications and those of the president's senior advisors; sensitive military, diplomatic, or national security information; sensitive law enforcement techniques or ongoing investigations; and internal deliberative processes. There is considerable disagreement between Congress and the Executive Branch as to the nature of the privilege and when it may be claimed, and scant case law on the particulars of its application to congressional requests. Importantly, in whatever form it may take, the privilege is not absolute.[20] It gives way to a legitimate overriding need from Congress; it can be waived; and it may not be used to withhold evidence of wrongdoing or criminal behavior within the Executive Branch.

(U) Executive privilege is the President's alone to assert. Accordingly—from the Executive Branch's perspective—in order to withhold information on the basis of a valid claim of executive privilege, a witness will frequently refuse to answer a question or produce documents on the grounds that it could implicate the privilege, thereby preserving the opportunity to assert the privilege for the President. Following notification from a witness that a request has raised a "substantial question of executive privilege," the White House's approach in

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[19] (U) *See United States v. Nixon*, 418 U.S. 683, 708 (1974).
[20] (U) *Ibid.*, 713.

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theory adheres to the procedures outlined in a 1982 memorandum from then-President Reagan.[21] Traditionally, the White House will seek an opinion from Department of Justice's (DOJ) Office of Legal Counsel (OLC) substantiating its position that the privilege exists as related to the specific subject matter in the question or document. If that determination is made, Congress and the Executive Branch may engage in an "accommodations" process to resolve the dispute through a proffer of the information or *in camera* review in lieu of specific testimony or document production. If, however, the process does not satisfy Congress's legitimate needs, then Congress may contest the claim.

(U) The Committee anticipated that it could face executive privilege claims from Obama Administration officials who testified about actions they took as part of the National Security Council or conversations they had with President Obama about Russian interference. In practice, though, Obama Administration officials freely shared their conversations with then-President Obama and each other related to the Russia threat. The Committee heard testimony about Principal's Committees (PCs) and Deputy's Committees (DCs) from Susan Rice, Denis McDonough, Michael Daniel, Celeste Wallander, Jeh Johnson, Ben Rhodes, Samantha Power, Loretta Lynch, Sally Yates, and Lisa Monaco, among others. This testimony provided useful insights into the history of interactions between the Obama Administration and the Russian government, which informed the Committee's report.

2. (U) A Claimed Transition Privilege

(U) The Committee did not anticipate, however, the multitude of novel and unprecedented potential executive privilege claims from the WHCO on behalf of members of President-elect Trump's Transition Team and the Transition itself, for communications before Trump took office. The Committee was surprised by these assertions because they were made inconsistently and because they have no basis in law. The Committee's experience demonstrated the potential for abuse of executive privilege, particularly as it relates to impeding a Congressional inquiry.

i. (U) Executive Privilege for the Trump Administration Began at Noon on January 20, 2017

(U) The Committee's position is that executive privilege for President Trump began when he assumed Constitutional office, at noon on January 20, 2017. During the 2016–2017 Presidential Transition, President Obama was the person holding the Constitutional office of the President, and therefore the only person who could assert a Constitutional privilege for that period. When pressed for any legal precedent or any opinion from OLC that supported the

[21] **(U)** Memorandum, President Reagan to the Heads of Executive Departments and Agencies on Procedures Governing Responses to Congressional Requests for Information, November 4, 1992.

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existence of executive privilege during the Transition, WHCO continually and solely relied on a letter from then-White House Counsel Don McGahn to then-House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence (HPSCI) Chairman Devin Nunes.[22] McGahn's letter cites important principles of executive privilege pertaining to the President's communications with close advisers, mostly found in *United States v. Nixon*, 418 U.S. 683 (1974) and *In re Sealed Case,* 121 F.3d 729 (D.C. Cir. 1997).[23] McGahn's letter argues that because the Presidential Transition Act ("PTA") contemplates confidentiality during the Transition, and because Congress has tacitly implied a recognition that Administrations prepare to take office before Inauguration Day (by, for example, scheduling confirmation hearings for national security cabinet official designates), executive privilege pertaining to presidential communications must then apply during the Transition.[24]

(U) This argument contorts the PTA and common understandings of executive privilege, and the Committee could identify no additional basis to support it. The argument was particularly suspect as applied to an apparent foreign policy operation run by Transition officials who can claim no Constitutional authority to be conducting American diplomacy. To date, the only court to address the existence of a Transition privilege has rejected it.[25] Throughout the investigation, and still today, the Committee adheres to the view that a valid claim of executive privilege can only exist once a President has been sworn into office.

ii. (U) The WHCO's Approach was Inconsistent, and Waiver Could Have Occurred

(U) Throughout 2017, the Committee's engagements with former Transition officials and entities representing the Transition elicited no assertions of potential executive privilege over the Transition. For instance, the Committee interviewed Jared Kushner and Hope Hicks, both senior members of the Campaign, the Transition Team, and the Administration. These witnesses testified to the Committee freely and without any assertions related to executive privilege during the Transition period. During the Committee's initial document requests and conversations with the Trustees of the Transition,[26] those representatives of the Trustees made no explicit mention of executive privilege, instead using a boilerplate paragraph that acknowledged that "[a]ll documents and information are produced by TFA subject to, and without waiving, any and all applicable constitutional, statutory, and common law privileges."[27]

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[22] (U) Letter, McGahn to Nunes, February 14, 2018 (provided to Committee Counsel by White House Deputy Counsel via email on March 29, 2018).
[23] (U) *Ibid.*
[24] (U) *Ibid.*; *see also* PTA, Pub. L. 88-277, as amended.
[25] (U) *Fish v. Kobach*, No. 16-2105-JAR-JPO, 17 WL 1920910, *5–6 (D. Kan. May 10, 2017).
[26] (U) The Trustees of the Transition is the custodial entity that maintained Transition records once the President took office.
[27] (U) *See, e.g.*, Letter, Langhofer to Burr and Warner, December 8, 2017.

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(U) However, by March of 2018 and beyond, the Committee's interview and document requests to K.T. McFarland, Sarah Flaherty,[28] Stephen Miller, Avi Berkowitz, and Steve Bannon were all met by "potential assertions" of executive privilege during the Transition. After conversations with WHCO during these witness negotiations, the Committee inquired with Transition counsel about whether any of its documents had been withheld on a basis of executive privilege concerns, rather than just attorney-client concerns. After months of discussion with both WHCO and Transition counsel, in February, 2019, the Committee learned that the Transition Trustees had withheld documents based on a potential assertion of executive privilege.[29]

(U) The Trustees of the Transition provided their documents to the WHCO for review, in order to assess whether any documents could be candidates for an executive privilege assertion. This process took approximately four additional months. McFarland and Flaherty similarly used the WHCO to filter their document production to the Committee. Ultimately, 65 documents from the Transition, 32 documents from McFarland, and one document from Flaherty were withheld from production and proffered to Committee counsel, as described below.[30]

(U) Due to time constraints and the limits of the Senate's jurisdictional statute, as described above, the Committee did not litigate these claims of executive privilege during the Transition. Despite the potential of waiver and the unusual position of the WHCO related to executive privilege, the Committee worked with witnesses to scope questions in order to obtain the most essential information, and participated in an accommodations process with WHCO.

iii. (U) The "Accommodations" Process

(U) Although the Committee strenuously disagreed with the White House's view on the validity of asserting executive privilege for Transition activities, there were strategic reasons for agreeing to an accommodations process for its requests. By obtaining a preview of the documents, the Committee could assess whether it had obtained the purportedly privileged materials through other means; gain information to further evaluate its interest in pursuing litigation to obtain the withheld materials; and measure the strength of the executive branch's argument in favor of applying the privilege. The Committee was also cognizant that the statute governing jurisdiction for subpoena enforcement—in particular, the clause which excludes enforcement in the case of a government official asserting a government privilege—could limit the possibility of prevailing in litigation, meaning that its best option to gather information was through an accommodation. Finally, applicable legal precedent from the D.C. Circuit suggested

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[28] (U) Flaherty was an aide to Lt. Gen. Michael T. Flynn and McFarland, detailed to the Transition.
[29] (U) Letter, Langhofer to Burr and Warner, February 22, 2017.
[30] (U) The 65 Transition documents include 32 documents that had been withheld and separately proffered during the McFarland accommodations process.

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that even if the Committee disagreed with the White House's novel invocation of the privilege, prior to initiating an enforcement proceeding, the Committee should "take cognizance of an implicit constitutional mandate to seek optimal accommodation through a realistic evaluation of the needs of the conflicting branches in the particular factual situation."[31]

(U) The WHCO offered Committee counsel an opportunity to inspect some of the withheld documents, and gave summaries at varying levels of detail for others. The process proved useful in some limited respects. Most notably, the Committee found that certain materials the White House sought to protect were already in its possession and also should not have been subject to a privilege claim. This arose, for example, with respect to documents produced by Sarah Flaherty. One of these documents was described to Committee counsel as an undated eight-paragraph memorandum with a sticky note dated January 9, 2017, from Flynn to McFarland stating: "re: [a foreign nation] for your consideration." The paragraphs were further summarized as follows:

- (U) 1: Discussion identifying foreign government internal personnel movements.
- (U) 2: Recitation of the author's assessment of the foreign government's view of areas of long-term strategic concern shared with the U.S.
- (U) 3: Assessment of the foreign government's view concerning the effect of post-1992 U.S. policies for both countries.
- (U) 4: Discussion of the author's view of challenges facing the President (broad), especially in the national security area.
- (U) 5: List of issues for the U.S. involving the foreign government and the author's observation regarding the degree of connection or non-connection to the foreign government.
- (U) 6: Expresses a need for a plan to make progress on strategic matters, not specifically tied to the foreign government.
- (U) 7: Author's assessment that the foreign government and the people of the foreign nation have substantial goodwill towards the President-elect.

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[31] (U) *United States v. AT&T*, 567 F.2d 121 (D.C. Cir. 1977).

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- (U) 8: Suggestion/proposal for possibilities of engagement with the foreign government.[32]

(U) According to the WHCO, the document was a candidate for privilege because it had been "prepared for and shared among the President-elect's senior advisors and concerns foreign policy and national security."[33] But the WHCO had taken this position without ascertaining key facts. For example, it could not identify the author of the document; where and in what format the document had resided when in Flaherty's possession; and whether the document was prepared for the President-elect or at his request or was ever shown to him. At minimum, it knew that the document did not contain any classified information.

(U) Based on the description, the Committee identified the memorandum as a document already in its possession, produced by Robert Foresman—who was not a member of the Campaign nor the Transition Team—and written to Flynn.[34] The Committee also knew from its investigation that Foresman had adapted a substantial part of the memorandum from another document shared by Allen Vine, who is an associate of the Putin-linked Russian oligarch Suleiman Kerimov.[35] The Committee's position was that the document could not be privileged: it was not drafted by a member of the Transition Team and had, in part, originated with a close associate of a Kremlin insider. Committee counsel informed the WHCO of the general contours of these facts (though not specific names or the details of how it had acquired the information). WHCO subsequently dropped its claim of potential executive privilege and produced the document to the Committee.

(U) As this experience illustrated, White House intervention significantly hampered and prolonged the Committee's investigative effort. Most importantly, some witnesses were directed by the White House not to turn over potentially privileged information—so they refused to produce materials without first handing them over to the White House for a privilege review, or refused to answer questions concerning the Transition without first consulting with the White House. As a result, the White House had a chance to review and control the information responsive to Committee requests before the Committee did, even though the Committee was seeking information from private citizens who could not themselves assert the privilege, and who were free to disregard the White House's directive.

(U) Witness testimony also proved to be a particular challenge. In addition to the noted White House inconsistency with respect to privilege during interviews, witnesses declined to respond to questions relating to the Transition without first getting permission from WHCO,

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[32] (U) SSCI Memorandum, January 23, 2019.
[33] (U) *Ibid.*
[34] (U) Memorandum, Foresman to Flynn (RMF-SCI-00003003–3004).
[35] (U) For a complete discussion of this document, *see infra* Vol. 5, Sec. III.K.4.iv.

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sometimes even in the middle of an interview. The WHCO suggested that the Committee could present its interview questions for consideration in advance. The Committee rejected this proposal because doing so would have exposed the full scope of the Committee's investigation to WHCO and compromised the Committee's commitment to confidentiality. Instead, interview questions relating to the Transition were saved until the end of the interview, at which time they were asked and then relayed by witness counsel over the phone to the WHCO for its direction. Then, the WHCO would advise witness counsel and Committee counsel of whether or not the witness could respond.

3. (U) Obstruction, Attorney-Client Privilege, and the Joint Defense Agreement

(U) Although there is no formal requirement for Congress to honor the attorney-client privilege,[36] the Committee respected all legitimate and properly-supported invocations of the privilege during its investigation as a matter of congressional discretion. Proper assertions of the privilege did not prove to be obstacles to the Committee's work. However, the Committee encountered dubious objections to its requests and questioning based on an undocumented and unproven "joint defense agreement."

(U) The existence of a joint defense agreement arose after Michael Cohen testified to the Committee on February 26, 2019, that his former attorney, Stephen Ryan, had in 2017 circulated drafts of Cohen's prior written statement to the Committee—a statement which included numerous false statements for which Cohen later pleaded guilty[37]—to attorneys for other witnesses in the Committee's investigation, and that these attorneys had been involved in revising the statement.[38] At the Committee's request, Cohen subsequently produced several of the communications in his possession, including six emails he had received from Ryan containing or forwarding proposed edits and redlines to his draft statement from third parties, between August 16 and August 25, 2017.[39]

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[36] (U) *See, e.g.*, Glenn A. Beard, *Congress v. The Attorney-Client Privilege: A "Full and Frank Discussion,"* 35 Amer. Crim. L. Rev., 119, 122-27 (1997) ("[C]ongressional witnesses are not legally entitled to the protection of the attorney-client privilege, and investigation committees therefore have discretionary authority to respect or overrule such claims as they see fit."). *See also* Ethics Opinion 288, *Compliance with Subpoena from Congressional Subcommittee to Produce Lawyer's Files Containing Client Confidences or Secrets*, Legal Ethics Committee, District of Columbia Bar, February 1999 (opining that an attorney is permitted to produce client confidences or secrets in response to a congressional subpoena if a congressional subcommittee overrules objections based on attorney-client privilege and threatens fines or imprisonment for non-compliance).

[37] (U) *See* Information, *United States v. Michael Cohen*, 18-CR-850, November 29, 2018.

[38] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Michael Cohen, February 26, 2019, pp. 21–23 ("Cohen Tr. II"). Following an initial citation, this Report refers to transcripts using a short form citation of "Witness Tr." For witnesses who were interviewed a second time, such as Cohen, citations to the transcript of the second interview are identified as such by "Witness Tr. II."

[39] (U) *See, e.g.*, Email, Ryan to Cohen, August 21, 2017, attaching draft statement ("Attached please find the current version of the Moscow statement. We sort of accepted the changes from Alan and Abbe."); Email, Ryan to

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(U) Based on Cohen's testimony and document production, the Committee pursued further evidence of involvement by other witnesses in his obstruction of the Committee's investigation. This issue was pertinent, if not central, to the Committee's work. The Committee needed to evaluate testimony and evidence it had received, including determining the veracity of that testimony, as part of establishing a record of the matter under investigation.

(U) From the documents produced by Cohen, the Committee became concerned that multiple witnesses and/or their counsel could have been involved in or aware of Cohen's attempt to mislead the Committee.[40] Indeed, at least two witnesses (Donald Trump Jr. and Felix Sater) could have known that Cohen's statement falsely represented material facts about negotiations over a deal for a Trump Tower Moscow. Further, Cohen told the Committee that following his initial testimony, he received a phone call from Sekulow, who told him that Trump "heard that you did great, and don't worry, everything's going to be fine. He loves ya."[41] Cohen also testified that after his initial interview, Sekulow mentioned "pardons" or "pre-pardons" for Cohen.[42]

(U) Accordingly, the Committee pursued additional communications made by Michael Cohen or Stephen Ryan to these attorneys or their clients, and by third parties to Cohen and Ryan. Normally, these communications would not be protected by the attorney-client privilege because they were shared with third parties, and hence no longer confidential.[43] Nonetheless, the Committee was informed that the materials it requested could not be provided because they were subject to a joint defense agreement (JDA).[44]

Cohen, August 22, 2017 ("Felix would like 'salesmanship' instead of 'puffing'. He confirmed factually [sic] accuracy of doc. Sekulow liked doc. Suggested we change all 'project' references to 'proposal'—I think that is ok. Alan G asked for a word version implying he had edits. No word from Abbe (picking a jury for Menendez today) and Alan F.").

[40] (U) Cohen Tr. II, p. 21 ("The statement that was drafted was circulated through all of the various individuals. They had read it. They knew the information was false.").

[41] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 43.

[42] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 73–76.

[43] (U) *See In re Kellogg Brown & Root, Inc.*, 756 F.3d 754, 757 (D.C. Cir. 2014) (the privilege "applies to a *confidential communication between attorney and client* if that communication was made for the purpose of obtaining or providing legal advice to the client") (emphasis added); *Permian Corp. v. United States*, 665 F.2d 1214, (D.C. Cir. 1981) ("Any voluntary disclosure by the holder of such a privilege is inconsistent with the confidential relationship and thus waives the privilege.") (*quoting United States v. AT&T*, 642 F.2d 1285, 1299 (D.C. Cir. 1980)).

[44] (U) *See, e.g.*, Letter, Woodward and Brand to Burr and Warner, April 4, 2019; SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Jared Kushner, February 28, 2019 ("Kushner Tr. II"); SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Donald Trump Jr., June 12, 2019 ("Trump Jr. Tr. II").

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(U) Courts have recognized a narrow exception to the waiver rule when a communication is made pursuant to a valid JDA.[45] However, it is the proponent's burden to demonstrate both the existence of a JDA and that the JDA covers communications a party seeks to protect.[46] Further, a JDA does not provide a blanket immunity from congressional process. That burden must be satisfied on a communication-by-communication basis (such as on a privilege log), and not categorically.[47] That is, a party seeking to demonstrate the existence of a JDA must do so "by proof, not proclamation," with sufficient information to "show that at a specific time or times, 'a joint defense or strategy has been decided upon and undertaken by the parties and their respective counsel.'"[48]

(U) Because it is "in derogation of the search for truth,"[49] the joint defense privilege should be "narrowly construed."[50] The mere practice of cooperation or information sharing between parties does not, on its own, create a JDA.[51] Rather, there must be a "coordinated legal strategy."[52] And, to be ethical, the strategy—including the sharing of confidential information outside of the attorney-client relationship—should also be known to and authorized by the client.[53]

(U) The Committee questioned several witnesses and counsel to identify the nature of the JDA. No showing to substantiate its existence was made by any proponent of the privilege. All agreed that there was nothing written to document the JDA or any of its key features, such as when it began, who was included, and the JDA's purpose. Even if the JDA were a verbal agreement (valid under some case law), that would not excuse the participants from satisfying their obligation to prove its existence.

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[45] (U) *See, e.g., United States v. Weissman*, 195 F.3d 96, 99 (2d Cir. 1999).
[46] (U) *See ibid.*
[47] (U) *See, e.g., Certain Underwriters at Lloyd's v. Nat'l R.R. Passenger Corp.*, 162 F. Supp. 3d 145, 155 (E.D.N.Y. 2016) (privilege claimant must "establish factual predicate" for withholding documents under common interest doctrine); *Denney v. Jenkens & Gilchrist*, 362 F. Supp. 2d 407, 416 (S.D.N.Y. 2004) (privilege claimant "must show that the particular communication at issue was disclosed in connection with the joint legal defense").
[48] (U) *Jansson v. Stamford Health, Inc.*, 312 F. Supp. 3d 289, 304 (D. Conn. 2018) (internal citation omitted).
[49] (U) *United States v. Nixon*, 418 U.S. 683, 709 (1974).
[50] (U) *Weissman*, 195 at 100.
[51] (U) *Minebea Co. v. Papst*, 228 F.R.D. 13, 16 (D.D.C. 2005). *See, e.g., United States v. Krug*, 868 F.3d 82, 87 (2d Cir. 2017) ("The mere fact that the communications were among co-defendants who had joined in a joint defense agreement is, without more, insufficient to bring such statements within the attorney-client privilege.").
[52] (U) *Minebea*, 228 F.R.D. at 16.
[53] (U) *See, e.g.*, Ethics Opinion 296, *Joint Representative: Confidentiality of Information*, Legal Ethics Committee, District of Columbia Bar, February 2000 (discussing need for attorney to obtain "clear authorization" to share one client's information with another client, "even when the discussion involves the subject matter of [a] joint representation," and noting that "[t]he guarantee of confidentiality of communication between client and attorney is a cornerstone of legal ethics").

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(U) Several witnesses also appeared to be unaware of their participation in the purported JDA or its purpose.[54] Yet, according to some of their attorneys, the mere fact of a client's membership in the JDA was also privileged, frustrating even the Committee's basic efforts to understand its scope.[55]

(U) The Committee gained some clarity when, in response to a subpoena for documents, Ryan's counsel provided the Committee with a privilege log containing 553 communications by members of the purported JDA. The log indicated that the purported JDA covered communications beginning on or about June 20, 2017, with an email from Alan Garten to Stephen Ryan, and continuing through at least October 27, 2017, with an email from Alan Futerfas to Alan Garten, Stephen Ryan and Jay Sekulow. A notably flurry of activity immediately preceded Cohen's submission of his August written statement, and an additional burst of communications surrounded his October 25, 2017 testimony. Based on the names of counsel identified in the log, membership in the alleged JDA appeared to include, at least, Donald Trump, Donald Trump Jr., the Trump Organization, Jared Kushner, Ivanka Trump, Paul Manafort, the Trump Campaign, Keith Schiller, Hope Hicks, Michael Flynn, and Felix Sater.[56] However, the Committee was provided with no competent evidence to substantiate the JDA's existence by Ryan or anyone else.

(U) Due to time and resource considerations, the Committee opted not to further pursue its inquiry into potentially obstructive conduct under this alleged JDA umbrella. Doing so would have likely required initiating litigation over subpoena compliance, a process that may not have resolved in time to be of investigative value.

4. (U) Fifth Amendment and Immunity

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[54] (U) For example, when Trump Jr. was asked whether he was a member of a JDA, his counsel interjected: "I think the discussions about the existence of a joint defense agreement should not be with Mr. Trump Jr. but perhaps between the lawyers." Trump Jr. then responded: "The reality is I may or may not have. I'm not 100% sure how that's done. You'll have to speak to counsel about it. . . . I don't know the details of it. . . . If I'm specifically in there, I'm not aware of that. . . . I'm not sure." Trump Jr. Tr. II, pp. 129–130. When McFarland was questioned about her participation in a JDA, her counsel similarly objected as to whether the question could be asked, and McFarland ultimately did not respond. SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Kathleen Troia ("K.T.") McFarland, March 8, 2018, pp. 220–222.

[55] (U) When Kushner was asked whether he was a member of a JDA, his counsel protested: "He can't answer that question . . . [b]ecause the existence of a joint defense agreement is part of a joint defense agreement." Kushner Tr. II, p. 26. Counsel later asserted, without citing any factually relevant authority, that membership in a JDA is privileged because disclosure of client's identity could in some other circumstances jeopardize confidential client communications. Email, Counsel to Committee, April 19, 2019. Specifically, counsel cited *In re Grand Jury Investigation No. 83-2-34*, 723 F.2d 447, 451–455 (6th Cir. 1983), which identifies three exceptions to the general rule, none of which were applicable in this situation.

[56] (U) Privilege Log, Stephen Ryan, April 24, 2019.

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(U) Some witnesses asserted their Fifth Amendment privilege against self-incrimination in response to the Committee's document requests, interview requests, or both.[57] In several cases where individuals asserted that the act of searching for documents constituted a testimonial act that could be self-incriminating—as was the case with Flynn, for example—the Committee was able to subpoena documents from the individual's company because the Fifth Amendment is not available to corporations.[58] In other instances, the Committee's direct investigative activity stalled once a witness asserted his or her privilege against self-incrimination. The Committee did consider limited grants of immunity to specific witnesses, but ultimately decided against taking that step.

i. (U) How Congressional Immunity Works

(U) The modern immunity statutes, enacted in 1970, provide "use" and "derivative use" immunity for witnesses—evidence proffered in a criminal prosecution of an immunized witness cannot be either the direct or indirect result of the congressional testimony.[59] Once Congress, or a congressional Committee, subpoenas a witness, the witness has four options: (1) refuse to appear and risk being held in contempt; (2) appear, but refuse to answer questions and risk contempt; (3) appear and testify; or (4) appear and refuse to answer by asserting his or her Fifth Amendment privilege against self-incrimination. Of course, immunity can compel otherwise reticent witnesses to supply necessary information.[60]

(U) If the Committee is aware that the witness plans to assert his or her Fifth Amendment privilege, the Committee may vote to grant the witness immunity prior to subpoenaing testimony, pursuant to 18 U.S.C. § 6002 and 18 U.S.C. § 6005. The request must be approved by two-thirds of the members of the full Committee. Specifically, the Committee vote is a vote to grant immunity and a vote for Senate Legal Counsel to seek immunity orders

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[57] (U) Interestingly, some witnesses testified before the HPSCI or House Judiciary and Oversight Committees, but declined to testify in front of the Senate based upon assertions of a privilege against self-incrimination (*e.g.*, George Papadopoulos and Roger Stone). It is unclear to the Committee whether the parameters for testimony in the House were markedly different than those suggested by the Committee.

[58] (U) *See, e.g., Braswell v. United States*, 487 U.S. 99, 104–113 (1988) (reviewing development of the Fifth Amendment's "collective entity rule").

[59] (U) *See* 18 U.S.C. §§ 6002, 6005. It is important to note that "use" immunity differs from "transactional" immunity. A grant of transactional immunity protects the witness from any prosecution related to any transaction the witness discusses. Congress's earlier transactional immunity statutes resulted in witnesses taking "immunity baths" whereby they would use their Congressional testimony as a confessional to avoid future prosecutions. Howard R. Sklamberg, "Investigation Versus Prosecution: The Constitutional Limits on Congress's Power to Immunize Witnesses," 78 N.C.L. REV. 153, 158 (1999). *See also Kastigar v. United States*, 406 U.S. 441 (1972) (holding that granting witnesses use immunity, rather than transactional immunity, was constitutional).

[60] (U) Congress can only hold a witness in contempt when that witness "refuses to answer any question pertinent to the subject under inquiry." 2 U.S.C. § 194. By asserting a valid Fifth Amendment privilege, the witness avoids a contempt charge.

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from federal district court. As a prerequisite to the court granting immunity, the Committee must provide notice to the Attorney General ten days in advance of the testimony, which allows the Attorney General time to "can" any testimony or evidence, thus preserving it for any potential future prosecution.[61] The Attorney General can waive this notice provision.[62] After the notice period passes (or is waived), the Committee may then apply for an order of immunity from a federal district judge. The court must grant the order if the Committee has met the procedural requirements for immunity, although DOJ can request an additional 20-day waiting period.[63] After the court approves the immunity order, the witness can no longer assert his or her Fifth Amendment privilege. The court's role in Congressional immunity is purely ministerial; it must grant the order if the statutory requirements are met.

ii. (U) The Committee's Considerations and Interactions with DOJ

(U) The Committee attempted to interview Rick Gates, Mike Flynn, and George Papadopoulos, and to reengage Paul Manafort and Sam Patten.[64] All five individuals asserted their Fifth Amendment privilege against self-incrimination in response to subpoenas and/or voluntary requests for interviews.[65]

(U) In discussions prior to considering immunity in the fall of 2018, DOJ advised the Committee that it "could not support" immunity for any of these witnesses. On December 21, 2018, the Committee sent a letter signed by all 15 Members requesting that the Deputy Attorney General (who was also the Acting Attorney General for the Special Counsel's investigation during the tenure of then-Attorney General Sessions) appear before the Committee to discuss the Department's specific concerns. The Deputy Attorney General refused to appear, but indicated that he would send a letter outlining his concerns. On January 24, 2019, the Committee received a substantive email from DOJ's Office of Legislative Affairs explaining DOJ's objections and again promising an official letter from the Deputy Attorney General. On March 6, 2019, the Committee received a letter from Assistant Attorney General Stephen Boyd. The March 6, 2019

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[61] (U) 18 U.S.C. § 6005.
[62] (U) *Ibid.*
[63] (U) *Ibid.*
[64] (U) The Committee had a very limited engagement with Manafort prior to his indictment, and had an initial interview with Patten which resulted in referring him for a violation of 18 U.S.C. § 1001, for which he eventually pleaded guilty. Manafort and Patten both refused any further Committee engagement without immunity.
[65] (U) DC Bar Ethics Opinions 31 and 358 advise that committee counsel may not force a witness who has expressed his or her intention to assert a privilege against self-incrimination to appear if the sole purpose of that appearance is "to pillory the witness." Ethics Opinion 358, *Subpoenaing Witness When Lawyer for Congressional Committee Has Been Advised that Witness Will Decline to Answer Any Questions on Claim of Privilege; Legal Ethics Opinion 31 Revisited*, Legal Ethics Committee, District of Columbia Bar, February 2000. While other committees have found that calling witnesses whose counsel have asserted their privilege against self-incrimination on their behalf can lead to useful testimony, here, the Committee agreed to accept written assertions from witness counsel.

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letter stated that granting immunity to any of the five individuals "would be harmful to the ongoing SCO Russia and Department investigations, and prosecutions, in multiple ways." The letter relied on case law on congressional grants of immunity and the heavy burden prosecutors face in *Kastigar* hearings to prove that evidence is not derived in any way from immunized testimony. Due to these concerns, the Department "urge[d] the Committee to wait" to compel immunized testimony "until after the active criminal matters are completed," although there was no date certain, or even estimate, for when that might be.[66]

(U) On March 14, 2019, the Committee held a business meeting to consider granting immunity to Manafort, Gates, Flynn, and Patten. The vote failed, and the Committee did not consider immunity again.

5. (U) Extraterritoriality

(U) The Committee sought to interview several witnesses who lived abroad. While the Committee did successfully conduct voluntary interviews abroad, there were limited options available to compel witnesses largely residing outside of the United States.

(U) The Committee's subpoena power is a Constitutional power embedded in Congress's inherent powers to investigate. However, subpoenas directed to non-U.S. persons located outside the United States presented jurisdictional complications as to service and enforcement. Accordingly, when necessary, the Committee sought to effect service of a subpoena during a foreign individual's U.S. travel, including through the assistance of the U.S. Marshals.[67]

(U) For individuals who did not travel to the United States, the Committee could have attempted to obtain a foreign government's assistance through a Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty (MLAT) or letter rogatory, which enable a foreign court system to use its own compulsory process to get a witness to respond to the Committee's questions. These processes may require coordination with the Department of State, the foreign government, and in the case of a letter rogatory, a federal court. However, there is precedent for Congressional investigations to use these tools.[68] Finally, the Committee could have attempted to leverage international treaty

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[66] (U) Letter, Boyd to Burr, March 6, 2019.

[67] (U) For example, the U.S. Marshals successfully served a Committee subpoena on Emin Agalarov, a Russian citizen, on February 20, 2020, in Newark International Airport as he was heading to New York City. Agalarov provided both documents and testimony pursuant to the subpoena.

[68] (U) The House Committee on Assassinations in the 1970s used letters rogatory, and the Iran-Contra Select Committee was authorized to use letters rogatory, though never actually did so. However, numerous Mutual Legal Assistance Treaties are restricted to assistance in criminal cases, which would appear to preclude assistance in a congressional investigation.

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obligations or ask a friendly government to assist in document production or service of process as a matter of comity.[69]

(U) Ultimately, the Committee did not pursue any compulsory action for witnesses located outside of the United States. On several occasions, the Committee was able to persuade witnesses from overseas to travel to the United States for an interview, to conduct a proffer through their attorneys, or to submit to an interview outside the United States. Despite these accommodations, several key witnesses remained outside of the Committee's reach.

6. (U) Committee Access to Electronic Communications Data

(U) On several occasions, the Committee's investigation required access to electronic communications data, including subscriber information and transactional metadata from electronic communications service providers. These providers are generally restricted from disclosing such information to a third party under the Stored Communications Act (SCA), 18 U.S.C. §§ 2702–2703, unless there is a statutory exception. For certain government entities, the SCA provides a companion mechanism to compel the production of information. However, no court has addressed whether the Stored Communications Act restricts Congress's independent authority to obtain such data as part of a duly authorized investigation. And, since the 1986 enactment of the SCA, the Committee was not aware of any congressional committee that had pursued the production of such data.[70] Accordingly, the Committee carefully considered whether the SCA precluded providers from voluntary disclosure of non-content information to Congress. Then, for those providers that declined voluntary production, the Committee also considered whether the SCA's procedures for compulsory production supplanted Congress's inherent subpoena authority.[71]

(U) The SCA establishes a hierarchy of protections for different categories of communications data depending on the perceived privacy interests. With respect to the contents of a communication, disclosure by a provider is generally prohibited to "any person or entity."[72] In contrast, for non-content information, such as basic subscriber data, session logs, or to/from addressing information, disclosure by a provider is only prohibited to "any governmental entity."[73] Specific statutory exceptions apply to each of these prohibitions.

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[69] (U) In 1992, the House October Surprise Task Force secured cooperation from the French and U.K. governments in its inquiry.

[70] (U) The Committee has become aware that other congressional committees have since followed suit in pursuing these requests.

[71] (U) The Committee did not request the contents of any communications from providers, and therefore did not examine the SCA's applicability to such requests.

[72] (U) 18 U.S.C. §§ 2702(a)(1)–(2).

[73] (U) 18 U.S.C. § 2702(a)(3).

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(U) Based on the statutory text, the Committee determined that the SCA did not restrict voluntary disclosure of non-content information. "Governmental entity" is defined by the U.S. Code, Title 18, as "a department or agency of the United States or any State or political subdivision thereof."[74] Indisputably, Congress is not an "agency of the United States." "Agency" means "any department, independent establishment, commission, administration, authority, board or bureau of the United States or any corporation in which the United States has a proprietary interest, unless the context shows that such term was intended to be used in a more limited sense."[75]

(U) Nor is Congress a "department." "Department" is defined as "one of the executive departments . . . , unless the context shows that such term was intended to describe the executive, legislative, or judicial branches of the government."[76] The context to make this showing—the statutory text and related statutes—must be "fairly powerful,"[77] and it is not present here. Had Congress sought to limit its own access to this information, it could have done so expressly.[78] Thus, the Committee determined that there is no statutory prohibition against voluntary disclosure by a provider of non-content information in response to a Committee request. This interpretation was in keeping with the Committee's early experience with voluntary productions of information relating to Russian IRA troll accounts from companies like Facebook and Twitter, information which is discussed *infra* Vol. 2.

(U) Not all providers agreed to cooperate. Accordingly, the Committee considered whether the SCA's compulsory production mechanisms supplanted its inherent subpoena power. As discussed above, the congressional subpoena authority is an "essential and appropriate" exercise of Congress's broad investigative power, itself a necessary component to Congress's constitutional role. Appropriate exercise of the legislative function demands "the power of inquiry—with process to enforce it."[79] Congress does not strip itself of this authority lightly, and the Committee determined that it did not do so in enacting the SCA.

(U) The SCA provides a specific path for a "governmental entity" to compel production of data from providers, ranging from subpoenas, to court orders, to warrants based on probable cause. But, as with voluntary production, the statutory text does not encompass Congress

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[74] (U) 18 U.S.C. § 2711(4).
[75] (U) 18 U.S.C. § 6.
[76] (U) *Ibid.*
[77] (U) *Hubbard v. United States*, 514 U.S. 695 (1995) (holding that "context" in 18 U.S.C. § 1001, then prohibiting a false statement "in any matter within the jurisdiction of any department or agency of the United States," did not extend prohibition to legislative or judicial branches) (overruling *United States v. Bramblett*, 348 U.S. 503, 509 (1955)).
[78] (U) *See, e.g.*, 26 U.S.C. § 6103 (proscribing specific mechanisms to govern Congressional access to tax return information).
[79] (U) *McGrain v. Daugherty*, 273 U.S. 135 (1927).

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because Congress does not qualify as a "governmental entity." Moreover, the legal authorities outlined by the SCA are ostensibly available only for law enforcement requesters as part of a criminal investigation; although Congress may issue a subpoena, Congress cannot apply for an order or warrant from a court, as the SCA requires. In this regard, Congress is like a private litigant which may use a civil subpoena to obtain data from a provider, and the Committee proceeded under those guidelines.

(U) Based on these considerations, the Committee issued subpoenas to, and received non-content data from, multiple providers—including social media platforms, telecommunications companies, and internet service providers—none of which contested the Committee's authority.

(U) As reflected in the Committee's report, many individuals related to aspects of its investigation used a variety of electronic communications and phone calls to communicate with one another. The data the Committee obtained offered insight into both general patterns of behavior and pivotal moments involving key actors, provided new leads for further investigation, and gave the Committee the ability to corroborate or rebut information it received from other sources. Like any modern-day investigation, the Committee was faced with a need for direct access to digital evidence, and it undertook deliberate but measured steps to secure data with significant investigative value. However, the Committee chose to limit its use of this tool and did not, for instance, seek the personal telephonic toll records of Americans except in very limited situations in which other avenues for investigation had been foreclosed.

7. (U) Other Issues: First Amendment and Spousal Privilege

(U) The Committee's document requests to Fusion GPS, Dan Jones, and Cody Shearer were met with assertions of First Amendment privileges, rooted in both freedom of press and freedom of association theories. While the Committee believed these assertions were overbroad, the Committee was able to obtain the necessary documents and responses it needed to continue its investigation without further litigating these issues.

(U) The Committee also encountered potential spousal privilege claims from Bruce Ohr and Nellie Ohr, both of whom were cooperative in discussing their conversations with each other, law enforcement, and their respective employers. The Committee appreciates their cooperation with the Committee's investigation.

8. (U) Transcript Review

(U) Senate Rule XI prohibits any "memorial or other paper presented to the Senate" to be "withdrawn from its files except by order of the Senate." Standing Rule XXVI 10(a) on Committee Procedure makes clear that "[a]ll committee hearings, records, data, charts, and files shall be . . . the property of the Senate." Thus, the Committee's transcripts are "Senate papers"

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and prohibited from release without a Resolution passed by the full Senate. The Committee's practices regarding transcript review had two goals: (1) to maintain an accurate record of Committee interviews; and, (2) to provide transparency to witnesses and to law enforcement about how the transcripts would be shared.

(U) The Committee allowed witnesses, to the extent practicable, to review and edit transcripts of their interviews at SSCI offices once completed. Witnesses appearing before the Committee frequently relied on memory rather than documents, so the review allowed witnesses to correct names or dates they may have misremembered, but did not permit substantive amendments of the testimony. The Committee allowed witness counsel to be present during the review, but not to take notes, and only the witness was permitted to edit his or her testimony.

D. (U) Working With and Around the Executive Branch

1. (U) DOJ, FBI, and SCO

(U) Although the Committee sought to be respectful of DOJ, FBI, and SCO investigative equities, the Committee also had an investigative basis to review pertinent FBI holdings and to interview the same witnesses or review the same documents. This led the Committee to engage with DOJ and FBI as to how the Committee would obtain access to relevant information without impeding law enforcement. During the course of its investigation, the Committee obtained access to, among other information: the FISA applications for Carter Page; materials related to other confidential human sources; source validation and other documents related to Christopher Steele; and the case opening documentation for Crossfire Hurricane. However, the Committee's access was complicated by the relationship between FBI and the SCO. FBI information allocated to SCO was restricted and unavailable to the FBI writ-large, and hence could not be conveyed to the Committee until the SCO investigation had concluded.

(U) With respect to certain non-SCO information, the FBI Counterintelligence Division agreed to brief the Committee periodically on specific individuals that the Committee identified. These briefings were classified and conducted on the record in closed Committee spaces. As reflected in this Report, some briefings provided new and relevant information to the Committee. However, many of the briefings were not satisfactory due to SCO restrictions on access to relevant information. According to FBI Counterintelligence Division, SCO "equities" prevented more comprehensive briefings and document production. Moreover, the Committee did not obtain first-hand access to the underlying FBI records used in these briefings, but rather had to rely on briefers' characterizations of the underlying FBI records.

(U) This limitation eventually compelled the Committee to pursue direct access to SCO files. In November 2018, the Chairman and Vice Chairman met with officials from the DOJ and the SCO, including the Deputy Attorney General, to convey the Committee's need for the restricted SCO information. The DOJ officials stated that it would consider a written request that

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identified specific information, and the Committee provided such a list on December 7, 2018.[80] The request covered information related to the five witnesses who had asserted the Fifth Amendment privilege against self-incrimination. DOJ never provided information in response, despite repeated follow-up requests.

(U) Instead, the Committee was left waiting until after the completion of the SCO's written report. On March 29, 2019, following the public release of a letter from Attorney General William Barr discussing the *SCO Report*, the Committee transmitted a request to the FBI Director "to be fully briefed, as soon as possible, on the SCO's holdings pertinent to Russia's interference in the 2016 U.S. election, and on any FBI holdings previously withheld due to SCO equities," and to be "provide[d] copies of any written results of the SCO's counterintelligence work, and all supporting documentation underlying those findings, including any documentation of counterintelligence activities conducted by the FBI supporting the SCO investigation."[81] On May 9, 2019, the Committee followed up with a letter to the Attorney General requesting that DOJ provide, or authorize FBI to provide, "all information previously withheld due to SCO equities, all intelligence information and supporting documentation related to the SCO's investigation, and any documentation of counterintelligence activities conducted by the FBI supporting the SCO investigation."[82]

(U) Information arrived slowly and incrementally, but not in response to the Committee's request. On May 29, 2019, the Committee received a less-redacted version of Volume I of the Report—which excluded grand jury information but had lifted all other redactions—for review in Committee spaces. In June 2019, DOJ made available to the Committee certain SCO investigative materials for *in camera* review following a subpoena from the House. SCO materials, which were produced by DOJ (and later FBI) on a rolling basis over the following several months until February 2020, included FBI FD-302s documenting witness interviews; FBI FD-1057s documenting and disseminating analysis of investigative information; witness communications; and other related documents. Many documents included numerous redactions, and documents referenced as being in associated attachments to the FBI records (*i.e.*, so-called "1A" attachments to FBI files) were often not produced. The Committee was also not advised of how much information DOJ was intending to provide or when, or how much information was being withheld and why. Notably, at no point did DOJ and FBI agree to provide information relating to ongoing cases, such as the prosecution related to the IRA or the prosecution related to the GRU hackers. Nonetheless, the Committee endeavored to incorporate the available information in this Report, where relevant and appropriate. DOJ may continue to provide information to the Committee after the publication of this Report, or to produce such

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[80] (U) Email, SSCI to Department of Justice, Office of Legislative Affairs, and SCO, December 7, 2018.
[81] (U) Letter, Burr and Warner to Wray, March 29, 2019.
[82] (U) Letter, Burr and Warner to Barr, May 9, 2019.

[redacted]

information publicly, which cannot be referenced here but will inform the Committee's ongoing legislative, oversight, and investigative activities.

2. (U) Access to and Use of Classified Materials in the Report

(U) The Committee requested and, following negotiations with the ODNI, received access to a classified space at the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) Headquarters building where it was given pertinent, classified materials in the IC's possession not otherwise available as part of regular Committee oversight. Access to those materials was highly restricted, even among investigative staff, and sometimes made available to staff directors only. A formal "Terms of Access" was agreed to on April 12, 2017, setting forth conditions and procedures for access to documents, staff notes, computer access, and preservation of documents.[83] The Committee also made use of classified materials otherwise available as part of its regular oversight mission.

[redacted] Due to the inclusion of classified information in its report, the Committee worked with the ODNI for classification review. Upon transmittal by the Committee, the ODNI shared the volumes first with the [redacted] and [redacted] and then disseminated selections for review by other departments or agencies that had classification equities over the information. The review provided the ODNI and relevant executive branch entities with the opportunity to consider whether information in the report was properly marked and, if classified, appropriately redacted for public release.

[83] **(U)** The Committee's access to this information is also described *infra* Vol. 4.

[redacted]

III. (U) COUNTERINTELLIGENCE CONCERNS

A. (U) Paul Manafort

1. (U) Introduction and Findings

(U) Paul Manafort is a former lobbyist and political consultant with ties to numerous foreign politicians and businessmen, most notably in Russia and Ukraine. In March 2016, Manafort joined the Trump Campaign as convention manager. By May 2016, then-Candidate Trump officially elevated Manafort to be the Campaign's chairman and chief strategist. On August 19, 2016, following press articles related to his past work in Ukraine for a pro-Russia political party headed by former Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovych, Manafort resigned from the Trump Campaign.

(U) Manafort had direct access to Trump and his Campaign's senior officials, strategies, and information. During the campaign, Manafort worked closely with his long-time deputy, Rick Gates, who had similar access to Campaign personnel and information.

(U) While serving on the Trump Campaign, Manafort, often with the assistance of Gates, engaged with individuals inside Russia and Ukraine on matters pertaining to both his personal business prospects and the 2016 U.S. presidential election. The Committee scrutinized these contacts in order to determine whether these activities were connected to Russian interference in the 2016 U.S. election.

(U) Manafort's connections to Russia and Ukraine began in approximately 2004. At that time, Manafort and his political consulting firm began work for Oleg Deripaska, a Russian oligarch. Deripaska conducts influence operations, frequently in countries where he has a significant economic interest. The Russian government coordinates with and directs Deripaska on many of his influence operations. From approximately 2004 to 2009, Manafort implemented these influence operations on behalf of Deripaska, including on a broad, multi-million dollar political influence campaign directed at numerous countries of interest to Deripaska and the Russian government.

(U) At about the same time that he hired Manafort, Deripaska introduced Manafort to pro-Russia oligarchs in Ukraine, including Rinat Akhmetov. These Ukrainian oligarchs had deep economic ties to Russia and were aligned with a pro-Russia political party which was backed by the Russian government. Over the next decade, these oligarchs paid Manafort tens of millions of dollars and formed strong ties with Manafort, independent of Deripaska. Manafort's work in Ukraine culminated with the 2010 election of Viktor Yanukovych to the presidency, bringing Manafort into the inner circle of Ukrainian politics until Yanukovych's flight to Russia in 2014.

[redacted]

[redacted]

(U) At the outset of his work for the Ukrainian oligarchs and for Deripaska, Manafort hired and worked increasingly closely with a Russian national, Konstantin Kilimnik. Kilimnik is a Russian intelligence officer. Kilimnik quickly became an integral part of Manafort's operations in Ukraine and Russia, serving as Manafort's primary liaison to Deripaska and eventually managing Manafort's office in Kyiv. Kilimnik and Manafort formed a close and lasting relationship that would endure to the 2016 U.S. elections and beyond.

(U) By the time he joined the Trump Campaign, Manafort's work in Ukraine had diminished and his relationship with Deripaska had long soured. In late 2015 and early 2016, however, Manafort remained engaged in business disputes related to both. Manafort believed he was owed millions of dollars by oligarchs in Ukraine for past political consulting work and sought to collect on this debt. Separately, Deripaska initiated legal proceedings to recover a multi-million dollar investment in a failed Manafort business venture. These financial disputes came at a time when Manafort had no meaningful income.

(U) In the midst of these disputes, Manafort used personal contacts to offer his services—unpaid—to the Trump Campaign as early as January 2016. The Campaign hired Manafort in mid-March 2016 after conducting no known vetting of him, including of his financial situation or vulnerability to foreign influence. Prior to the public announcement of Manafort's new position on the Campaign, Manafort reached out to Kilimnik, with whom Manafort had remained in contact, to notify him of the development. Once on the Campaign, Manafort quickly sought to leverage his position to resolve his multi-million dollar foreign disputes and obtain new work in Ukraine and elsewhere. Once Manafort's hiring was publicly announced, Manafort used Kilimnik to send private messages to three Ukrainian oligarchs—at least one of whom Manafort believed owed him money—and to Deripaska.

(U) On numerous occasions over the course of his time on the Trump Campaign, Manafort sought to secretly share internal Campaign information with Kilimnik. Gates, who served as Manafort's deputy on the Campaign, aided Manafort in this effort. Manafort communicated electronically with Kilimnik and met Kilimnik in person twice while serving on the Trump Campaign. Manafort briefed Kilimnik on sensitive Campaign polling data and the Campaign's strategy for beating Hillary Clinton. At Manafort's direction, Gates used an encrypted messaging application to send additional Campaign polling data to Kilimnik.

[redacted] Manafort also discussed with Kilimnik a peace plan for eastern Ukraine that benefited the Kremlin. At Yanukovych's direction, Kilimnik sought Manafort's assistance with the plan. Manafort continued to work with Kilimnik on the plan until at least early 2018. Kilimnik coordinated directly with Yanukovych on the plan [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

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(U) The Committee was unable to reliably determine why Manafort shared sensitive internal polling data or Campaign strategy with Kilimnik. Manafort and Gates both claimed that it was part of an effort to resolve past business disputes and obtain new work with their past Russian and Ukrainian clients by showcasing Manafort's success.

(U) The Committee obtained some information suggesting Kilimnik may have been connected to the GRU's hack and leak operation targeting the 2016 U.S. election.

- [redacted]
- [redacted]
- [redacted]

[redacted] While this information suggests that a channel for coordination on the GRU hack-and-leak operation may have existed through Kilimnik, the Committee had limited insight into Kilimnik's communications with Manafort and [redacted], all of whom used sophisticated communications security practices.

[redacted] After the election, Manafort continued to coordinate with Russian persons, particularly Kilimnik and other individuals close to Deripaska, in an effort to undertake activities on their behalf. After Kilimnik arranged the meeting, Manafort met in Spain with another top Deripaska aide who was also tied to [redacted] Manafort also met secretly with Kilimnik in the United States and Spain in early 2017.

[redacted]

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[redacted]

[redacted] Following the election, Manafort worked with Kilimnik on narratives that sought to undermine information showing that Russia interfered in the 2016 U.S. election. [redacted] Deripaska participated in these influence operations. Manafort and Kilimnik also continued to pursue the pro-Russia Ukraine peace plan Kilimnik had first raised with Manafort during their August 2016 meeting, including efforts to organize a poll testing the peace plan in the spring of 2018. [redacted]

(U) The Committee found that Manafort's presence on the Campaign and proximity to Trump created opportunities for the Russian intelligence services to exert influence over, and acquire confidential information on, the Trump Campaign. The Committee assesses that Kilimnik likely served as a channel to Manafort for Russian intelligence services, and that those services likely sought to exploit Manafort's access to gain insight into the Campaign. Taken as a whole, Manafort's high-level access and willingness to share information with individuals closely affiliated with the Russian intelligence services, particularly Kilimnik, represented a grave counterintelligence threat.

2. (U) Limitations on the Committee's Investigation

(U) The Committee's investigation into Manafort's activities related to Russia and Russian interference was materially limited in several respects.

(U) First, the Committee was unable to interview Manafort or Gates about most matters related to its investigation.[84] While the Committee initially received, through counsel, brief written answers from Manafort responding to a small number of written questions and limited document production, the statements included inaccuracies and omissions and the document production was incomplete. The Committee received a limited set of documents from Gates in 2019, but these did not include many communications relevant to the Committee's investigation.[85]

(U) Second, the use of careful communications security practices, particularly by Manafort, Gates, and Kilimnik, further restricted the Committee's insight. During the 2016

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[84] (U) By prior agreement with the Committee, Manafort provided testimony limited to the June 9, 2016 meeting in Trump Tower, which is discussed *infra* Vol. 5, Sec.C.5. Subsequently, both Manafort and Gates asserted their Fifth Amendment rights in response to the Committee's inquiries.

[85] (U) Gates provided documents pursuant to a subpoena from the HPSCI. Gates produced these same documents to the Committee but refused to produce further documents or submit to an interview with the Committee.

[redacted]

[redacted]

campaign, Kilimnik flew to the United States in order to discuss sensitive topics with Manafort in person, rather than rely on electronic communications. When they did communicate electronically, Manafort, Gates, and Kilimnik used a variety of encrypted applications, eliminating a documentary record of many communications that almost certainly would have had high investigative value.[86] Manafort, Gates, and Kilimnik also shared an email account in order to practice foldering, a technique used to avoid detection when communicating.[87] The three used coded language in other, less secure communications.[88] After he was indicted, Manafort purchased a pay-as-you-go phone specifically for the purpose of communicating with Kilimnik and Gates.[89] In 2017, as news media began publishing details from a small number of Manafort's email communications with Kilimnik, Kilimnik admitted in private communications to close associate Sam Patten that he was not worried about the publication of his emails with Manafort because he and Manafort had long practiced communications security dating back to their work in Ukraine.[90]

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[86] (U) Manafort recalled using Viber, Signal, and WhatsApp with Kilimnik. FBI, FD-302, Manafort 9/12/2018. In addition, Gates recalled using Threema with Manafort and Kilimnik. According to Gates, it was Kilimnik who had introduced some of these applications, including Viber and Threema, to Manafort and Gates. FBI, FD-302, Gates 1/31/2018. Gates explained that the group often changed which encrypted application they were using when Kilimnik told them that a particular application had been compromised. FBI, FD-302, Gates 2/27/2018. Manafort admitted to using WhatsApp, Wickr, Signal, Threema, Skype, Snapchat, Viber, Hushmail, WeChat, and Voxer at some point in time with various associates. FBI, FD-302, Manafort 9/20/2018. Manafort maintained a laptop computer that he used in Ukraine but did not connect to the internet while overseas. Gates and Manafort used multiple email accounts and changed them regularly. Gates and Manafort also used Silent Phone briefly in Ukraine. FBI, FD-302, Gates 1/31/2018.

[87] (U) FBI, FD-302, Manafort 9/12/2018. Foldering is a technique in which individuals write an email and save the email as a draft in an email account accessible by both communicants, allowing them to communicate without sending the email. Manafort and Kilimnik appeared to use foldering on a Kilimnik-controlled account while Manafort served on the Trump Campaign. *SCO Report*, Vol. I, p. 130. Manafort, Gates, and Kilimnik later set up a Hushmail account specifically for the purpose of foldering communications. FBI, FD-302, Manafort 9/12/2018; FBI, FD-302, Gates 1/31/2018.

[88] (U) For example, when one wanted to notify the other that a foldered message was ready to be viewed, Manafort, Gates, and Kilimnik would tell the others to check the "tea bag" or "the updated travel schedule." FBI, FD-302, Gates 2/27/2018. The Committee only had access to the communications platforms the group deemed less secure, and the Committee's access into even these less secure communications platforms was incomplete.

[89] (U) FBI, FD-302, Manafort 9/12/2018. Manafort had previously used a similar technique with Gates and Kilimnik in Ukraine. According to Gates, Manafort required new phone numbers to be issued after DMP was allegedly hacked. Gates and Manafort referred to certain phones maintained by Gates, Manafort, and Kilimnik as "bat phones." The "bat phones" were normal phones, but had different phone numbers. FBI, FD-302, Gates 1/31/2018.

[90] (U) Email, Kilimnik to Patten, September 20, 2017 (SSCI 2017-4885-3-000039–40). In response to press articles which revealed communications between Kilimnik and Manafort, Kilimnik advised Patten that he and Manafort had assumed that their "phones, hotel rooms, office, etc." were surveilled during their past work together and that as a result, Manafort "is kind of used to this life."

[redacted]

[redacted]

(U) Lastly, Manafort, who was interviewed by the SCO approximately a dozen times, lied consistently to the SCO during these interviews about one issue in particular: his interactions with Kilimnik, the Russian intelligence officer at the center of the Committee's investigation.[91] These lies violated Manafort's plea agreement, which obligated him to be truthful in his cooperation with the government, and exposed him to a more severe prison sentence than the agreement contemplated.[92] Manafort's obfuscation of the truth surrounding Kilimnik was particularly damaging to the Committee's investigation because it effectively foreclosed direct insight into a series of interactions and communications which represent the single most direct tie between senior Trump Campaign officials and the Russian intelligence services. Manafort's true motive in deciding to face more severe criminal penalties rather than provide complete answers about his interactions with Kilimnik is unknown, but the result is that many interactions between Manafort and Kilimnik remain hidden.

3. (U) Background on Manafort's Foreign Activities

(U) Starting in the 1970s, Manafort began working as a political consultant and lobbyist for foreign governments and political parties around the world, business that he continued to conduct for decades.[93] A review of Department of State cables showed that the nature of Manafort's work with foreign governments and politicians involved efforts to gain electoral success for local clients, or in some cases, conduct business.[94]

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[91] (U) The federal court hearing Manafort's case in the District of Columbia found that Manafort's misleading statements about Kilimnik occurred in "multiple instances . . . and they all follow a pattern." In particular, the court found that "[c]oncessions come[] in dribs and drabs, only after it's clear that the Office of Special Counsel already knew the answer." Transcript of Sealed Hearing, *United States v. Paul J. Manafort, Jr.*, Case No. 17-201-1-ABJ (D.D.C. February 13, 2019), p. 29. Of particular note, Manafort misled investigators about meeting with Kilimnik in Madrid and Kilimnik's efforts to advance a Ukraine peace plan involving Yanukovych. Beyond these false or misleading statements, the court found that Manafort engaged in "multiple clusters of false or misleading or incomplete or needed-to-be-prodded-by-counsel statements, all of which center around the defendant's relationship or communications with Mr. Kilimnik." *Ibid.*, p. 40. Additionally, Sam Patten, another key witness in the investigation due to his close relationship with Kilimnik, similarly engaged in conduct designed to obfuscate his relationship with Kilimnik. Patten withheld and deleted documents related to Kilimnik that were relevant to the Committee's investigation. During the execution of a search warrant on Patten's home, Patten used his wife's phone to send a text message to Kilimnik and then deleted the message. FBI, FD-302, Patten 5/22/2018.

[92] (U) Plea Agreement of Paul J. Manafort, Jr., *United States v. Paul J. Manafort, Jr.*, Case No. 17-201-1-ABJ (D.D.C. September 14, 2018), p. 6.

[93] (U) As early as 1973 or 1974, Manafort was in Lebanon working to get business for a construction company in Saudi Arabia. *See* SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Tom Barrack, May 31, 2018, pp. 13–14.

[94] [redacted] Additionally, open source information suggests Manafort or his firm conducted similar foreign political consulting for other foreign governments, such as in Zaire, Equatorial Guinea, the Philippines, Angola, Saudi Arabia, and Somalia. *See* Franklin Foer, "Paul Manafort, American Hustler," *The Atlantic*, March 2018.

[redacted]

[redacted]

(U) The Committee limited its investigation of Manafort and his associates to areas related to Russia and Russian-aligned interests. The most significant of Manafort's Russian-aligned interests centered on two overlapping areas: (1) Russian oligarch Oleg Deripaska and (2) politicians affiliated with the now-defunct Party of Regions (PoR) and its successor, the Opposition Bloc (OB), in Ukraine. In pursuing these relationships, Manafort conducted influence operations that supported and were a part of Russian active measures campaigns, including those involving political influence and electoral interference. These past activities resulted in relationships and levers of influence, including multi-million dollar financial disputes, which persisted throughout Manafort's time as the head of the Trump Campaign. Furthermore, Manafort sought to secretly contact both Deripaska and Ukrainian oligarchs affiliated with the OB in connection with his work on the Trump Campaign. Manafort reached out to both entities before, during, and after his time on the Trump Campaign to provide inside information and offer assistance to these Russian-aligned interests.

i. (U) Manafort's Work with Oleg Deripaska

(U) Manafort's relationship with Russian government-aligned interests began with his introduction to Oleg Deripaska in approximately 2004. Since at least that time, Deripaska has acted as a proxy for the Russian state and intelligence services. Deripaska has managed and financed Kremlin-approved and -directed active measures campaigns, including information operations and election interference efforts. Deripaska has conducted these activities in an effort to install pro-Kremlin regimes, control local economies and politicians, and strengthen Kremlin-aligned powerbrokers across the globe.[95]

(U) The Committee has limited insight into the origins of Manafort's relationship with Deripaska, but it likely began in 2004.[96]

- [redacted]

[95] (U) For a complete description of Deripaska's involvement in Russian active measures and ties to the Russian intelligence services, *see infra* Vol. 5, Sec. III.A.8.i.

[96] (U) Open source information suggests that Manafort's work for Deripaska also involved Georgia as early as 2004. According to that information, Manafort undertook efforts related to the political reemergence of former Georgian Minister of State Security Igor Giorgadze. Giorgadze had previously been removed from office after being accused of organizing an attempted assassination of the then-Georgian president, Eduard Shevardnadze. *See* Brett Forrest, "Paul Manafort's Overseas Political Work Had a Notable Patron: a Russian Oligarch," *The Wall Street Journal*, August 30, 2017.

[97] [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

- (U) Michael Caputo, a former employee of a firm run by Manafort and several others, including Roger Stone, told the Committee that in 2004, Manafort hired him on a Deripaska-related project. In particular, Caputo told the Committee that he was retained to organize U.S. media coverage that would be positive towards Deripaska in response to Deripaska's failed efforts to obtain a U.S. visa.[98]

(U) Manafort recalled that he met Deripaska through his business partner at the time, Rick Davis.[99] Davis had met Deripaska in 2003 through Nathaniel Rothschild, a British investment fund manager and scion of the Rothschild banking dynasty.[100] According to open source information, Rothschild and Deripaska have had a relationship since at least 2003.[101] Press reports further suggest that the relationship between the two men helped Deripaska secure the financing needed to cement his control of UC RUSAL in the early- to mid-2000s.[102]

a. (U) Manafort's Influence Operations in Ukraine

[redacted] At the time he hired Manafort, in approximately 2004, Deripaska [redacted] These Russian influence efforts were designed to influence the 2004 Ukrainian presidential election between PoR-candidate Viktor Yanukovych and independent candidate Viktor Yushchenko in Yanukovych's favor.[103] On November 21, 2004, after a runoff vote, Ukraine's Central Election Commission announced Yanukovych as the winner.[104] The election, however, was widely viewed as illegitimate due to

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[98] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Michael Caputo, May 1, 2018, p. 33. Caputo claimed he was engaged in this effort for only a 10-day period. Caputo recalled his instructions from Manafort related to Deripaska press efforts: "We need stories. Focus on wires." Caputo further recalled that he "went out there and just, excuse my French, humped every leg in journalism, and didn't get much results." *Ibid.*, p. 48. The full scope of Manafort's public relations activities on Deripaska's behalf remains unclear.

[99] (U) FBI, FD-302, Manafort 9/20/2018.

[100] (U) *Ibid.*

[101] (U) "Rothschild to earn millions from RUSAL float," *The Telegraph*, January 2, 2010.

[102] (U) United Company (UC) RUSAL is a Russian company that primarily produces aluminum and related products. According to other open source reporting, Rothschild and Deripaska were central figures in British political scandals involving Peter Mandelson, a former Member of Parliament who served as European Commissioner for Trade from 2004 to 2008. In 2008, Mandelson met with Deripaska on his yacht in the Mediterranean, where they allegedly discussed preferential treatments on aluminum tariffs. In January 2005, Mandelson traveled on private jets from Davos, Switzerland, to Moscow, Russia, and then on to a private Deripaska retreat in Siberia. Rothschild was a participant in these meetings. *See, e.g.*, "The Russian oligarch, the Old Etonian billionaire and deeply disturbing questions about Lord Mandelson's integrity," *Daily Mail*, February 11, 2012.

[103] (U) Prior to the election, Russian government officials had overtly supported Yanukovych and the PoR, and Putin personally visited Yanukovych five days before the election, praising his government. *See, e.g.*, "Putin, In Ukraine, Praises Government Days Before Election," *RFE/RL*, October 26, 2004.

[104] (U) *See* Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), "Ukraine Presidential Election 31 October, 21 November and 26 December 2004: OSCE/ODIHR Election Observation Mission Final Report," May 11, 2005.

[redacted]

[redacted]

widespread fraud. Efforts to interfere in the election were systematic and included: intimidation of election monitors, fraud, ballot stuffing, multiple voting, government pressure on voters, denial of media access, media control and manipulation, disruptions of public rallies, official harassment, beatings and arrests of hundreds of students and activists, and a likely attempt on the life of the front-running opposition candidate.[105]

[redacted] The Russian government had significant involvement in these election interference efforts, and used heavy-handed political influence tactics.[106] [redacted]

[redacted] Russian electoral interference in Ukraine generated severe blowback, leading to a series of popular protests known as the Orange Revolution, which reversed Yanukovych's alleged electoral victory. Manafort in a memorandum at the time described the Orange Revolution and the defeat of Yanukovych as a "disaster."[110] [redacted][111]

(U) In the immediate aftermath of the Orange Revolution, Deripaska contacted Manafort and directed him to begin work to rehabilitate Yanukovych and the PoR. Manafort briefed Deripaska on how to recover from this defeat and influence Ukrainian politics in a manner beneficial to both Deripaska and the Kremlin.[112]

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105 [redacted] Freedom House, "Election Fraud in Ukraine Presidential Vote," November 22, 2004. [redacted]

106 [redacted] Richard Weitz, "Global Security Watch: Russia," p. 89 [redacted]

107 [redacted]

108 [redacted]

109 [redacted]

110 [redacted]

111 [redacted]

112 [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

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(U) Under Deripaska's guidance, Manafort outlined for Deripaska and Rothschild a strategy for a political influence campaign in Ukraine. Manafort referred to this influence campaign as "our program."[113] Manafort described how the program would be a broad system for influence with distinct political, lobbying, communications, and legal components.[114] The Ukraine program was, according to Manafort's memorandum, undertaken "pursuant to the directives of Mr. Deripaska" and in support of "our mutual friend in Ukraine,"[115] almost certainly a reference to Rinat Akhmetov, to whom Deripaska had previously introduced Manafort and his firm, Davis Manafort Partners.[116] Akhmetov, Ukraine's richest oligarch, was the primary backer of Yanukovych and maintained close ties to Deripaska and other Russian government and organized crime figures.[117] Akhmetov and other oligarchs in Ukraine began funding Manafort's work there, while Deripaska provided Manafort other funding and strategic guidance as part of a broader influence campaign.[118]

(U) Manafort's objective was to avoid future events like the Orange Revolution. To do this, Manafort sought to sway the political direction of Ukraine to benefit the PoR without the heavy-handed tactics that Russia and Deripaska had used in 2004.[119] This involved a strategy to "subtly influence the perceptions" of Western governments and create "an acceptable explanation for actions by governments not totally in concert with Western thinking."[120] Manafort outlined this goal in a 2005 memorandum to Deripaska and Rothschild:

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[113] [redacted]

[114] **(U)** *Ibid.*

[115] **(U)** *Ibid.*

[116] [redacted] *SCO Report*, Vol. I, p. 132; *see also* SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Bo Denysyk, June 12, 2018, p. 10 ("I asked him that. He was very vague. He said through some mutual friends in Moscow. But that's all I know."); [redacted]

[117] [redacted] *See, e.g.*, Maximilian Hess, "Ukraine's Donbas Don: Who is Rinat Akhmetov," January 29, 2020. [redacted]

[118] **(U)** The exact funding structure at this time is unclear, but by 2005, and proceeding thereafter, Manafort made millions of dollars from Akhmetov, Deripaska, and other oligarchs.

[119] **(U)** Memorandum, Manafort and Davis, to Deripaska and Rothschild, June 23, 2005. In December 2004, Kilimnik had written a separate memorandum to Manafort that similarly concluded that Russia's harsh tactics in 2004 were not as effective as western tactics at playing the "modern game" of political influence where perceptions matter more than reality. Kilimnik noted to Manafort in the memorandum that Russia would "lose if they don't learn how to play this game." *See* "Russian charged with Trump's ex-campaign chief was key figure in pro-Russia strategy," *Associated Press*, July 3, 2018.

[120] **(U)** *Ibid.*

[redacted]

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[redacted]

[W]e are confident that we can create the protections needed to ensure the avoidance of Orange Revolutions becoming acceptable in the West. The key is to understand the West and to use their tools to deal with the specific problems in ways that the West believes is in concert with them. Rather than attacking the West, the correct strategy can be created to embrace the West and in so doing restrict their options to ferment an atmosphere that gives hope to potential advocates of a different way.[121]

[redacted] Consistent with the detailed plan for influence outlined by Manafort in his briefing to Deripaska, Russia shifted its focus from direct and overt interference in Ukrainian politics toward a more subtle approach.[122] [redacted]

[redacted]

(U) Connections between Manafort's program in Ukraine and Russia's own influence efforts there suggest that they were effectively part of the same campaign to undermine the Ukrainian government and support pro-Russia candidates. Both involved Deripaska and supported the PoR. Documentary information also suggests that Manafort intended to brief the Kremlin on his activities in Ukraine and understood that his activities benefited the Kremlin.[124] In his memorandum to Deripaska, Manafort stated that "we are now of the belief that this model can greatly benefit the Putin Government if employed at the correct levels with the appropriate commitments to success."[125] Manafort later explained that Deripaska needed specific talking points for Putin related to the Ukraine program, which the memorandum provided.[126]

b. (U) Manafort's Global Influence Operations For Deripaska

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[121] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[122] **(U)** *See, e.g.,* Steven Pifer, "Averting Crisis in Ukraine," Council on Foreign Relations, January 2009, p. 35.
[123] [redacted]
[124] [redacted]
[125] [redacted]
[126] **(U)** FBI, FD-302 Manafort 9/21/2018.

[redacted]

[redacted]

(U) Manafort's work for Deripaska went beyond Ukraine and extended to matters of interest to Deripaska "worldwide."[127] Gates recalled that Manafort and Deripaska used to meet regularly and had a number of different projects ongoing.[128] This included a political influence program which Deripaska financed.[129] As part of this program, Manafort worked on influence efforts in Central Asia, Cyprus, Georgia, Guinea, Montenegro, and elsewhere in Europe.[130] Deripaska financially backed candidates in many of these countries and hired Manafort and his firm to do the on-the-ground political consulting to support these efforts.[131] Deripaska used an offshore entity to pay Manafort and his firm tens of millions of dollars for this and other work, including at least $25 million in 2008 alone.[132]

(U) According to Gates, whom Manafort hired to work on the Deripaska-directed projects starting in approximately 2007, the aim of Manafort's influence work for Deripaska was to install friendly political officials in countries where Deripaska had business interests.[133] However, Deripaska's work on behalf of the Kremlin included Deripaska's use of his own personal wealth for Kremlin-directed projects, blending Deripaska's interests and those of the Russian state.[134] Manafort's influence work for Deripaska was, in effect, influence work for the Russian government and its interests.

(U) An example of the overlap between Russian-directed influence efforts and those where Deripaska had a personal interest—and employed Manafort to advance both—is Montenegro. Deripaska first became involved in Montenegro in a significant way through his purchase of a majority stake in Kombinat Aluminijuma Podgorica (KAP), Montenegro's largest exporter, which at one point was responsible for approximately half of the country's economic output. The sale occurred as a result of a 2005 Montenegrin government-controlled privatization and required Montenegrin government approval.[135] Deripaska's purchase, however, was not purely a private business matter and was instead backed by the Russian government.

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[127] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Adam Waldman, November 3, 2017, p. 102. As noted above, Manafort also undertook influence efforts in the United States on Deripaska's behalf, including assisting Deripaska in obtaining a U.S. visa. *See* FBI, FD-302, Gates 2/2/2018. Gates recalled that a Manafort-controlled Cypriot account, LOAV, contributed money to 501c(4) entity that supported the John McCain presidential campaign. Gates stated that the money was from Deripaska. FBI, FD-302, Gates 2/28/2018. Continued Deripaska influence efforts in Guinea are described *infra* Vol. 5, Sec III.A.8.i.

[128] (U) FBI, FD-302, Gates 2/2/2018.

[129] (U) *Ibid.* Gates recalled that part of the Deripaska program was named "Eurasia 21."

[130] (U) *See, e.g.,* [redacted]; FBI, FD-302, Gates 10/29/2018; [redacted]; FBI, FD-302, Gates 3/12/2018.

[131] (U) FBI, FD-302, Gates 2/2/2018.

[132] (U) *Ibid.*

[133] (U) *SCO Report*, Vol. I, p. 131.

[134] (U) *See also infra* Vol. 5, Sec. III.A.8.i.

[135] (U) "Russia's Deripaska sues Montenegro for lost aluminum investment," *Reuters*, December 7, 2016.

[redacted]

[redacted]

- [redacted]
- [redacted]
- [redacted]

(U) Deripaska expanded his own influence in Montenegro and furthered Russian government efforts to exert influence over the country, which Deripaska executed in part by hiring Manafort and his firm.

- [redacted]
- (U) Deripaska hired Manafort and his firm to work on the Montenegrin independence referendum.[140] Manafort's firm sent a team led by Manafort's partner Rick Davis to Montenegro.[141] Manafort and his firm worked with, and became internal consultants to, Prime Minister Milo Djukanovic but billed and reported to Deripaska.[142]
- (U) Manafort and his team kept Deripaska informed of operational details, and Deripaska provided direction to Manafort and coordinated with him on actions Deripaska would conduct personally to assist in the influence campaign. For example, one document prepared by Manafort stated that Deripaska should, as a "follow up" to recent

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136 [redacted]
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141 (U) *Ibid.*
142 (U) *Ibid.* Since that time, Deripaska has sought to control the Montenegrin government and influence its policies toward Kremlin-aligned objectives. Most recently, this took the form of directly supporting a GRU-run coup attempt in the country in 2016, *see infra* Vol. 5, Sec. III.A.8.i.

[redacted]

activities undertaken by Manafort and his firm on the ground in Montenegro, "organize negotiations with key opposition leaders."[143]

[redacted]

(U) These operations may have been directly related to the Russian intelligence services.

[redacted]

c. (U) Konstantin Kilimnik

(U) Starting in likely late 2004, Konstantin Kilimnik began to work for Manafort in Ukraine and elsewhere on Deripaska-related projects.[146] Kilimnik attended the Russian military's language institute and served in the Russian military until at least 1995. From 1995 to 2005, Kilimnik was an employee at the International Republican Institute (IRI), serving in IRI's Moscow office.[147] Kilimnik began working alongside Manafort in Ukraine secretly while still an employee of IRI in Moscow.[148] Once this was discovered, IRI fired Kilimnik, and Kilimnik became a formal employee of Manafort's firm.[149]

(U) Open source information also suggests that, in 2004, Kilimnik began working in Ukraine for Deripaska in support of Yanukovych's election.[150] According to that report, Kilimnik traveled to Ukraine while he was still working at IRI.[151] Allegations that Kilimnik was

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[143] (U) *Ibid.*

[144] [redacted] At the time, Shoygu was the Russian Minister of Emergency Situations and is now the Minister of Defense. Sergey Lavrov was and remains the Russian Foreign Minister. Both men have been longtime members of Putin's inner circle.

[145] [redacted]

[146] (U) Kilimnik is a Russian intelligence officer. *See infra* Vol. 5, Sec. III.A.8.ii.

[147] (U) IRI Semi-Annual Report (IRI Production) ("Konstantin Kilimnik continues to serve in his role as acting director of the Moscow office").

[148] (U) Email, Sibley to Nix, September 7, 2018 (IRI Production).

[149] (U) *Ibid.*

[150] (U) Maria Zholobova and Roman Badanin, "The Absolute Soviet Man. A Portrait of Konstantin Kilimnik, Russian patriot and Paul Manafort's buddy," *Proekt*, August 22, 2018.

[151] (U) *Ibid.*

[redacted]

in Ukraine around the time of the elections are supported by IRI records, which suggest Kilimnik was present in the country for approximately seven days during the first round of voting.[152]



Экз 2 : бухгалтерия

Организац ЗАО "Тревел Сити" ИНН: 7706237149/770501001

Юридический адрес: 115054, г. Москва, ул. Щипок, д. 11, стр1., тел.: 787-7274

РАСХОДНАЯ НАКЛАДНАЯ № 35739 от 21.10.2004

Агент: ТКП Форма оплаты: Касса

Покупатель: Международный республиканский и Получил: Килимник Константин Викторович

№	Маршрут/Пассажир	№ билета	Класс	Кол	Тариф	Таксы	Сумма по билету	Скидка	Всего
1	Москва-Киев-Москва KILIMNIK KONSTANTIN VICTOROVICH	[illegible]302	Эконом	1	4 750,00	1 103,00	5 853,00		5 853,00
2	Услуги агентства			1	-	-	120,00	-	120,00
					4 750,00	1 103,00	5 973,00		5 973,00
								Итого к оплате:	5 973,00

Всего к оплате: Пять тысяч девятьсот семьдесят три рубля 00 копеек

в т.ч. НДС: Восемьдесят рублей 11 копейка

Отпустил _____ Иванова Елена Александровна Получил _____

ПРИ ОПЛАТЕ ЧЕРЕЗ БАНК ПРОСИМ УКАЗЫВАТЬ НОМЕРА НАКЛАДНЫХ В ПЛАТЕЖНЫХ ПОРУЧЕНИЯХ!!!

While the exact start of Kilimnik's relationship with Manafort and Deripaska is unknown, IRI fired Kilimnik for moonlighting for Manafort's firm shortly after this travel.[153]

(U) Kilimnik began working for Manafort no later than early 2005, and likely as early as late 2004.[154] Over time, Kilimnik became increasingly integral to Manafort's operation and helped steer Manafort through the details and political environment in Ukraine.[155] Manafort worked long hours with Kilimnik and often ate meals together.[156] Gates described Manafort and Kilimnik as having a "close relationship."[157] Manafort sometimes went to Kilimnik's house for dinner and knew Kilimnik's family.[158]

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[152] **(U)** IRI-002668 (a travel agency booking for Kilimnik's travel from Moscow to Kyiv, booked October 21, 2004) (pictured); *see also* IRI-002667 (an IRI travel form listing Kilimnik's travel to Kyiv from October 27, 2004 to November 3, 2004, which includes the first round of voting the in Ukrainian presidential election on October 31, 2004); IRI-002675. Records suggest Kilimnik provided a variety of reasons to IRI for this travel, including consultations with IRI officials and serving as an election observer. *See* IRI-002667; IRI-002675.

[153] **(U)** Email, Sibley to Nix, September 7, 2018 (IRI Production).

[154] **(U)** *See* "Russian charged with Trump's ex-campaign chief was key figure in pro-Russia strategy," *Associated Press*, July 3, 2018.

[155] **(U)** SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Sam Patten, January 5, 2018, pp. 19–20.

[156] **(U)** FBI, FD-302, Manafort 9/13/2018.

[157] **(U)** FBI, FD-302, Gates 1/30/2018.

[158] **(U)** FBI, FD-302, Manafort 9/13/2018.

[redacted]

(U) Kilimnik has long maintained close ties to Deripaska and his inner circle.[159] Since at least 2005, Kilimnik worked on Deripaska-related projects with Manafort in Ukraine, Montenegro, and elsewhere.[160] A July 2006 memorandum from Manafort to Deripaska proposed that Manafort's firm create an office in Moscow to be managed by Kilimnik. According to the plan, the Moscow office run by Kilimnik could transfer its public relations functions to a division within one of Deripaska's companies managed by Georgy Oganov, a top Deripaska aide.[161]

[redacted]

d. (U) Pericles

(U) Manafort's work with Deripaska also included a joint business venture known as Pericles Emerging Market Partners L.P., a private equity fund designed to be focused on foreign investment in eastern Europe, particularly Ukraine, Russia, and Montenegro.[163] Deripaska was the sole investor in this fund through a company Deripaska controlled, B-Invest.[164] Manafort formed the fund with Rick Davis, his then-business partner.

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[159] (U) Gates believed Kilimnik may have had a direct line to Deripaska. *See* FBI, FD-302, Gates 10/29/2018. Kilimnik retained this close relationship for years after Manafort's initial work with Deripaska ceased. According to Patten, Kilimnik has met with Deripaska and Deripaska associates, including Boyarkin. Patten understood that Kilimnik was in continuous contact with Deripaska and his inner circle. FBI, FD-302, Patten 5/22/2018.

[160] (U) *See, e.g.*, Work Proposal, "Keeping Guinea on Course" (SP_OSC_000990) (describing Kilimnik as having "managed successful political operations for Ukraine's ruling party, prime minister and president from 2005-2014," and having worked as a "senior member of campaign team for successful referendum for independence in Montenegro in 2006 and several other parliamentary and presidential campaigns."); FBI, FD-302, Manafort 9/13/2018.

[161] [redacted] Kilimnik maintained a contact entry for Oganov with email and telephone information. Oganov is a longtime employee of Deripaska and is associated with [redacted] *See infra* Vol. 5, Sec. A.8.i.c.

[162] [redacted]

[163] (U) Confidential Offering Memorandum, Pericles Emerging Market Partners, L.P., December 2006, at 1.

[164] (U) *SCO Report*, Vol. I, p. 131; [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

(U) Gates recalled that Kilimnik assisted him on matters related to Deripaska, including serving as Manafort's point of contact with Deripaska's side of the deal for Pericles.[165] Gates recalled traveling to Russia with Kilimnik to meet with Deripaska's representatives there in relation to B-Invest.[166] However, Gates stated that Manafort at one point did not want to tell Kilimnik about Pericles because he was worried that Kilimnik would share information about Deripaska's fund with other oligarchs.[167]

[redacted] Prior to the formation of Pericles, Deripaska introduced Manafort to Kypros Chrysostomides, a Cyprus-based businessman known as "Dr. K" who specialized in the formation of offshore business entities.[168] Chrysostomides and his companies assisted Manafort and Deripaska in setting up loans to disguise income in Cypriot businesses and avoid Cypriot taxes; these efforts included Pericles.[169] Chrysostomides also helped Manafort set up bank accounts and shell companies[170] which formed the basis of Pericles. Manafort ultimately controlled the accounts in Cyprus.[171] [redacted]

[redacted]

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[165] (U) FBI, FD-302, Gates 1/29/2018. Later, after the filing of a winding up petition in which Kilimnik was named as a participant in Pericles, Kilimnik claimed that when Pericles started in 2007, Kilimnik was working for Manafort and living in Moscow and that he had "zero involvement in this thing, did not even manage translation of documents." Email, Kilimnik to Patten, August 17, 2016 (SSCI 2017-4885-3-000426-428).

[166] (U) FBI, FD-302, Gates 2/2/2018. Kilimnik later privately disputed his involvement in Pericles. Email, Kilimnik to Patten, August 17, 2016 (SSCI 2017-4885-3-000426–428).

[167] (U) FBI, FD-302, Gates 10/29/2018.

[168] (U) FBI, FD-302, Manafort 9/13/2018.

[169] [redacted]

[170] (U) *Ibid.* Chrysostomides used his company, Dr. K. Chrysostomides & Co LLC (DKCC) to create at least three shell companies on behalf of Manafort, Gates, and Deripaska—Lucile Consultants Limited, Bletilla Ventures Limited, and Yiakora Ventures Limited—all registered to 1 Lampousas Street, 1095 Nicosia, Cyprus. This was done to facilitate the transfer of money through the Cypriot accounts to Russia, Ukraine, and the United States.

[171] (U) FBI, FD-302, Gates 2/12/2018.

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

(U) According to Gates, by 2009 Manafort's business with Deripaska had "dried up."[174] Over the course of their business dealings, Manafort and his firm had made tens of millions of dollars from Deripaska and Deripaska had loaned him millions of dollars more.[175] The dispute that arose from the Pericles investment lasted through Manafort's joining the Trump Campaign in 2016.

ii. (U) Manafort's Work in Ukraine for the Party of Regions (PoR)

[redacted] Manafort's work in Ukraine initially occurred under the strategic direction of Deripaska. [redacted] However, Manafort's relationships with PoR figures, most notably Rinat Akhmetov, Serhiy Lyovochkin, and Viktor Yanukovych, increased over time and became independent of Deripaska's involvement. The PoR maintained strong connections to Russia, received Russian assistance, and pursued a pro-Russia agenda. As a result, Manafort's work became intertwined with other aspects of Russian influence.[177]

(U) In his support of the PoR, Manafort's activity in Ukraine furthered Russian influence efforts in the run-up to the 2006 Verkhovna Rada (Ukrainian legislature) elections. After receiving support from Manafort and the Russian government, the PoR gained a significant number of seats in the 2006 elections.

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[172] [redacted] According to an FBI interview of Gates, Alexander and Dmitry Cherap were the owners of Black Sea Cable and were affiliated with Rinat Akhmetov. [redacted]

[173] [redacted]

[174] (U) *SCO Report*, Vol. I, p. 132.

[175] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 131.

[176] [redacted]

[177] (U) For example, by 2008 all of Manafort's income came from either Deripaska- or PoR-related work, suggesting his level of involvement in Ukraine had grown significantly. FBI, FD-302, Manafort 9/20/2018.

[redacted]

[redacted]

- (U) Manafort and his firm led the Rada election effort for the PoR—Moscow's preferred party—and coordinated all aspects of the PoR's policy platform, party organization, polling, and messaging.[178]
- [redacted]

(U) Manafort's work with the PoR continued following the 2006 Rada elections, culminating in the 2010 election of Yanukovych as president of Ukraine and the elevation of the PoR as the majority party in government. According to Patten, by this time Manafort had acquired a "mythic status" in Ukraine, and Manafort's operations there expanded to include "large crews of expatriates, 10 or 15 Americans" in the country with teams "all over the place" who were "flying around with a 747 with an advance team and things like that."[181] Manafort also organized U.S.-based firms, particularly Mercury Public Affairs and the Podesta Group, to conduct lobbying and public relations on behalf of the PoR and the Yanukovych regime.[182] To manage these contracts and publicly distance them from the PoR, Manafort helped organize their work through a Belgium-based organization known as the European Centre for a Modern Ukraine (ECFMU).[183] The ECFMU was secretly backed and funded by the Yanukovych regime and the PoR and reported to Manafort and Andriy Klyuyev, then a senior Ukrainian government official close to Yanukovych.[184]

(U) Kilimnik became a central part of Manafort's work in Ukraine. Kilimnik was placed in a managerial role within Manafort's firm, eventually becoming head of the Ukraine office and having "power of attorney" as the office director.[185] Department of State personnel in the U.S. Embassy in Kyiv who interacted directly with Manafort and PoR leaders viewed Kilimnik as "Manafort's man in Bankova" (Bankova is a reference to Bankova Street in Kyiv where the Ukrainian Presidential Administration is housed) and understood that Kilimnik maintained

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[178] [redacted]; Kenzi Abou-Sabe, et al., "What Did Ex-Trump Aide Paul Manafort Really Do in Ukraine?" *NBC News*, June 27, 2017; Memorandum from Manafort and Davis to Deripaska, April 27, 2006.
[179] [redacted]
[180] (U) *Ibid.*
[181] (U) Patten Tr., pp. 27, 67.
[182] (U) *See* FBI, FD-302, Gates 10/10/2018; Statement of the Offense and Other Acts, *United States v. Paul J. Manafort, Jr.*, Case No. 17-201-1-ABJ (D.D.C. September 14, 2018).
[183] (U) FBI, FD-302, Gates 10/10/2018.
[184] (U) *Ibid.* According to Gates, both Vin Weber of Mercury Public Affairs and Tony Podesta of the Podesta Group were aware that the ECFMU was backed by Klyuyev. Gates also recalled that one of the ECFMU's key officers, Inna Kirsh, was paid each month directly by Klyuyev to fund the ECFMU.
[185] [redacted]
Email, Kilimnik to Patten, August 17, 2016 (SSCI 20017-4885-3-000426–428).

[redacted]

[redacted]

access to the inner-most circles of Ukrainian politics.[186] According to Gates, Kilimnik had "unfettered" access to Yanukovych and Yanukovych's office.[187] Gates recalled that Kilimnik joined Manafort in most meetings with the oligarchs, and could not recall an instance where Manafort conducted a meeting with oligarchs without Kilimnik present.[188]

[redacted] Once in power, the PoR under Yanukovych reengaged in electoral manipulation and corruption.[189] [redacted] The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) and [redacted] reports from 2012 detail widespread vote-buying, misuse of administrative resources, and the use of bribes or threats to press candidates not to stand for election.[191] Senior leaders of the PoR, who paid Manafort and with whom Manafort maintained close personal relationships, were reliant on corruption and organized crime. For example, Yuriy Boyko and Dmytro Firtash, two long-time allies and funders of the PoR who maintained close relationships with Manafort, [redacted]

(U) Manafort, Gates, Kilimnik, and others at Manafort's firm coordinated and managed polling work, media and advertising, the hiring of consultants, preparation of talking points, and speechwriting for Yanukovych and the PoR. The work also extended beyond elections. Documents show that Manafort worked for Yanukovych and the PoR at times unrelated to election campaigns and formed a continuous relationship with the PoR and Yanukovych.[193] This

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[186] [redacted] Email, Shultz to Tefft, et al., April 30, 2013 (CDP-2017-00011G-001383). At approximately the same time, Kilimnik conducted side projects with Deripaska's deputy Boyarkin. For instance, in May 2011, Kilimnik was seeking to meet with Boyarkin and emailed Boyarkin a document in Russian entitled "Regarding Central Asia and International Projects." This document suggested a plan of action to protect and expand RUSAL's business interests outside of Russia. In particular, the document outlined a plan to minimize the risk of potential political in foreign countries where RUSAL operated, including through a more effective use of a network of "friends" in Russia and abroad. Additionally, in June 2011, Boyarkin, Kilimnik, and several others were involved in creating a website, www.russianintelligencer.com. The website included a newsletter, which included emerging trends and leading indicators in political and economic matters related to Russia. As of August 2011, Kilimnik was providing suggestions on the site. [redacted]

[187] (U) FBI, FD-302, Gates 1/29/2018.

[188] (U) FBI, FD-302, Gates 1/31/2018.

[189] (U) *See* "Ukraine election 'reversed democracy', OSCE says," *BBC*, October 29, 2012.

[190] [redacted]

[191] [redacted] "Ukraine election 'reversed democracy', OSCE says," *BBC*, October 29, 2012; [redacted]

[192] [redacted] Firtash is separately under federal indictment in the Northern District of Illinois related to an alleged international racketeering conspiracy. *See* Indictment, *United States v. Dmitry Firtash, et al.*, Case No. 13CR515 (N.D. Ill. Jun. 20, 2013).

[193] (U) *See, e.g.*, Government's Response in Opposition to Defendant's Second Supplemental Motion in Limine, *United States v. Paul Manafort*, Crim. No. 1:18-cr-83-TSE (E.D. Va., July 30, 2018).

[redacted]

[redacted]

included work related to foreign lobbying, public relations, and political consulting more generally.[194] Eventually, Manafort made more than $60 million from these activities in support of Yanukovych and the PoR.[195]

(U) The PoR did not have its own budget or centralized committee to pay for the work of Manafort's and his firm, DMP, in Ukraine.[196] Instead the PoR engaged a series of oligarchs who were tasked with paying for various portions of the PoR's political campaign work.[197] Over the course of Manafort's work in Ukraine, approximately 30 to 50 oligarchs chipped-in for the PoR-related work.[198] Gates referred to these oligarchs as DMP's "paymasters."[199] Primarily, however, Manafort and his firm were funded by Lyovochkin and Akhmetov.[200] Lyovochkin likely provided funding to DMP on behalf of other oligarchs, particularly Firtash.[201] Akhmetov's account with Manafort and DMP was handled by Akhmetov's deputy, Kolesnikov,[202] and Kilimnik was the primary conduit for arranging payments to DMP.[203] In particular, Gates recalled that Kilimnik would tell Gates to create invoices for certain amounts at certain times and address them to certain corporate entities located offshore.[204] When asked if there was a *quid pro quo* agreement in which the oligarchs agreed to fund DMP's contracts in exchange for something once the PoR-supported candidate was elected, Gates stated that he never saw that firsthand, but he suspected that was the case.[205]

4. (U) Manafort's Activities from 2014 until Joining the Trump Campaign

(U) Issues related to Manafort's historical involvement with Deripaska and the PoR continued through Manafort's entry into the Trump Campaign in 2016. These connections generally focused on business disputes and efforts to collect debts.

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[194] (U) *Ibid.*
[195] (U) *Ibid.*
[196] (U) FBI, FD-302, Gates 1/29/2018.
[197] (U) *Ibid.*
[198] (U) FBI, FD-302, Gates 1/31/2018.
[199] (U) FBI, FD-302, Gates 1/29/2018.
[200] (U) *Ibid.*
[201] (U) FBI, FD-302, Gates 1/31/2018.
[202] (U) FBI, FD-302, Gates 1/29/2018.
[203] (U) FBI, FD-302, Gates 1/31/2018.
[204] (U) *Ibid.* Gates recalled that "pretty much all" of the Cyprus entities were used for PoR work. FBI, FD-302, Gates 1/29/2018. These entities were often organized by which oligarchs were funding payments to the Cypriot accounts. For example, Bletilla Ventures Limited in Cyprus was affiliated with payments related to Lyovochkin. FBI, FD-302, Gates 1/31/2018. Over time, Manafort put Kilimnik in control of the majority of Manafort-related accounts in Cyprus. FBI, FD-302, Gates 1/30/2018. Gates did not know why Kilimnik was in charge of these accounts, but understood that Manafort wanted it that way. *Ibid.* These accounts included Global Highway Limited and Lucicle Consultants Limited.
[205] (U) FBI, FD-302, Gates 1/31/2018.

[redacted]

[redacted]

i. (U) Former-PoR Associates in Ukraine

(U) After Yanukovych fled Ukraine for Russia in 2014, the PoR effectively dissolved. Manafort, however, maintained close connections to the former PoR officials who remained in Ukraine. The remnants of the PoR consolidated into a new political party, the Opposition Bloc (OB). The OB was made up of a variety of pro-Russia politicians and former-PoR figures, causing it to be viewed as a rebranded version of the PoR.[206] Lyovochkin, Yanukovych's former chief of staff, helped lead the consolidation of the OB with the backing of Akhmetov, Yanukovych's longtime sponsor.[207]

(U) Manafort, along with Gates and Kilimnik, worked to support the newly formed OB. According to Patten, while Manafort was very expensive, Akhmetov viewed Manafort as a "lucky charm," and thus continued to pay him for consulting work.[208] Manafort remained the main political advisor to the OB, but Manafort's involvement was not at the same level as its previous peak under Yanukovych, likely due to the OB's own reduced political standing.[209] According to Gates, DMP's work for the PoR in 2014 was primarily related to a "micro-targeting campaign."[210] Manafort's continued involvement in Ukraine was noted by other observers at the time. For example, an American IRI employee who attended a meeting with OB representatives at the time noted that the OB representatives "did an EXCELLENT job pushing all the right buttons." The observer further noted:

> *Well, no wonder they performed well - Paul Manafort is their consultant, residual consultant from Yanukovych days. He was in our hotel with former IRI employee Konstantin Klimenko [sic] and is on my flight today[.] You would have thought Manafort et al would have realized what a bullet they dodged when Yanukovych left but I guess the contracts are too lucrative.*[211]

(U) Kilimnik remained deeply involved in Manafort's efforts to assist the OB. Kilimnik ostensibly ran the Kyiv office of Manafort's firm, DMP. However, Kilimnik appeared to have significant access within the OB independent of Manafort.[212] Kilimnik's ultimate source of funding and authority during this time also remains unclear. Patten, whom Kilimnik recruited to

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[206] (U) For example, the American IRI employee observed that the OB was in fact a "Party of Regions (PoR) re-do." Email, Garrett to Green and Van Rest, October 29, 2014 (IRI Production).
[207] (U) Email, Purcell to Toko and LeClair, September 15, 2014 (CDP-2017-00011G-001489-1490).
[208] (U) FBI, FD-302, Patten 5/30/2018.
[209] (U) Patten Tr., p. 27.
[210] (U) FBI, FD-302, Gates 1/31/2018.
[211] (U) Email, Garrett to Green and Van Rest, October 29, 2014 (IRI Production).
[212] [redacted]
Email, Kilimnik to Patten, August 17, 2016 (SSCI 2017-4885-3-000426-428).

[redacted]

[redacted]

come to Ukraine in 2014 to assist the OB and who reported to Kilimnik, recalled that although Kilimnik worked from an office in Manafort's firm in Kyiv, it was unclear to Patten whether Lyovochkin or Manafort was paying Kilimnik.[213] Patten recalled one occasion during his first meeting with Manafort in Kyiv where Manafort had spoken highly of Kilimnik and called Kilimnik a "powerful little dude."[214]

(U) While the scale of Manafort's work in Ukraine began to decline, Manafort nonetheless stayed involved in Ukraine matters in the lead-up to his March 2016 entry into the Trump Campaign. For example, a November 19, 2015 email from an associate of Gates relayed that Manafort and Gates were actively involved in the "Mariupol race on 11/29," a likely reference to a second round of elections in Mariupol on November 29, 2015.[215] The same email also relayed Gates's perspective on the latest political developments on this race and Ukrainian politics more generally, suggesting an active engagement.[216] Travel records suggest Manafort

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[213] [redacted] Patten stated that he was hired by, paid by, and reported to Lyovochkin through Kilimnik for his 2014 work in Ukraine. FBI, FD-302, Patten 5/30/2018. Patten further noted that Lyovochkin had previously managed Manafort's account for Yanukovych. FBI, FD-302, Patten 9/6/2018. Kilimnik and Lyovochkin appear to have sought to exert influence over a diverse array of Ukrainian politicians behind the scenes. According to Gates, Lyovochkin had a "cadre of candidates" whom he was running in various elections in Ukraine, and Kilimnik was assisting him in this effort. FBI, FD-302, Gates 1/29/2018. Patten's Ukraine work with Kilimnik in support of Lyovochkin is consistent with Gates's characterization. In early 2015, Vitali Klitschko, a former opposition leader during the Maydan protests, hired Patten to assist in his Kyiv mayoral campaign. Kilimnik arranged the meeting where Klitschko hired Patten. Lyovochkin, who was ostensibly not a part of Klitschko's campaign or political party, paid Patten from an offshore account Lyovochkin controlled. Patten recalled one 2015 meeting with Klitschko and Kilimnik in which Klitschko kicked Kilimnik out of the meeting and told Patten that Patten worked for him (Klitschko) and not Lyovochkin. Klitschko told Patten that he kicked Kilimnik out because Kilimnik was too close to Lyovochkin. Patten, who worked in support of Klitschko for approximately a year, was paid $800,000—solely by Lyovochkin. FBI, FD-302, Patten 5/30/2018. After 2015, Patten continued to work in support of Klitschko, and Kilimnik again began to support the effort directly. Kilimnik would later tell Patten that Lyovochkin "will be making all decisions" for Klitschko as it related to which political consultants to hire. Text message, Kilimnik to Patten, August 2, 2018 [redacted] Lyovochkin appeared to be working behind the scenes to fund pro-Kremlin political influence operations in Ukraine—likely including those which have involved Kilimnik, Patten, and Manafort—using [redacted]

[214] (U) FBI, FD-302, Patten 5/30/2018.

[215] (U) Email, Mermoud to Bensh and Afendikov, November 19, 2015 (ORP3000009).

[216] (U) *Ibid.*

[redacted]

[redacted]

was present in Ukraine from September to late October 2015.[217] During this trip, communications reflect that Kilimnik was spending time with Manafort in Kyiv.[218]

(U) During this time, Manafort believed the OB and its backers owed him money. According to Manafort, at one point in 2014, the OB owed Manafort about $4 million. At the end of 2014 and into 2015, the OB paid Manafort between $1 million and $2 million.[219] According to Gates, the Ukrainian oligarchs, particularly Akhmetov and Lyovochkin, continued to owe Manafort approximately $2.4 million.[220] According to Patten, Manafort remained involved in Ukraine because he was "trying to get paid."[221]

(U) By 2016, Gates understood that Kilimnik was no longer receiving a paycheck from DMP.[222] Instead, Gates believed Kilimnik was being paid directly by Lyovochkin.[223] However, according to Gates, Kilimnik remained engaged with the OB in an effort to keep the party together as a viable opposition party and to obtain payment for Manafort's firm.[224] Gates believed Kilimnik was still doing some work for the OB on behalf of DMP.[225]

ii. (U) Deripaska and Pericles Lawsuit

(U) As noted above, Pericles's failure after the economic downturn in 2008 and 2009 led to a souring of relations between Manafort and Deripaska. According to Gates, Manafort was upset that Deripaska had not followed through on his originally promised investment of $200 million, while Deripaska was mad because he felt the asset was not well-managed.[226] Gates also speculated that Deripaska was mad because he was not kept abreast of everything that happened with the investment.[227] Manafort said he would call Deripaska, but Gates did not know if

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[217] [redacted] (showing a departure from Newark Liberty Airport on September 20, 2015, with an arrival at Boryspil International Airport in Ukraine the next day, and a return to the United States on October 27, 2015).

[218] (U) *See, e.g.*, Email, Kilimnik to Patten, September 24, 2015 (SSCI 2017-4885-3-001166).

[219] (U) FBI, FD-302, Manafort 9/13/2018; FBI, FD-302, Gates 1/29/2018.

[220] (U) FBI, FD-302, Gates 1/29/2018. Patten stated that his understanding was that Akhmetov was "the last Ukrainian businessperson who paid Manafort." Patten Tr., p. 75.

[221] (U) Patten Tr., p. 43; FBI, FD-302, Gates 2/2/2018.

[222] (U) FBI, FD-302, Gates 2/2/2018.

[223] (U) *Ibid.*

[224] (U) *Ibid.*

[225] (U) *Ibid.* In 2016, Kilimnik worked primarily with Patten, who was not affiliated with DMP, on matters for both Lyovochkin and other OB-affiliated politicians, including Klitschko. Kilimnik used a DMP email address and listed DMP as his employer on U.S. visa applications as late as December 2016. CDP-2017-00011-000087–89.

[226] (U) FBI, FD-302, Gates 2/2/2018.

[227] (U) *Ibid.*

[redacted]

[redacted]

Manafort ever did.[228] According to Kilimnik, at some point Manafort claimed to have reached out to Deripaska in relation to the Pericles dispute.[229] Kilimnik told Patten years later that "Manafort says he tried to make contact with him, but because he did not do it through me I have no idea how he tried to get in touch. Maybe sent emails, which Oleg never reads."[230] Gates had heard that Manafort and Deripaska had sporadic meetings between 2009 and 2014, possibly about things unrelated to the investment deal, although Gates was not aware of their substance.[231] Gates believed that between approximately 2014 and 2016, Manafort asked Kilimnik to communicate with Deripaska, who contacted Deripaska's "chief of security," Viktor Boyarkin, presumably about Pericles.[232]

(U) In December 2014, Deripaska's attorney filed a winding up petition in the Grand Court of the Cayman Islands in an effort to liquidate what remained of Pericles.[233] It is unclear why such a long period of time elapsed between the end of the Pericles deal in approximately 2008 and the lawsuit filed in 2014.[234] Gates later believed that the lawsuit was a public relations stunt to help Deripaska obtain a visa.[235] The Cayman Islands court petition named Gates, Manafort, Kilimnik, and several others as key individuals involved in Pericles and claimed that Manafort and Gates had "simply disappeared."[236]

(U) After the start of the proceeding in the Cayman Islands, Adam Waldman, Deripaska's U.S.-based lawyer, told the Committee that in approximately March 2015, Deripaska asked him to "look into" the Pericles matter.[237] Waldman recalled that he sought to locate Manafort, which "took some doing."[238] Waldman left Manafort voicemails in an attempt

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[228] (U) *Ibid.*
[229] (U) Email, Kilimnik to Patten, August 17, 2016 (SSCI 2017-4885-3-000426-428).
[230] (U) *Ibid.*
[231] (U) FBI, FD-302, Gates 1/30/2018.
[232] (U) FBI, FD-302, Gates 2/2/2018; FBI, FD-302, Gates 10/29/2018;
[233] (U) Winding Up Petition, *In the Matter of Section 36(3) of the Exempted Limited Partnership Law, 2014 and In the Matter of Pericles Emerging Market Partners, L.P.*, Cause No. FSD 0131 of 2014 (Grand Court of the Cayman Islands December 9, 2014).
[234] (U) Gates in particular claimed he did not know why Deripaska waited so long to file suit. FBI, FD-302, Gates 1/30/2018.
[235] (U) FBI, FD-302, Gates 10/29/2018.
[236] (U) Winding Up Petition, *In the Matter of Section 36(3) of the Exempted Limited Partnership Law, 2014 and In the Matter of Pericles Emerging Market Partners, L.P.*, Cause No. FSD 0131 of 2014 (Grand Court of the Cayman Islands December 9, 2014).
[237] (U) Waldman Tr., pp. 85–86.
[238] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 85.

[redacted]

[redacted]

to get in touch with him.[239] Email records from May 2015 suggest that Waldman was continuing efforts to locate Manafort.[240]

(U) Waldman ultimately received a response from Manafort, who directed Waldman to Gates to discuss Pericles. According to Waldman, Waldman met with Gates, whom Waldman described as "very nervous," at Waldman's Washington D.C. home.[241] Waldman recalled that Gates told a "fairly complicated story about an approximately $26 million investment" from Deripaska.[242] According to Waldman, Gates described years earlier looking at numerous target companies and ultimately landing on, "with Mr. Deripaska's team's assistance," Black Sea Cable.[243] According to Waldman:

> *[T]he story became very difficult to follow, because it wasn't entirely clear that he'd actually invested in the Ukrainian cable company. It seemed that he'd invested in something somebody owned relating to the cable company, some sort of rights relating to the cable company. This became extremely convoluted . . . . One of the things that I learned was that the investment was $26 million, but the fees associated with the investment seemed to be about—seemed to be about $8 million.*[244]

(U) In August 2015, an application was initiated in the Eastern District of Virginia relating to the winding up petition in the Grand Court of the Cayman Islands, which sought to subpoena testimony and documents from Manafort and Gates.[245] Patten understood that a "month or two" before Manafort joined the Campaign, "Deripaska's lawyers were looking for Manafort . . . and they couldn't find him." Patten's general understanding was that at the time "both sides were pissed at each other."[246]

(U) Ultimately, Gates was deposed in November 2015 and Manafort was deposed in December 2015 in relation to the Pericles proceedings, while a dispute over access to, and use of,

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[239] **(U)** *Ibid.*, pp. 85–87.

[240] [redacted]

[241] **(U)** Waldman Tr., pp. 88, 90.

[242] **(U)** *Ibid.*, p. 90.

[243] **(U)** *Ibid.*, pp. 85, 90.

[244] **(U)** *Ibid.*, pp. 90–91.

[245] **(U)** *In Re: Application Of Kris Beighton And Alex Lawson, In Their Capacities As Joint Official Liquidators Of Pericles Emerging Market Partners, L.P., A Cayman Islands Limited Partnership, For Assistance Pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1782*, Case No. 1:15mc20 (E.D. Va. August 12, 2015).

[246] **(U)** Patten Tr., p. 101.

[redacted]

[redacted]

documents was not resolved until mid-February 2016—in the midst of Manafort's private lobbying to obtain a position on the Trump Campaign.[247]

5. (U) Manafort's Activities While Serving on the Trump Campaign

i. (U) Manafort's Entry into the Trump Campaign

(U) At least as early as January 2016, Manafort was actively seeking a position on the Trump Campaign. Manafort explained to Gates—who was still working for Manafort's firm, despite a lack of clients—that working for the Trump Campaign would be "good for business" and a potential way for Manafort's firm to be paid for work done in Ukraine for which they were owed.[248] Manafort used contacts with Roger Stone and Tom Barrack, both of whom were longtime associates of Trump, to lobby for a position on the Trump Campaign.

(U) On January 30, 2016, during a meeting with Barrack, Manafort requested Barrack's help in obtaining a position on the Trump Campaign.[249] Prior to the January outreach, Barrack had not heard from Manafort for an extended period.[250] Barrack agreed to help Manafort approach Trump in an effort to obtain a position for Manafort on the Trump Campaign.[251]

(U) By February 25, 2016, Barrack had spoken to Trump twice about the possibility of Manafort joining the Campaign.[252] According to Barrack, Trump initially was not interested in the idea of hiring Manafort because Trump closely associated Manafort with Roger Stone, whom Barrack described as having a "love-hate" relationship with Trump.[253] Despite this, Manafort requested that Barrack continue to lobby Trump on his behalf.[254] Manafort sent Barrack a set of notes and talking points outlining Manafort's qualifications and his commentary on the state of the presidential campaign.[255] Gates assisted Manafort in preparing these papers.[256] In Manafort's email transmitting one such set of talking points to Barrack, Manafort highlighted

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[247] (U) Complaint, *Surf Horizon Limited v. Paul J. Manafort, Jr., et. al.*, No. 650130/2018 (Sup. Ct. N.Y. Co. May 17, 2018).
[248] (U) FBI, FD-302, Gates 2/2/2018.
[249] (U) Email, Manafort to Barrack, January 30, 2016 (CLNS_SSCI_0000004). Manafort had first reached out to Barrack earlier in January and expressed interest in reconnecting in person. When the two did meet, Barrack recalled that Manafort had two specific requests; one of which was Barrack's help related to joining the Trump Campaign. Emails, Manafort and Barrack, January 17, 2016 (CLNS_SSCI_0000001-3); Barrack Tr., p. 30.
[250] (U) Barrack Tr., p. 26. According to Barrack, the relationship between the two had been strained after Manafort had delayed full repayment of a loan from Barrack.
[251] (U) Email, Manafort to Barrack, January 30, 2016 (CLNS_SSCI_0000004).
[252] (U) Email, Barrack to Manafort, February 25, 2016 (CLNS_SSCI_0000006).
[253] (U) Emails, Manafort and Barrack, February 25, 2016 (CLNS_SSCI_0000007); Barrack Tr., p. 26.
[254] (U) Email, Manafort to Barrack, February 25, 2016 (CLNS_SSCI_0000010).
[255] (U) *Ibid.* (CLNS_SSCI_0000010-12) (with attachment).
[256] (U) FBI, FD-302, Gates 2/2/2018.

[redacted]

[redacted]

that the role he envisioned for himself would be "convention manager, non paid."[257] Barrack later recalled that the issue of payment was important because "Trump wasn't interested in paying anybody for those positions."[258] Barrack recalled that Manafort's offering to work for free "were the magic words."[259]

(U) On February 29, 2016, Manafort sent another set of talking points to Barrack for his transmission to Trump.[260] In addition to outlining his own qualifications, this document described Manafort's belief that the Republican "establishment" had begun to organize an effort to disrupt Trump's nomination and provided a set of recommendations to Trump.[261] Later that day, Barrack sent an email to Trump's assistant, Rhona Graff, but addressed the message to "Donald."[262] The email described how the convention would be "critical" and that Manafort was "the most experienced and lethal of managers . . . Paul handled all of the conventions and is a killer, he would do this in an unpaid capacity. . . . I've attached a couple of Paul's thought pieces for your consideration - PLEASE PLEASE take the time to read the attachments."[263] Barrack attached to the email both of Manafort's previous memoranda to him, totaling five pages.[264] Barrack sent the same email and attachments to Ivanka Trump and Jared Kushner, stating "I think it is really, really important and Manafort is a genius killer but the opposite of Stone."[265] Ivanka Trump responded that she would "print and show the attached and below to DJT following Super Tuesday."[266] Corey Lewandowski, then the campaign manager, recalled that

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[257] (U) Email, Manafort to Barrack, February 25, 2016 (CLNS_SSCI_0000010). In his email transmitting the talking point document, Manafort also highlighted his foreign political work and his knowledge of "modern campaign technology": "I have spent the last 20 years running campaigns outside of the US. So, I am up to date on modern campaign technology and the key players with expertise." The Committee has no further information about this claim. At about the same time that Manafort and Gates joined the Trump Campaign, however, Gates reached out to a political consultant with ties to Israel seeking Israeli social media influence technology. *See infra* Vol. 5, Sec. III.J.

[258] (U) Barrack Tr., p. 32.

[259] (U) *Ibid.*

[260] (U) Email, Manafort to Barrack, February 29, 2016 (CLNS_SSCI_0000014–17) (with two attachments).

[261] (U) *Ibid.*

[262] (U) Email, Barrack to Graff and Marckstadt (blind copy), February 29, 2016 (CLNS_SSCI_0000043) (with two attachments).

[263] (U) *Ibid.*

[264] (U) The 2-page document included: "I can channel my strategic skills, tactical abilities and knowledge of modern political campaign tools into the demands of this specific convention job but also will be available, if desired, to apply these skills in helping to shape a national campaign working for the team that Trump has organized."

[265] (U) Email, Barrack to I. Trump and Kushner, February 29, 2016 (CLNS_SSCI_0000055–60 (with two attachments).

[266] (U) Email, I. Trump to Barrack and Kushner, February 29, 2016 (CLNS_SSCI_0000085).

[redacted]

[redacted]

Ivanka Trump ultimately did share the email with her father along with a handwritten note at the bottom which read: "Daddy, Tom says we should get Paul."[267]

(U) Following Super Tuesday, Barrack continued to email Ivanka Trump and Jared Kushner to press them to consider hiring Manafort.[268] Barrack forwarded these emails to Manafort, saying "FYI. I am trying."[269] Barrack also told Manafort that he would talk to Trump "one on one" on March 11, 2016, and "lean hard."[270] Later, on March 11, Manafort emailed Barrack and inquired if Barrack was still getting "pushback" from Trump.[271] Barrack responded that he was continuing to get pushback.[272] Manafort then asked Barrack if he should "be patient or start moving on," noting that he had "kept my calendar open."[273] Barrack responded that he was continuing to "push subtly."[274]

(U) Throughout this time, Manafort and Barrack both communicated with Stone. Stone shared with Barrack his belief that Trump "needs Manafort" and lobbied Barrack to help Manafort obtain a position on the Campaign.[275] Stone wrote in an email to Barrack:

> *You are the only one who can do this. Donald sees you as a peer – the rest of us are just vassals. he has no research or plan. his handlers reinforce his worst instincts. . . . I think Ivanka and Jared and Don,Jr [sic] and Eric have had their fill of Corey. We will know Tues if we are headed to a brokered convention- if so he needs Manafort or he will get robbed.*[276]

(U) According to Barrack, Stone was also in touch with Trump directly to recommend that Trump hire Manafort.[277] Phone records support this claim, showing that from March 1, 2016, to March 16, 2016, Stone made or received calls from Trump-associated numbers at least

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[267] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Corey Lewandowski, October 18, 2017, pp. 72, 78. Hope Hicks had a similar recollection of the memos being provided to Trump: "Tom had sent a bunch of emails, I think to Ivanka Trump and to Rhona Graff. . . . I think there were some attachments from Paul outlining a strategy he might be able to help execute on getting the delegates for the convention." SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Hope Hicks, October 16, 2017, p. 108.

[268] (U) Email, Barrack to I. Trump and Kushner, March 5, 2016 (CLNS_SSCI_0000106).

[269] (U) Email, Barrack to Manafort, March 6, 2016 (CLNS_SSCI_0000117).

[270] (U) Email, Barrack to Manafort, March 6, 2016 (CLNS_SSCI_0000118).

[271] (U) Email, Manafort to Barrack, March 11, 2016 (CLNS_SSCI_0000134).

[272] (U) Email, Barrack to Manafort, March 11, 2016 (CLNS_SSCI_0000134).

[273] (U) Email, Manafort to Barrack, March 11, 2016 (CLNS_SSCI_0000137).

[274] (U) Email, Barrack to Manafort, March 11, 2016 (CLNS_SSCI_0000138).

[275] (U) Email, Stone to Barrack, March 5, 2016 (CLNS_SSCI_0000105); Barrack Tr., p. 33.

[276] (U) Email, Stone to Barrack, March 12, 2016 (CLNS_SSCI_0000141).

[277] (U) Barrack Tr., p. 44. In a March 5, 2016 email, Stone told Barrack that he was working to help Trump with campaign strategy and that he and Trump "speak frequently." Email, Stone to Barrack, March 5, 2016 (CLNS_SSCI_0000105).

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ten times.[278] Records for that same date range also indicate that Stone either called or received calls from Manafort's primary cell phone number eleven times.[279]

(U) By the evening of March 16, 2016, Trump appears to have hired Manafort.[280] In an email to Barrack with "You are the Best!!" in the subject line, Manafort told Barrack that "[w]e are going to have so much fun, and change the world in the process."[281]

(U) Manafort's hiring was not made public until March 29, 2016, when the Campaign issued a press release. However, senior Trump Campaign officials became aware of the decision prior to the public announcement, although they were not aware with specificity as to its timing. For example, Hope Hicks, a close aide to Trump on the Campaign, recalled attending a dinner at Mar-a-Lago with Trump and Manafort on March 24. At the dinner, which had been scheduled earlier in the week, Hicks understood that the decision to hire Manafort had already been made.[282]

ii. (U) Kilimnik's Awareness of Manafort's Hiring Before the Public Announcement

(U) Manafort likely made Kilimnik aware of the possibility the he would join the Trump Campaign prior to its public announcement, judging by Kilimnik's contemporaneous communications at that time.

(U) Patten believed Manafort may have provided Kilimnik advance notice of his joining the Trump Campaign.[283] In particular, Patten told the Committee that he and Kilimnik had discussed the possibility of Manafort joining the Trump Campaign before it became public.[284]

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[278] (U) AT&T toll records, Roger Stone/Drake Ventures. These calls account for a total of 78 minutes of call time.
[279] (U) *Ibid.* These calls account for a total of 77 minutes of call time.
[280] (U) Email, Manafort to Barrack, March 16, 2016 (CLNS_SSCI_0000153). On the evening of March 16, 2016, the day that Manafort was most likely hired, a series of calls suggest that Stone, Manafort, and numbers associated with Trump were in communication at approximately the same time. At 4:42 PM, a number associated with the Trump Organization contacted Stone and conducted an eight-minute call. Immediately after that call, Stone dialed Manafort, who did not answer. Minutes later, Manafort returned Stone's call. Manafort and Stone spoke for 10 minutes. AT&T toll records, Roger Stone/Drake Ventures.
[281] (U) Email, Manafort to Barrack, March 16, 2016 (CLNS_SSCI_0000153).
[282] (U) Hicks Tr., p. 108.
[283] (U) Patten Tr., p. 70.
[284] (U) Patten Tr., p. 69. In a press article authored by Patten in 2019, Patten claimed that in "late 2015," Lyovochkin asked Patten "whether it was true that Trump was going to hire Manafort to run his campaign." According to his article, Patten told Lyovochkin "that was an absurd notion." Sam Patten, "Kostya and Me: How Sam Patten Got Ensnared in Mueller's Probe," *Wired*, August 14, 2019. Given Lyovochkin's close relationship with Kilimnik, it is plausible that Lyovochkin's inquiry reflected Kilimnik's own awareness of Manafort's intention to join the Trump Campaign. If Patten's public comment is accurate, the timing of this question from Lyovochkin

[redacted]

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Patten recalled that he believed the idea that Trump would hire Manafort was "sort of ridiculous," while Kilimnik believed it was in fact likely.[285] Immediately after the public announcement, Kilimnik emailed the Campaign's press release announcing Manafort's hiring to Patten in order to show Patten that Patten was wrong.[286] Patten further told the Committee that he knew Kilimnik and Manafort "were in contact" in the period prior to the announcement, although he was not aware any specific communication relaying this information to Kilimnik.[287]

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would suggest Manafort and Kilimnik may have discussed the Trump Campaign significantly prior to Manafort's eventual formal hiring.

[285] (U) *Ibid.*

[286] (U) Email, Kilimnik to Patten, March 30, 2016 (SSCI 2017-4885-3-000834); Patten Tr., pp. 69–70.

[287] (U) *Ibid.*

[288] [redacted] *See infra* Vol. 5, Sec. III.A.8.i for information about Boyarkin's connections to the GRU.

[289] (U) *Ibid.* For a complete discussion of this information, *see infra* Vol. 5, Sec. III.A.5.iv. On March 10, 2016, the GRU began spearphishing email accounts of individuals associated with Hillary Clinton. *SCO Report*, Vol. I, p. 37, *see also* [redacted] For a discussion of the GRU hack-and-leak operation, *see* Vol. 5, Sec. III.B.

[290] [redacted]

[291] [redacted]

[292] [redacted]

[293] [redacted]

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(U) Kilimnik's other two trips to the United States in 2016 (described below) appear to be designed with the express purpose of meeting with Manafort. Nevertheless, the Committee has no insight into Kilimnik's time in the United States in March 2016, nor does it have information to suggest that the two met during the March trip.

iii. (U) Manafort Announces His Position on the Trump Campaign; Extends Private Offers to Russian and Ukrainian Oligarchs

(U) The day after the public announcement that Manafort joined the Trump Campaign on March 29, 2016, Gates sent Kilimnik an email with five attachments and instructions regarding those attachments.[294] Four of the attachments were personal memoranda from Manafort and individually addressed to four recipients.[295] Gates drafted the four personal memoranda, while Manafort reviewed and approved them.[296] Three of the intended recipients—"SL" (Serhiy Lyovochkin), "RA" (Rinat Akhmetov), and "BVK" (Boris Kolesnikov)—were Ukrainian oligarchs affiliated with the OB.[297]

- [redacted] Serhiy Lyovochkin, a longtime PoR and OB member, is commonly viewed as one of the party's more sophisticated and capable officials. Lyovochkin co-owns Ukraine's most popular television company along with U.S.-indicted oligarch and former Manafort business partner Dmytro Firtash. Lyovochkin was a key financer for Manafort's work in Ukraine during Lyovochkin's time serving as the head of Yanukovych's presidential administration, and later as a leader of the OB. Lyovochkin is a close associate of Kilimnik, and Kilimnik has maintained frequent and close access to him for years. In addition to Kilimnik, Lyovochkin has maintained other significant ties to Russia and Russian-backed actors. [redacted]

[redacted] The Committee did not seek to interview [redacted]

[294] (U) Email, Gates to Kilimnik, March 30, 2016.
[295] (U) Email, Gates to Kilimnik, March 30, 2016.
[296] (U) FBI, FD-302, Gates 2/2/2018.
[297] (U) Email, Gates to Kilimnik, March 30, 2016.
[298] [redacted]
[299] [redacted]

[redacted]

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- [redacted] Rinat Akhmetov, described above, has generally maintained pragmatic relationships with Ukrainian, Russian, and Western governments and had long been a primary financier of Manafort's work in Ukraine. As Ukraine's richest oligarch, Akhmetov was one of the PoR's—and later the OB's—most crucial backers. He has also maintained significant ties to Russia and Russian-backed actors. [redacted] As noted above, Manafort had worked for Akhmetov for over a decade, and at the time of this outreach, Manafort believed Akhmetov owed him over two million dollars.[301]

- [redacted] Boris Kolesnikov, a pro-Russia Ukrainian oligarch from Donetsk, has been a longtime PoR and OB member—at one point its co-leader—and is Rinat Akhmetov's right-hand man. [redacted] Manafort had a long history of working with Kolesnikov and had previously assisted him as early as 2005 on behalf of Akhmetov and Deripaska related to Kolesnikov's arrest on extortion charges.[304] According to emails from U.S. Embassy Kyiv, Kilimnik acted as an in interlocutor and representative to the Embassy for Kolesnikov and attempted to set up meeting for Kolesnikov with U.S. ambassadors in Russia and Ukraine in 2014 and 2015.[305]

(U) The fourth memo, which unlike the other three used only the word "north" to identify the document, was addressed to "OVD," a reference to Oleg Deripaska.[306]

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[300] [redacted]

[301] (U) *See infra* Vol. 5, Sec. III.3.ii.

[302] [redacted]

[303] (U) *Ibid.* p. 25.

[304] [redacted]

[305] [redacted] Email Purcell to Pyatt, September 15, 2014 (CDP-2017-00011G-000809) ("I got an e-mail today from Sasha's old contact Konstantin Kilimnik proposing that you [Pyatt] meet with Kolesnikov."); Email, Purcell to Donahue and Kent, August 13, 2015 (CDP-2017-00011G-001347-1348) ("KK also made one request as a favor to Kolesnikov. Kolesnikov would like to meet with Amb. Pyatt and/or his 'good friend' Amb. Tefft sometime when he is in Moscow (which seems to be fairly often).")

[306] (U) "North" is used by Kilimnik and others to refer to Russia. *See, e.g.,* Email, Kilimnik to Marson, August 18, 2016 (SSCI 2017-4885-3-000414–416) ("people up north").

[redacted]

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[redacted]

(U) Gates also sent the press release announcing Manafort's joining the Trump Campaign so it could be translated by Kilimnik, and provided as an attachment to each of the four memoranda.[307]

(U) These memoranda were short personal notes from Manafort highlighting his newly announced position with the Trump Campaign. In the memoranda to Kolesnikov, Akhmetov, and Lyovochkin, Manafort also wrote that he was interested in Ukrainian politics and implied he might be interested in assisting them:

> *I am watching intently at the prospects of a new Ukraine government potentially forming in the coming days. We should revisit this topic and think about how to best position the OB as the next majority party in parliament. As you have seen from the US election, anything is possible with the will of the people. I look forward to speaking with you soon.*[308]

(U) The fourth memorandum, addressed to Deripaska, omitted the Ukraine language and instead included the suggestion that Manafort could brief Deripaska on the Trump Campaign. "I am hopeful that we are able to talk about this development with Trump where I can brief you in more detail. I look forward to speaking with you soon."[309] Gates believed that the purpose of the correspondence with Deripaska was to confirm that Deripaska had dropped his lawsuit related to Pericles.[310] Gates believed that the letter did not need to mention the lawsuit because Manafort discussed the idea of getting Deripaska to drop the lawsuit with Kilimnik verbally.[311] According to Gates, Manafort never told him anything specific as to what Manafort was offering Deripaska.[312] Gates thought that Deripaska wanted a U.S. visa and having Manafort in a position inside the Trump Campaign might be helpful to Deripaska.[313] Manafort's position could help Deripaska develop relationships with Trump, which could have been helpful to Deripaska in other ways as well.[314]

(U) The Committee has no record of whether Kilimnik delivered these memoranda to their intended recipients. Given Kilimnik's close access to the intended recipients and other

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[307] **(U)** The press release attachment included in the Gates email to Kilimnik sent at 6:57 a.m. was titled "DT PJM press release .docx." Kilimnik forwarded a document titled, "DT PJM press release .docx," to Patten later that same day. SSCI 2017-4885-3-000834.

[308] **(U)** Memorandum from Manafort to Kolesnikov, March 30, 2016; Memorandum from Manafort to Akhmetov, March 30, 2016; Memorandum from Manafort to Lyovochkin, March 30, 2016.

[309] [redacted]

[310] **(U)** FBI, FD-302, Gates 2/2/2018.

[311] **(U)** *Ibid.*

[312] **(U)** *Ibid.*

[313] **(U)** *Ibid.*

[314] **(U)** *Ibid.*

[redacted]

[redacted]

records showing that Kilimnik did in fact pass other information on subsequently, it seems likely that Kilimnik would have delivered the memoranda as requested by Gates.[315]

iv. [redacted] Kilimnik [redacted]

(U) On the evening of April 10, 2016, Manafort emailed Kilimnik. In the email, Manafort inquired if Kilimnik had shown "our friends" media coverage related to Manafort.[316] Given the context, "our friends" is almost certainly a reference to the oligarchs affiliated with the OB with whom Manafort and Kilimnik had longstanding ties. Kilimnik responded, "Absolutely. Every article."[317] The next morning, Manafort asked Kilimnik how his role with the Trump Campaign could be leveraged to collect the money owed to him by the OB, and whether Deripaska had seen recent press articles relating to Manafort:[318]

> On 4/11/16, 10:20 AM, "Paul Manafort" <pmanafort@dmpint.com> wrote:
>
> >How do we use to get whole.
> >
> >Has Ovd operation seen?

(U) Kilimnik quickly responded in a lengthy email to Manafort.[319] Kilimnik first told Manafort that he had been "sending everything to Victor [Boyarkin], who has been forwarding the coverage directly to OVD."[320]

(U) Kilimnik also wrote that he had "more hopes for OVD than for idiotic Ukrainians, who seem to be completely falling apart." Kilimnik then provided a highly detailed insider's account of the current Ukrainian political scene and laid out potential scenarios for upcoming developments in Ukrainian politics. Kilimnik alluded to Ukrainian political outcomes that he had "outlined" in his "previous emails," suggesting that Manafort had already been engaging

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[315] [redacted]

[316] **(U)** Email, Manafort to Kilimnik, April 10, 2016 (DJTFP00010544).
[317] **(U)** Email, Kilimnik to Manafort, April 11, 2016 (DJTFP00010544).
[318] **(U)** Email, Manafort to Kilimnik, April 11, 2016 (DJTFP00010544).
[319] **(U)** Email, Kilimnik to Manafort, April 11, 2016 (DJTFP00010543).
[320] **(U)** *Ibid.*

[redacted]

[redacted]

with Kilimnik on Ukrainian political issues in a substantive manner prior to this April 11, 2016 email.[321] The Committee was not able to obtain these earlier communications.[322]

[redacted]

The timing of this [redacted] is not known with precision, but occurred in close proximity to Manafort reaching out to Kilimnik, either immediately prior to or after Manafort's April 11 email.[328]

[redacted]

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[321] (U) *Ibid.*

[322] (U) The Committee only received the April 11, 2016, email described here because Manafort forwarded the email in its entirety to Gates on Gates's Trump Campaign email account. The original exchange between Manafort and Kilimnik used the email accounts pmanafort@dmpint.com and kkilimnik@dmpint.com. It is unclear why Kilimnik was still using the @dmpint.com account, which he used for other business, including communications with officials at the U.S. Embassy in Kyiv and with his business partner at the time, Sam Patten. The Committee issued a subpoena to the entity DMP International, LLC, but service through a registered agent did not yield any response from DMP International. Manafort's retained counsel claimed to not be engaged for the DMP International matter and would not engage with the Committee on its requests related to that matter. Efforts to engage Manafort directly while incarcerated also failed to elicit any substantive response. The Committee sought to gain further insight into the DMP International email account by issuing a subpoena to Rackspace Inc., a hosting company that at one point hosted the "dmpint.com" domain. By the time the Committee issued its subpoena to Rackspace, however, Rackspace had already ceased hosting the domain and had no longer retained any data. The Committee did not seek civil enforcement of its subpoena to DMP International.

[323] [redacted]

[324] (U) *Ibid.*

[325] (U) *Ibid.*

[326] (U) *Ibid.*

[327] (U) *Ibid.*

[328] [redacted] Manafort appears to have asked Kilimnik if he had been sending news articles on to Deripaska by approximately 10:20 a.m. Moscow time on April 11. Email, Manafort to Kilimnik, April 11, 2016 (DJTFP00010544). Kilimnik had confirmed to Manafort that he had "been sending everything to Victor, who has been forwarding the coverage directly to OVD" by 10:40 a.m. Moscow time the same day. Email, Kilimnik to Manafort, April 11, 2016 (DJTFP00010543).

[329] [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

As noted above, Manafort separately used the term "our friends" in a conversation with Kilimnik to refer to oligarchs affiliated with the OB.

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

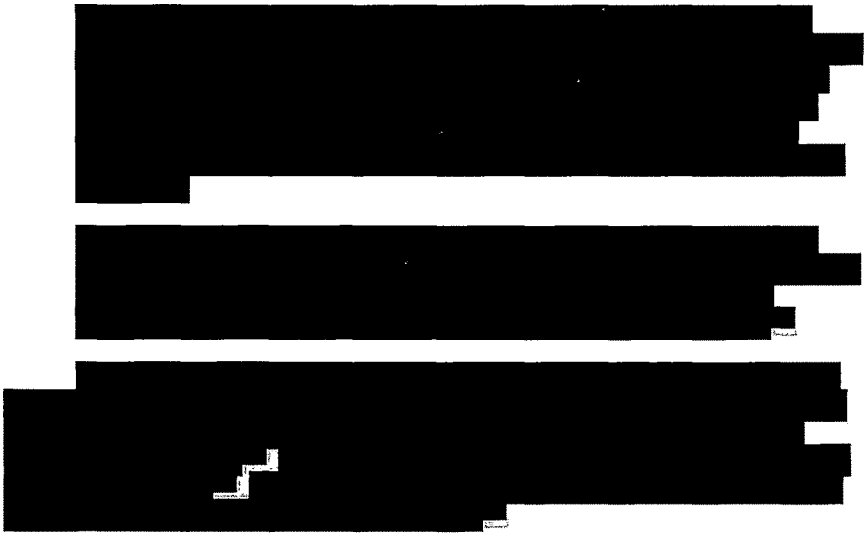
[343] (U) *Ibid.*

[344] [redacted]

[345] [redacted] According to [redacted], on April 20, 2016, Kilimnik booked a flight itinerary to the United States, which was scheduled to depart on May 5, 2016, as a roundtrip ticket from Kyiv's Boryspil International Airport to Washington Dulles International Airport. [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]



[redacted] On April 21, 2016, at 2:42 a.m., Deripaska passed through U.S. customs at Newark Liberty International Airport after arriving on a private flight.[350]

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[346] [redacted] In a series of emails to an associate on April 22, 2016, Kilimnik said that Manafort is very smart and if Trump listens to his advice, Trump will become president. Kilimnik also suggested that Manafort would become the National Security Advisor if Trump won the election and that because Manafort knows Ukraine better than anyone else, such an outcome would not be so bad for Ukraine. [redacted] Additional aspects of this email chain are discussed below.

[347] (U) *Ibid.*

[348] (U) *Ibid.*

[349] (U) Kilimnik would later make reference to the possibility that Manafort could have emailed Deripaska directly, but suggested that Deripaska "never reads" his emails. Email, Kilimnik to Patten, August 17, 2016 (SSCI 2017-4885-3-000426-428).

[350] [redacted] An April 25, 2016, Instagram post by an account affiliated with Deripaska pictured what appears to be Deripaska at United Nations (UN) Headquarters in New York and states in a caption that the Paris Climate Agreement was signed on Friday at UN Headquarters in New York. Deripaska traveled using his Russian diplomatic passport, [redacted] *Ibid.*; [redacted] Deripaska has retained a number of individuals to assist him in obtaining visas to the United States, which he has long struggled to routinely obtain. For more information on some of these individuals, *see infra* Vol. 5, Sec. IV.B.

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted] On April 24, 2016, Deripaska departed the U.S. on a private flight from Newark Liberty International Airport.[353] Other than [redacted] the Committee has no information about whether Deripaska met or communicated with Manafort while he was in New York.[354]

[redacted]

v. (U) Manafort and Kilimnik Meet in New York City; Discuss Ukraine, Trump Campaign Strategy; Sharing of Internal Trump Campaign Polling Data with Kilimnik Begins

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[351] [redacted]

[352] (U) *Ibid.*

[353] [redacted]

[354] Deripaska made three other trips to the United States in 2016 prior to the election. According to [redacted] Deripaska arrived in Washington, D.C., on February 24, 2016, and departed the United States from San Francisco on February 27, 2016. Deripaska also arrived in Newark on May 29, 2016, and departed the United States from San Francisco on June 2, 2016. Lastly, Deripaska arrived in Newark on September 23, 2016, and departed from Teterboro on September 29, 2016. [redacted]

[355] [redacted]

[356] (U) *Ibid.*

[357] (U) *Ibid.*

[redacted]

[redacted]

(U) The Committee did not obtain the content of any direct communications between Manafort and Kilimnik from April 11, 2016 to May 6, 2016. However, other communications suggest that Manafort and Kilimnik may have discussed the U.S. elections and Manafort's strategy to defeat Clinton in this time period. On April 22, 2016, Kilimnik told an associate that Manafort had a "clever plan" for beating Clinton and expressed confidence that with Manafort's help, Trump would win.[358] After the associate expressed concern over Manafort and Trump, Kilimnik told the associate in a subsequent email that Manafort is a very good strategist and that there could be surprises, even in American politics.[359] Kilimnik added that Manafort believes in Trump and claims that Trump will definitely win. Kilimnik reiterated to the associate that Manafort said that they have a "clever plan of screwing Clinton."[360]

(U) By May 5, 2016, Manafort was aware that Kilimnik was "coming to DC this weekend for a wedding."[361] On May 5, 2016, Manafort informed Gates of this development and told Gates that Kilimnik "wanted to meet up."[362] Manafort asked Gates to discuss Kilimnik's visit the following day.[363]

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[358] (U) [redacted] Kilimnik used the word "хитрый," which can also be translated as "cunning."

[359] (U) [redacted]

[360] [redacted] Kilimnik used the word "трахнуть." [redacted] The SCO asked Gates why Kilimnik referred to Manafort's "clever plan" to defeat Clinton in this email thread. Although Gates was not a participant on these communications, Gates stated that he believed this referred to Manafort's strategy to attack Clinton's credibility. The SCO asked Gates what was clever about such a plan, and Gates agreed that it was not clever and he did not know why Kilimnik characterized it as clever. FBI, FD-302, Gates 2/12/2018. It is unclear on what basis Gates held this belief, or whether Gates was confusing this reference with a subsequent plan to focus on Clinton's negatives that Manafort shared with Kilimnik at an August 2, 2016 meeting that Gates also partially attended. *See infra* Vol. 5, Sec. III.A.5.vii.a.

[361] (U) Email, Manafort to Gates, May 5, 2016 (DJTFP00021339). It is unclear how Manafort came to understand Kilimnik was coming to the United States for a wedding and "wanted to meet up." Manafort's reference to Kilimnik attending a wedding also remains unexplained. Given the other information developed about Kilimnik's activities, the most plausible time Kilimnik could have attended a wedding was during the day on May 6, 2016, when Kilimnik's whereabouts were not fully known. Patten, who was in contact with Kilimnik during his trip and met with him while he was in the United States, was unaware of any wedding. FBI, FD-302, Patten 11/27/2018. Given Manafort and Kilimnik's persistent use of coded language, nicknames, and other allusions, it is possible that "wedding" could have some other meaning. It is also possible that Manafort was incorrect about Kilimnik's plans, or that Kilimnik manufactured an innocuous reason for his trip to Washington, D.C., when relaying his travel plans to Manafort.

[362] (U) Email, Manafort to Gates, May 5, 2016 (DJTFP00021339).

[363] (U) *Ibid.*

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted] Kilimnik arrived at Washington Dulles International Airport on May 5, 2016, and passed through U.S. customs that evening.[364] As Kilimnik arrived, Kilimnik and Patten exchanged phone calls and text messages.[365] Patten offered Kilimnik dinner that evening at his home. Patten told the Committee that he recalled meeting with Kilimnik on his trip "separately about our business," but that he did not see much of Kilimnik, who was busy with other matters.[366] Patten understood that the main purpose of Kilimnik's trip was to meet with Manafort.[367]

(U) On the evening of May 6, 2016, Kilimnik's communications suggest he met for "off the record" drinks with Department of State employees.[368] Kilimnik was frustrated by this meeting, stating that he met "Finer or whatever the fuck is his name. In total space."[369]

(U) That same evening, Kilimnik worked with Gates and Manafort to arrange logistics for an in-person meeting between Manafort and Kilimnik.[370] From 9:25 p.m. to 9:40 p.m., Gates and Kilimnik exchanged phone calls on Kilimnik's U.S. and Ukrainian phone numbers, ultimately speaking for 12 minutes.[371] At 9:49 p.m., Gates and Manafort exchanged emails about the meeting with Kilimnik, stating that the meeting would take place at 7:30 a.m. the next morning and that Kilimnik would take the train to New York from Washington, D.C.[372] At 10:03 p.m., Kilimnik and Gates again spoke on the phone.[373] Gates then worked with a travel agent to arrange Kilimnik's train tickets to New York, sending Kilimnik train tickets shortly thereafter.[374] Gates and Kilimnik conducted a number of subsequent phone calls, including at

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[364] [redacted] Kilimnik passed through customs at 5:32 p.m. *Ibid.* According to [redacted] Kilimnik planned on staying at the Hyatt Regency hotel in Washington, D.C. [redacted] Patten recalled that Kilimnik stayed with him for one night during one of his trips to the United States, and later believed it might have been this trip. FBI, FD-302, Patten 11/27/2018.

[365] [redacted]

[366] (U) Patten Tr., p. 80.

[367] (U) FBI, FD-302, Patten 11/27/2018.

[368] (U) Email, Kilimnik to [redacted] May 6, 2016 (SSCI 2017-4885-3-000686).

[369] (U) *Ibid.* At the time, Jonathan Finer was Chief of Staff to then-Secretary of State John Kerry. Patten said he understood "[i]n total space" to mean "in outer space" and therefore not well informed on issues involving Ukraine. Patten Tr., p. 79; FBI, FD-302, Patten 5/22/2018.

[370] (U) The Committee does not have complete insight into the content of these communications, and it is possible that other matters were discussed.

[371] [redacted]

[372] (U) *Ibid.*

[373] (U) *Ibid.*

[374] (U) *Ibid.*

[redacted]

[redacted]

10:25 p.m. for approximately eight minutes, 10:40 p.m. for approximately three minutes, and 11:27 p.m. for approximately two minutes.[375]

(U) On May 6, 2016, Kilimnik used his kkilimnik@dmpint.com email address to write a draft email to himself related to his meeting the next day with Manafort.[376] The Committee did not obtain the contents of the email.

(U) On the morning of May 7, from approximately 3:00 a.m. to 7:00 a.m., Kilimnik traveled by train to New York to meet with Manafort.[377] At approximately 7:30 a.m., Kilimnik met with Manafort alone in New York at the Peninsula Hotel.[378]

(U) According to Manafort, Kilimnik discussed Ukrainian politics, and in particular, a plan by Boyko to increase election participation in the OB's stronghold in the eastern zone of Ukraine.[379] Kilimnik had worked to gather information on Ukraine prior to the meeting with Manafort. As part of this effort, Kilimnik had spoken to Boyko after Boyko had traveled to Moscow and likely met with high-ranking Russian government officials.[380] Kilimnik also spoke with Lyovochkin prior to his trip to the United States.[381]

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[375] (U) *Ibid.*

[376] [redacted] Manafort and Kilimnik engaged in a technique called "foldering," by which Manafort and Kilimnik would save drafts in an email account and read them without sending them, although it is unclear if this draft was created for that purpose. Later, Manafort read a draft written by Kilimnik and saved in this same account. [redacted] Patten also engaged in foldering with Kilimnik. FBI, FD-302, Patten 5/22/2018.

[377] [redacted] Late on the evening of May 6, 2019, Kilimnik emailed Patten, writing that he was in "negotiations with Manafort to get me a 6 am private flight and then 1-2 pm do Dulles." Email, Kilimnik to Patten, May 6, 2016 (SSCI 2017-4885-3-000686). The following morning at 6:02 a.m., Kilimnik emailed Patten and stated that he was "leaving DC for NY" and that he would be "[h]aving breakfast with Manafort at Peninsula hotel, then taking train back to DC." Email, Kilimnik to Patten, May 7, 2016 (SSCI 2017-4885-3-000686). Patten was under the impression that Kilimnik may have traveled using private air travel arranged by Manafort, potentially on the Trump-owed plane. FBI, FD-302, Patten 5/22/2018. Despite Patten's impressions, Kilimnik traveled via train. Metadata associated with Kilimnik's phone indicates travel via a train route over approximately four hours from 3:00 a.m. to 7:00 a.m. [redacted]

[378] [redacted] Kilimnik's and Manafort's phones were both located in close proximity to the Peninsula hotel as of 7:30 a.m. Phone metadata associated with Gates's phone reveals he was located in Richmond, Virginia at the time of the meeting.

[379] (U) *Ibid.* Gates described Boyko as a pro-Russian former-PoR official who pretended to be pro-European. Gates stated that Boyko had been an emissary between Yanukovych and Putin. FBI, FD-302, Gates 2/2/2018.

[380] (U) *Ibid.*; *SCO Report*, Vol. I, p. 138.

[381] (U) FBI, FD-302, Gates 2/2/2018. Kilimnik appears to have been in close and continuous contact with Lyovochkin for years, including during this time period.

[redacted]

[redacted]

(U) In addition to Ukrainian politics, Manafort and Kilimnik also discussed the Trump Campaign, likely including details of Manafort's vision of Trump's path to victory and the margins by which he might win.[382] Manafort expected Kilimnik to pass this information back to individuals in Ukraine and elsewhere.[383] Kilimnik later shared with Patten what he had learned about Manafort's "campaign strategy" at the meeting, including a discussion of whether Trump "[has] a shot; if he has a shot, why."[384]

[redacted] At 10:59 a.m., after the meeting with Manafort, Kilimnik sent Patten an email stating that he "just got on the train" and that he would be arriving at Washington's Union Station at 2:25 p.m.[385] At 5:09 p.m., Gates asked Kilimnik to call him if he had not yet departed on his flight. At 5:26 p.m., Gates and Kilimnik conducted a 13-minute phone call.[386] Kilimnik departed the United States on a flight scheduled to depart at 6:50 p.m. from Washington Dulles.[387]

(U) Additionally, according to Gates, Manafort instructed Gates to begin sending Kilimnik certain Trump Campaign polling data and other Campaign updates as a result of this meeting between Manafort and Kilimnik.[388] Gates further stated that he periodically sent the data via WhatsApp, an encrypted messaging application, and deleted the messages to Kilimnik daily.[389] Gates described the data as "topline" data, which included the results of internal polling including state, dates, generic, decided GOP, and other such numbers. Gates said that this was a copy and paste from summary sheets provided by Trump Campaign pollster and longtime

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[382] (U) In addition to Manafort's own statements about the meeting, *see SCO Report*, Vol. I, p. 138, an email sent later by Kilimnik to Patten provides some additional, but limited, corroboration that Kilimnik and Manafort discussed the Trump Campaign at the meeting and may have discussed potential electoral outcomes. In that email, sent the day after the election, Kilimnik stated, "It was close, and if DT had been more disciplined things would have gone as Paul said in May – bigger gap." Email, Kilimnik to Patten, November 9, 2016 (SSCI 2017-4885-3-000289).

[383] (U) *SCO Report*, Vol. I, p. 138.

[384] (U) Patten Tr., pp. 73–74.

[385] (U) Email, Kilimnik to Patten, May 7, 2016 (SSCI 2017-4885-3-000686).

[386] [redacted] Shortly after this call, Gates and Roger Stone conducted an approximately 34-minute phone call, although there is no information linking the two.

[387] [redacted] Patten appears to have flown to Kyiv on May 8, 2016, to meet with Kilimnik and others. SSCI 2017-4885-3-000702; SP_SSCI_003001.

[388] (U) *SCO Report*, Vol. I, pp. 136–137. Gates initially told the SCO that he started sending the information to Kilimnik in April or early May 2016. Gates later told the SCO that he believed it was after the meeting on May 7, 2016, that he began sending the polling data to Kilimnik. Manafort did not acknowledge instructing Gates to send the polling data to Kilimnik.

[389] (U) *Ibid.*

[redacted]

[redacted]

Manafort associate Anthony Fabrizio.[390] Gates recalled that it was not the entire raw data set, nor was it cross tabs.[391]

(U) Gates did not know why Manafort wanted him to send Kilimnik the polling data. Gates presumed that Manafort gave the instruction to share the information with Kilimnik so that Kilimnik could share the information with Ukrainian oligarchs as a way of showing the strength of Manafort's position on the Campaign, although no direct evidence supports this conclusion.[392] Gates also understood that Kilimnik would share the information with Deripaska.[393] Beyond Gates's recollection, the Committee was unable to obtain direct evidence of what Kilimnik did with the polling data and whether that data was shared further. For more information about the sharing of polling data, *see infra* Vol. 5, Sec. III.A.vii.a.

vi. [redacted] Manafort Offers to Brief Deripaska Through Kilimnik and Boyarkin; Kilimnik Appears to Have Insider Knowledge of Trump Campaign; [redacted] and Kilimnik Coordinate on [redacted]

(U) Other than Gates's admission that he began using WhatsApp to send polling data to Kilimnik, the Committee has no material information about the content of communications between Manafort or Gates and Kilimnik following the May 7, 2016 meeting until July 7, 2016. On July 7, 2016, a reporter from the *Kyiv Post* sent a request for comment to Manafort regarding

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[390] (U) FBI, FD-302, Gates 2/15/2019.

[391] (U) *Ibid.* A review of Fabrizio polling data sent to Manafort and Gates revealed a consistent format for such "topline" result documents, which were distinguished internally from "cross tabs" and "raw data." The documents labeled "topline" took a consistent form throughout the campaign period. In general, these documents provided all responses for each polled question on a questionnaire, which usually included approximately 100 questions. These questionnaires tested a variety of questions related to Trump and Clinton. For example, on June 30, 2016, Fabrizio emailed Manafort, Gates, and four other Campaign personnel "topline" data for eight of the Campaign's seventeen "Target States" (the remaining target states were also tested on different days). These eight topline documents totaled 247 pages with detailed breakdowns of aggregated responses for each question tested as part of the poll. Email, Fabrizio to Manafort, Gates, et al., June 30, 2016 (FAB007731–FAB007978) (attaching eight PDF documents, each of which related to a different target state and titled "TOPLINE"). In response to Fabrizio's sharing these topline data documents with this group, Manafort replied that "I don't want these results shared with anyone outside of the recipients of this email." Email, Manafort to Fabrizio, Gates, et al., June 30, 2016 (FAB009360). Fabrizio repeatedly produced "topline" results throughout the campaign in a similar format, creating dozens of documents with thousands of pages of text. It is unclear how much of this data Gates shared with Kilimnik. Gates did not specify whether he copied text from inside the "topline" document or simply copied the PDF itself and pasted it into WhatsApp. In describing other communications he had with a separate individual, Gates said that while he used multiple encrypted applications to communicate, documents usually came through WhatsApp. FBI, FD-302, Gates 10/10/2018.

[392] (U) FBI, FD-302, Gates 1/31/2018.

[393] (U) *SCO Report*, Vol. I, p. 136.

[redacted]

[redacted]

an upcoming article about Pericles.[394] Manafort forwarded this inquiry to Kilimnik, telling him "FYI" and asking if there was "any movement on this issue with our friend."[395] Given the context and Kilimnik's response, "our friend" almost certainly refers to Deripaska.[396] Kilimnik responded that he was "carefully optimistic on the question of our biggest interest" and expected that "we" will get back to the "original relationship" with Deripaska.[397] For unknown reasons, Kilimnik suggested that Deripaska was aware that there was "time sensitivity" involved in the matter.[398]

> *Our friend V [Boyarkin] said there is lately significantly more attention to the campaign in his boss' [Deripaska's] mind, and he will be most likely looking for ways to reach out to you pretty soon, understanding all the time sensitivity. I am more than sure that it will be resolved and we will get back to the original relationship with V.'s boss.*[399]

(U) Manafort responded by instructing Kilimnik to "[t]ell V boss that if he needs private briefings we can accommodate."[400] The following day, July 8, 2016, Kilimnik sent Manafort the resulting *Kyiv Post* story—"Trump's Campaign Manager Haunted by Past Business."[401] In his email to Kilimnik, Manafort again instructed Kilimnik that he "should cover V [Boyarkin] on this story and make certain that V understands this is all BS and the real facts are the ones we passed along last year."[402]

[redacted]

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[394] (U) Email, Kovensky to Manafort, July 7, 2016 (DJTFP00012834–12835).
[395] (U) Email, Manafort to Kilimnik, July 7, 2016 (DJTFP00012834).
[396] (U) It is possible the reference is to Boyarkin, or to Deripaska and Boyarkin generally.
[397] (U) Email, Kilimnik to Manafort, July 7, 2016 (DJTFP00012834).
[398] (U) *Ibid.*
[399] (U) *Ibid.*
[400] (U) Email, Manafort to Kilimnik, July 7, 2016 (DJTFP00012834).
[401] (U) Email, Kilimnik to Manafort, July 8, 2016 (DJTFP00012834); Josh Kovensky, "Trump's Campaign Manager Haunted by Past Business," *Kyiv Post*, July 8, 2016.
[402] (U) Email, Manafort to Kilimnik, July 7, 2016 (DJTFP00012834).
[403] [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

(U) In mid- to late-July 2016, Kilimnik appeared to have insider knowledge of the Trump Campaign.

[redacted]

- (U) In mid-July 2016, in response to a comment by Patten related to Trump's recent selection of Mike Pence as a presidential running mate and how that selection might negatively affect foreign policy, Kilimnik wrote to Patten: "You know Paul – he is focused on winning the elections and then dealing with foreign policy or whatever. The choice of VP is purely electoral, as I understand."[411] Manafort later singled out the topic

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[404] (U) For more information on Steele and his reporting, *see infra* Vol. 5, Sec. IV.B. Gates recalled that, at some point, Manafort had asked Kilimnik to talk to his sources about the Steele dossier and get more information about it. According to Gates, Kilimnik's sources included Deripaska's people and numerous others. FBI, FD-302, Gates 10/25/2018. Given the context, this request may have occurred after the dossier's publication.

[405] [redacted]

[406] (U) *Ibid.*

[407] [redacted]

[408] (U) *Ibid.*

[409] (U) *Ibid.*

[410] (U) *Ibid.*

[411] (U) Email, Kilimnik to Patten, July 17, 2016 (SSCI 2017-4885-3-000499). While Kilimnik did not explicitly state that this knowledge came from Manafort, the context for the comment—and Kilimnik's ongoing

[redacted]

[redacted]

of why Trump chose Pence as his running mate as one of the "public" topics on which he might have been willing to brief Deripaska.[412] Manafort, however, claimed he never briefed Deripaska on it.[413] It is possible Manafort identified this topic because he had already discussed it with Kilimnik, his primary conduit to Deripaska.

[redacted]

vii. (U) Manafort Meets with Kilimnik at the Grand Havana Room in New York City; They Discuss Polling Data, Ukraine Plan, and Debts

(U) On July 28, 2016, Kilimnik flew from Kyiv to Moscow.[418] Late that evening, Kilimnik emailed Manafort under the subject line "Black caviar" and relayed two points.[419] The first point related to a press inquiry that Lyovochkin had received.[420] With respect to this point, Kilimnik sought to determine whether Manafort wanted Lyovochkin to speak with the reporter in an effort to provide the reporter a positive view of Manafort's prior work in Ukraine.[421] The second point involved Kilimnik's request to discuss a matter with Manafort, the substance of which Kilimnik sought to speak about only indirectly in the email:

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communications with Manafort at that time— suggests Kilimnik may have acquired this understanding based on a prior conversation with Manafort.

[412] (U) FBI, FD-302, Manafort 9/11/2018.

[413] (U) *Ibid.*

[414] [redacted]

[415] (U) *Ibid.*

[416] (U) *Ibid.*

[417] (U) *Ibid.*

[418] (U) *SCO Report*, Vol. I, p. 138.

[419] (U) Email, Kilimnik to Manafort, July 29, 2016 (DJTFP00013334).

[420] (U) *Ibid.*

[421] (U) *Ibid.*

[redacted]

[redacted]

I met today with the guy who gave you your biggest black caviar jar several years ago. We spent about 5 hours talking about his story, and I have several important messages from him to you. He asked me to go and brief you on our conversation. I said I have to run it by you first, but in principle I am prepared to do it, provided that he buys me a ticket. It has to do about the future of his country, and is quite interesting. So, if you are absolutely not against the concept, please let me know which dates/places will work, even next week, and I could come and see you.[422]

(U) Manafort told the SCO that "the guy who gave you your biggest black caviar jar" was Yanukovych.[423] Manafort explained that this was a reference to a $30,000 to $40,000 jar of caviar that Yanukovych had given him at a lunch following Yanukovych's 2010 election as president.[424] Patten told the Committee that Kilimnik had relayed a similar explanation for the reference. Patten recalled:

According to Konstantin, they [Konstantin and Manafort] were having breakfast with the president, President Yanukovych . . . Mr. Manafort complimented the caviar. And [Yanukovych] said: Oh you like it; I'll get you more. And sort of snapped his fingers, and he's given a big vat of it.[425]

(U) Within minutes of receiving Kilimnik's email, Manafort responded to Kilimnik, telling him that "Tuesday is best."[426] After Kilimnik asked for an alternate day, Manafort and Kilimnik settled on the evening of Wednesday, August 2, 2016, in New York.[427] Kilimnik told Manafort that he needed "about two hours" because "it is a long caviar story to tell."[428]

[redacted] According to [redacted], on August 2, 2016, at 7:43 p.m. Kilimnik passed through U.S. customs at New York John F. Kennedy International Airport.[429] Manafort's

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[422] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[423] **(U)** *SCO Report*, Vol. I, p. 139
[424] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[425] **(U)** Patten Tr., p. 83. Gates, however, recalled a similar story, but that the event was a party hosted by Rinat Akhmetov, not Yanukovych, and that it was Akhmetov who was the man who gave Manafort his "biggest black caviar jar." FBI, FD-302, Gates 2/12/2018.
[426] **(U)** Email, Manafort to Kilimnik, July 29, 2016 (DJTFP00013334).
[427] **(U)** Emails, Manafort and Kilimnik, July 29–31, 2016 (DJTFP00013474).
[428] **(U)** Email, Kilimnik to Manafort, July 31, 2016 (DJTFP00013474). Kilimnik told Manafort that he had "our friends working on my ticket."
[429] [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

Campaign email account calendar had an entry for the Kilimnik meeting starting at 9:00 p.m., following a 5:30 p.m. meeting with Trump and Rudy Giuliani in Trump Tower.[430]

(U) Manafort, Kilimnik, and Gates exchanged a number of calls and messages in the lead-up to the meeting. At 8:33 p.m., Kilimnik texted Manafort.[431] At 8:51 p.m., Manafort and Gates had a 23-minute phone call, in the middle of which Kilimnik dialed Manafort.[432] From 9:30 p.m. to 9:32 p.m., Gates and Kilimnik exchanged three short phone calls.[433]

(U) Although it is unclear exactly when the meeting began, on the evening of August 2, 2016, Manafort and Kilimnik eventually met at the Grand Havana Room, a private lounge located at 666 Fifth Avenue in New York City. According to testimony and records, Gates arrived late to the meeting.[434] At least three topics were discussed at the meeting: internal Trump polling information and strategy; a peace plan for Ukraine; and past debts and business disputes with Deripaska and the OB.[435] At the end of the meeting, Kilimnik, Gates, and Manafort deliberately departed using separate routes to avoid being seen together.[436] Late that evening, between 11:28 p.m. and 12:09 a.m., Manafort and Kilimnik also exchanged approximately ten text messages.[437]

a. (U) Internal Polling Information and Trump Campaign Strategy

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[430] [redacted] Daily Schedule, August 2, 2016 (DJTFP00023323). The meeting is recorded as "Dinner w/ KK." "KK" is a frequently used moniker for Kilimnik. During the Transition meeting, Manafort texted Gates what appears to be a reference to meeting with Kilimnik, stating only "[t]hat is when guest and I will be downstairs." [redacted]

[431] [redacted]

[432] (U) *Ibid.*

[433] (U) *Ibid.*

[434] (U) *Ibid.*; FBI, FD-302, Gates 2/12/2018. Gates stated that there may have been topics discussed prior to Gates's arrival. FBI, FD-302, Gates 2/12/2018.

[435] (U) *See SCO Report*, Vol. I, pp. 139–141. The order in which these three topics are presented herein does not necessarily correlate to the order in which they were discussed in the meeting.

[436] [redacted] *Ibid.*, p. 141. Kilimnik departed from Washington D.C. on August 4, 2016 on a flight scheduled to depart at 6:55 p.m. local time. [redacted] Patten recalled Kilimnik staying at Patten's house once Kilimnik traveled to Washington, D.C., after his meeting with Manafort and Gates in New York. Patten's proximity to Kilimnik so near in time to the August 2, 2016 meeting lends some credibility to his version of events as relayed by Kilimnik.

[437] [redacted] The next day, Manafort, Gates, and Stone were in contact about a plan to "save" Trump. *See infra* Vol. 5, Sec. III.B.

[redacted]

[redacted]

(U) At the meeting, Manafort walked Kilimnik through the state of the Trump Campaign, including its internal polling data, and Manafort's plan to win.[438]

(U) As noted above, since approximately early May, Gates had been periodically sending Trump Campaign polling data to Kilimnik via WhatsApp and then deleting the messages.[439] Subsequent communications between Kilimnik and his associates obtained by the Committee also make reference to Kilimnik's awareness of Trump's internal polling, providing contemporary documentary evidence that Kilimnik had access to it.[440] This polling data included internal Trump Campaign polling data from Trump Campaign pollster and longtime Manafort associate Anthony Fabrizio.[441] Fabrizio had been hired by the Trump Campaign at Manafort's urging after Manafort joined the Campaign. Fabrizio had conducted past polling work for Manafort, including as part of Manafort's work in Ukraine.[442]

(U) Kilimnik was capable of comprehending the complex polling data he received. A large body of documentary evidence and testimony indicates that Kilimnik had significant knowledge of, and experience with, polling data. In particular, for over a decade, Kilimnik had regularly helped formulate and review polling questionnaires and scripts, hired and overseen polling experts, analyzed and interpreted polling results, and presented the outcome of polls to

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[438] (U) FBI, FD-302, Patten 5/22/2018; *SCO Report*, Vol. I, p. 140; FBI, FD-302, Manafort 9/11/2018.
[439] (U) *SCO Report*, Vol. I, p. 136.
[440] (U) Email, Kilimnik to Marson, August 18, 2016 (SSCI 2017-4885-3-000414–416) ("Trump's internal polling shows signs of strengthening of their positions among key target groups they care about.").
[441] (U) FBI, FD-302, Gates 2/7/2018; FBI, FD-302, Patten 5/22/2018; *SCO Report*, Vol. I, p. 136. Fabrizio later paid for some of Manafort's legal fees in an irregular arrangement. Manafort, who was not paid by the Trump Campaign, arranged for Fabrizio to be hired by the Campaign, and Fabrizio was ultimately compensated for his polling work by the Campaign directly. Further, Manafort helped setup a political action committee (PAC) run by Manafort's and Gates's close associate Laurance Gay. That PAC, one of the largest pro-Trump PACs responsible for raising over $20 million, in turn, had a contract with a Fabrizio-controlled entity, First Media Services Corporation (T/A Multi-Media Services Corporation) for election-related work. Gay received a percent of commissions as a result of this contract. *See* Declaration in Support of the Government's Breach Determination and Sentencing, *United States v. Paul J. Manafort, Jr.*, Case No. 1:17-CR-201 (D.D.C. January 15, 2019); Christina Wilkie, "A mysterious payment to Paul Manafort's lawyer reveals a hidden chapter of Trump's 2016 presidential campaign," *CNBC*, March 10, 2019. In June 2017, Gay asked Fabrizio to pay $125,000 of Manafort's legal fees via wire transfer from First Media Services. *Ibid.* The Fabrizio-controlled entity wired the funds to the law firm then representing Manafort, Wilmer Cutler Pickering Hale and Dorr LLP. Email, Fabrizio to Manafort, September 21, 2017 (FAB010402). Manafort offered numerous conflicting explanations for this arrangement, and a federal judge found that Manafort had misled the SCO about the arrangement. Transcript of Sealed Hearing, *United States v. Paul J. Manafort, Jr.*, Case No. 1:17-CR-201 (D.D.C. February 13, 2019). While this arrangement resembles a kickback scheme, Manafort claimed the payment from Fabrizio was just a friend helping a friend. FBI, FD-302, Manafort 9/13/2018.
[442] (U) Supplemental Statement Pursuant to the Foreign Agents Registration Act of 1938, as amended, DMP International, LLC, June 27, 2017.

[redacted]

[redacted]

politicians and colleagues. Further, Kilimnik was familiar with Fabrizio's past work and had worked with him professionally.

(U) Open source information suggests that Kilimnik viewed the polling data as a key to Manafort's success and believed his interpretation of the data yielded valuable insights. In an interview with a reporter in 2018, Kilimnik stated:

> *Manafort is a guy who can merge strategy and message into something that will work for victory. He has done it all across the world and he has done it really just very skillfully. . . . I've seen him work in different countries and he really does -- takes very seriously his polling and he can spend two weeks going through the data and he will come with the best strategy you can ever have.*[443]

(U) Information obtained by the Committee suggests that Fabrizio's polling data was of significance to the Trump Campaign and was relied upon by the Campaign's data operation. The Campaign's data operation, in turn, largely determined the Campaign's resource allocation and strategy. Brad Parscale, who was in charge of the Campaign's data operation, provided some insight into how polling data was used. Parscale explained that while in some cases senior Campaign aides would independently direct Campaign resource allocation, "98 percent" of the allocation was determined by the Campaign's internal polling data as provided by its pollsters.[444] This data was updated "every few days" or "every day almost during certain periods."[445]

(U) While the Trump Campaign employed three different pollsters over the course of the 2016 campaign, information suggests that Fabrizio was the primary pollster during Manafort's tenure and potentially beyond. For example, a graphic from an internal Campaign presentation from August 2016 depicts Fabrizio as the only pollster directly linked to the Trump Campaign data operation.[446]

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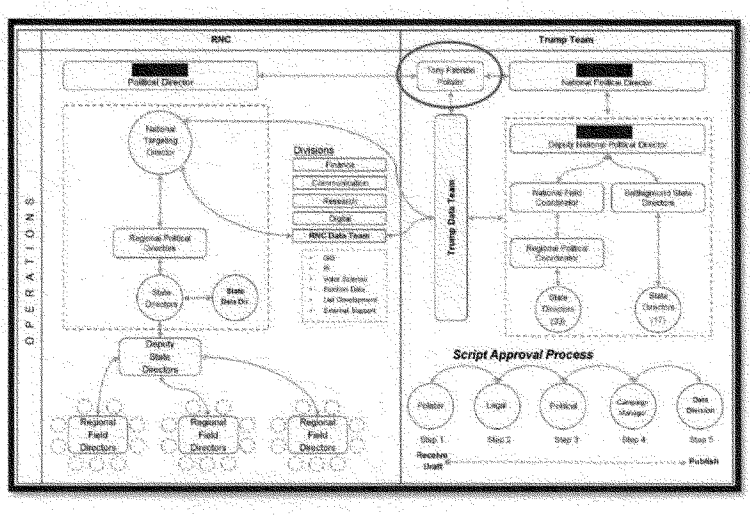
[443] (U) Christopher Miller, "'Person A' In His Own Words: On The Record With Shadowy Operative In Russia Probe," RFE/RL, April 6, 2018 (from audio clip entitled "Kilimnik2").
[444] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Brad Parscale, November 20, 2017, p. 38.
[445] (U) *Ibid.*
[446] (U) Trump Data Team Presentation, August 22, 2016 (FLYNN_SSCI_00011768) (redactions in black and emphasis in red added).

[redacted]

[redacted]



(U) Parscale further explained that the polling data was ingested into a visualization tool with the help of Cambridge Analytica developers.[447] The visualization tool was available on an iPad which Parscale carried.[448]

> *I wanted to be able to just fly around with Trump and if he asked me, how are we doing in western Michigan, I could open [the data visualization tool] up and just say: Okay, here's where you need to fly to tomorrow. . . . That was based off data coming in from polling.*[449]

(U) Manafort stated that he trusted Fabrizio's numbers and judgment.[450] Manafort's own communications to Fabrizio further underscore the importance Manafort placed on the internal polling data. For example, in a May email to Fabrizio, Manafort discussed using RNC polling as a baseline, suggesting that Fabrizio should "piggyback" off the RNC polling as much as

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[447] **(U)** Separately, Patten worked for Cambridge Analytica, but not related to its Trump-related work. *See infra* Vol. 5, Sec. III.J.
[448] **(U)** Parscale Tr., p. 64.
[449] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[450] **(U)** FBI, FD-302, Manafort 9/11/2018.

[redacted]

[redacted]

possible.[451] Manafort underscored, however, that he and Fabrizio needed to be "in control" of Fabrizio's polling data, including what Manafort described as "the sensitive stuff."[452]

(U) At the meeting, Manafort walked Kilimnik through the internal polling data from Fabrizio in detail.[453] According to Gates, Kilimnik wanted to know how Trump could win.[454] Manafort explained his strategy in the battleground states and told Kilimnik about polls that identified voter bases in blue-collar, democratic-leaning states which Trump could swing.[455] Manafort said these voters could be reached by Trump on issues like economics, but the Campaign needed to implement a ground game.[456] Gates recalled that Manafort further discussed the "battleground" states of Michigan, Wisconsin, Pennsylvania, and Minnesota.[457]

(U) The Committee sought to determine with specificity what information Kilimnik actually gleaned from Manafort on August 2, 2016. Information suggests Kilimnik understood that some of the polling data showed that Clinton's negatives were particularly high; that Manafort's plan for victory called for focusing on Clinton's negatives as much as possible; and that given Clinton's high negatives, there was a chance that Trump could win.

(U) Patten's debriefing with the SCO provides the most granular account of what information Kilimnik obtained at the August 2, 2016 meeting:

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[451] (U) Email, Manafort to Fabrizio, Gates, and Wiley, May 17, 2016 (FAB008947).
[452] (U) *Ibid.* Manafort did not elaborate further on what constituted "the sensitive stuff."
[453] [redacted] FBI, FD-302, Gates 2/12/2018; FBI, FD-302, Gates, 2/15/2019; *SCO Report*, Vol. I, p. 140; FBI, FD-302, Patten 5/22/2018. Prior to the meeting with Kilimnik, Manafort sent Gates an email with the subject line "Print for SCh meeting." Attached to the email was a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet, prepared by Fabrizio's firm, containing historical polling data and internal Campaign polling data derived from mid-July covering each of 137 designated market areas (DMAs) across Arizona, Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Iowa, Indiana, Maine, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, North Carolina, New Hampshire, Nevada, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and Wisconsin. The spreadsheet included voting data from previous presidential elections for the purposes of comparison with current internal Trump Campaign data for each DMA. Fabrizio first sent the Microsoft Excel spreadsheet to Manafort and Gates on July 15, 2016, and again on July 17, 2018. Email, Fabrizio to Manafort, July 17, 2016 (FAB005382–5445) (attaching the Excel file). Metadata analysis shows that the document that Fabrizio sent on July 15 and July 17 was the same document that Manafort sent to Gates on the morning of August 2, 2016, with instructions to print the document. [redacted] Although Manafort asked him to print that data earlier in the day, Gates did not recall Manafort referencing that printed data during the meeting with Kilimnik. FBI, FD-302, Gates, 2/15/2019.
[454] (U) FBI, FD-302, Gates 2/2/2018
[455] (U) *Ibid.*
[456] (U) *Ibid.*
[457] (U) FBI, FD-302, Gates 1/30/2018. Gates's memory on this point, however, was not exceptionally clear. Gates at first believed that the meeting was in May and that Manafort had presented his plan for the primaries and delegates to Kilimnik. After being reminded that the meeting was in August, not May, Gates corrected himself, stating that Kilimnik and Manafort discussed the battleground states.

[redacted]

[redacted]

Kilimnik told Patten that at the New York cigar bar meeting, Manafort stated that they have a plan to beat Hillary Clinton which included Manafort bringing discipline and an organized strategy to the campaign. Moreover, because Clinton's negatives were so low [sic] – if they could focus on her negatives they could win the election. Manafort discussed the Fabrizio internal Trump polling data with Kilimnik, and explained that Fabrizio's polling numbers showed that the Clinton negatives, referred to as a 'therm poll,' were high. Thus, based on this polling there was a chance Trump could win.[458]

(U) Patten relayed similar information to the Committee. In particular, he told the Committee that Kilimnik mentioned Manafort's belief that "because of Clinton's high negatives, there was a chance, only because her negatives were so astronomically high, that it was possible to win."[459]

(U) The Committee also sought to understand the purpose of sharing the polling data, as well as what, if anything, Kilimnik did with the information about internal Trump polling and strategy. As noted, Gates understood that Kilimnik would share the polling data with Ukrainian oligarchs affiliated with the OB and with Deripaska. However, Gates ultimately claimed that he did not trust Kilimnik, that he did not know why Manafort was sharing internal polling data with him, and that Kilimnik could have given the data to anyone.[460] While the Committee obtained evidence revealing that Kilimnik shared with Deripaska other information passed on by Manafort—such as links to news articles—the Committee did not obtain records showing that Kilimnik passed on the polling data. However, the Committee has no records of, and extremely limited insight into, Kilimnik's communications [redacted] As a result, this lack of documentary record is not dispositive.

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[458] (U) FBI, FD-302, Patten 5/22/2018.

[459] (U) Patten Tr., p. 106. Fabrizio's firm conducted a large round of polling in mid-July. That polling covered the Campaign's seventeen designated target states and tested dozens of questions. However, documents suggest that the Campaign viewed a shift in "image" between Trump and Clinton as a key takeaway from this polling. In particular, a memorandum from Fabrizio to Manafort dated July 27, 2016, and marked "CONFIDENTIAL – EYES ONLY" focused on a recent shift in the candidates' images revealed in the mid-July polling. According to the memorandum, the recent polling showed "DJT's net image improve by 7 points with voters in our Target States" while Clinton's image "eroded a net of 7 points." According to the memorandum, this change contributed to the "bounces" the Campaign saw in polling, and Fabrizio emphasized that this shift should inform the Campaign's strategy going forward. Memorandum, "Important Supplement to Yesterday's Memo," July 27, 2016 (FAB001244). While the Campaign clearly viewed a variety of factors as important in their victory, including those unrelated to Clinton's image and favorability, these findings are consistent with Manafort relaying to Kilimnik that the Campaign had a path to victory given Clinton's negatives.

[460] (U) FBI, FD-302, Gates 2/12/2018.

[redacted]

[redacted]

(U) The Committee was unable to determine Kilimnik's actions after receiving the data. The Committee did, however, obtain a single piece of information that could plausibly be a reflection of Kilimnik's actions after the August 2 meeting.

[redacted]

(U) Despite these correlations, the Committee could not reliably determine whether this information was ultimately connected to Manafort's sharing of internal polling data and Campaign strategy.

b. (U) Ukraine Peace Plan

(U) The second item discussed at the August 2, 2016, meeting was a plan for resolving the ongoing conflict in eastern Ukraine. Information about that peace plan discussion, however, is limited to testimony from Manafort and Gates. As with his other interactions with Kilimnik, Manafort provided inaccurate information about this topic to the SCO.

(U) Gates, who arrived late to the meeting,[462] said that Kilimnik had relayed an "urgent" message at the meeting.[463] The message came from Yanukovych and asked whether Manafort would run Yanukovych's comeback campaign.[464] Kilimnik relayed that Yanukovych had reached out to Kilimnik through an "intermediary" and sent Kilimnik to present the plan to Manafort.[465] Kilimnik was directed to present the proposal and Manafort's response in person.[466]

(U) Manafort told the SCO that Kilimnik outlined a plan to have Viktor Yanukovych return to politics in eastern Ukraine, and to have eastern Ukraine declared an autonomous

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[461] [redacted]

[462] (U) Gates stated that he had arrived to the meeting after Manafort and Kilimnik had already sat down to eat in the dining room. Gates estimated that he stayed for 45 minutes. FBI, FD-302, Gates 1/30/2018.

[463] (U) FBI, FD-302, Gates 2/12/2018. Gates believed the message was "urgent" because Yanukovych needed to start rebuilding the OB immediately to prepare for his run.

[464] (U) *Ibid.*

[465] (U) FBI, FD-302, Gates 1/30/2018.

[466] (U) *Ibid.* Gates stated that he did not know the identity of the intermediary.

[redacted]

[redacted]

region.[467] Manafort understood that the plan was a "backdoor" means for Russia to control eastern Ukraine.[468] Manafort stated that Kilimnik ran the plan by someone in the Russian government for approval.[469] Manafort admitted that Kilimnik did not need to state the obvious—that Manafort could benefit financially.[470]

(U) Manafort stated that he told Kilimnik the plan was crazy and that ended the discussion.[471] Gates recalled that Manafort laughed and declined Yanukovych's offer to "run his comeback campaign."[472] Manafort claimed that had he not cut off the discussion of this plan, Kilimnik would have asked Manafort to convince Trump to come out in favor of the peace plan.[473]

(U) Despite Manafort's assertion that he cut the conversation short, Manafort and Kilimnik took a variety of follow-on actions related to the plan.

- [redacted]
- (U) As described below, this discussion was also not the last instance of Kilimnik and Manafort discussing the plan.[475] Manafort eventually admitted to reading a foldered email from Kilimnik describing the plan and steps for its implementation in December 2016. The plan was also discussed at a February 2017 Manafort-Kilimnik meeting in Madrid.
- (U) Manafort continued working with Kilimnik on the plan, including efforts to draft a poll to test aspects of the plan as late as 2018.

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[467] (U) Communications Kilimnik had with the U.S. Embassy in Kyiv and other communications with his associates reveal Kilimnik's longstanding focus on the issue of resolving the conflict in eastern Ukraine. The Committee obtained records indicating Kilimnik was discussing a plan related to Yanukovych as early as May 2015. Email, Kilimnik to Purcell, May 21, 2015 (CDP-2017-00011G-000427) ("The launch of Pravda, or "Bring Yanukovich Back" project may happen in the next few weeks, or so I am hearing. they are still thinking about the name, but this is on top of the shortlist for names. :))").

[468] (U) *SCO Report*, Vol. I, p. 140.

[469] (U) FBI, FD-302, Manafort 9/12/2018. Manafort later restated this by saying that he believed Kilimnik would have run the plan by someone in the Russian government for approval.

[470] (U) *Ibid.*

[471] (U) *SCO Report*, Vol. I, p. 140.

[472] (U) FBI, FD-302, Gates 1/30/2018.

[473] (U) *SCO Report*, Vol. I, p. 140.

[474] [redacted]

[475] (U) *SCO Report*, Vol. I, p. 140.

[redacted]

[redacted]

(U) Separately, an email from Kilimnik suggests that he and Manafort may have also discussed the formation of Russia and Ukraine policy on the Trump Campaign during the August 2, 2016 meeting. Approximately two weeks after the meeting, Kilimnik told an associate that he had "seen Manafort last week" and "got a sense that everything that Trump says about Russia and Ukraine is Trump's own emotional opinion, not campaign strategy." Kilimnik complained that Manafort was not influencing the Campaign's strategy on Russia and Ukraine, "otherwise the message would have been much more balanced."[476]

c. (U) Manafort's Past Debts and Business Disputes with Deripaska and the OB

(U) In addition to Campaign strategy involving polling data and the Ukraine plan, Manafort and Kilimnik also discussed two financial disputes and debts at the meeting.

(U) The first dispute involved Deripaska and Pericles.[477] Gates recalled that Kilimnik relayed at the meeting that Deripaska's lawsuit had been dismissed.[478] Gates also recalled that Kilimnik was trying to obtain documentation showing the dismissal.[479]

(U) The second involved money Manafort believed he was owed by the OB for his work in Ukraine.[480] During the meeting, Kilimnik updated Manafort on what was happening with Lyovochkin, Akhmetov, and their "other friends" in Kyiv.[481] Manafort understood that the "oligarchs" wanted "intel" on the Trump Campaign.[482] The specifics of what was discussed at this meeting are unknown. Although his recollection was not specific to this meeting, Gates recalled that during the campaign Kilimnik had said that Akhmetov had agreed to pay Manafort for the money owed.[483] At one point, Kilimnik said Akhmetov was going to pay, but he was having trouble getting his money out of Ukraine.[484]

viii. (U) Possible Connections to GRU Hack-and-Leak Operations

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[476] (U) Email, Kilimnik to Marson, August 18, 2016 (SSCI 2017-4885-3-000414–416). Kilimnik was emailing a journalist from *The Wall Street Journal*, and given Kilimnik's repeated lying and obfuscation to the press, the accuracy of the statement is difficult to assess.
[477] (U) *SCO Report*, Vol. I, p. 141. Manafort recalled that Kilimnik worked for him to keep the Pericles lawsuit from getting out of hand. FBI, FD-302, Manafort 9/11/2018.
[478] (U) FBI, FD-302, Gates 1/30/2018.
[479] (U) *Ibid.*
[480] (U) *SCO Report*, Vol. I, p. 141.
[481] (U) FBI, FD-302, Manafort 9/11/2018
[482] (U) *Ibid.*
[483] (U) FBI, FD-302, Gates 2/7/2018.
[484] (U) *Ibid.*

[redacted]

[redacted]

(U) Some evidence suggests Kilimnik may be connected to the GRU hack-and-leak operation related to the 2016 U.S. election. This assessment is based on a body of fragmentary information.

[redacted] As mentioned above, [redacted] The GRU subsequently transferred the Podesta emails to WikiLeaks, which began publicly releasing the emails on October 7, 2016.

[redacted] Kilimnik is also possibly connected to [redacted]

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485 [redacted]

486 (U) *Ibid.*

487 (U) *Ibid.*

488 (U) The GRU gained access to Podesta's emails in March 2016. The GRU's first known outreach to WikiLeaks in relation to the passage of these emails occurred in mid-September 2016. *See infra* Vol. 5, Sec. III.B.

489 [redacted]

490 (U) *Ibid.*

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

- [redacted] Kilimnik shared the same document with Manafort at approximately the same time.[493] Kilimnik appeared to treat the plan confidentially, stating that it was not in the public domain, and sought to quietly test the viability of the plan.[494] [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

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[redacted]

[redacted]

- [redacted] On February 4, 2014, an audio recording of a phone call between then-U.S. Ambassador to Ukraine Geoffrey Pyatt and then-Assistant Secretary of State for European and Eurasian Affairs Victoria Nuland appeared on YouTube.[507] The video

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[500] (U) *Ibid.*
[501] (U) *Ibid.*
[502] (U) *Ibid.*
[503] [redacted]
[504] (U) *Ibid.*
[505] (U) *Ibid.*
[506] (U) *Ibid.*
[507] (U) Available at: youtube.com/watch?v=MSxaa-67yGM#t=89. [redacted] targeting of Pyatt and Nuland is noteworthy because of Kilimnik's close proximity to both. When the calls got leaked, Kilimnik was acting as the primary intermediary between U.S. diplomats and the PoR prior to Yanukovych's departure, and then again with the OB after his departure. *See, e.g.,* Emails, Kasanof, Zentos, Pfleger, et al., February 23, 2014 (CDP-2017-00011G-000877) (describing Kilimnik as the primary point of contact with the PoR for scheduling PoR-related meetings with visiting Deputy Secretary of State in late-February 2014); Email, Pfleger to Pyatt, et al., November 15–18, 2013 (CDP-2017-00011G-001090- CDP-2017-00011G-001091) (describing Kilimnik as the primary point of contact in arranging a call between Yanukovych and the U.S. Vice President in November 2013). Kilimnik personally attended meetings with Pyatt and Nuland when he accompanied Lyovochkin and other PoR/OB officials. *See, e.g.* Email, Kilimnik to Pfleger, October 9, 2014 (CDP-2017-00011G-000792) (describing Kilimnik's attendance at an October 2014 meeting between Nuland and Lyovochkin). Communications occurring in early 2015

[redacted]

[redacted]

initially received only limited attention in the first hours after publication. On February 5, 2014, an aide to then-Russian Deputy Prime Minister Dmitry Rogozin tweeted a YouTube link to the audio of the call.[508] By February 6, the leak had received widespread attention in Western media.[509]

[redacted]

made reference to a past instance where Kilimnik appears to have served as the interpreter for a meeting with Nuland. Email, Purcell to Toko, et al., May 21, 2015 (CDP-2017-00011G-000433).

[508] (U) Christopher J. Miller, "'Fuck the EU,' frustrated Nuland says to Pyatt, in alleged leaked phone call (UPDATE)," *Kyiv Post*, February 6, 2014. [redacted]

[509] (U) *See, e.g.*, Doina Chiacu, Arshad Mohammed, "Leaked audio reveals embarrassing U.S. exchange on Ukraine, EU," Reuters, February 6, 2014.

[510] [redacted]

[511] [redacted]

[512] [redacted]

[513] [redacted]

[514] [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

- [redacted] Cyber Berkut is a GRU persona influence operation which has been active since that time.[518] Cyber Berkut has leaked a wide variety of hacked material and conducted other computer network operations and influence campaigns on behalf of the Russian government.[519]

- [redacted]

(U) Manafort's involvement with the GRU hack-and-leak operation is largely unknown. Kilimnik was in sustained contact with Manafort before, during, and after the GRU cyber and influence operations, but the Committee did not obtain reliable, direct evidence that Kilimnik and Manafort discussed the GRU hack-and-leak operation. As noted above, however, the content of the majority of the communications between Manafort and Kilimnik is unknown. Some of these communications involved in-person meetings; no objective record of their content exists.

(U) Two pieces of information, however, raise the possibility of Manafort's potential connection to the hack-and-leak operations.

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[515] [redacted]

[516] [redacted]

[517] [redacted]

[518] [redacted] U.K. National Cyber Security Centre, "Reckless campaign of cyber attacks by Russian military intelligence service exposed," October 3, 2018, [redacted]

[519] **(U)** *Ibid.*

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted] Yohai, who is no longer married to Manafort's daughter, pleaded guilty to conspiracy to commit wire fraud in 2018, and again in 2019, and was sentenced to 110 months in federal prison.[522] Manafort appears to have been in contact with Yohai during key periods in 2016. For instance, Yohai appeared on the call list Manafort maintained on his Campaign Microsoft Outlook calendar in early June 2016.[523] During approximately this same time, Yohai was involved in [redacted] with Manafort, including [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[520] [redacted]

[521] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 4–5.

[522] (U) U.S. Attorney's Office, Central District of California, "Serial Con Artist Sentenced to More Than 9 Years in Federal Prison for $6.7 Million Swindle of Investors, Family and Friends," November 12, 2019.

[523] (U) Call list, Manafort, June 9, 2016 (DJTFP00022279).

[524] [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted] the Committee has no information to corroborate this report's account of [redacted] However, the Committee was able to corroborate most other aspects of this same report.[526]

ix. (U) The "Ledger" and Manafort's Resignation

(U) On August 14, Steve Bannon was brought on to the Trump Campaign as CEO. Bannon recalled that a condition of his joining the Campaign that he worked out with Trump was that Manafort would not be fired, which Bannon explained was because he did not want to have any "bloodletting" related to the Campaign, which could be a distraction.[527] Instead, Bannon understood that Manafort would "be able to stick around as a figurehead."[528] However, Bannon recalled that later that same day, Manafort told him that *The New York Times* was nearing publication on a story alleging Manafort was involved in cash payments in Ukraine totaling

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[525] [redacted]

[526] [redacted]

[527] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Steve Bannon, November 19, 2018, p. 58.

[528] (U) *Ibid.*

[redacted]

[redacted]

millions of dollars.[529] That evening, *The New York Times* published the article with the headline "Secret Ledger in Ukraine Lists Cash for Donald Trump's Campaign Chief."[530]

(U) Manafort told the FBI that he had previously briefed Trump on his past work in Ukraine.[531] Manafort said that he did this because he wanted Trump prepared in case Manafort's Ukraine work or the Deripaska issue popped up.[532] Manafort recalled that he did not go into detail because Trump was not interested.[533] However, when information about Manafort's work in Ukraine came out, Manafort told the FBI that Trump was upset.[534]

(U) On August 18, 2016, Kilimnik told a journalist in private that he had "almost daily contacts with Manafort these days on this 'Ukraine crisis.'"[535] Kilimnik also made reference to communications with Gates.[536] However, Kilimnik claimed:

> *What others do not see is that Manafort is building a parallel system of HQ, pretty similar to what he has done in Ukraine for PofR, which plays a crucial role in key moments. Whether he has time to finish it is another story.*[537]

(U) On August 19, 2016, Manafort resigned from the Trump Campaign. That same day, Kilimnik wrote to an associate that "Manafort will make billions on this free PR working for the same people he used to work. And probably get a lot of new clients with his newly found fame."[538]

6. (U) Manafort's Activities For the Remainder of the Campaign

(U) After leaving the Trump Campaign in August 2016, Manafort stayed in touch with Trump, Kushner, and others on the Trump Campaign. Manafort also stayed in touch with Kilimnik, and Kilimnik was aware of Manafort's continuing communications with the

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[529] **(U)** *Ibid.* pp. 58–59.
[530] **(U)** Andrew E. Kramer, et al., "Secret Ledger in Ukraine Lists Cash for Donald Trump's Campaign Chief," *The New York Times*, August 14, 2016.
[531] **(U)** FBI, FD-302, Manafort 9/11/2018.
[532] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[533] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[534] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[535] **(U)** Email, Kilimnik to Marson, August 18, 2016 (SSCI 2017-4885-3-000414–16). The Committee was unable to obtain these communications between Kilimnik and Manafort.
[536] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[537] **(U)** *Ibid.* Gates relayed a very similar statement to the SCO, using the same term. Gates explained that, in Ukraine, Manafort had created a "parallel system" of people loyal to him inside PoR. According to Gates, Manafort did the same thing in the Trump Campaign with Parscale, Miller, Fabrizio, Dearborn, and others. Gates believed Manafort maintained these connections when he left the Campaign. FBI, FD-302, Gates 2/2/2018.
[538] **(U)** Email, Kilimnik to Marson, August 18, 2016 (SSCI 2017-4885-3-000414–416).

[redacted]

[redacted]

Campaign. Some evidence suggests that Manafort may have been involved in outreach from the Ukrainian government to the Trump Campaign during this time.

i. (U) Manafort's Continued Contact with the Trump Campaign; Kilimnik's awareness of these contacts

(U) After his resignation on August 19, 2016, Manafort stayed in touch with the Trump Campaign through repeated contacts with Trump, Kushner, and others.

(U) Manafort told the FBI that, after his resignation, but before the election, he and Trump had spoken "a few times."[539] While Manafort claimed to have not recalled the substance of these interactions, he did recall giving Trump advice on Trump's performance in the second debate and giving Trump ideas for the third debate.[540] Separate records indicate that Manafort and Trump spoke on the night of the election.[541]

(U) Manafort also told the SCO that from the time he left the Campaign until the election, he met with Kushner "once or twice" and spoke to Kushner on the phone "five or six times."[542] Manafort said that both sides reached out to one another.[543] According to Manafort, Donald Trump and others in his family were aware that Manafort and Kushner were in contact and Kushner "thought it would be good" for Manafort to call Trump.[544] Kushner told the Committee that he and Manafort were in contact, but that this contact occurred "infrequently." Kushner recalled Manafort telling him to "watch the Rust Belt; that's where you're going to have big success. . . . looking at the demographics and the data, he felt very strongly that the Midwest was an area that we should be very focused on."[545] Kushner did not share any more of the substance of his discussions with Manafort, although emails suggest Manafort continued to provide input on Campaign strategy and encouraged the use of WikiLeaks information. For instance, on October 21, 2016, Manafort sent Kushner an email with an attached memorandum that provided strategy guidance recommending that the Campaign should depict Clinton "as the failed and corrupt champion of the establishment," because "Wikileaks provides the Trump

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[539] (U) FBI, FD-302, Manafort 9/13/2018.
[540] (U) *Ibid.*
[541] (U) Email, Manafort to Graff, November 18, 2016 (TRUMPORG_76_004856).
[542] (U) FBI, FD-302, Manafort 9/13/2018. Email communications suggest that Manafort and Kushner met in-person after Manafort was fired, but prior to Election Day. For instance, in a September 13, 2016 email, Fabrizio told Manafort that he was aware that Manafort was planning on "having breakfast with Jared tomorrow." Email, Manafort to Fabrizio and Gates, September 13, 2016 (FAB008949).
[543] (U) FBI, FD-302, Manafort 9/13/2018.
[544] (U) *Ibid.*
[545] (U) Transcript of the Interview with Jared Kushner, July 24, 2017, p. 108.

[redacted]

[redacted]

campaign the ability to make the case in a very credible way – by using the words of Clinton, its campaign officials and DNC members."[546]

(U) On November 5, 2016, Manafort sent a document entitled "Securing the Victory" to at least Trump, Kushner, and Reince Priebus.[547] The document predicted a Trump victory in the election just days away. In the two-page memorandum, Manafort counseled that the Trump team must prepare the public and media for this result or else face rejection and backlash. In particular, Manafort voiced a concern that the Clinton Campaign would "move immediately to discredit the DT victory and claim voter fraud and cyber-fraud, including the claim that the Russians have hacked into the voting machines and tampered with the results."[548] Manafort told the SCO that that he had "no information" that Russia hacked voting machines.[549] For a full accounting of Russian cyber activities against U.S. electoral infrastructure, including the penetration of a state at this time, *see infra* Vol. I. Manafort also sent the memorandum to Sean Hannity, although he said he did not expect Hannity to talk to Trump about it.[550]

(U) Kilimnik was aware that Manafort remained in contact with Trump and the Campaign generally and took an interest in making use of the connection. Kilimnik told Patten that Manafort stayed in the background, but still maintained contact and stayed close to Trump.[551]

ii. (U) Manafort's Involvement in Ukrainian Government Outreach to the Campaign

(U) With Gates's help, Manafort was involved in outreach from the Ukrainian Embassy in the United States to the Trump Campaign in September 2016. This outreach came through Frank Mermoud, a former Department of State official who was involved in organizing the

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[546] (U) *SCO Report*, Vol. I, p. 141.

[547] (U) Email, Priebus to Bannon, November 5, 2016 (SKB_SSCI-0000961); FBI, FD-302, Manafort 9/13/2018. While Manafort recalled in his interview with the SCO that he sent the memorandum to Trump's executive assistant, the Trump Organization did not produce any such document as part of the Committee's request. Because of other known deficiencies in the Trump Organization's document responses, the Committee does not draw the conclusion that no document was sent. Not all senior individuals in the Trump Campaign engaged in substantive interactions with Manafort after his departure. For instance, while Steve Bannon was the recipient of short messages of encouragement from Manafort and responded in kind, Bannon made clear internally that he thought further interactions with Manafort would negatively impact the Campaign. In response to Priebus forwarding Manafort's November 5, 2016 memorandum to him, Bannon responded, "We need to avoid manafort like he has a disease. Dems will say that the Russians are helping us win." Email, Bannon to Priebus, November 5, 2016 (SKB_SSCI-0000964).

[548] (U) Email, Priebus to Bannon, November 5, 2016 (SKB_SSCI-0000964).

[549] (U) FBI, FD-302, Manafort 9/13/2018.

[550] (U) *Ibid.*

[551] (U) FBI, FD-302, Patten 5/30/2018.

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diplomatic outreach for events surrounding the July 2016 Republican National Convention in Cleveland. At the Convention, Mermoud had introduced Manafort to then-Ukrainian Ambassador to the United States Valeriy Chaly.[552] According to Mermoud, Chaly was "upset" about the changes to the Republican platform related to Ukraine.[553] Mermoud recalled that Manafort and Chaly had spoken on the convention floor for several minutes about Ukraine, which had appeared to "mollify" Chaly's concerns.[554]

(U) On September 14, 2016, Mermoud reached out to Gates, who at the time was still serving on the Trump Campaign, with "something of extreme interest."[555] Earlier that day Chaly had emailed Mermoud a request for help arranging a meeting between Poroshenko and Trump during Poroshenko's upcoming trip to the United Nations General Assembly.[556] Later that day, Mermoud texted Gates, asking if "Paul" had anything to say about their earlier conversation about the meeting.[557] Gates responded to Mermoud's text, "Yes. Will call shortly. Going to try and do it."[558] Gates relayed a proposed day for the Trump-Poroshenko meeting through Mermoud, but Chaly responded that day would not work for the Ukrainian side.[559] Mermoud and Gates discussed the possibility of a call between Trump and Poroshenko instead.[560] Gates told Mermoud that he supported the idea for a call, but instructed him not to "say anything to chalay about a call until I speak with Paul and our scheduler."[561] The Committee did not obtain information indicating that a phone call between Trump and Poroshenko occurred during the campaign.

(U) Mermoud was under the impression from Gates that Manafort supported the idea of a call or meeting and was involved in it, even though Manafort had already left the Campaign.[562] Mermoud explained to the Committee that it was his understanding that Manafort was "still talking to candidate Trump quite a bit."[563] Mermoud further stated that Gates told him that

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[552] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Frank Mermoud, November 29, 2017, p. 51.
[553] (U) *Ibid.* For more on the RNC Platform Changes, *see infra* Vol. 5, Sec. III.L.3.
[554] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 53.
[555] (U) Text Message, Mermoud to Gates, September 14, 2016 (ORP3000001).
[556] (U) Email Chaly to Mermoud, September 14, 2016 (ORP5000103).
[557] (U) Text Message, Mermoud to Gates, September 14, 2016 (ORP3000001).
[558] (U) Text Message, Gates to Mermoud, September 14, 2016 (ORP3000001).
[559] (U) Text Messages, Gates and Mermoud, September 15–16, 2016 (ORP3000001–2); Emails, Chaly and Mermoud, September 14–16, 2016 (ORP5000103) ("Paul Manafort, who I introduced you to on the Convention floor in Cleveland, has been engaged in this effort to assist in getting your President to meet with the candidate. . . . Paul will continue to help to promote that and facilitate efforts of communication behind the scenes.").
[560] (U) Text Messages, Gates and Mermoud, September 16, 2016 (ORP3000002).
[561] (U) Text Message, Gates to Mermoud, September 16, 2016 (ORP3000002).
[562] (U) Mermoud Tr., p. 74.
[563] (U) *Ibid.* p. 74.

[redacted]

[redacted]

Manafort was "still involved, particularly at this juncture, on political issues relating to the campaign."[564]

7. (U) Manafort's Activities After the Election

(U) Many of Manafort's activities during the post-election period remain unknown to the Committee, making a complete account of Manafort's conduct difficult to reliably determine.

(U) However, the Committee was able to locate or substantiate numerous meetings and communications which, while representing only fragmentary and incomplete information, reveal that Manafort actively coordinated with both Kilimnik and associates of Deripaska on multiple lines of effort. Some of these lines of effort continued themes first raised during his tenure on the Trump Campaign. These included a plan to return Viktor Yanukovych to power in Ukraine and resolve the conflict in eastern Ukraine in a manner beneficial to Russia. They also included efforts to resolve the Pericles issue with Deripaska and return to a cooperative relationship, including on unspecified areas as the result of a discreet meeting in Spain in early 2017. Other lines of effort took shape only after Manafort left the Campaign, including efforts involving Kilimnik, Deripaska, and others to counter the ongoing allegations against them in the press and allegations against Russian interference in the U.S. election more generally.

i. [redacted] Kilimnik Seeks to Leverage His Relationship with Manafort; Coordinates [redacted]

(U) Immediately after Trump's victory, Kilimnik began considering how to leverage his relationship with Manafort for influence. One example of this involved Patten, whom Kilimnik appeared interested in getting appointed to a position inside the U.S. Government. The day after the election, Kilimnik raised with Patten the idea of "talking to Paul" in order to find a job for Patten in the incoming administration.[565] Kilimnik raised this idea again the following day, asking Patten "[s]hould I raise you with Paul, so that they could at least have somebody smart there?"[566] Kilimnik simultaneously claimed that he wanted to be able to continue to make money with Patten as part of their joint consulting business, which Patten's joining the administration would prevent. However, Kilimnik continued to push the issue, telling Patten that "[y]our knowledge of the region is superb, and you could do your country a favor by running policy not based on false perceptions, but on facts."[567] Patten said he declined Kilimnik's

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[564] (U) *Ibid.* p. 76.
[565] (U) Email, Kilimnik to Patten, November 9, 2016 (SSCI 2017-4885-3-000289).
[566] (U) Email, Kilimnik to Patten, November 10, 2016 (SSCI 2017-4885-3-000287).
[567] (U) Email, Kilimnik to Patten, November 10, 2016 (SSCI 2017-4885-3-000286). Kilimnik also told Patten that his "egoistic sense is against mentioning your name in response to Manafort's question." *Ibid.* It is unclear what Kilimnik's mention of "Manafort's question" refers to, although it seems to suggest that Manafort asked Kilimnik

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offer.[568] Kilimnik ultimately said he would tell Manafort that Patten was engaged in other matters.

(U) Kilimnik also displayed interest in using Manafort to exert influence on politics elsewhere. For instance, in December 2016, Kilimnik, who knew of Patten's continuing work on political issues in Iraq, sent Patten a request for information about Patten's "Iraq solution" which Kilimnik thought might be useful to share with Manafort.[569] Kilimnik explained to Patten that he was interested in using Manafort as a means to influence both the Trump Administration and the Russian government to effect a certain political outcome.[570] Patten agreed that "PJM could be instrumental in a solution if he will push it actively."[571]

[redacted] For more information on Oganov's ties [redacted] *see infra* Vol. 5, Sec. III.A.8.i.c.

- [redacted]

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for recommendations for administration positions on Ukraine. Gates recalled that in January 2017, Manafort claimed he was using intermediaries, including Kushner, to get people appointed to administration positions. Additionally, Manafort said he had other people helping him, including Rudy Giuliani. FBI, FD-302, Gates, 11/14/2018.

[568] (U) FBI, FD-302, Patten 5/30/2018.

[569] (U) Email, Kilimnik to Patten, December 21, 2016 (SSCI 2017-4885-3-000234).

[570] (U) *Ibid.* ("At some point I am very interested in a page on Iraq solution. It will be very timely in early January. Again, not urgent, but pls think if there is anything new and how we can organize DT through PJM and Russia into accepting what is in everybody's best interests. Except probably Iran, but who cares.").

[571] (U) Email, Patten to Kilimnik, December 21, 2016 (SSCI 2017-4885-3-000234). Patten may have written a one page Iraq solution proposal and provided it to Kilimnik, which Patten assumed would be provided to Manafort. At the time of the December email, Patten knew that Kilimnik was in Moscow and it was possible that Kilimnik shared this email with someone in Russia, but Patten did not know if Kilimnik did share it. FBI, FD-302, Patten 6/12/2018.

[572] [redacted] World Policy Conference, "Georgy Oganov," 2019; [redacted]

[573] [redacted]

[574] [redacted]

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[redacted] The extent of coordination between Manafort's attorney and Oganov is unknown.

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ii. (U) Manafort and Kilimnik Communicate with Yanukovych in Russia Related to Ukraine Plan; Attempt Communications Countermeasures

(U) Kilimnik specifically sought to leverage Manafort's contacts with the incoming Trump administration to advance Kilimnik's agenda, particularly with regard to the Ukraine plan. Kilimnik thought that Trump could solve Ukraine's problems because of Manafort's connection to Trump.[579]

(U) Kilimnik and Manafort secretly coordinated on Ukraine matters, practicing communications security through the continued use of foldering. On December 8, 2016, Kilimnik drafted an email and saved it in his kkilimnik@dmpint.com email account.[580] Manafort acknowledged reading this email, despite the fact that it was not sent.[581]

(U) In the email, Kilimnik stated that he had a meeting with "BG" today, a reference to Yanukovych.[582] Kilimnik relayed that Yanukovych had asked Kilimnik to pass on several items to Manafort.[583] Among them were messages about a plan to resolve the Ukraine conflict which

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[575] [redacted]
[576] [redacted]
[577] [redacted]
[578] [redacted]
[579] (U) FBI, FD-302, Patten 5/30/2018.
[580] (U) *SCO Report*, Vol. I, p. 140.
[581] (U) *Ibid.*
[582] (U) Email, Kilimnik to Kilimnik, December 8, 2016 [redacted] *SCO Report*, Vol. 1, p. 139. According to Gates, both Manafort and Kilimnik sometimes called Yanukovych "big guy." FBI, FD-302, Gates 1/30/2018. Other historical communications from Kilimnik refer to Yanukovych as the "BG." Email, Kilimnik to Kasanof, November 27, 2013 (CDP-2017-00011G-001071).
[583] (U) Email, Kilimnik to Kilimnik, December 8, 2016 [redacted] Kilimnik appeared to hide his Ukraine-related efforts with Manafort from Patten, his associate and business partner. In late November 2016, Patten was working to coordinate the hiring of a new social media company and digital vendor for

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[redacted]

involved Yanukovych, the same plan that Kilimnik had raised with Manafort during the August 2, 2016 meeting.[584] The email said:

> *Russians at the very top level are in principle not against this plan and will work with the BG to start the process of uniting DNR and LNR into one entity, with security issues resolved (i.e. Russian troops withdrawn, radical criminal elements eliminated). The rest will be done by the BG and his people.*[585]

(U) Kilimnik further wrote that "[a]ll that is required to start the process is a very minor 'wink' (or slight push) from DT saying 'he wants peace in Ukraine and Donbass back in Ukraine' and a decision to be a 'special representative' and manage this process."[586] Following that, Kilimnik suggested that Manafort "could start the process and within 10 days visit Russia (BG guarantees your reception at the very top level, cutting through all the bullshit and getting down to business), Ukraine, and key EU capitals."[587] The email also suggested that once then-Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko understood this "message" from the United States, the process "will go very fast and DT could have peace in Ukraine basically within a few months after inauguration."[588] Kilimnik promised to brief Manafort "in detail" when he next saw him.[589]

[redacted] Separately, OB officials conducted outreach to Manafort on the peace plan. [redacted]

[redacted]

work in Ukraine and asked Kilimnik, "[A]re we still actively not wanting PJM to find out, or does it not matter?"[583] Kilimnik responded that "PJM is NOT part of this whole story, and we do not want him to find out under any circumstances." Emails, Patten and Kilimnik, November 27, 2016 (SSCI 2017-4885-3-000264). Days later, Kilimnik would draft the foldered email privately laying out a Ukraine plan for Manafort.

[584] (U) Email, Kilimnik to Kilimnik, December 8, 2016 [redacted]

[585] (U) *Ibid.*

[586] (U) *Ibid.*

[587] (U) *Ibid.*

[588] (U) *Ibid.*

[589] (U) *Ibid.* Kilimnik also told Manafort that Yanukovych believed the plan would be "hugely beneficial for you personally because this will open way to a much higher status for you for fixing Ukraine problem and will also open way to a lot of serious business deals."

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

iii. [redacted] Kilimnik and Boyarkin Arrange a Meeting for Manafort in Madrid; Manafort [redacted]

(U) Prior to Kilimnik's December 8, 2016 email, Manafort also communicated with Kilimnik about setting up a meeting with a Deripaska representative.

[redacted]

[redacted] Around this same time, Kilimnik and Manafort discussed the meeting via encrypted chat. A [redacted] of some of these encrypted messages between Kilimnik and Manafort taken from [redacted] and obtained by the Committee suggests the meeting was designed to be about "recreating old friendship" and "global politics." The below represents the exchange as captured by [redacted]:

Kilimnik:

> *3) V understands where you can potentially come and is working with his boss to get a meeting organized. My understanding is that it will be about recreating old friendship and talking about global politics, not about money or Pericles.*

Kilimnik:

> *Wonder if I can/should share this with V*

Manafort:

> *Yes you should share. Say I am confused*
> *–Nothing to negotiate*
> *–No rush to finish*

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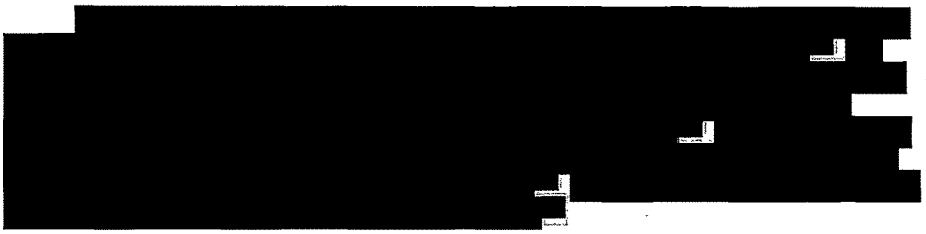
590 [redacted]
591 [redacted]
592 **(U)** *Ibid.*

[redacted]

I need this finished before Jan 20.[593]



[redacted] On January 8, 2017, hours after returning to the United States from a trip to Cuba, Manafort flew to Madrid, Spain.[598] Manafort met with Oganov in Madrid during what he claimed was a one-hour breakfast meeting.[599] Manafort told the FBI that, at the meeting, Oganov told him that he needed to meet with Deripaska in person to resolve the Pericles matter.[600] Manafort agreed but said he would not travel to Ukraine or Russia for the meeting.[601]

(U) Manafort provided false and misleading information about the purpose, content, and follow-up to the meeting with Oganov to both the Committee and the SCO. In particular, Manafort told the Committee in a written response through counsel that he attended a meeting on or around January 17, 2017, in Madrid with "Georgy Organov."[602] The written response claimed that the meeting was "regarding a private litigation matter involving Oleg Deripaska."[603] Despite admitting his attendance at the meeting to the Committee in May 2017, Manafort initially denied

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[593] [redacted] Messages, Kilimnik and Manafort [redacted] The text message string, including Kilimnik's first two points which presumably were included in his message, is cut off because only [redacted] of this conversation was available to the Committee. Almost all messages on encrypted applications between Kilimnik and Manafort were unavailable to the Committee.

[594] [redacted]

[595] (U) *Ibid.*

[596] (U) *Ibid.*

[597] (U) *Ibid.*

[598] [redacted] (showing Manafort's flight to Madrid as scheduled to arrive in Madrid on January 9, 2017, at 10:25 a.m. local time).

[599] (U) FBI, FD-302, Manafort 9/11/2018.

[600] (U) *Ibid.*

[601] (U) *Ibid.*

[602] (U) Letter, Brown and Shapiro to SSCI, May 9, 2017. "Organov" is an apparent misspelling of Oganov.

[603] (U) *Ibid.*

[redacted]

[redacted]

attending the meeting in his interviews with the SCO in the fall of 2018.[604] He eventually admitted to attending the meeting with Oganov, and then repeated what he described in his letter to the Committee—that the meeting had been arranged by his lawyers and concerned only the Pericles lawsuit.[605]

[redacted] Manafort's claims about the meeting were false. As the above messages show, the meeting was not designed to be about Pericles, but was also about recreating the "old friendship" and "global politics." Further, [redacted] that was never revealed to investigators.[606]

- [redacted]

[redacted]

(U) Manafort returned to the United States from Madrid on January 12, 2017.[615] Three days later, Manafort sent an email to K.T. McFarland, who at the time was designated to become

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[604] (U) *SCO Report*, Vol. I, p. 142.
[605] (U) *Ibid.*
[606] [redacted]
[607] (U) *Ibid.* It is unclear if Kilimnik gained this knowledge from personally attending the meeting, or from receiving a readout from Manafort or Oganov immediately after the meeting.
[608] (U) *Ibid.*
[609] (U) *Ibid.*
[610] (U) *Ibid.*
[611] (U) *Ibid.*
[612] (U) *Ibid.*
[613] (U) *Ibid.*
[614] (U) *Ibid.*
[615] (U) Email, Manafort to McFarland, January 15. 2017 [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

the number two official in Trump's National Security Council and was serving as Flynn's deputy on the Transition.[616] In the email, Manafort asked McFarland if she was in Washington D.C. that week and, if so, if she was willing to meet informally.[617] Manafort said he had "some important information I want to share that I picked up on my travels over the last month."[618]

(U) Before responding to Manafort, McFarland forwarded Manafort's request to Flynn and inquired whether she should agree to meet with Manafort.[619] Flynn responded by recommending that McFarland not meet with Manafort "until we're in the hot seats," presumably a reference to their taking official roles in the U.S. Government.[620] It is unclear what Manafort hoped to speak with McFarland about, but he claimed to the SCO it involved matters related to Cuba, not Russia or Ukraine.[621]

iv. (U) Kilimnik and Lyovochkin Travel to Washington D.C. for Inauguration, Meet with Manafort and Discuss Ukraine

(U) Shortly after Manafort and Oganov's meeting in Madrid, Kilimnik and Lyovochkin traveled to the United States for the presidential inauguration in January 2017. On the trip, Kilimnik and Lyovochkin secretly met with Manafort. The content of this meeting is almost entirely unknown, although Manafort claimed that they discussed the Ukraine plan.[622]

[redacted] In early January 2017, Kilimnik asked Patten to obtain tickets to the inauguration through the Presidential Inaugural Committee (PIC). According to Patten, Kilimnik made this request on behalf of Lyovochkin.[623] Patten eventually obtained tickets through a straw purchaser, intended for Kilimnik, Lyovochkin, and Vadim Novinsky, a Ukrainian businessman and politician affiliated with the OB.[624] Only Kilimnik and Lyovochkin ultimately traveled to the United States in order to attend. Kilimnik departed from Moscow and landed at Washington

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[616] (U) *Ibid.*
[617] (U) *Ibid.*
[618] (U) *Ibid.*
[619] (U) *Ibid.*
[620] (U) *Ibid.*
[621] [redacted] *SCO Report*, Vol. 1, p. 142. In particular, Manafort claimed that it dealt with an effort Manafort undertook with Brad Zackson, who had arranged a meeting between Manafort and "Castro's son" in Havana, Cuba. FBI, FD-302, Manafort 9/11/2018; *see also* [redacted] (showing Manafort and Zackson on same flight booking to Havana).
[622] (U) *SCO Report*, Vol. 1, p. 142; FBI, FD-302, Manafort 9/11/2018.
[623] (U) It is illegal for foreign nationals to purchase tickets to the PIC's events.
[624] (U) FBI, FD-302, Patten 5/22/2018.

[redacted]

[redacted]

Dulles on January 19, 2017.[625] That evening, Patten, Kilimnik, Lyovochkin, and a pollster who had worked with Kilimnik and Patten in Ukraine had dinner together.[626]

(U) The day of the inauguration, Patten, Lyovochkin, and Kilimnik had lunch in Alexandria, Virginia.[627] Kilimnik told Patten that he was nervous that he would see Manafort because Kilimnik knew that Manafort resided in Alexandria.[628] Patten believed Kilimnik was trying to distance himself from Manafort in furtherance of his work in Ukraine.[629] Unbeknownst to Patten, Kilimnik and Lyovochkin met with Manafort at the Westin in Alexandria during this trip.[630]

(U) According to Gates, Manafort had at some point mentioned the possibility of returning to do work in Ukraine, and the only name Manafort had mentioned in this context was Lyovochkin.[631] As noted above, Lyovochkin had paid for Manafort's work in Ukraine in prior years, and Kilimnik maintained an exceptionally close relationship with Lyovochkin throughout 2016 and 2017. While the Committee has no further evidence of direct communications between Lyovochkin and Manafort after this meeting, Manafort continued to work closely on Ukraine issues with Kilimnik.

(U) According to Patten, he and Kilimnik watched the inauguration in the lobby of the Mandarin Oriental hotel in Washington, D.C., where Patten understood Kilimnik was staying.[632] That evening, Patten and Lyovochkin briefly attended an inaugural ball. Kilimnik told Patten that he was staying in his hotel room.[633]

[redacted] Kilimnik departed from the United States on the evening of January 22, 2017, returning to Moscow.[634]

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[625] [redacted] Kilimnik passed through U.S. customs at Washington Dulles at 4:48 p.m. local time.

[626] (U) Emails, Patten and Kilimnik, January 18–19, 2017 (SSCI 2017-4885-3-000218–219); FBI, FD-302, Patten 5/22/2018.

[627] (U) FBI, FD-302, Patten 11/27/2018. In a separate debriefing, Patten stated that the three had dinner at "EON" in Alexandria, but did not specify the date. This may have been a reference to Restaurant Eve, a now-closed restaurant in Alexandria, Virginia.

[628] (U) *Ibid.*

[629] (U) *Ibid.*

[630] (U) *SCO Report*, Vol. 1, p. 142.

[631] (U) FBI, FD-302, Gates 10/25/2018. Gates also recalled that at some point around the inauguration, Manafort had said that nobody would care about Crimea because Russia's takeover was already complete. According to Gates, Manafort had previously done polling in 2014 regarding Ukrainians' views on Crimea.

[632] (U) FBI, FD-302, Patten 11/27/2018; 5/22/2018.

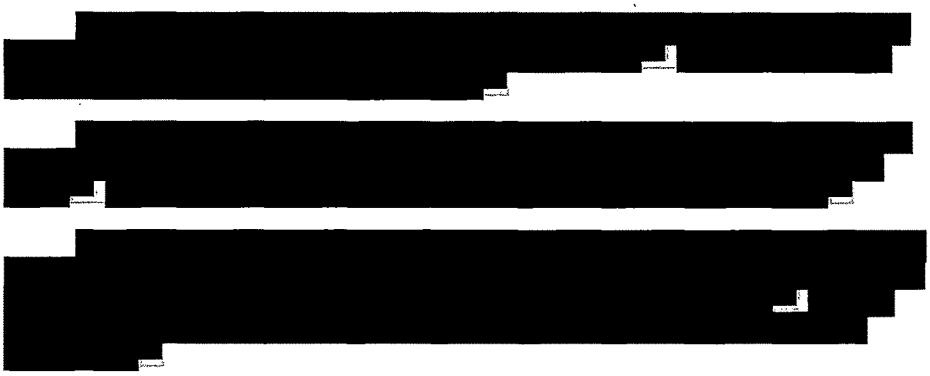
[633] (U) FBI, FD-302, Patten 11/27/2018.

[634] [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

v. (U) Kilimnik and Manafort Meet in Madrid; Discuss Counter-Narratives and Ukraine



[redacted] On February 23, 2017, Kilimnik flew from Kyiv to Moscow, where he stayed for four days before flying to Madrid on February 26, 2017.[641] The Committee has no insight into Kilimnik's activities in Moscow during this time. Kilimnik was scheduled to arrive in Madrid on the morning of February 26, 2017.[642] On February 25, 2017, Manafort departed from New York City and arrived in Madrid on a flight scheduled to arrive on the morning of February 26, 2017.[643]

(U) After arriving in Madrid, Kilimnik and Manafort met. The majority of what Manafort and Kilimnik said during this meeting is unknown.[644] In his interviews with the SCO, Manafort initially denied meeting with Kilimnik in Madrid. However, once confronted with

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[635] [redacted]
[636] (U) *Ibid.*
[637] (U) *Ibid.*
[638] (U) *Ibid.*
[639] (U) *Ibid.*
[640] (U) *Ibid.*
[641] [redacted]
[642] (U) *Ibid.*
[643] [redacted] Manafort traveled on a booking made with a second passenger, Hector Hoyos-Aliff. *Ibid.* [redacted] The Committee did not engage Hoyos-Aliff.
[644] (U) Manafort's account of the meeting, which came after repeated false statements about whether a meeting with Kilimnik occurred, is the Committee's sole source information about the meeting.

[redacted]

[redacted]

travel records showing that Kilimnik was also in Madrid at the same time, Manafort ultimately admitted that he met with Kilimnik in Madrid during the February trip.[645]

(U) According to Manafort, Kilimnik had been putting together background information on the status of inquiries by reporters and investigators about Manafort's activities in Kyiv, at Manafort's request.[646] Manafort claimed that Kilimnik came to Madrid to update him on the work of the National Anti-Corruption Bureau related to the ledger.[647] Manafort further claimed that he met with Kilimnik for an hour and a half at Manafort's hotel, where Kilimnik told him that the criminal investigation in Ukraine was "going nowhere."[648] Manafort claimed he did not ask Kilimnik to Madrid in order to talk about the peace plan, but he said Kilimnik would have raised it.[649]

[redacted] Kilimnik was scheduled to depart Madrid and return to Moscow on a flight departing just after midnight early on February 27, 2017.[650] Manafort subsequently traveled to Shanghai and possibly other locations, and did not return to the United States until over a week later.[651]

vi. (U) Russian Influence Operations to Undermine Investigations into Russian Interference

[redacted] The Committee observed numerous Russian-government actors from late 2016 until at least January 2020 consistently spreading overlapping false narratives which sought to discredit investigations into Russian interference in the 2016 U.S. elections and spread false information about the events of 2016. Manafort, Kilimnik, Deripaska, and others associated with Deripaska participated in these influence operations. As part of these efforts, Manafort and Kilimnik both sought to promote the narrative that Ukraine, not Russia, had interfered in the 2016 U.S. election and that the "ledger" naming payments to Manafort was fake. These efforts coincided with a [redacted] and related efforts by Deripaska to discredit investigations into Russian meddling.[652] Similarities in narrative content, the use of common dissemination platforms, the involvement of Kremlin agents Kilimnik and Deripaska, and [redacted] all suggest that these influence efforts were coordinated to some degree.

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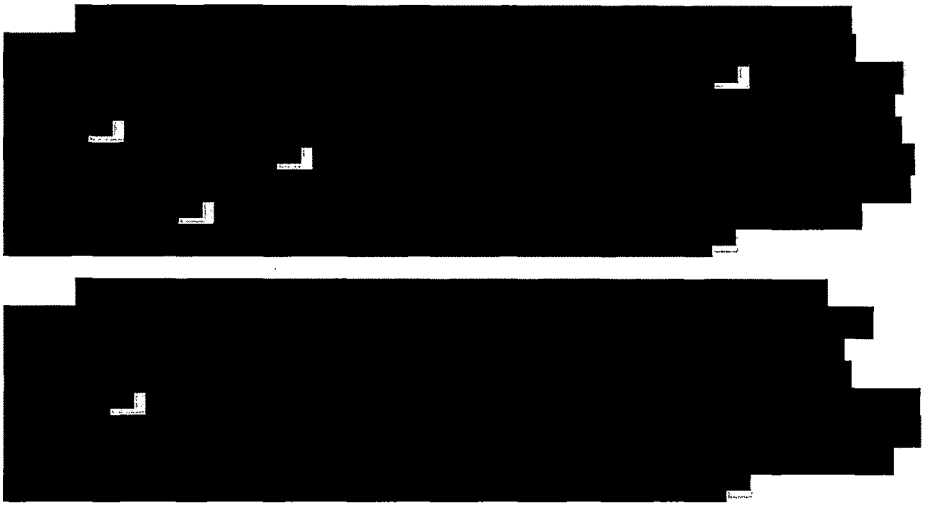
[645] (U) FBI, FD-302, Manafort 9/13/2018.
[646] (U) *Ibid.*
[647] (U) *Ibid.*
[648] (U) *Ibid.*
[649] (U) *Ibid.*
[650] [redacted]
[651] [redacted]
[652] [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

(U) These influence efforts took place in the larger context of existing Russian information operations targeting Ukraine and the United States.



(U) In August 2016, immediately after news articles regarding Manafort's work in Ukraine, Manafort and Kilimnik began discussing the Ukrainian government's supposed involvement in the reporting. Manafort claimed that then-Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko was behind the media campaign to "smear" Manafort.[660] Manafort said Poroshenko had fabricated the "black ledger" and was supporting Hillary Clinton.[661] Manafort recalled that, at some point, Lyovochkin heard from Poroshenko that the U.S. Embassy was pressuring Ukraine's National Anti-Corruption Bureau for information on Manafort.[662] Kilimnik promoted the

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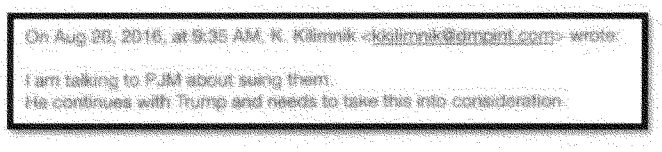
[653] [redacted]
[654] (U) *Ibid.*
[655] (U) *Ibid.*
[656] (U) *Ibid.*
[657] (U) *Ibid.*
[658] (U) *Ibid.*
[659] (U) *Ibid.*
[660] (U) FBI, FD-302, Gates 2/2/2018.
[661] (U) *Ibid.*
[662] (U) FBI, FD-302, Manafort 10/1/2018. Manafort did not specify if this came directly from Lyovochkin, or through Kilimnik. Gates also recalled that Lyovochkin reached out to Manafort once or twice. The first time was to

[redacted]

[redacted]

narrative that the Ukrainian authorities had "artificially instigated" stories related to Manafort's work in Ukraine, including the alleged black ledger.[663]

(U) The day after Manafort resigned, Kilimnik was coordinating with Manafort to counteract negative public media. For example, Kilimnik wrote an email to Patten in which he said that he was "talking to PJM" and suggested that they were considering suing reporters who published negative articles about Kilimnik and Manafort.[664]


On Aug 20, 2016, at 9:35 AM, K. Kilimnik <kkilimnik@dmgint.com> wrote:

I am talking to PJM about suing them.
He continues with Trump and needs to take this into consideration.

(U) Kilimnik almost certainly helped arrange some of the first public messaging that Ukraine had interfered in the U.S. election. On August 23, 2016, Kilimnik exchanged emails with Roman Olearchyk, a journalist with the *Financial Times* in Kyiv.[665] Five days later, the *Financial Times* published an article by Olearchyk, entitled "Ukraine's leaders campaign against 'pro-Putin' Trump."[666] The article quoted "a former Yanukovich loyalist now playing a lead role in the Regions party's successor, called Opposition Bloc" who, according to the article, "let loose a string of expletives" and "accused western media of 'working in the interests of Hillary Clinton by trying to bring down Trump.'"[667] After the article was published, Kilimnik shared the article with Gates with the subject "FT - unbelievable."[668] In the email, Kilimnik explained to Gates that "these idiots actually admit that PP's government was deliberately trying to

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discuss a story on Manafort for which reporters had contacted Lyovochkin for comment. This may be a reference to Kilimnik's outreach in late July 2016, *see infra* Vol. 5, Sec.A.5.vii.

[663] (U) Email, Kilimnik to Marson, August 18, 2016 (SSCI 2017-4885-3-000414–416). Kilimnik appeared to be under the impression that Trump believed that Ukraine interfered. Kilimnik made this statement in a private email with a journalist, making the accuracy of the statement is difficult to assess. The Committee's efforts focused on investigating Russian interference in the 2016 election. However, during the course of the investigation, the Committee identified no reliable evidence that the Ukrainian government interfered in the 2016 U.S. election.

[664] (U) Email, Kilimnik to Patten, August 20, 2016 (SSCI 2017-4885-3-000408). Although Kilimnik's reference to these communications with Manafort were reflected in Kilimnik's communication to Patten, the Committee was not able to obtain the underlying communications between Manafort and Kilimnik.

[665] (U) Emails, Kilimnik and Olearchyk, August 23, 2016 (SSCI 2017-4885-3-000384).

[666] (U) Roman Olearchyk, "Ukraine's leaders campaign against 'pro-Putin' Trump," *Financial Times*, August 28, 2016.

[667] (U) *Ibid.* The Committee did not obtain direct evidence that Kilimnik was involved in arranging this quote, but given Kilimnik's communications with Olearchyk, his other efforts to promote the Ukraine interference messages, and his intimate involvement with the OB and its leadership, his involvement seems likely.

[668] (U) Email, Kilimnik to Gates, August 29, 2016 (Gates Production). Kilimnik also sent the article to Patten. Email, Kilimnik to Patten, August 29, 2016 (SSCI 2017-4885-3-000376).

[redacted]

[redacted]

destabilize Trump's campaign."[669] Kilimnik told Gates that "this article is actually helpful to us" and said that he "hope[s] DT sees it."[670]

(U) Kilimnik also updated Manafort on the Ukrainian government's investigation into Manafort and other related investigations, including their key players and progress. In late-November 2016, Kilimnik sent Manafort a summary of an interview with the head of Ukraine's Specialized Anti-Corruption Prosecutor's Office (SAPO).[671] In the email, Kilimnik explained to Manafort that parts of the interview were "very relevant to us" and highlighted several narratives, including around Ukrainian parliamentarian Serhiy Leshchenko's role in the release of the "black ledger":

> *The prosecutor who is investigating the case is basically making a point that a) the scans of alleged "black ledger" appeared in public domain in violation of existing procedures and were used for a specific purpose by Leschenko and Avakov, b) there is no evidence than any of that stuff is real, and have been no real movement since the beginning of investigation in august, and c) there are absolutely no grounds to suspect anyone, especially PJM in this whole thing.*[672]

(U) Manafort appears to have been involved in efforts to arrange a call between Poroshenko and Trump after the election, which appears to have been motivated by Manafort's own interest in countering these same Ukrainian criminal investigations.

- (U) On November 10, 2016, Kilimnik forwarded a foreign press article to Manafort and Gates about the investigations in Ukraine. The article discussed Ukrainian politicians aligned with Poroshenko's political party who had reversed course after Trump's victory and were now accusing Leshchenko of "falsifying evidence" in a Ukrainian criminal case related to Manafort.[673] Kilimnik believed that Leshchenko was "part of the group of deputies who launched [a] PR offensive in coordination with HRC HQ and poured mud over us in the media,

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[669] (U) Email, Kilimnik to Gates, August 29, 2016 (Gates Production).
[670] (U) *Ibid.* Additionally, on September 5, 2016, Manafort and Roger Stone conducted three calls for a total call time of 26 minutes. AT&T toll records, Roger Stone/Drake Ventures. The next day, Stone tweeted about the same *Financial Times* article, stating that "the only interference in the US election is from Hillary's friends in Ukraine." Internet Archive, Capture of twitter.com/rogerjstonejr/status/773162795240189952, October 17, 2016; Thomas Rid, "Who's Really to Blame for the 'Ukraine Did It' Conspiracy Theory?" *The Atlantic*, December 5, 2019.
[671] (U) Email, Kilimnik to Manafort and Gates, November 19, 2016 (SSCI 2017-4885-3-000268–269). The head of SAPO, Nazar Kholodnytskyy, would continue making allegations related to U.S. involvement in the Manafort case and the "black ledger" through 2019. *See, e.g.*, John Solomon, "How the Obama White House engaged Ukraine to give Russia collusion narrative an early boost," *The Hill*, April 25, 2019.
[672] (U) *Ibid.* Arsen Avakov is the Ukrainian Minister of Internal Affairs.
[673] (U) Email, Kilimnik to Manafort and Gates, November 10, 2016 (DJTFP00024681).

[redacted]

[redacted]

using false evidence and copies of something resembling 'black accounting book of PR.'"[674]

- **(U)** After receiving Kilimnik's November 10, 2016 email, Manafort messaged Gates, writing: "This makes the Frank project even more timely. Let me know if Frank [Mermoud] can do what we discussed."[675] According to Gates, Manafort had asked Gates to reach out to Mermoud to offer Manafort's assistance to then-Ukrainian Ambassador to the United States Valeriy Chaly in repairing relationships Manafort believed Poroshenko had damaged.[676]

- **(U)** The next day, November 11, 2016, Mermoud emailed Chaly and asked for a phone call to discuss a matter which Mermoud that Chaly would find "of interest and value."[677] Mermoud informed Gates that he had messaged Chaly "to ask for a phone call."[678] On November 13, 2016, Mermoud forwarded to Gates a message which Mermoud had received from Chaly, stating: "Got it. [We] are in contact with his executive assistant Ms. Rhona Graf. Still waiting for confirmation of slot for a phone call by my President on Tuesday."[679] On November 15, 2016, Trump and Poroshenko held their first call.[680]

- **(U)** After the call, Mermoud and Gates discussed arranging a meeting between Manafort and Chaly. On November 22, 2016, Mermoud messaged Gates: "Ambo just called me . . . . Said he would welcome meeting with Paul. He has some information to share."[681] Gates responded, "Interesting. I will share with P." Several days later, Mermoud informed Gates that he would be meeting with Chaly on a separate subject soon and asked if he had "any guidance" from Manafort.[682] Gates responded that the "[o]nly guidance is to reinforce the

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[674] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[675] **(U)** Email, Manafort to Gates, November 10, 2016 (DJTFP00024681).
[676] **(U)** FBI, FD-302, Gates 2/2/2018.
[677] **(U)** Email, Mermoud to Chaly, November 11, 2016 (ORP5000103).
[678] **(U)** Text Message, Mermoud to Gates, November 13, 2016 (ORP3000003).
[679] **(U)** Text Message, Mermoud to Gates, November 13, 2016 (ORP3000003).
[680] **(U)** "President Poroshenko had a phone call with President-elect Donald Trump," President of Ukraine, Official Website, November 15, 2016. Beyond a brief readout of the call provided by the Ukrainian government, the substance of the call is unknown.
[681] **(U)** Text message, Mermoud to Gates, November 22, 2016 (ORP3000003).
[682] **(U)** Text message, Gates to Mermoud, November 28, 2016 (ORP3000003).

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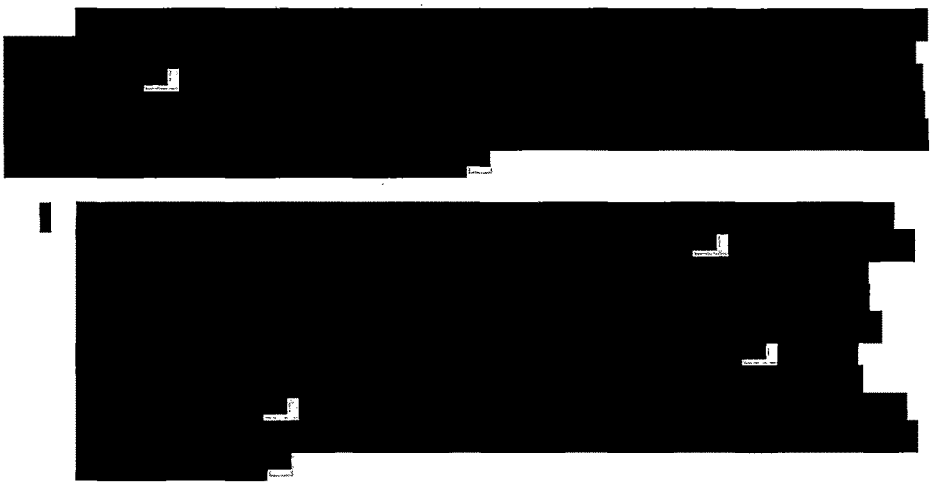
previous points" and to tell Chaly that Manafort had "helped organize the call between the two presidents."[683] Mermoud met with Chaly the next day.[684]



(U) While he was discussing Ukrainian investigations with Manafort, Kilimnik helped write an opinion article under Lyovochkin's name that included similar themes.[691] Kilimnik and Patten circulated a draft of the article in January 2017, which included language suggesting that Ukraine's National Anti-Corruption Bureau (NABU) had "manufactur[ed] a case" against Manafort.[692] The article further insinuated that Trump had no Russia ties, stating that there was

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[683] (U) Text message, Mermoud to Gates, November 28, 2016 (ORP3000003).
[684] (U) Text message, Mermoud to Gates, November 29, 2016 (ORP3000003). After the meeting, Mermoud asked to speak with Gates, presumably on matters related to Manafort.
[685] [redacted] In February 2017, Putin publicly alleged that there was Ukrainian influence in the 2016 U.S. presidential election. Kremlin.ru, "Joint news conference with Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban," February 2, 2017.
[686] [redacted]
[687] [redacted]
[688] (U) *Ibid.*
[689] (U) *Ibid.*
[690] (U) *Ibid.*
[691] (U) Emails, Kilimnik and Patten, January 26, 2017 (SSCI 2017-4885-3-000211–213) (attaching draft opinion article).
[692] (U) *Ibid.*

[redacted]

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"no real fire behind all this smoke."[693] The article ultimately was published by *U.S. News & World Report* on February 6, 2017.[694]

(U) Manafort embraced and promoted the narrative of Ukraine's alleged involvement in the 2016 elections. For example, in a February 2017 meeting with Donald Trump Jr., Manafort discussed how Ukraine, not Russia had meddled in the election. In an email to Trump Jr., Manafort shared a *Politico* article that seems to have underpinned repeated claims by others helping advance this narrative.[695]

From: Paul Manafort [pmanafort@dmpint.com]
Sent: 2/14/2017 4:15:07 PM
To: Donald Trump Jr. [/o=ExchangeLabs/ou=Exchange Administrative Group (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/cn=Recipients/cn=3e47f047265340od85d07849e0f57b42-djtjr]
Subject: Enjoyed our meeting

Don
It was great to reconnect. I am pursuing the topics we discussed and will be back to you.

On a separate note, I have pasted below the Ken Vogel story in Politico that ran about 3 weeks ago. He lays out clearly the conspiracy to implement the disinformation campaign on me between the DNC/Obama Administration and the Govt of Ukraine.The Ukraine Govt has now totally backed off saying that there is no interest ever in me and the ledger was a falsified document.

Of coarse, now with the Flynn resignation, all of this will be dragged up again, with no facts and no basis for anything.
Best
Paul

http://www.politico.com/story/2017/01/ukraine-sabotage-trump-backfire-233446

(U) As described above, in late-February 2017 Manafort met with Kilimnik in Madrid to discuss the Russia-related investigations, including the one in Ukraine, which Kilimnik said was "going nowhere."[696]

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[693] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[694] **(U)** Serhiy Lyovochkin, "Ukraine Can Win in the Trump Age," *U.S. News & World Report*, February 6, 2017. Patten pleaded guilty to violating FARA based, in part, on his efforts drafting and placing this article with Kilimnik. Criminal Information, *United States v. W. Samuel Patten*, Case No: 1:18-cr-260 (D.D.C. August 31, 2018).
[695] **(U)** Email, Manafort to Trump Jr., February 14, 2017 (TRUMPORG_76_001248); *see also* Emails, Manafort and Trump Jr., February 2–6, 2016 (indicating that Manafort planned to meet Trump Jr. in Trump Jr.'s New York office on February 7, 2016). The *Politico* article Manafort sent would be used by others close to Manafort to make the case that Ukraine, not Russia, interfered in the U.S. elections. For example, on August 22, 2017, Kilimnik's alias Twitter account, @PBaranenko, retweeted a story by *Sputnik* reporter Lee Stranahan who used the *Politico* article as a basis to legitimize his claims that DNC contractor Alexandra Chalupa and the Ukrainian government was "THE REAL 2016 Election Interference." Tweet, @PBaranenko, August 22, 2018 (Retweet of @stranahan).
[696] **(U)** FBI, FD-302, Manafort 9/13/2018.

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted] Given Kilimnik's communications with [redacted], Kilimnik's overlapping efforts with Manafort, and [redacted] it is likely that some coordination occurred between Deripaska-directed efforts and those undertaken by Kilimnik and Manafort.[697]

- [redacted]
- [redacted] On March 22, 2017, the *Associated Press* published an article stating that Manafort had in the mid-2000s proposed a confidential plan to influence politics, business dealings, and news coverage to "greatly benefit the Putin Government."[701] [redacted]

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[697] [redacted]

[699] [redacted] As of February 2017, Waldman sought to engage Vice Chairman Warner related to two separate clients: Julian Assange, on a potential deal with the U.S. Government related to an investigation into Assange and Assange's possession of documents later known as "Vault 7"; and Christopher Steele, about his involvement in reports that had recently been released related to the Trump Campaign, Manafort, and others. [redacted] According to Waldman's communications, as of mid-February 2017, Waldman was aware that the WikiLeaks release of Vault 7 documents would severely damage U.S. national security and the CIA. Text message, Waldman to Warner, February 16, 2017 (AW_00000075).

[700] [redacted]

[701] (U) Jeff Horvitz and Chad Day, "AP Exclusive: Before Trump Job, Manafort Worked to Aid Putin," *Associated Press*, March 22, 2017.

[702] [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

- (U) Shortly thereafter, on March 25, 2017, Waldman discussed with Vice Chairman Warner the possibility of a potential Committee engagement with Deripaska.[704] Waldman said that he raised the idea with Deripaska, who would be in London in the coming days, and that Deripaska was potentially interested in the engagement.[705]

- (U) On March 28, 2017, Deripaska took out several large advertisements in major U.S. newspapers offering to testify before the SSCI and the HPSCI. Waldman later explained that he understood that Deripaska intended to testify not about potential election interference, but rather about Manafort.[706]

(U) As of June 2017, Kilimnik continued to engage with Manafort on Ukrainian investigations related to Manafort. Kilimnik emailed Manafort about statements from Ukraine's SAPO, including a statement claiming that Manafort was not a subject of SAPO's investigation into the "black ledger" because of a lack of evidence.[707] Kilimnik told Manafort that the statement was "a big deal" and suggested that "[y]our people should see this."[708]

(U) Also in mid-2017, other Russian-government proxies and personas worked to spread the false narrative that Ukraine interfered in the U.S. election. On July 12, 2017, Cyber Berkut—which had been dormant for months—alleged on its blog that Ukraine had interfered in the 2016 U.S. elections.[709] In the post, Cyber Berkut claimed that hacked emails revealed a set of financial transactions between Viktor Pinchuk and the Clinton Foundation.[710] On July 13, 2017, @USA_Gunslinger, a long-running false persona account of the Internet Research Agency (IRA), tweeted about "Clinton and her campaign team's collusion with Ukraine to interfere in the US election."[711]

[redacted] On July 24, 2017, Ukrainian parliamentarian Andrii Derkach sent a letter to then Ukrainian Prosecutor General Yuriy Lutsenko to ask Lutsenko to investigate

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[703] (U) *Ibid.*
[704] (U) Text Messages, Waldman and Warner, March 23–25, 2017 (AW_00000082).
[705] (U) *Ibid.*
[706] (U) Waldman Tr., p. 109.
[707] (U) Email, Kilimnik to Manafort and Gates, June 5, 2017 (SSCI 2017-4885-3-000118).
[708] (U) *Ibid.*
[709] (U) CyberBerkut was a fake persona controlled by the GRU. Chris Bing, "Russian hacker group 'CyberBerkut' returns to public light with allegation against Clinton," *CyberScoop*, July 12, 2017.
[710] (U) *Ibid.*
[711] (U) IRA handles (June 2018); 4332740714-tweets.txt; Thomas Rid, "Who's Really to Blame for the 'Ukraine Did It' Conspiracy Theory?" *The Atlantic*, December 5, 2019.

[redacted]

[redacted]

"interference" in the 2016 U.S. elections, particularly as it related to NABU's role in this interference.[712] [redacted]

(U) Kilimnik also worked to conduct messaging to U.S. Government officials and the media to undercut other Ukrainian government investigations related to Manafort.[716] In September 2017, Kilimnik shared a letter with Patten that Lyovochkin and his OB associates drafted allegedly on behalf of Oleksandr Lavrynovych.[717] Lavrynovych is a former Ukrainian justice minister who was involved in Manafort's 2011 hiring of U.S. law firm Skadden, Arps, Meagher & Flom LLP for Ukraine-related work, and who had come under investigation by Ukrainian authorities.[718] Lyovochkin wanted to use Kilimnik to push this letter to embassies and the media.[719] Kilimnik also noted that Lyovochkin separately wanted to write a similar letter to U.S. Ambassador to Ukraine Marie Yovanovich and U.S. Special Representative for Ukraine Negotiations Kurt Volker on the matter.[720]

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- [redacted]

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[712] (U) Facebook Post, Андрей Деркач, August 15, 2017.
[713] [redacted]
[714] (U) *Ibid.*
[715] (U) *Ibid.*
[716] (U) Email, Kilimnik to Patten, September 19, 2017 (SSCI 2017-4885-3-000038).
[717] (U) *Ibid.*
[718] (U) *See, e.g.,* Kenneth P. Vogel and Andrew E. Kramer, "Skadden, Big New York Law Firm, Faces Questions on Work With Manafort," September 21, 2017. Separately, when the Skadden work came under public and government scrutiny, Manafort, Gates, and Kilimnik talked about purging documents related to a report Skadden produced for the PoR. Manafort said to purge all evidence of the coordination with Skadden attorneys. After this discussion, Gates deleted some emails. Gates deleted more emails in 2016 after he learned about inquiries from DOJ's FARA unit. FBI, FD-302, Gates 1/31/2018.
[719] (U) Email, Kilimnik to Patten, September 19, 2017 (SSCI 2017-4885-3-000038).
[720] (U) *Ibid.*

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721 [redacted]
722
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724 (U) *Ibid.*
725 (U) *Ibid.*
726 (U) *Ibid.*
727 (U) *Ibid.*
728 (U) *Ibid.*

[redacted]

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- [redacted]
- [redacted]
- [redacted] On May 14, 2018, Solomon published an article in *The Hill* titled "Mueller May Have a Conflict—And It Leads Directly to a Russian Oligarch," which outlined [redacted], including Deripaska's alleged cooperation with the FBI on matters related to Robert Levinson and implying that his history with the FBI might create a "conflict" for the SCO.[734] [redacted] Solomon appeared on Hannity's television show that evening to discuss the same allegations.[735]

[redacted]

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[729] (U) *Ibid.* Waldman's contact with Jones is discussed *infra*, Section 4.B.6.vi.
[730] (U) *Ibid.*
[731] (U) *Ibid.*
[732] (U) *Ibid.*
[733] (U) *Ibid.*
[734] (U) John Solomon, "Mueller May Have a Conflict—And It Leads Directly to a Russian Oligarch," *The Hill*, May 14, 2018.
[735] (U) "Transcript: Conflict of interest for Robert Mueller?" *Fox News*, May 14, 2018.
[736] [redacted]
[737] (U) *Ibid.*

[redacted]

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- **(U)** On March 20, 2019, Solomon published an article from an interview he conducted with former Ukrainian Prosecutor General Yuriy Lutsenko. In the interview, Lutsenko made the false claim that, in 2016, the then-U.S. Ambassador to Ukraine, Marie Yovanovich, passed him a list of individuals who should not be prosecuted.[739] The day Solomon's article was published, Trump retweeted it.[740]

- [redacted] A supposed copy of the list turned up in an online forum.[743] [redacted]

- **(U)** On the same day, Solomon published a second article derived from the same interview with Lutsenko.[745] That article repeated Lutsenko's claim that he had "opened a probe into alleged attempts by Ukrainians to interfere in the 2016 U.S. presidential

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[738] **(U)** *Ibid.*

[739] **(U)** John Solomon, "Top Ukrainian justice official says US ambassador gave him a do not prosecute list," *The Hill*, March 20, 2019. Lutsenko's claim that he was given a "list" of individuals to not prosecute was false; he later recanted it.

[740] **(U)** Tweet, @realDonaldTrump, March 20, 2019. On May 7, 2019, U.S. Ambassador to Ukraine Yovanovitch was recalled early from Ukraine.

[741] [redacted]

[742] **(U)** *Ibid.*

[743] **(U)** Debatepolitics.com, "The names of 'improsecutable' Ukrainians from the Yovanovitch list got out," March 25, 2019.

[744] [redacted] *see also* Ben Nimmo, "UK Trade Leaks and Secondary Infektion: New Findings and Insights from a Known Russian Operation," Graphika, December 2019.

[745] **(U)** John Solomon, "Senior Ukrainian official says he's opened probe into US election interference," *The Hill*, March 20, 2019.

[redacted]

[redacted]

election."[746] Kilimnik, using an alias Twitter account registered under a false persona, retweeted the story.[747]

- [redacted] Kilimnik had previously reached out to Lutsenko in late 2016 in an apparent effort to propose that Lutsenko pursue political office with the assistance of Kilimnik and others. In November 2016, Patten and Kilimnik arranged for a polling company to test the viability of a new political party which would include Klitschko, Lutsenko, and two other Ukrainian political figures.[748] The poll work was likely funded by Lyovochkin. Email communications suggest Patten reviewed the proposal, and Kilimnik planned to deliver the proposal to Lutsenko in December 2016, per Lyovochkin's instructions.[749] [redacted]

(U) Starting in 2017, and continuing at least until late 2019, Kilimnik used an alias Twitter account registered under a false persona to push a variety of false information, much of which centered on efforts to discredit the Russia investigations and assert that Ukraine, not Russia, had intervened in the 2016 U.S. presidential election.[751]

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[746] (U) *Ibid.*

[747] (U) Tweet, @PBaranenko, March 20, 2019 (Retweet of @JackPosobiec).

[748] (U) Slide deck, "Ukraine November Survey Presentation," December 4, 2016 (SP_OSC_000702-759); Email, Kilimnik to Patten, et al., December 18, 2016 (SSCI 2017-4885-3-000237) (responding to a email with a document "Lutsenko vote and coalitions").

[749] (U) *Ibid.*

[750] [redacted]

[751] (U) Kilimnik tweets under the alias Petro Baranenko (@PBaranenko). Twitter, @pbaranenko (account information showing account creation email of borattulukbaev@yahoo.com). While the @PBaranenko account was registered in February 2017, the earliest tweet the Committee obtained was from August 1, 2017. A separate account in true name, @k_kilimnik, is no longer active. This account could have been affiliated with Kilimnik, but the Committee could not confirm that it was. In 2018 and 2019, Kilimnik used his @PBaranenko account to tweet a variety of pro-Russian themes, including false information about NotPetya, Bill Browder, Malaysian Airlines flight MH-17, and the 2014 Maydan protests. For example, Kilimnik retweeted a claim "[t]he stakes are rising as they try to keep the truth about Browder from coming out." Tweet, @PBaranenko, September 15, 2018 (retweet of @TFL1728). Kilimnik also retweeted a tweet disparaging Bellingcat and Eliot Higgins, using #Bellingcrap and #MH17 and attaching an image purporting to show that part of Bellingcat's analysis of the MH-17 BuK launcher was "made up." Tweet, @PBaranenko, September 17, 2018 (retweet of @Deus_Abscondis). On September 23, 2018, Kilimnik retweeted the same account, which purported to show that the serial number depicted in images of missile parts related to the MH-17 shootdown was a "forgery." Tweet, @PBaranenko, September 23, 2018 (retweet of @Deus_Abscondis). Kilimnik also repeatedly pushed false information claiming that those Maydan participants killed in the protests where shot by "Georgian snipers" as part of a "false flag." Tweet, @PBaranenko, March 18, 2019 (retweet of @elenaevdokimov7).

[redacted]

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- **(U)** Kilimnik repeatedly tweeted information related to the Bidens and Ukraine, much of which originated from Solomon. For example, on April 1, 2019, Kilimnik retweeted Solomon's own tweet linking to his article in *The Hill* titled, "Joe Biden's 2020 Ukrainian nightmare: A closed probe is revived."[752] On May 14, 2019, Kilimnik tweeted, "Ukraine's Prosecutor General Lutsenko is ready to provide payment orders concerning Hunter Biden, says there are payments for millions USD" and attached a link to an article about the issue.[753]

- **(U)** On September 16, 2018, Kilimnik retweeted a tweet by Donald Trump which stated, "The illegal Mueller Witch Hunt continues in search of a crime. There was never Collusion with Russia, except by the Clinton campaign."[754]

- **(U)** On August 22, 2018, Kilimnik retweeted *Sputnik* reporter Lee Stranahan's tweet related to allegations that Alexandra Chalupa, a former DNC contractor, was involved in interfering in the U.S. elections and that the "real" election interference had been between the DNC and Ukraine.[755] Kilimnik retweeted Stranahan or others restating Stranahan's claims on this theme dozens of times. In January 2019, Kilimnik used his persona's account to send a single direct message to Stranahan.[756]

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[752] **(U)** Tweet, @PBaranenko, April 1, 2019 (Retweet of @jsolomonReports).
[753] **(U)** Tweet, @PBaranenko, May 14, 2019.
[754] **(U)** Tweet, @PBaranenko, September 16, 2018 (Retweet of @realDonaldTrump).
[755] **(U)** Tweet, @PBaranenko, August 22, 2018 (Retweet of @stranahan).
[756] **(U)** Twitter, @PBaranenko (direct messaging metadata).
[757] [redacted]
[758] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[759] **(U)** *Ibid.*

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vii. (U) Manafort's Continued Efforts with Kilimnik on Ukraine; Kilimnik's Own Continued Activities

(U) After the U.S. presidential election, Kilimnik and Patten began developing ideas for peaceful settlement to the conflict in eastern Ukraine. Kilimnik and Patten drafted a paper outlining the plan, which was to decentralize power, limit Kyiv's role in running the country, engage in direct bilateral talks between Poroshenko and Putin, and focus on local elections.[763]

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[760] (U) *Ibid.*

[761] (U) *Ibid.*

[762] [redacted]

[763] (U) FBI, FD-302, Patten 5/30/2018. *See also* Emails, Kilimnik and Patten, August 19–20, 2017 (SSCI 2017-4885-3-000014-18) (attaching an document entitled "Re-Framing the Russia-Ukraine Conflict in Pursuit of an Outside the Box Pathway to Peace" edited by both Patten and Kilimnik).

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The plan included having the United States serve as an honest broker and work directly with Russia at the highest levels to resolve the conflict.[764] Patten recalled Kilimnik discussing exiled former PoR members living in Moscow—including Yanukovych—whom Kilimnik collectively called "the refugees."[765] Kilimnik was interested in these refugees and their possible return to politics in Ukraine.[766]

(U) Kilimnik used his work with Patten to test the viability of a Yanukovych return. Patten recalled conducting at least one poll with Kilimnik in 2017 as part of their ongoing work for the OB.[767] In mid-2017, Kilimnik and Patten organized a survey at Kilimnik's urging to, in part, discreetly measure voters' openness to Yanukovych's return.[768] According to Patten, Kilimnik thought that if Yanukovych returned to politics in eastern Ukraine, it would help the OB because Yanukovych would bring strong leadership back to the OB.[769] The poll revealed that Yanukovych was not viable at that time.[770] While Patten was aware that Kilimnik would periodically mention Yanukovych, Patten claimed he never got the sense that Kilimnik was trying to push Yanukovych's return.[771] Patten also believed that Kilimnik was attempting to distance himself from Manafort in furtherance of Kilimnik's own ongoing work in Ukraine.[772] As described *infra*, emails, testimony, and records show that Kilimnik had, in fact, engaged in an effort to return Yanukovych to Ukraine since 2016 and extending to at least 2018.

(U) Kilimnik separately continued to push the Yanukovych peace plan with Manafort and others. By early 2018, Kilimnik was again working with Manafort—who was under criminal indictment in the United States—in an attempt to organize a poll in Ukraine that would quietly try to gauge voter sentiment on Yanukovych. Kilimnik and Manafort planned to use the poll, which tested other Ukrainian political issues and OB politicians, to gauge voter sentiment for the peace plan involving Yanukovych without overtly revealing the purpose of the poll. Manafort worked with Fabrizio's company in an effort to create a questionnaire for the poll. Kilimnik, meanwhile, directly coordinating these efforts with Yanukovych in Russia.

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[764] (U) FBI, FD-302, Patten 5/30/2018.
[765] (U) FBI, FD-302, Patten 11/27/2018.
[766] (U) *Ibid.*
[767] (U) FBI, FD-302, Patten 5/30/2018.
[768] (U) Email, Kilimnik to Patten and Garrett, July 31, 2017 (SSCI 2017-4885-3-000024–26) ("I would also discreetly measure Yanukovich"). Patten recalled that the poll tested a wide variety of issues, but included questions designed to test voters' sentiment of Yanukovych. FBI, FD-302, Patten 5/30/2018. *See also* Email, Kilimnik to Patten and Garrett, July 11, 2017 (SSCI 2017-4885-3-000054) (responding to focus group testing, Kilimnik asked if respondents were "open to Yanuk return" which he believed was an "important question.").
[769] (U) FBI, FD-302, Patten 5/30/2018. The OB had been suffering from internal personality conflicts, which Kilimnik had long worked to resolve.
[770] (U) FBI, FD-302, Patten 11/27/2018.
[771] (U) *Ibid.*
[772] (U) *Ibid.*

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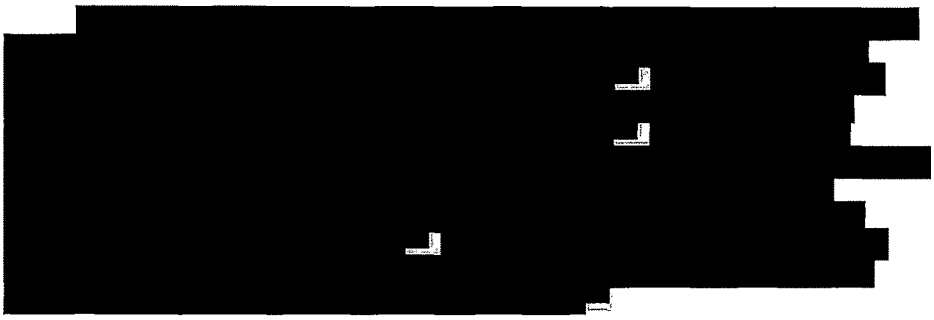

(U) At approximately the same time, Manafort shared a draft of the Kilimnik-authored plan with Fabrizio and his firm for their use in creating polling questions to test its viability.[777] The draft plan, which aimed to garner Trump's support, was obtained by the Committee and is reproduced below.

> *A New Initiative to Settle the Conflict in South-East of Ukraine*
>
> *The beginning of 2018 has seen an increase in violence in the conflict zone of the South-Eastern Ukraine. Each day brings news about casualties on the [sic] both sides, while the Minsk agreements are stalling because the [sic] both sides of the conflict lack desire to achieve peace.*
>
> *The leadership of Ukraine represented by President Poroshenko is not interested in the [sic] peaceful settlement, and has been using the conflict to justify its failed economic policy. The toxicity of the leaders of DNR and LNR is complicating their participation in the negotiations' process, and in fact is depriving millions of the region's residents of the right to be represented in the [sic] international politics. Neither Kyiv, nor DNR/LNR want Donbass back in Ukraine. This nullifies the efforts of the international community aimed at stopping the conflict.*
>
> ***Continuation of the conflict in Donbass leads to uncontrolled scenarios, and presents a risk of the violence getting out to other countries of the region.*** *In*

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773 [redacted]

774 [redacted]

775 [redacted]

776 **(U)** *Ibid.*

777 **(U)** Email, Manafort to Fabrizio and Ward, February 21, 2018 (FAB010190).

[redacted]

[redacted]

order to prevent it a new approach to settlement of the conflict and return of the country to peace and civic accord is needed.

The proposed approach envisions:

1) Creation of a new entity – The Autonomous Republic of Donbass (ARD), which will be an autonomous region of Ukraine. The ARD will be created within the borders of Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts that existed prior to April 2014, when the armed conflict began. A decision to create the ARD should ideally be passed by a protocol of Normandy format meeting.

2) Passing of a special law by Verkhovna Rada, which will determine the legal status and timeframe of incremental reintegration of the ARD into Ukraine. This measure will immediately unblock the peaceful process and create conditions for implementation of a joint plan of ceasefire. If the Rada does not pass this law, President Poroshenko should approve it by his Decree and disband the Verkhovna Rada as an obstacle to implementation of peace agreements.

3) Election of the Prime Minister for the transitional period based on the guidelines of a temporary Constitution of the ARD. The Prime Minister of the ARD shall be elected by the Parliament (People's Assembly) of the ARD and will lead the process of negotiations to settle the conflict between the ARD and Ukraine. The Prime Minister of the ARD shall be a legitimate and plenipotentiary representative of the ARD in talks with international structures within the framework of programs to rebuild the economy and overcome the consequences of the armed conflict. An optimal candidate for this job is Victor Yanukovich. Based on his experience and respect in the region he is able to create the necessary conditions for peaceful settlement and restoration of the political balance in Donbass.

A key driver that will bring back the dynamics into the peaceful settlement process can be an initiative of the President of the United States Donald Trump proposing to create the ARD and involve Mr. Yanukovich into the peaceful settlement process. This initiative then can be raised by representatives of the United States during their contacts with their Russian counterparts. In case of agreement of Russia and Mr. Yanukovich such initiative will make it possible to quickly develop a road map for settlement of the conflict and approve it soonest at a Normandy format meeting.

Another key condition of success of this plan is practical effort by the United States, aimed at convincing Ukraine's President Poroshenko to announce his support of initiative to create the ARD and start a new stage of peaceful

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settlement. This plan will be beneficial for the Ukrainian government, because Poroshenko will be able to implement his election promise of 2014 and end the war. Election of Mr. Yanukovich as head of the ARD with consent of the United States and Russia will significantly increase chances of peaceful settlement of the conflict. Support of this initiative by the United States will be a fair and democratic decision with respect to Mr. Yanukovich, who did everything possible for peaceful settlement in 2014 and signed a plan of peaceful settlement with the Opposition on February 21, 2014. This plan subsequently was blown up by the radicals. This fact failed to obtain a proper reaction by the EU officials, who guaranteed it with their signatures, and led to serious deterioration of the situation in Ukraine.

Implementation of the plan will make it possible to create new dynamics in the process of peaceful settlement and can in fact become a starting point for return of peace into Ukraine, where the United States should play a leading role in restoring peace and territorial integrity of Ukraine.

Personal participation of the US President will lead to stopping the bloodshed, returning political balance and stability in Ukraine, creating a stable and effective pro-European legislative majority, able of implementing effective reforms.[778]

[redacted] Manafort reached out to Fabrizio about the possibility of conducting a poll in Ukraine.[779] Fabrizio, Fabrizio's polling firm, and Manafort began organizing the details of the Ukraine-related polling work.

(U) Manafort wanted to use Evgeny Kopatko to conduct the survey and fieldwork, which would be coordinated through Kilimnik.[780] Kopatko is a Ukrainian, pro-Russian sociologist and pollster who has recently been awarded Russian citizenship by Putin.[781] Manafort provided a draft questionnaire to Fabrizio and his company. The questionnaire focused broadly on numerous candidates and parties in Ukraine, but also sought to test the idea of Yanukovych's return in eastern Ukraine. In particular, question 72(a) directly asked for respondents' reactions

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[778] (U) Document, "New Initiative for Peace copy.docx" (FAB010192-10194).
[779] (U) Emails, Manafort and Fabrizio, February 5, 2017 (FAB010524) (setting up a telephone call); Email, Manafort to Fabrizio, February 12, 2018 (FAB010513) ("It looks like we are going to move forward on the poll that I discussed with you about 10 days ago.").
[780] (U) Emails, Manafort and Fabrizio, February 19, 2018 (FAB010509).
[781] (U) [redacted] "Ukrainian sociologist Kopatko received Russian citizenship," *Ukrop News 24*, April 26, 2017.

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[redacted]

to a statement that Donetsk and Luhansk need to "be led to unite into one republic and bring back Yanukovych as their leader."[782] Kilimnik and Manafort, however, requested that this question be redesigned to test sentiment about a Yanukovych comeback without explicitly revealing the plan through the question. Manafort instructed Fabrizio's partner, Bob Ward, to "remove VY as the player in this plan" and instead referenced only "someone who is part of east and a leader in the PoR during the VY years."[783] Kilimnik had separately pointed out to the group that Yanukovych's associations with the peace plan was "not in the public domain."[784] After removing an explicit reference to Yanukovych as the potential leader, Manafort directed Ward to test "VY as an acceptable player to the Ukrainian people (vs. leadership) to assist in bringing peace to DONBASS."[785]

(U) In addition to these instructions, Manafort sent the above-described Kilimnik peace plan document to Fabrizio and Ward.[786] Fabrizio's firm created another questionnaire based on Manafort's guidance and the Kilimnik-authored peace plan.[787]

23. I am going to describe a plan that have been proposed to resolve the conflict in Donbas.

Create an Autonomous Republic of the Donbas from the Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts which would elect a new prime minister, someone with real government experience and stature from the region that can engage in reasonable discussions with Kiev, Russia and the United States and implement a plan for disbanding and granting amnesty to the Donbas militia, restoring order, and reopen the borders with the rest of Ukraine. Like Crimea before the conflict, this autonomous republic would be part of Ukraine, elect deputies to the Verkhovna Rada, vote for president of Ukraine, but elect its own leadership and govern itself locally. Its territorial integrity would be defended by the Ukrainian armed forces.

Based on this, is this a plan you strongly support, somewhat support, somewhat oppose, or strongly oppose?

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[782] **(U)** Email, Fabrizio to Ward, February 19, 2018 (FAB010419–10461) (attaching a 120-question questionnaire).
[783] **(U)** Email, Manafort to Ward and Fabrizio, February 21, 2018 (FAB010190).
[784] **(U)** Email, Manafort to Fabrizio, February 19, 2018 (FAB010419) ("This is what I received from KK. His answers are in red."). On February 23, 2017, *RFE/RL* published an article which included quotes from Kilimnik and included Kilimnik's admission that he had drafted a peace plan, referred to as the "Mariupol plan," which would involve the return of Yanukovych to bring peace to eastern Ukraine. Christopher Miller, "Who is Paul Manafort's Man in Kyiv? An Interview with Konstantin Kilimnik," *RFE/RL*, February 23, 2017. Patten later told a journalist privately that his understanding was that Kilimnik thought his conversation with the *RFE/RL* journalist was off-the-record. Email, Patten to Helderman, June 7, 2017 (SSCI 2017-4885-3-000107).
[785] **(U)** Email, Manafort to Ward and Fabrizio, February 21, 2018 (FAB010190–10194) (attaching "New initiative for Peace copy.docx").
[786] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[787] **(U)** Email, Ward to Manafort and Fabrizio, February 21, 2018 (FAB010406-10417) (attaching a draft survey questionnaire).

[redacted]

[redacted]

COMMITTEE SENSITIVE – RUSSIA INVESTIGATION ONLY

24. Which of these outcomes do you support the most?
25. Which of these outcomes do you think is the easiest to get agreement on?
26. Which of these outcomes do you think is in the best interests of you and your community?

[USE SAME CARD FOR EACH]

1 DNR and LNR receive special status with broad autonomy, and can chose any leader, as long as there is a plan for reintegration back in Ukraine

2 DNR and LNR become an independent state

3 DNR and LNR return to Ukraine as normal oblasts as they were before

4 DNR and LNR become part of Russia

5 not sure (do not read)
6 refused (do not read)

27. Some have suggested that former Ukrainian President Victor Yanukovych, as someone from the Donbas and who can deal with Russia, can play a constructive role in ending the conflict in the Donbas and help bring stability to the region. Do you agree or disagree with this view? (IF CHOICE MADE, ASK) Is that strongly (agree/disagree) or just somewhat (agree/disagree)?

(U) Through Manafort, Kilimnik provided Fabrizio and his firm feedback on the questionnaire. In his feedback, Kilimnik asked Fabrizio and Ward to "get a deeper understanding of attitudes toward Yanukovich/Azarov and what they can do for Ukraine to get back. Implement a peace plan, rebuild Donbass, bring back good ties with Russia, etc."[788] The draft with Kilimnik edits included questions about Mykola Azarov's viability with the same peace plan.

(U) Azarov, the former Prime Minister under Yanukovych who had also fled to Russia, had long been involved in potential efforts to return to Ukraine and establish a pro-Russia government. Azarov almost certainly had the backing of the Russian government.

- [redacted] As early as 2015, a nationalist Russian

[788] **(U)** Document, "KK Note on Dr 4" (FAB010356). Kilimnik also raised the possibility of measuring "the toxicity of the Party of Regions. It still technically exists, and there are constant conversations about its revival. Understanding how toxic the political parties are, there could be a chance."
[789] [redacted]

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[redacted]

press outlet suggested that Azarov could help run a "national salvation government" in Ukraine.[790] Shortly thereafter, Azarov announced a government-in-exile from his Moscow-based hotel.

- [redacted] Azarov's press spokesperson both during his time serving as Prime Minister in Ukraine and when he announced his government-in-exile from Moscow, was Serhiy Zavorotnyy, an SVR officer involved in influence operations.[791]
- [redacted]

(U) Work on the poll continued with Fabrizio's firm until at least March 10, 2018.[794] Fabrizio's firm did not ultimately field the poll, although it is unclear why.

(U) Kilimnik, however, continued efforts to reestablish Yanukovych as part of a peace settlement. Kilimnik worked with associates inside Russia, Ukraine, and elsewhere to affect U.S. perceptions of the conflict in Ukraine. These plans blended Kilimnik's efforts to bring about Yanukovych's return—including his exoneration related to the violence in the Maydan in February 2014—with the aforementioned themes promoting the narrative that Ukraine, not Russia, had interfered in the 2016 U.S. elections.

- [redacted]

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[790] [redacted]

[791] [redacted] identifies as Zavorotnyy as a member of military unit 33949, which is identified with the SVR. For more information about unit 33949 and its affiliation with the SVR, *see* Sergey Kanev, "Everyone knew the traitor," *Novaya Gazeta*, November 20, 2010 (Russian language). Zavorotnyy now appears on pro-Kremlin media in Russia and frequently promotes the views and priorities of the Russian government. [redacted]

[793] [redacted]

[794] **(U)** Email, Manafort to Fabrizio, et al., March 9, 2016 (FAB010231) (attaching ten documents, including "Ukr Qu Dr 4 KK.docx" and "KK note on Dr 4.docx").

[795] [redacted]

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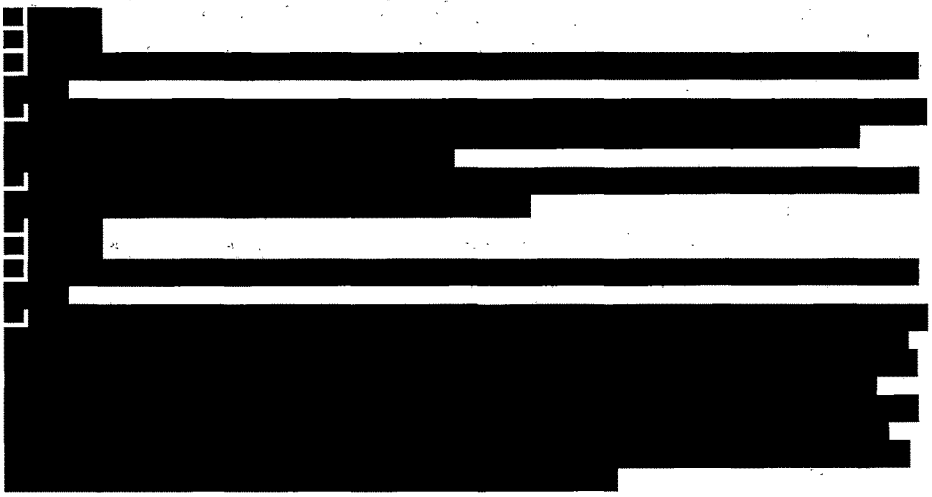

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805 [redacted]

806 [redacted]

807 (U) *Ibid.*

808 (U) *Ibid.*

809 (U) *Ibid.*

810 [redacted]

811 (U) *Ibid.*

812 (U) *Ibid.*

813 [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

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[redacted] For example, in late May 2019, Telizhenko claimed that the "black ledger" naming Manafort was a forgery solicited by the Obama administration.[819]

[redacted]

[814] (U) *Ibid.*
[815] [redacted]
[816] (U) *Ibid.*
[817] (U) *Ibid.*
[818] [redacted] Kilimnik tweeted and retweeted about Portnov. For example, on May 31, 2019 Kilimnik tweeted, "Portnov is one of the best Ukrainian lawyers. Also author of totaly [sic] Western-supported Criminal-Procedural code (one of many achievements of the Yanukovich Administration). He was prosecuted by Poroshenko on totally fake charges and has a moral right to do what he is doing." Tweet, @PBaranenko, May 31, 2019.
[819] (U) Josh Dawsey and David Stern, "Giuliani meets with former diplomat as he continues to press Ukraine inquiries," *The Washington Post*, May 24, 2019.

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[823] (U) *Ibid.*
[824] (U) *Ibid.*
[825] (U) *Ibid.*
[826] (U) *Ibid.*

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[827] (U) *Ibid.*
[828] (U) *Ibid.*
[829] (U) *Ibid.*
[830] (U) *Ibid.*
[831] (U) *Ibid.*
[832] (U) *Ibid.*
[833] (U) *Ibid.*
[834] (U) *Ibid.*
[835] [redacted]
[836] (U) *Ibid.*

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[837] (U) *Ibid.*
[838] [redacted]
[839] (U) *Ibid.*
[840] [redacted]
[841] (U) *Ibid.*
[842] [redacted]
[843] [redacted]
[844] (U) *Ibid.*
[845] (U) *Ibid.*

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted] Telizhenko participated in a documentary film that aired on a U.S. news channel, entitled "One America News Investigates – The Ukraine Hoax: Impeachment, Biden Cash, and Mass Murder with Michael Caputo."[848]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted

[redacted]

[redacted]

viii. (U) Manafort and Gates Communications Regarding Investigations

(U) Until Gates entered into a plea agreement with the SCO in February 2018, Manafort and Gates remained in close contact and regularly discussed the investigations into both of their activities.[858]

- (U) Manafort and Gates discussed the possibility of a presidential pardon.[859] Manafort recalled that Gates suggested Manafort should ask an attorney for Trump about a pardon.[860] Manafort claimed he had no discussion with the White House or anyone with access to the White House about a pardon.[861]

- (U) Manafort was aware that the RNC had raised money for a defense fund. Manafort asked John Dowd, then a lead attorney for Trump, if Manafort and Gates were eligible for money from this fund.[862] Dowd said yes.[863]

- (U) In early 2018, Manafort asked Laurance Gay, a friend of Manafort and Gates, to dissuade Gates from accepting a plea agreement.[864]

- (U) Manafort and Gates continued to remain in contact while Gates was proffering to the SCO.[865] According to Manafort, Gates had denied that he was proffering to the SCO.[866]

8. (U) Manafort's Associates' Ties to Russian Intelligence Services

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[856] (U) *Ibid.*
[857] [redacted]
[858] (U) FBI, FD-302, Manafort 9/12/2018.
[859] (U) *Ibid.*
[860] (U) *Ibid.*
[861] (U) *Ibid.*
[862] (U) *Ibid.*
[863] (U) *Ibid.*
[864] (U) *Ibid.*
[865] (U) *Ibid.*
[866] (U) *Ibid.*

[redacted]

[redacted]

i. (U) Oleg Deripaska and His Aides

(U) The Committee found that, since at least the time he hired Paul Manafort in approximately 2004, Oleg Deripaska has acted as a proxy for the Russian state and Russian intelligence services. Deripaska has managed and financed influence operations on the Kremlin's behalf. Deripaska's activities include Kremlin-approved and -directed active measures—including information operations and election interference efforts—conducted to install pro-Kremlin regimes and strengthen Kremlin-aligned powerbrokers across the globe. Deripaska's right-hand-man for the implementation of Russian active measures is Viktor Boyarkin, a GRU officer working for Deripaska.

a. (U) Deripaska's Kremlin Ties

[redacted] Oleg Deripaska's close relationship with Putin probably dates to Putin's election in 2000. [redacted]

867 [redacted]
868
869

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted] Deripaska also has a Russian diplomatic passport and has used diplomatic credentials to attend the UN General Assembly as a representative of Russia.[873]

[redacted]

b. (U) Deripaska's "Chief of Staff": Viktor Boyarkin

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870 [redacted]
871 [redacted]
872 [redacted]
873 (U) Waldman Tr., p. 32
874 [redacted]
875 [redacted]
876 [redacted]
877 (U) *Ibid.*
878 [redacted] This information directly conflicts with information provided by Christopher Steele to DOJ at a time when Steele had a business relationship with Deripaska through Deripaska's attorneys. For more information, *see infra* Vol. 5, Sec. IV.B.

[redacted]

[redacted]

(U) Oleg Deripaska primarily implements Russian active measures through Russian national Viktor Boyarkin. Boyarkin is a Russian intelligence officer affiliated with the GRU. The Committee found reliable evidence suggesting that Boyarkin is part of a cadre of individuals ostensibly operating outside of the Russian government but who nonetheless implement influence operations that are directed by the Kremlin, and funded by key Russian oligarchs, particularly Deripaska. The Committee bases its assessment that Boyarkin is a Russian intelligence officer on the following information:

- [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[

[redacted]

[redacted]

[886] (U) *Ibid.*
[887] [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

(U) Boyarkin appeared to coordinate with other Russian nationals operating seemingly outside of the Russian government but who nonetheless undertook influence operations on its behalf.

- [redacted]

(U) Boyarkin also coordinated sensitive operations on Deripaska's behalf. For example, Nastya Rybka, a former Deripaska mistress, was arrested in Thailand and claimed that she was "the only witness and the missing link in the connection between Russia and the U.S. elections—the long chain of Oleg Deripaska, Prikhodko, Manafort, and Trump."[893] Rybka also suggested that she was in possession of more than 16 hours of audio recordings she made of Deripaska's conversations with business associates and Russian political leaders, namely Russian Deputy Prime Minister Sergei Prikhodko.[894]

[redacted]

[892] (U) *Ibid.*

[893] (U) Anton Troianovski, "A self-described sex expert says she will spill information on Trump and Russia to get out of a Thai jail," *The Washington Post*, February 27, 2018. Rybka's true name is Anastasia Vashukevich.

[894] (U) *See, e.g.,* Nataliya Zotova and Oleg Boldyrev, "Nastya Rybka: Model who got caught up in the Trump-Russia row," *BBC*, January 31, 2019; Richard Paddock, "Escort Says Audio Recordings Show Russian Meddling in U.S. Election," *The New York Times*, March 5, 2018.

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

- (U) Prior to her arrest in Thailand, Rybka's social media posts had been the subject of a lawsuit filed by Deripaska against Russian opposition leader Alexey Navalny. In February 2018, Navalny posted to his website a 25-minute video outlining alleged connections—including a romantic relationship—between Rybka and Deripaska. The video includes a number of vignettes apparently collected from Rybka's social media accounts and focuses on an August 2016 meeting between Deripaska and Prikhodko aboard Deripaska's yacht near Norway.[896] Almost immediately after the video appeared on Navalny's website, Deripaska sought, and was granted, a court order demanding the removal of a number of Instagram posts and YouTube videos. Russia's communications regulator, Roskomnadzor, issued an order to Russian internet service providers blocking access to Navalny's website on February 15, 2018.[897]

- (U) Following her arrest, Rybka told reporters she was afraid to return to Russia, and offered to tell her story to American investigators in exchange for asylum. Her colleague Alexander Kirillov allegedly requested, in a letter to the American consulate, political asylum for those arrested with Rybka.[898] Her arrest also apparently attracted the attention of Deripaska and his business associates. A recording available on YouTube purports to reproduce a conference call conversation between "Georgy" (presumably Georgy Oganov), Tatiana Monaghan,[899] and William Sein about this matter.[900]

- [redacted]

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[895] [redacted]

[896] (U) *See, e.g.,* "Navalny Website Blocked in Russia Over 'Rybkagate' Report," *RFE/RL*, February 16, 2018; YouTube, http://youtu.be/RQZr2NgKPiU.

[897] (U) *Ibid.*

[898] (U) Richard Paddock, "Escort Says Audio Recordings Show Russian Meddling in U.S. Election," *The New York Times*, March 5, 2018. It is the Committee's understanding that U.S. Government investigators sought to interview Rybka in Thailand, but were not granted access. The Committee did not seek its own interview with Rybka.

[899] (U) Monaghan is a close Deripaska associate who serves as President of the Russian National Committee of the International Chamber of Commerce. Monaghan is also connected to Boyarkin. In March and May 2016, Monaghan and the ICC hosted roundtables touting RUSAL's efforts to develop an Ebola vaccine. Monaghan appears to have co-hosted the March event with Boyarkin, and both appear to have attended the May event.

[900] (U) YouTube, https://youtu.be/zqU2L_05yUI. The Committee does not have any independent verification of the sourcing or content of this call.

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[901] [redacted]

[902] *Ibid.* The Committee sought an interview with Soriano, but was unable to secure one. [redacted]

[903] [redacted]

[904] (U) *Ibid.*

[905] (U) *Ibid.*

[906] (U) *Ibid.*

[907] (U) *Ibid.*

[908] (U) *Ibid.*

[909] (U) *Ibid.*

[910] [redacted]

[911] (U) *Ibid.*

[912] (U) *Ibid.*

[913] (U) *Ibid.*

[redacted]

[redacted]

- [redacted]

- **(U)** In statements to the media in August 2018, Rybka suggested she sent copies of her recordings to Deripaska, and expressed her hope that he would help secure her release from prison.[920] In January 2019, Rybka was released from Thai custody and deported to Russia.

[redacted] The Committee assesses that Boyarkin handled other influence operations funded by and coordinated with Deripaska—with the approval and direction of the Kremlin. [redacted][925]

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[914] [redacted]
[915] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[916] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[917] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[918] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[919] [redacted]
[920] **(U)** *See, e.g.*, Richard Paddock, "She Gambled on Her Claim to Link Russians and Trump. She is Losing," *The New York Times*, August 31, 2018.
[921] [redacted]
[922] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[923] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[924] [redacted] *Ibid.* According to Boyarkin, this included securing the assistance U.S. law firm [redacted] to provide legal assistance to [redacted] case.
[925] [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

c. (U) Deripaska's Strategic Advisor: Georgy Oganov

(U) Georgy Oganov is a longtime advisor to Deripaska and is affiliated with [redacted] Oganov attended the Moscow State Institute for International Relations.[926] Waldman described Oganov as speaking seven or eight languages. Waldman also assessed that, as a senior advisor to Deripaska, Oganov had direct access to him.[927] Waldman also understood that Oganov maintains ties to the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs "at the deputies level" and "[c]ertainly he and the foreign minister know each other."[928]

[redacted] Oganov was ostensibly a diplomat. [redacted]

[redacted]

d. (U) Deripaska's Role in Russian Active Measures in Montenegro

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[926] (U) World Policy Conference, "Georgy Oganov," 2019.
[927] (U) Waldman Tr., pp. 57, 59.
[928] (U) *Ibid.* pp. 59–60.
[929] [redacted]
[930] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 29.
[931] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 22.
[932] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 29.
[933] [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

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(U) While Deripaska's influence operations on behalf of the Kremlin span the globe, the activities of Deripaska, Boyarkin, and their associates in Montenegro provide a clear example of Deripaska's malign influence efforts.

(U) As noted above, Deripaska first became involved in Montenegro when he purchased a controlling share in KAP, a deal that was likely done in coordination with the Russian government to extend Russian influence in Montenegro. Deripaska hired Manafort, whose company began working in Montenegro on Deripaska's behalf as early as 2005.[934]

[redacted]

[redacted] By 2016, Deripaska was involved in funding and executing an aggressive Russian-directed campaign to overthrow the Montenegrin government and assassinate the Prime Minister in a violent coup. [redacted] These efforts supported a pro-Russia and anti-NATO Montenegrin opposition party, the Democratic Front (DF).

[redacted]

[redacted]

[934] (U) *See infra* Vol. 5, Sec. III.A.3.i. Open source information indicates that Paul Manafort was in discussions to participate in political consulting in Montenegro on behalf of the DF in the lead up to the October 2016 election in Montenegro and the coup attempt. *See* Simon Shuster, "Exclusive: Russian Ex-Spy Pressured Manafort Over Debts to an Oligarch," *Time*, December 29, 2018. The Committee does not have further information about his potential involvement.

[935] [redacted]

[936] [redacted]

[937] [redacted]

[redacted]

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[redacted]

[redacted]

- [redacted]

[redacted]

- [redacted]

[redacted]

- [redacted]

[redacted]

- [redacted]

[redacted]

- [redacted]

[redacted] Boyarkin directly facilitated many of these activities, including [redacted] and payments to DF politicians, [redacted]

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938 [redacted]

939 [redacted]

940 (U) This is a Russian term which is now used for activities which used to be referred to by the Russian government as "active measures."

941 [redacted]

942 [redacted] Treasury, "Treasury Targets Russian Operatives over Election Interference, World Anti-Doping Agency Hacking, and Other Malign Activities," December 19, 2018; [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted][945]

- [redacted]
- [redacted]
- [redacted]

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[943] [redacted]
[944] (U) *Ibid.*
[945] [redacted] *See, e.g.*, Samir Kajosevic, "Monetenegro Prosecution Suspects Israeli Consultant of Coup Role," *Balkan Insight*, July 31, 2019; [redacted]
[946] [redacted]
[947] [redacted]
[948] [redacted]
[949] (U) *Ibid.*

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

954 (U) *Ibid.*
955 (U) *Ibid.*, p. 34.
956 (U) *Ibid.*, p. 33.
957 (U) *Ibid.*
958 (U) *Ibid.*, p. 34.
959 [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted] Additionally, Deripaska initiated

Mishakov is also an associate and business partner of Andrey Rozov, the developer with whom Michael Cohen and Felix Sater worked on a potential Trump Tower Moscow deal during the 2016 presidential campaign. *See infra* Vol. 5, Sec. D.ii.a.

960 [redacted]

961 (U) *Ibid.*

962 (U) *Ibid.*, p. 36.

963 (U) *Ibid.*

964 (U) *Ibid.*

965 (U) *Ibid.*, p. 37.

966 (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 35, 37.

967 [redacted]

968 (U) *Ibid.*

[redacted]

a lawsuit against the Montenegrin government seeking hundreds of millions of Euros, claiming unlawful expropriation of his KAP investment.[969]

[redacted] On April 1, 2017, Aleksandar Vucic was elected president in Serbia.[970]

[redacted]

[969] (U) Dusica Tomovic, "Russian Billionaire Sues Montenegro Over Lost Investment," *Balkan Insight*, December 7, 2016.
[970] (U) Aleksandar Vascovic and Ivana Sekularac, "Serbia's Vucic confirms domination with presidential win," *Reuters*, April 1, 2017.
[971] [redacted]
[972] (U) *Ibid.*
[973] (U) *Ibid.*
[974] (U) *Ibid.*
[975] [redacted]
[976] (U) *Ibid.*
[977] (U) *Ibid.*
[978] (U) *Ibid.*
[979] (U) *Ibid.*
[980] (U) *Ibid.*

[redacted]

[redacted]

e. (U) Deripaska's Involvement in Other Russian Active Measures

[redacted] Deripaska has conducted numerous other Russian active measures campaigns and information operations, including those that interfere directly in democratic processes and elections. [redacted]

[redacted] Other Deripaska employees beyond Boyarkin and Kilimnik are also connected to GRU influence operations, suggesting Deripaska's operations are thoroughly integrated into Kremlin influence operations planning. [redacted]

[redacted] Deripaska's companies, including RUSAL, are proxies for the Kremlin, including for Russian government influence efforts, economic measures, and diplomatic relations. [redacted]

- **(U)** In approximately 2008 or 2009, Manafort worked on a project for Deripaska in Guinea where Deripaska had a large interest in bauxite mining and alumina refinery facilities.[986] Boyarkin managed the project for Deripaska.[987] Gates recalled meeting with

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[981] [redacted]
[982] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[983] [redacted]
[984] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[985] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[986] **(U)** FBI, FD-302, Gates 10/29/2018. Deripaska's business interest primarily involved the Friguia Bauxite and Alumina Complex, which had been privatized in 2006. The Friguia complex is one of the largest employers in Guinea. *See* "Friguia Bauxite and Alumina Complex," RUSAL.com.
[987] **(U)** FBI, FD-302, Gates 4/18/2018.

[redacted]

[redacted]

Boyarkin, Kilimnik, and Manafort about the project.[988] Boyarkin had intelligence regarding politicians in Guinea and contacts within the Guinean government.[989] Deripaska's strategy was to use American campaign techniques in Guinea to get the person he supported elected president.[990] Gates recalled that after working on the project for several months, the presidential candidate Manafort's firm was supporting was shot.[991] After the shooting, Boyarkin moved a Russian military ship to Guinea as a show of force to anyone who was trying to impede Deripaska.[992] Gates believed the work in Guinea ended shortly thereafter, work for which Manafort's firm was paid over $1 million.[993]

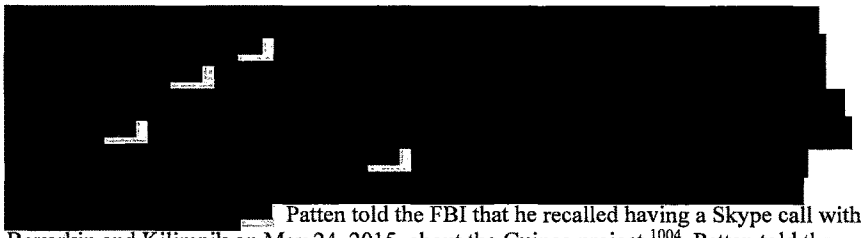
- [redacted]

[redacted]

[988] (U) FBI, FD-302, Gates 10/29/2018. At the time of the meeting, Gates recalled that it was clear that Kilimnik and Manafort already knew Boyarkin. FBI, FD-302, Gates 4/18/2018. According to Gates, Boyarkin behaved deferentially to both Manafort and Deripaska. FBI, FD-302, Gates 10/29/2018.
[989] (U) FBI, FD-302, Gates 4/18/2018.
[990] (U) *Ibid.*
[991] (U) *Ibid.*
[992] (U) *Ibid.*
[993] (U) *Ibid.*
[994] [redacted]
[995] (U) *Ibid.*
[996] (U) *Ibid.*
[997] (U) *Ibid.*
[998] (U) *Ibid.* In addition to the Guinea work, Kilimnik worked on a number of projects for Deripaska and Boyarkin and frequently sought to involve his business partner Patten. Patten participated in a number of pitches and proposals on Deripaska-related work, but claimed his work on the underlying projects never came to fruition. For example, Patten was offered a project working for Deripaska in Montenegro. Patten stated that he declined the offer to work on the Montenegro project because the project went beyond politics, violence would emanate from the project, and Patten thought it was better for Montenegro to be aligned with NATO. (As noted above, [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]



Patten told the FBI that he recalled having a Skype call with Boyarkin and Kilimnik on May 24, 2015, about the Guinea project.[1004] Patten told the Committee during his interview that he did not know a "Viktor Boyarkin."[1005] Patten later told the SCO that he did not lie to the Committee because at the time he only knew Boyarkin as "Viktor," a Russian associate of Kilimnik's who worked for Deripaska.[1006]

- [redacted]

[redacted].) Another potential Deripaska project related to Kazakhstan. FBI, FD-302, Patten 5/22/2018.

999 [redacted].

1000 (U) *Ibid.*

1001 (U) *Ibid.*

1002 (U) *Ibid.*

1003 (U) *Ibid.*

1004 (U) FBI, FD-302, Patten 5/22/2018. As noted above, Patten told the SCO that the proposals he worked on with Kilimnik related to Guinea, Kazakhstan, and others were for Deripaska. FBI, FD-302, Patten 5/22/2018. Email evidence obtained by the Committee provides some reflections of this work. For example, one project involving RUSAL's interests in Kazakhstan occurred three months after the Skype call with Boyarkin about Guinea. Patten and Kilimnik took steps to hide their work on this Kazakhstan project by using foldering on Hushmail. For example, on August 23, 2015, Kilimnik emailed Patten to tell him that Kilimnik had had a "very good and interesting meeting with Victor" and that "[t]here is real interest in KZ [Kazakhstan], but we need to change the format of the memo a bit – make it short and basically tie it to the program I outlined earlier." Shortly thereafter, Kilimnik told Patten to "Pls check hush." Patten's subsequent response appeared to suggest he had received Kilimnik's edits. Emails, Kilimnik and Patten, August 23–24, 2015 (SSCI 2017-4885-3-001216). A document in Patten's possession offered a proposal to support RUSAL in Kazakhstan's markets, as well as possibilities for "impacting" Kazakhstan's "political machinations." The proposal continued: "Like in Ukraine in 2005, RUSAL's shareholders can play a crucial role by assigning an 'anti-crisis political team,' which will ensure electoral success and international acceptance for the right party and leader, contributing to internal political stability and protection of RUSAL's assets against uncontrolled scenarios and deterioration in business and rule of law environment." Memorandum, "Where Will Kazakhstan's Devaluation Lead?" (SP_OSC_000988) (referencing Kazakhstan's currency free float "last week," suggesting the document was written in late-August 2015). Kilimnik and Patten appeared to continue using Hushmail to edit documents. *See, e.g.*, Emails, Kilimnik and Patten, December 21, 2015 (SSCI 2017-4885-3-001010).

1005 (U) Patten Tr., p. 172.

1006 (U) FBI, FD-302, Patten 5/22/2018.

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

1007 [redacted]
1008 (U) *Ibid.*
1009 (U) *Ibid.*
1010 (U) *Ibid.*
1011 (U) *Ibid.*
1012 (U) *Ibid.*
1013 (U) *Ibid.*
1014 (U) *Ibid.*
1015 (U) *Ibid.*
1016 (U) *Ibid.*
1017 (U) *Ibid.*
1018 [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

f. (U) Deripaska's Connections to Hacking Operations

[redacted]

[1019] [redacted]

[1020] (U) *Ibid.*

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

ii. (U) Konstantin Kilimnik

[redacted] The Committee found that Konstantin Kilimnik is a Russian intelligence officer. The Committee found reliable evidence suggesting that Kilimnik—like Boyarkin—is part of a cadre of individuals ostensibly operating outside of the Russian government but who nonetheless

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[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

implement Kremlin-directed influence operations. These operations are funded by both the Russian government and by key Russian oligarchs, including Deripaska. The Committee bases this assessment on a body of information it obtained in the course of its investigation, including electronic communications; interviews; law enforcement information; and [redacted] and [redacted]. The following information was relevant in making this assessment:

- [redacted]

[redacted]

1025 [redacted]
1026
1027 (U) *Ibid.*
[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

- [redacted]
- [redacted] The *SCO Report* found that Kilimnik had "ties" to the Russian intelligence services.[1036] However, [redacted]
- [redacted]
- [redacted]
- [redacted]

1034 [redacted]
1035 (U) *Ibid.*
1036 (U) *SCO Report*, Vol. I, p. 133.
1037 [redacted]
1038 [redacted]
1039 [redacted]
1040 [redacted]
1041 (U) *Ibid.*
1042 [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

- (U) Kilimnik was trained in languages at the Russian Military Institute of the Ministry of Defense (VKIMO), an institute that Kilimnik himself admitted to colleagues was used by both the GRU and KGB. Kilimnik, however, downplayed and mischaracterized the type of career these intelligence officers followed compared to his own and claimed that his former classmates were not involved in intelligence matters.[1046] In particular, Kilimnik claimed in private correspondence to his close associate and business partner Sam Patten that, because he was not a military attaché, he could not be a GRU officer. Kilimnik also claimed to Patten that "GRU does not have agents abroad. Not its business after the reforms."[1047] Kilimnik further claimed:

> *Never had any contacts later with military, KGB . . . . NONE of [my classmates] stayed in the military . . . all do top jobs at telecoms, consulting, standard and poors, accounting etc. . . . we do not talk because have [sic] time to keep in touch.*[1048]

[redacted] All of these assertions are lies. [redacted]

[1043] [redacted]

[1044] [redacted]

[1045] (U) *See infra* Vol. 5, Sec. IV.B.

[1046] (U) Patten told the Committee that although he was not an expert on the Russian intelligence services, he did not believe Kilimnik was a Russian intelligence officer. Patten Tr., pp. 98–99.

[1047] (U) Email, Kilimnik to Patten, August 20, 2016 (SSCI 2017-4885-3-000408).

[1048] (U) *Ibid.*

[redacted]

[redacted] This information suggests Kilimnik intentionally downplayed and mischaracterized—including in private to his associates like Patten—the profile of Russian intelligence officers and his connections to them in order to distance himself from these allegations.[1051]

- (U) Kilimnik sought to counter and deny Russian involvement in the 2016 U.S. elections and push pro-Russia narratives. In 2017, Kilimnik denied in private communications with Patten that there was Russian interference in the U.S. elections.[1052] Patten recalled Kilimnik claiming that the Russia intervention "narrative" was "hugely, if not entirely, exaggerated."[1053] In an email to Patten responding to the public revelation of Kilimnik's campaign correspondence with Manafort, Kilimnik suggested that the Russians were "idiots" who were "too disorganized" to conduct such interference and that they "distrusted" Manafort too much to use him in any election meddling.[1054] For years, Kilimnik was defensive about Russian interference in Ukraine with U.S. Embassy in Kyiv officials; he would admit some Russian interference by well-known Russian agents like Medvedchuk, but attempt to distance himself and the OB from Russia.[1055] Kilimnik would later push false counter-narratives about the Maidan protests that were similar in

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1049 [redacted]

1050 [redacted]

1051 (U) Kilimnik appeared to mislead Patten about a variety of matters beyond those described above. For example, Kilimnik hid his work and meetings with Manafort in 2017 and 2018 from Patten.

1052 (U) For example, Kilimnik emailed Patten a *Financial Times* article on Russian interference in the U.S. elections, suggesting that the U.S. intelligence community "must be having very little sleep chasing those squirrels who they think exist." Email, Kilimnik to Patten, September 12, 2016 (SSCI 2017-4885-3-000347).

1053 (U) Patten Tr., p. 109.

1054 (U) Email, Kilimnik to Patten, September 20, 2017 (SSCI 2017-4885-3-000039).

1055 [redacted] *See, e.g.*, Email, Purcell to Pyatt, et al., April 24, 2015 (CDP-2017-00011G-001378); Email, Purcell to Pyatt, et al., May 19, 2015 (CDP-2017-00011G-001380). Separate information suggests that Kilimnik was incorrect that the OB was not supported by the Russians. [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

nature to Russian counter-narratives on the topic.[1056] As described *infra,* Kilimnik used his @PBaranenko alias account to tweet a variety of pro-Russian themes, including false information about NotPetya, Bill Browder, MH-17, and the 2014 Maidan protests.

- [redacted] In the spring of 2014, during Russia's invasion of Crimea, Kilimnik contacted Jonathan Hawker, a British national who was a public relations consultant at FTI Consulting and worked with Manafort on Yanukovych-related work. Kilimnik offered Hawker an opportunity to conduct a public relations campaign for an unspecified Russian government entity that would attempt to tout the Russian invasion as a liberation of Crimea.[1057] In an email to Hawker, Kilimnik stated that the purpose of the project was "to build a framework for clarifying and promoting Russia's position on Crimea and Ukraine in the Western and Ukrainian media using existing contacts and modern mechanisms."[1058] Kilimnik then facilitated a meeting between Hawker and an individual believed to be affiliated with the Russian government.[1059] Hawker ultimately attended a meeting in Russia and said he presumed the person he met with was a Russian operative. Hawker later explained that he submitted a proposal but with an overly high price because he did not want to engage in the work.[1060]

- (U) Patten told the SCO that after he had left IRI, an IRI employee who worked at IRI's Belarus desk, Trig Olson, made a claim that Kilimnik leaked information to Russian intelligence.[1061] Olson based his assessment on a situation where information provided in a meeting that Kilimnik had attended was leaked to Russian intelligence.[1062] Patten ultimately confronted Kilimnik about Olson's allegation, and Kilimnik denied he was the source of the leak.[1063]

- [redacted] Kilimnik has repeatedly claimed that in April 1995 he stopped his Russian military service at the rank of Lieutenant after having been assigned to teach Swedish at VKIMO and traveling on several "Russian trade delegations" to Sweden. Kilimnik further claimed that after leaving the Russian military, he was hired at the International

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1056 [redacted] For example, according to Manafort, Kilimnik believed that "Georgian mercenaries hired by the West" committed the violence in the Maydan in February 2014, not the Yanukovych regime. Kilimnik shared documentaries to this effect with Manafort. FBI, FD-302, Manafort 9/13/2018.

1057 [redacted]

1058 [redacted] Email, Hawker and Tulukbaev, March 18, 2014 (Doc ID 0.7.1120.104630).

1059 [redacted]

1060 (U) *Ibid.*

1061 (U) FBI, FD-302, Patten 5/22/2018.

1062 (U) *Ibid.*

1063 (U) FBI, FD-302, Patten 5/22/2018. Patten said he was skeptical of Olson's allegations about Kilimnik's ties to Russian intelligence in part because he believed Olson had a score to settle with Manafort because Olson had been fired from the McCain Campaign by Rick Davis, Manafort's former business partner.

[redacted]

[redacted]

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Republican Institute (IRI). A review of IRI records confirmed Kilimnik's employment at IRI no later than mid-1995.[1064] Kilimnik, however, appears to have not completely broken ties with the Russian government by 1995. [redacted] reflect that an official Russian diplomatic passport for "Konstantin Viktorovich Klimnik," born April 27, 1970, in Ukraine, was issued a diplomatic type B1/B2 (temporary visitor) visa in Moscow on October 28, 1997, over two years after he began working for IRI. The visa was valid until October 27, 1998.[1065]

- (U) Kilimnik was hired by IRI "fresh out of Russian Ministry of Defense."[1066] At IRI, he was placed as a program manager in charge of the NGO program. Russia has a long history of focus on foreign NGO activity, particularly IRI.[1067]

[redacted]

- (U) Despite claiming both publicly and in a statement sent to the Committee through Manafort's attorneys that "Ukraine is my country," the Committee found Kilimnik in fact maintains deep ties to Russia, which he attempts to obscure.[1069] In particular, Kilimnik maintains a permanent residence with a family in Moscow, has a Russian passport, and is a Russian citizen. When U.S. media published Kilimnik's name in August 2016, Kilimnik returned to Russia, allegedly for protection. When asked to explain why Kilimnik would choose Russia to return for protection, Patten explained to the Committee, "He's a Russian citizen, he owns a house there. Often we go home when we want to get out of a bad situation."[1070]

[1064] (U) IRI internal memorandum, Kilimnik to Griffin, July 12, 1995 (IRI-001039). The *SCO Report* misstates when Kilimnik first became affiliated with IRI; it was 1995, not 1998.

[1065] (U) The Committee considered alternative explanations for this discrepancy, including the possibility that for reasons of convenience or error Kilimnik maintained a diplomatic passport despite not having a government affiliation for over two years. Because such alternative explanations are credible, the Committee did not weigh this piece information heavily as evidence of Kilimnik's ongoing Russian government ties. Nonetheless, the information remains anomalous and is included because it is only one of many such anomalies which, taken as a whole, have greater weight.

[1066] (U) Email Mefford to Holzen and Kondraciuk, July 8, 2016 (IRI Production).

[1067] (U) At IRI, Kilimnik was exposed to a wide variety of government officials, some of whom went on to senior positions in the Russian government. *See, e.g.*, IRI, "Participants to Regional Networking Conference" February 24-27, 1999 (IRI-000054).

[1068] [redacted]

[1069] (U) Letter, Brown to SSCI, June 19, 2017.

[1070] (U) Patten Tr., pp. 47–48.

[redacted]

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[redacted]

- (U) Gates told the FBI that he joked about Kilimnik being a Russian spy because he did not know for sure if Kilimnik was a Russian intelligence officer.[1071] Gates stated, however, that he suspected Kilimnik was a Russian intelligence officer.[1072] Gates stated that Kilimnik was well connected in Russia and Ukraine and could obtain information easily.[1073] Gates characterized Kilimnik as an "odd guy" and that Kilimnik was always gathering information about everything.[1074] Gates also did not believe that Kilimnik could afford his lifestyle solely on his DMP salary.[1075] Gates recalled visiting Kilimnik's home in Kyiv where he noticed an Audi A8 in his garage, which Gates had never seen Kilimnik drive to work before.[1076]

- [redacted] According to Manafort, some people in the PoR thought Manafort worked for the CIA and Kilimnik worked for the KGB.[1077] Gates recalled that occasionally Manafort would intentionally make a false statement in Kilimnik's presence to test if Kilimnik was sharing information with others.[1078] At one point in time, Manafort told Yanukovych that Yanukovych should have Kilimnik checked out so that they would not have to hold back during "sensitive" conversations in Kilimnik's presence.[1079] Manafort relayed this advice to Yanukovych through Lyovochkin in 2010.[1080] Manafort recalled that Yanukovych subsequently told him that the SBU had cleared Kilimnik.[1081] However, at this time, the SBU was widely compromised by the Russian intelligence services. [redacted]

[1071] (U) [redacted] FBI, FD-302, Gates 1/29/2018.
[1072] (U) FBI, FD-302, Gates 2/12/2018.
[1073] (U) FBI, FD-302, Gates 1/29/2018.
[1074] (U) FBI, FD-302, Gates 2/12/2018.
[1075] (U) FBI, FD-302, Gates 10/29/2018.
[1076] (U) *Ibid.*
[1077] (U) FBI, FD-302, Manafort 9/13/2018.
[1078] (U) FBI, FD-302, Gates 10/29/2018. Manafort, like others who dealt with Kilimnik, at some point harbored suspicions that Kilimnik had ties to intelligence services. Manafort was undeniably aware—often from first-hand experience—of suspicious aspects of Kilimnik's behavior and network. Nevertheless, Manafort later asserted to the SCO that Kilimnik was not a spy.
[1079] (U) *Ibid.*; FBI, FD-302, Manafort 9/13/2018.
[1080] (U) FBI, FD-302, Manafort 9/13/2018.
[1081] [redacted]
[1082] [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

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[redacted] Despite his status as a Russian national, Kilimnik had "unfettered access" to Yanukovych and Yanukovych's office.[1084]

[redacted] Several other pieces of information about Kilimnik—while not as probative in isolation—are consistent with Kilimnik's affiliation with the Russian intelligence services because they closely align with Russian intelligence tradecraft. For example, Kilimnik conducted broad engagement with diplomats and embassies, especially in Kyiv;[1085] used multiple encrypted applications to enhance his communications security;[1086] used coded and vague language when discussing sensitive topics in writing; used "foldering" in emails;[1087] and used pseudonyms, such as "[redacted],"[1088] "[redacted]"[1089] and "[redacted]"[1090] for use in electronic communications. [redacted]

(U) Kilimnik also worked to undermine investigations into those close to him by interfering with witness testimony.

- (U) In June 2018, the SCO charged Kilimnik and Manafort with conspiring to obstruct justice. Starting in February 2018, Manafort and Kilimnik had attempted to persuade two

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[1083] (U) SSCI Memorandum, "Trip Report – Ukraine, Turkey, Austria," April 2014 (2014-2915).
[1084] (U) FBI, FD-302, Gates 1/29/2018.
[1085] (U) Kilimnik "regularly met with all manner of embassies, diplomats, so forth and so on." Patten Tr., p. 79. *See also* Email, Kilimnik to Purcell, January 21, 2016 (CDP-2017-00011G-000276) (Kilimnik stating that he sent notes to the German and French embassies in Kyiv).
[1086] [redacted] Kilimnik used at least Viber, Threema, and WhatsApp with Patten. This was at least in part because Kilimnik was, in his own view, most likely a regular subject of surveillance. Patten Tr., pp. 119–120, 167–168. [redacted]
[1087] (U) Manafort and Patten separately admitted to the SCO that they engaged in foldering with Kilimnik.
[1088] (U) Text Message thread, Patten and Kilimnik (SP_OSC_002819).
[1089] [redacted] For example, Kilimnik used the [redacted]
[1090] (U) *Ibid.*
[1091] [redacted]
[1092] (U) *Ibid.*

[redacted]

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[redacted]

individuals with who they had previously worked on Ukraine matters to influence their testimony.[1093] Manafort later admitted to this conspiracy with Kilimnik.[1094]

- (U) On May 31, 2018, the day Patten was scheduled to testify before a grand jury, Kilimnik asked Patten if there was "anything I can help you with on the GJ [grand jury]."[1095] Patten expressed concern to Kilimnik about his testimony related to purchasing inauguration tickets for Lyovochkin and money from Lyovochkin transferred to Patten for that purpose.[1096] Kilimnik offered Patten an "explanation," suggesting to Patten a fabrication he could offer to the grand jury:

> *How about they sent it to us for a poll they wanted to do, and because they (as they typically do) canceled the poll you decided to use it for inauguration tickets. Do your client a favor. One failed to come, no one actually attended other than you and SL. Business development for us.*[1097]

(U) Given Kilimnik's work as a Russian intelligence officer, the Committee also sought to understand Kilimnik's engagement with the U.S. Embassy in Kyiv during this time period. Beginning in the Yanukovych administration and continuing through at least late 2016, Kilimnik was in regular contact with personnel serving in the Embassy's political section.[1098]

(U) Kilimnik, first as an employee of Manafort's in Kyiv, and later as Patten's partner, served in several roles, most notably as an advisor to the presidential administration and in particular to Yanukoych's then-chief of staff, Lyovochkin. Kilimnik's access to these PoR politicians, and to the oligarchs that backed them, made Kilimnik an important contact of the political section. Kilimnik's ability to navigate the Maydan-led ouster of Yanukovych, and his transition to power broker within the OB made him a valuable resource to the Embassy.

[1093] (U) Superseding Indictment, *United States v. Paul J. Manafort, Jr., et al.*, Case No. 1:17-CR-201 (D.D.C. June 8, 2018).

[1094] (U) Plea Agreement of Paul J. Manafort, Jr., *United States v. Paul J. Manafort, Jr.*, Case No. 17-201-1-ABJ (D.D.C. September 14, 2018).

[1095] (U) Text Message, Kilimnik to Patten, May 31, 2018 [redacted]

[1096] (U) Text Message, Patten to Kilimnik, May 31, 2018 [redacted]

[1097] (U) Text Message, Kilimnik to Patten, May 31, 2018 [redacted] In September 2018, Kilimnik offered to arrange for Patten to receive money from Lyovochkin even after Patten's work for Lyovochkin had ceased and Patten's cooperation with the Government was public. Kilimnik asked Patten about the possibility of "sending a post-factum invoice for lobbying to SL." Kilimnik further stated that SL is "ready to do it" as compensation for Patten's legal costs. Text Message, Kilimnik to Patten, September 16, 2018 [redacted]

[1098] (U) The political section of the Embassy in Kyiv serves as the chief point of contact between embassy officials and representatives of the host government, and reports to the Department of State on issues affecting the relationship between the United States and Ukraine, including domestic political events.

[redacted]

[redacted]

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[redacted] Among the issues Kilimnik discussed with the Embassy were Lyovochkin's analysis of the Minsk Accord implementation[1099] and OB polling data.[1100] Kilimnik also worked to arrange meetings between Department of State officials and senior Ukrainian politicians, most notably Lyovochkin.[1101] Kilimnik's reporting was widely discussed within the political section, and on at least one occasion [redacted]

(U) Despite the widespread discussion and use of Kilimnik's reporting, which over the course of four years appears to have generated hundreds of pages of emails, and support for his visa applications, it is clear to the Committee that most Department of State personnel were appropriately skeptical of Kilimnik, occasionally dismissive of his reporting, and sometimes noted the need for caution when dealing with Kilimnik. Examples of the political section's skepticism of Kilimnik include:

- (U) Expressions of doubt about Kilimnik's reporting about Boris Filatov.[1104]
- (U) In March and July 2014 email exchanges, multiple officials calling into question the polling results Kilimnik was providing, and expressing concern about bias.[1105]
- (U) In September 2014, an Embassy officer suggesting to another that he needed Kilimnik's input on a subject, while noting the need to "be careful with that relationship."[1106]

[1099] (U) Email, Kilimnik to Purcell, January 21, 2016 (CDP-2017-00011G-000276).
[1100] (U) Email, Kilimnik to Purcell, February 28, 2016 (CDP-2017-00011G -000262–263); Email, Kasanof to Kyiv POL Core Section (CDP-2017-00011G-000810 –830); Email, Kasanof to Pyatt, et al., April 10, 2014 (CDP-2017-00011G-000834–836).
[1101] (U) Email, [redacted] to Kasanof, October 8, 2014 (CDP-2017-00011G-000776).
[1102] [redacted]
[1103] [redacted]
[1104] (U) Email, Purcell to [redacted] and [redacted] November 20, 2015 (CDP-2017-00011G-000300).
[1105] (U) Email, [redacted] to [redacted] and [redacted] (CDP-2017-00011G-000834) ("WTF? Of course K is going to s how [sic] us doom and gloom polls that are not in favor of the current government.").
[1106] (U) Email, [redacted] to [redacted] and LeClair, September 16, 2014 (CDP-2017-00011G-000804).

[redacted]

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[redacted]

- (U) Statements by one of Kilimnik's key Embassy interlocutors, made to another Department of State official in July 2015, discussing the degree to which a third official "knows I dislike and distrust Kilimnik."[1107]

- (U) Also in July 2015, then-Ambassador Pyatt's statement "Frankly, I have zero respect for KK's advice."[1108]

(U) The Embassy's view is perhaps best summed up in an August 2014 email from an Embassy official. In that email, the Embassy official reminds other Embassy employees that they should take Kilimnik's claims "with as much salt as you think appropriate" because "KK has his own history and agenda."[1109]

[1107] (U) Email, [redacted] to [redacted] July 9, 2015 (CDP-2017-00011G-000403).
[1108] (U) Email, Pyatt to Purcell, et al., July 8, 2015 (CDP-2017-00011G-000405).
[1109] (U) Email, Purcell to Donahue, et al., August 7, 2014 (CDP-2017-00011G-001446).

[redacted]

[redacted]

B. (U) Hack and Leak

1. (U) Introduction and Findings

(U) Beginning in March 2016, officers of the Russian Main Intelligence Directorate, the GRU, successfully hacked computer networks belonging to the Democratic National Committee (DNC) and the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee (DCCC), and the email accounts of Clinton Campaign officials and employees, including Campaign Chairman John Podesta. Over the following months, these hackers carefully established persistent access in confidential areas of the victims' systems and stole massive amounts of politically sensitive data and personal communications. The data was subsequently leaked by GRU personas and WikiLeaks at strategic moments during the 2016 election, as part of a coordinated hack-and-leak operation intended to damage the Clinton Campaign, help the Trump Campaign (the "Campaign"), and undermine the U.S. democratic process.[1110]

(U) The Committee sought to understand the nature of the Russian hacking operation, including its origins and intent. The Committee further examined the relationship between the GRU's operation and WikiLeaks, including when, how, and why WikiLeaks was provided with the hacked DNC and Podesta documents, and what it sought to achieve. The Committee also investigated the relationship between WikiLeaks and the Campaign, including the Campaign's treatment of WikiLeaks and any attempts to contact or coordinate with it.[1111]

(U) The Committee found that Russian President Vladimir Putin directed the hack-and-leak campaign targeting the DNC, DCCC, and the Clinton Campaign. Moscow's intent was to damage the Clinton Campaign and tarnish what it expected might be a Clinton presidential administration, help the Trump Campaign after Trump became the presumptive Republican nominee, and generally undermine the U.S. democratic process. The Committee's findings are based on a variety of information, including raw intelligence reporting.

[1110] (U) This conduct earned twelve GRU officers a criminal indictment from the SCO for violating the Computer Fraud and Abuse Act, committing aggravated identity theft, money laundering, and conspiracy. Indictment, *United States v. Viktor Borisovich Netyksho*, Case No. 1:18-cr-00215-ABJ (D.D.C. July 13, 2018) (hereinafter "*Netyksho* indictment").

[1111] (U) As part of its work, the Committee reviewed a variety of information relating to the Russian hacking of the DNC, DCCC and various officials and associates of the Clinton Campaign during the 2016 U.S. election. This included intelligence community reporting relating to GRU hack-and-leak activities and Russian cyber operations more broadly; information and analysis by computer forensic experts conducting incident response at the DNC and DCCC; and information gathered during the SCO's investigation, as reflected in the *SCO Report* and the *Netyksho* indictment, as well as the 2019 criminal trial of Roger Stone.

[redacted]

[redacted]

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(U) The hack-and-leak campaign was conducted by the GRU through specialized cyber units, executed using established GRU infrastructure, and planned and coordinated by GRU headquarters elements. Starting in March 2016, the GRU used spearphishing techniques to gain unauthorized access to the email accounts of individuals associated with the Clinton Campaign, including Campaign Manager John Podesta, and stole thousands of emails. In April 2016, the GRU leveraged stolen credentials of some of these individuals to obtain further unauthorized access to the networks of the DNC and DCCC, where it identified and carefully exfiltrated tens of thousands of politically sensitive documents from April through June 2016.[1112] The GRU continued to conduct hacking operations to obtain additional material from accounts associated with the Clinton Campaign until at least September 2016.

(U) The GRU quickly integrated the materials it stole during its hacking operation into an influence operation that relied on two primary fake personas—Guccifer 2.0 and DCLeaks—to promote and disseminate the hacked documents. The influence activities using these personas spanned June 2016 through the election, and included attempts to obscure Russia's responsibility for the hacking operation.[1113] In addition to publishing the stolen documents, the Russian personas used social engineering to seed information with specific individuals associated with the Trump Campaign. The GRU also relied on U.S. social media platforms and media attention for its influence operations.

[redacted] WikiLeaks actively sought, and played, a key role in the Russian campaign and very likely knew it was assisting a Russian intelligence influence effort. The Committee found significant indications that Julian Assange and WikiLeaks have benefited from Russian government support [redacted]

[redacted]

[1112] (U) For the Committee's discussion of FBI's role in the incident response and communications with the DNC, *see infra* Vol. 5, Sec. IV.A.

[1113] (U) Additional attempts to obscure Russian government involvement in these activities are discussed *infra* Vol. 5, Sec. III.A.7.vi.

[redacted]

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[redacted]

[redacted]

(U) The GRU transferred the information stolen from the Clinton Campaign and DNC to WikiLeaks, likely because WikiLeaks offered a more effective platform to disseminate stolen documents than the GRU's own organic methods. The GRU communicated with WikiLeaks using its fake personas throughout the summer of 2016. It transferred data to WikiLeaks through electronic means, and may also have transferred data to WikiLeaks through human couriers.

(U) As described in Volume 3 of this Report, the Committee notes that views on WikiLeaks remained conflicted within the U.S. Government and in the media at this time. The media also conducted its own outreach to WikiLeaks, Guccifer 2.0, and DCLeaks. Views on WikiLeaks's status only began to shift late in the summer of 2016.

(U) After receiving the GRU's materials, WikiLeaks timed its document releases for maximum political impact. WikiLeaks released the GRU-hacked materials obtained from the DNC on the eve of the Democratic National Convention. It released materials stolen from Podesta's email account starting on October 7, 2016, and continued to release Podesta's emails up until the election.

(U) While the GRU and WikiLeaks were releasing hacked documents, the Trump Campaign sought to maximize the impact of those materials to aid Trump's electoral prospects. To do so, the Trump Campaign took actions to obtain advance notice about WikiLeaks releases of Clinton emails; took steps to obtain inside information about the content of releases once WikiLeaks began to publish stolen information; created messaging strategies to promote and share the materials in anticipation of and following their release; and encouraged further theft of information and continued leaks.

(U) Trump and senior Campaign officials sought to obtain advance information about WikiLeaks through Roger Stone. In spring 2016, prior to Assange's public announcements, Stone advised the Campaign that WikiLeaks would be releasing materials harmful to Clinton. Following the July 22 DNC release, Trump and the Campaign believed that Roger Stone had known of the release and had inside access to WikiLeaks, and repeatedly communicated with Stone about WikiLeaks throughout the summer and fall of 2016. Trump and other senior Campaign officials specifically directed Stone to obtain information about upcoming document releases relating to Clinton and report back. At their direction, Stone took action to gain inside knowledge for the Campaign and shared his purported knowledge directly with Trump and senior Campaign officials on multiple occasions. Trump and the Campaign believed that Stone had inside information and expressed satisfaction that Stone's information suggested more releases would be forthcoming.

[redacted]

[redacted]

(U) In August 2016, following the Campaign's tasking, Stone obtained information indicating that John Podesta would be a target of an upcoming release, prior to WikiLeaks releasing Podesta's emails on October 7. Stone then communicated this information to Trump and other senior Campaign officials and affiliates, including Manafort and Gates. After the October 7 release, Trump, Manafort, Gates and others found Stone's information to be correct. Stone likely received this information from Jerome Corsi, who informed Stone in early August that WikiLeaks would be releasing Podesta's emails.

(U) The Committee could not reliably determine the extent of authentic, non-public knowledge about WikiLeaks that Stone obtained and shared with the Campaign. Corsi made contradictory statements about whether he acquired this information from a source or deduced it on his own. Corsi also coordinated with Stone on a cover story for Stone's information and deleted communications relating to the issue. Separately, Stone communicated with Randy Credico between August and October 2016 in an attempt to obtain advance information about WikiLeaks, but Credico denied having any non-public knowledge, despite having some connections to Assange.

(U) Obtaining Clinton-related emails was a primary focus of the Trump Campaign's opposition research effort. While it was seeking advance information about potential WikiLeaks releases, the Campaign created a messaging strategy to promote the stolen materials. When the hacked emails were released, the Campaign used the contents of the emails to attack Clinton. In addition, Trump publicly requested that Russia find and release the "missing" emails from Clinton's server, and hours later, GRU hackers attempted new spearphishing attacks against the Clinton Campaign. Trump also directed individuals in, and associated with, his Campaign to seek out Clinton's "missing" emails.[1114]

(U) Trump and the Campaign continued to promote and disseminate the hacked WikiLeaks documents, even after the Office of the Director of National Intelligence and the Department of Homeland Security released a joint statement officially attributing the hack-and-leak campaign to Russia as part of its interference in the U.S. presidential election. The Trump Campaign publicly undermined the attribution of the hack-and-leak campaign to Russia, and was indifferent to whether it and WikiLeaks were furthering a Russian election interference effort.

2. (U) Limitations on the Committee's Investigation

(U) The Committee faced several limitations to its inquiry. Most importantly, several witnesses implicated in the SCO's investigation refused interviews and document production, on the basis of their Fifth Amendment rights. These witnesses included Roger Stone, Paul

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[1114] (U) One effort to locate these "missing" emails is described *infra*, Vol. 5, Sec. L.1.

[redacted]

[redacted]

Manafort,[1115] Rick Gates, Randy Credico, and Jerome Corsi. In addition, the Committee requested but did not obtain an interview with Julian Assange. Ongoing criminal investigations and prosecutions further limited the Committee's access to materials in the possession of FBI and the Department of Justice, such as the criminal cases against Roger Stone and the GRU hackers. Finally, the Committee faced limitations on its legal authorities, including the inability to compel evidence from entities outside the United States.

3. (U) Background on GRU Hacking Activities

[redacted]The GRU is one of three Russian intelligence services—in addition to the FSB and Foreign Intelligence Service (SVR)—that maintains an active cyber program.[redacted]

[redacted] The ICA states, with high confidence, that Putin ordered the 2016 influence campaign against the U.S. presidential election.[1121]

[1115] (U) As noted elsewhere, Manafort did agree to a limited interview on the June 9, 2016 meeting in Trump Tower.

[1116] [redacted]

[1117] [redacted]

[1118] [redacted]

[1119] [redacted]

[1120] (U) *Ibid.*

[1121] (U) NIC, "Assessing Russian Activities and Intentions in Recent US Elections," January 6, 2017 (hereinafter *Declassified ICA*).

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

1122 [redacted]
1123
1124
1125 [redacted] Seven GRU officers belonging to Unit 26165 were charged with a conspiracy to commit computer intrusions and publicize stolen information in order to undermine and retaliate against efforts by anti-doping agencies involved in exposing Russian athletic doping programs, among other crimes. Indictment, *United States v. Aleksei Sergeyevich Morenets*, No. 2:18-cr-263-MRH (W.D. Pa. October 3, 2018).

1126 [redacted]
1127
1128
1129
1130

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

- **(U)** FPN 26165 was given primary responsibility for the technical work associated with the hack-and-leak operation: hacking into the DCCC, DNC and accounts of individuals affiliated with the Clinton Campaign.[1132] This operation was further parceled out to specialized sub-units that separately focus on developing malware, spearphishing, and bitcoin mining.[1133]

- **(U)** FPN 74455 had primary responsibility for the influence side of the hack-and-leak operation: it assisted in the release of stolen documents, promotion of those materials, and, among others, the publication of anti-Clinton content on GRU-operated social media accounts.[1134] As described in Volume I of this Committee's Report, FPN 74455 also separately hacked computers belonging to state boards of elections, secretaries of state, and U.S. companies involved in administration of U.S. elections.[1135]

- [redacted]

(U) Although the 2016 hack-and-leak campaign was by far Russia's most significant election interference operation targeting the United States, the GRU's effort was, in hindsight, a surprise but not an anomaly. It reflects a growing trend of Russia's increasing use of hack-and-leak operations over the past several years to target its foreign adversaries. In addition, many of the techniques that the GRU had honed in its earlier campaigns reappeared in 2016, although at a larger scale and with more sophistication: the use of fake personas on social media; the posting of stolen materials directly on GRU-operated websites for public consumption; and the use of specific individuals and existing outlets to push narratives about the documents that were advantageous to Russia.

[1131] [redacted] *See also* *Netyksho* indictment; *SCO Report*, Vol. I, pp. 36–37.
[1132] **(U)** *SCO Report*, Vol. I, p. 37.
[1133] **(U)** *Ibid.*, pp. 36–37.
[1134] **(U)** *Ibid.*, p. 37.
[1135] **(U)** *Ibid.* For a full discussion of Russian activities involving election infrastructure, *see* Vol. 1.
[1136] [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted] The GRU has conducted [redacted] significant hack-and-leak operations around the world since 2014, including: the 2016 U.S. elections (using the personas Guccifer 2.0 and DCLeaks), as well as operations conducted through the personas [redacted] "Cyber Caliphate," and "Cyber Berkut."[1137] [redacted] these operations took place prior to the 2016 U.S. election interference; others occurred contemporaneously or soon afterwards:

- [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[1137] [redacted] Public reporting from the United Kingdom attributes a variety of threat actors to the GRU, including Fancy Bear, APT 28, CyberCaliphate, Cyber Berkut, and others. *See* U.K. National Cyber Security Centre, "Reckless campaign of cyber attacks by Russian military intelligence service exposed," October 3, 2018.

[1138] [redacted]

[1139] (U) *Ibid.*

[1140] (U) *Ibid.*

[1141] (U) *Ibid.*

[1142] (U) *Ibid.*

[1143] (U) *Ibid.*

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

4. (U) The GRU Plans and Executes the Theft of Sensitive Political Documents

(U) In March 2016, GRU hackers began a coordinated, multi-month hacking effort against email accounts and computer networks associated with the Clinton Campaign and the Democratic Party. During the intrusion, the GRU identified and stole thousands of emails and sensitive political materials that it would later release and promote through fake online personas and WikiLeaks.

i. (U) Initial Stages

(U) In March 2016, GRU hackers began using research and targeting efforts to learn about Democratic Party websites, including the domains they ultimately hacked. Among other things, the hackers conducted technical queries for the IP configurations of victim domains and to identify network-connected devices, as well as metadata associated with those devices, such as the active operating systems, with the aid of the search engine "Shodan."[1146] They also conducted open-source research to learn about the DNC network, the Democratic Party, and Hillary Clinton's campaign.[1147] These searches permitted the hackers to identify technical vulnerabilities in the potential targets, craft effective spearphishing emails, and to assess the information their expected victims might possess. All of this activity took place before the GRU had successfully gained access to the victim systems.[1148]

[redacted]

[1144] (U) *Ibid.*
[1145] (U) *Ibid.*
[1146] (U) *Netyksho* indictment, ¶ 23; [redacted] Shodan is a search engine for internet-connected devices; it allows users to discover which devices are connected to the Internet, where they are located, and how they are configured. *See, e.g.*, J.M. Porup, "What is Shodan? The search engine for everything on the internet," *CSO*, October 18, 2018.
[1147] (U) *Netyksho* indictment, ¶ 23.
[1148] (U) *SCO Report*, Vol. I, p. 37.
[1149] [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted] The abbreviated URL links were created by a Senior Lieutenant in Unit 26165, with the username "john356gh."[1153] [redacted] and the GRU later used it to spearphish Democratic Party targets, including on March 25, 2016.[1155] [redacted]

(U) Beginning on or about March 10, 2016, GRU officers sent hundreds of spearphishing emails to the work and personal email accounts of employees and volunteers of the Clinton Campaign.[1157] Ninety spearphishing emails were directed to accounts hosted at hillaryclinton.com.[1158] By March 15, the GRU also began targeting Google and dnc.org email accounts used by Clinton Campaign employees.[1159] On April 6, the GRU successfully spearphished a DCCC employee.[1160] In total, over 300 accounts were targeted.[1161]

(U) The GRU used multiple techniques to fool recipients of its spearphishing emails. Some of the emails it sent contained a fake link purporting to let the recipient reset an account password, but in reality stole their credentials.[1162] Others, sent by a spoofed account that appeared to be from a known member of the Clinton Campaign, included a fake link purporting to direct the recipient to a spreadsheet about Clinton's ratings.[1163] GRU hackers used a URL-shortening service to obfuscate the link's malicious nature.[1164] A user who was tricked into

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[1150] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[1151] **(U)** Bitly provides a URL-shortening service and link management platform. *See, e.g.*, www.bitly.com/pages/features/link-shortening.
[1152] [redacted]
[1153] **(U)** *Netyksho* indictment, ¶¶ 13, 21.
[1154] [redacted]
[1155] **(U)** *Netyksho* indictment, ¶¶ 13, 21.
[1156] [redacted]
[1157] **(U)** *SCO Report*, Vol. I, p. 37.
[1158] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[1159] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[1160] **(U)** *Netyksho* indictment, ¶ 24.
[1161] **(U)** *Ibid.*, ¶ 21.
[1162] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[1163] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[1164] **(U)** *Ibid.*

[redacted]

[redacted]

clicking on the links and sharing his or her credentials gave the GRU control over the accounts, including the ability to steal the accounts' contents.[1165]



(U) The most recognizable victim of this spearphishing effort was John Podesta, the chairman of the Clinton Campaign. On March 19, 2016, Podesta's account received a spearphishing email purporting to be from Google. The email claimed that someone had tried to access his Google account and recommended that he change his password immediately by using a link embedded in the email.[1166] Based on an apparent mistake by a security specialist stating that the email was "legitimate" rather than "illegitimate," Podesta's assistant clicked the link, giving GRU hackers access to the account.[1167] On March 21, 2016, within two days of first accessing Podesta's account, the GRU hackers stole 50,000 of Podesta's emails.[1168]

[1165] **(U)** *Ibid.* Pictured is a publicly-available sample of one of the spearphishing emails sent by the GRU. Eric Lipton, et al., "The Perfect Weapon: How Russian Cyberpower Invaded the U.S.," *The New York Times*, December 13, 2016.
[1166] **(U)** *Netyksho* indictment, ¶ 21.
[1167] **(U)** Jim Sciutto, "How one typo helped let Russian hackers in," *CNN*, June 27, 2017; Ellen Nakashima and Shane Harris, "How the Russians hacked the DNC and passed its emails to WikiLeaks," *The Washington Post*, July 13, 2018. According to media reports, the security contractor meant to respond that the spearphishing email was "illegitimate."
[1168] **(U)** *Netyksho* indictment, ¶ 21.

[redacted]

[redacted]

ii. (U) Compromise of the DNC and DCCC Networks

(U) These initial compromises provided the jumping-off point for subsequent large-scale intrusions, starting with the DCCC. On April 7, 2016, the day after successfully spearphishing a DCCC employee, a GRU officer searched for technical information about the DCCC's network configurations to help identify connected devices and, presumably, vulnerabilities.[1169] The GRU then established its presence on the DCCC network on April 12, 2016, when hackers leveraged stolen credentials from the compromised DCCC employee to access the DCCC network.[1170] GRU hackers gained access to 29 computers on the network over the following weeks, including by stealing network administrator credentials through the use of keystroke loggers. The GRU compromised the network credentials belonging to at least 18 users.[1171]

(U) Once established on the network, the hackers moved quickly toward identifying and stealing politically-sensitive materials. On April 14, 2016, just days after the intrusion began, the GRU hackers installed rar.exe, a tool often used by hackers to compile and compress large amounts of data for easier exfiltration.[1172] The same day, they began to scour the system for political intelligence, using search terms like "Hillary," "Cruz," and "Trump," copying entire DCCC folders (including one labeled "Benghazi Investigations") and targeting computers that hosted opposition research and field operation plans for the election.[1173]

(U) Then, on April 18, 2016, the GRU gained access to the DNC network through a virtual private network (VPN) that connected the DNC and DCCC networks.[1174] The VPN was intended to give certain DCCC employees access to databases on the DNC network.[1175] The GRU had used malware called "X-Agent" to take screenshots and capture the key strokes of a DCCC employee who had authorization to access the DNC network.[1176]

(U) On April 19, the day after it had gained access to the DNC, the GRU established an external set of proxy computers, which the GRU referred to as the "middle servers," to interact with its malware.[1177] The GRU used these proxy servers to help mask the involvement of

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[1169] (U) *Ibid.*, ¶ 23.
[1170] (U) *Ibid.*, ¶ 24; Crowdstrike, *Draft Incident Investigation Report, DCCC*, August 8, 2016 (hereinafter *Crowdstrike DCCC Report*), p. 6.
[1171] (U) *Crowdstrike DCCC Report*, pp. 6, 10; *SCO Report*, Vol. I, p. 38.
[1172] (U) *Crowdstrike DCCC Report*, p. 19; *SCO Report*, Vol. I, p. 40.
[1173] [redacted]
[1174] [redacted] *DNC Report*, pp. 5–7; *SCO Report*, Vol. I, p. 38.
[1176] (U) *Netyksho* indictment, ¶ 26.
[1177] (U) *SCO Report*, Vol I., p. 39.

[redacted]

[redacted]

Russian government actors. The "middle servers" in turn connected to a second-set of GRU-controlled computers, known within the GRU as the "AMS Panel," which the GRU used to monitor and control its malware operations.[1178] The AMS Panel, which was housed on a server in Arizona leased by the GRU, also served as a repository for data obtained via keylogging sessions.[1179] Other servers the GRU used were located elsewhere in the United States and all over the world.[1180]

(U) The GRU quickly capitalized on its access to the DNC. On April 22, it exfiltrated an initial set of documents. Between May 25 and June 1, 2016, it again accessed the mail server and stole thousands of emails and attachments.[1181] By June 8, 2016, GRU hackers gained access to over 30 computers on the DNC network, including the mail server and shared file server.[1182]

(U) Within days of establishing its network of proxy computers, the GRU had also identified relevant materials to take from the DCCC. On April 25, the hackers began collecting and compressing over 70 Gigabytes of election-related documents on the DCCC network for exfiltration, which they separated into smaller parts, likely to avoid detection.[1183] On April 28, they used additional malware known as X-Tunnel to create an encrypted connection between the DCCC computers and GRU-controlled proxy computers for secure, large-scale data transfers, and then exfiltrated the over-70 Gigabytes of compressed data to a remote, GRU-controlled server.[1184] Consistent with GRU techniques and "methods of persistence" identified by computer forensic investigators in other intrusions, the hackers again used X-Agent to log keystrokes, take screenshots, and gather system data; used a lateral-movement tool called RemCom; and used Mimikatz, a credential-harvesting tool.[1185] The GRU also destroyed evidence of its activities by deleting logs and computer files that reflected its presence on the DNC and DCCC network, and the AMS panel.[1186]

5. (U) Russia "Weaponizes" Stolen Information with Fake Personas

(U) Shortly after gaining access to the DNC network, and months before it released any materials, the GRU prepared infrastructure to leak stolen information. Consistent with prior influence campaigns, the GRU used multiple fake personas on social media platforms—

[1178] (U) *Ibid.*, Vol I., pp. 39–40; *Netyksho* indictment, ¶¶ 24–25.
[1179] (U) *SCO Report*, Vol I., pp. 39–40; *Netyksho* indictment, ¶¶ 24–26.
[1180] (U) *See SCO Report*, Vol I., pp. 39–40; *Netyksho* indictment, ¶¶ 21, 24, 25.
[1181] (U) *SCO Report*, Vol I., pp. 40–41.
[1182] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 38.
[1183] (U) *Crowdstrike DCCC Report*, p. 6; *SCO Report*, Vol I., p. 40.
[1184] (U) *Crowdstrike DCCC Report*, pp. 6, 10; *SCO Report*, Vol I., p. 40.
[1185] (U) *Crowdstrike DCCC Report*, pp. 7, 10; *SCO Report*, Vol I., p. 38.
[1186] (U) *Netyksho* indictment, ¶ 31. The GRU sought to maintain access to the DNC and DCCC networks even after it had exfiltrated these materials. *See ibid.*, ¶¶ 32–34.

[redacted]

[redacted]

including a persona known as "Guccifer 2.0" and others associated with the fake outlet "DCLeaks"—to promote and disseminate its information, including by providing content in advance to media organizations and targeted U.S. persons. This influence campaign was used to promote the stolen documents and associated narratives, push back on early attribution of the attacks to the Russian government, and create plausible deniability for individuals who sought to use the stolen information.

i. (U) GRU Operation of the DCLeaks Site and Related Personas

(U) To launch its influence operation, the GRU created a website, dcleaks.com, which was operational from June 2016 to March 2017.[1187] The GRU used this website and affiliated social media personas to promote and disseminate stolen documents from the DNC and DCCC, while obscuring the GRU's involvement in the influence campaign.

[redacted] The DCLeaks website was registered by the GRU's Unit 26165 on April 19, 2016, the day after the GRU had gained access to the DNC and before any documents had been exfiltrated from the DCCC or DNC.[1188] [redacted]

(U) DCLeaks was not the GRU's first attempt to create a fake outlet related to the U.S. election. In fact, one week prior, around the same time it had first gained access into the DCCC network, the GRU had also tried to register the website "electionleaks.com."[1190] At that time, the GRU was only in possession of stolen emails from Campaign officials and others associated with the Democratic Party, including John Podesta. This information indicates that the GRU had been anticipating a "leak" campaign while it was still in the early stages of its intrusion.

(U) The GRU launched the DCLeaks website publicly on June 8, 2016.[1191] On the website, the GRU falsely presented DCLeaks as an independent transparency-focused platform, run by Americans for Americans. For example, on its "About" page, DCLeaks stated that its "aim is to find out and tell you the truth about U.S. decision-making process as well as about the key elements of American political life." DCLeaks also claimed to be "launched by the

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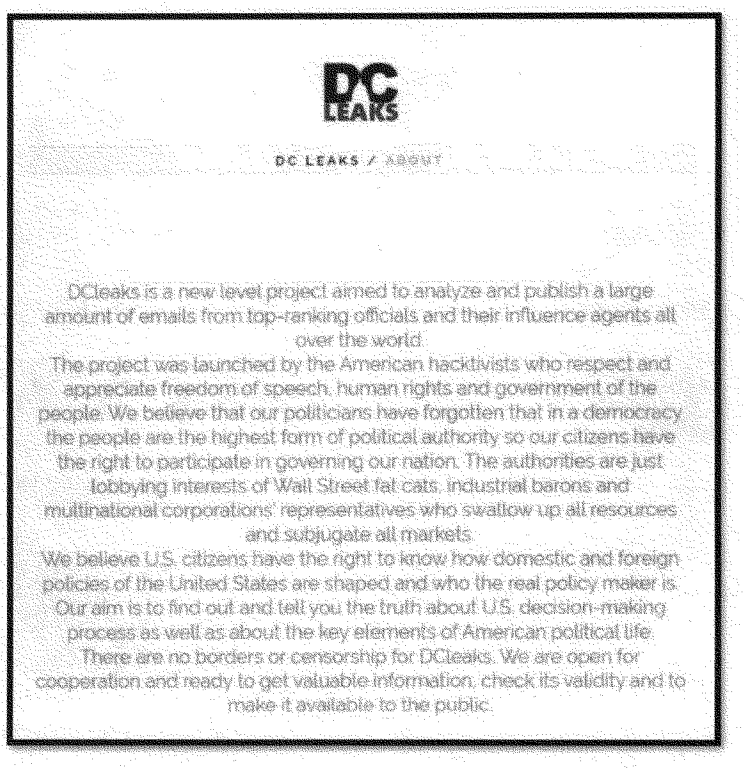
[1187] (U) *SCO Report*, Vol I., pp. 41–42.
[1188] (U) *Ibid.*, Vol I., p. 41. As discussed, however, the Russians had already stolen emails from John Podesta and other individuals.
[1189] [redacted]
[1190] (U) *SCO Report*, Vol I., p. 41.
[1191] (U) *Netyksho* indictment, ¶ 36.

[redacted]

COMMITTEE SENSITIVE – RUSSIA INVESTIGATION ONLY

American hacktivists who respect and appreciate freedom of speech, human rights and government of the people"[1192]:



DC LEAKS / ABOUT

DCleaks is a new level project aimed to analyze and publish a large amount of emails from top-ranking officials and their influence agents all over the world.

The project was launched by the American hacktivists who respect and appreciate freedom of speech, human rights and government of the people. We believe that our politicians have forgotten that in a democracy the people are the highest form of political authority so our citizens have the right to participate in governing our nation. The authorities are just lobbying interests of Wall Street fat cats, industrial barons and multinational corporations' representatives who swallow up all resources and subjugate all markets.

We believe U.S. citizens have the right to know how domestic and foreign policies of the United States are shaped and who the real policy maker is. Our aim is to find out and tell you the truth about U.S. decision-making process as well as about the key elements of American political life.

There are no borders or censorship for DCleaks. We are open for cooperation and ready to get valuable information, check its validity and to make it available to the public.

(U) The website offered visitors links to different sets of hacked materials, which were indexed by sender and recipient identities and contact information. The emails initially released by DCLeaks on June 8 appeared to originate from personal email accounts of Campaign employees, advisors, and volunteers, rather than the compromised DNC or DCCC networks.[1193] The GRU controlled access to document releases by password-protecting the pages it wanted to restrict, and would invite select journalists or U.S. persons to preview restricted material before it

[1192] **(U)** Internet Archive, Capture of dcleaks.com/index.php/about, July 20, 2016.
[1193] **(U)** *SCO Report*, Vol I., p. 41.

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[redacted]

became public.[1194] The site received over one million page views before it was shut down in March 2017.[1195]

[redacted] In addition to creating a false narrative about DCLeaks, the GRU took a variety of steps to obscure the Russian government's identity as the website operator. For example, the GRU paid for the registration with bitcoin it had mined and used an anonymizing service to register the site.[1196] [redacted]

(U) In connection with its releases, the GRU created a corresponding DCLeaks Twitter account, @dcleaks_, on June 8, 2016. In doing so, the GRU hid itself behind US-based proxies. The Twitter account was registered under the Gmail address dcleaksproject@gmail.com and from an IP address that resolved to a U.S. webhosting company based in Williamsville, New York.[1198] In keeping with broader attempts to avoid attribution, the GRU used Polish and Ukrainian phone numbers.[1199] The GRU used the DCLeaks account to communicate privately with targeted individuals and organizations. From June 14, 2016, to November 8, 2016, Committee analysis of the DCLeaks Twitter account shows that it sent 259 direct messages to other Twitter accounts, including WikiLeaks and Guccifer 2.0, as further discussed *infra*.[1200]

(U) Also on June 8, 2016, the GRU used a preexisting Facebook account under the name "Alice Donovan" to create a DCLeaks Facebook page.[1201] The DCLeaks Facebook page was used to promote products on the DCLeaks website, along with other personas that purported to be administrators of the DCLeaks site, like the Donovan persona. These additional administrator personas included "Richard Gingrey" and "Jason Scott."[1202] The first activity associated with the DCLeaks Facebook page occurred on June 8, with the posting of hacked private correspondence involving NATO's approach to Russia and a link to the DCLeaks website.[1203] On June 14, the DCLeaks page posted for the first time about stolen DNC documents with a link to the DCLeaks website: "Check restricted documents leaked from Hillary Clinton's presidential campaign

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[1194] **(U)** *Ibid.*, pp. 41–42.
[1195] **(U)** *Netyksho* indictment, ¶ 36.
[1196] **(U)** *SCO Report*, Vol I., p. 41.
[1197] [redacted]
[1198] **(U)** Twitter, @DCLeaks (registration information). The Committee reviewed publicly available WhoIs IP address information to identify the webhosting company.
[1199] **(U)** *Ibid.* Phone numbers were associated with countries based on their country codes.
[1200] **(U)** Twitter, @DCLeaks (direct messaging metadata).
[1201] **(U)** Facebook, Account ID [redacted] (DCLeaks registration information); *Netyksho* indictment, ¶ 38. The Facebook ID associated with DCLeaks is [redacted]
[1202] **(U)** Facebook, Account ID [redacted] (DCLeaks registration information); *Netyksho* indictment, ¶ 38.
[1203] **(U)** Facebook, Account ID [redacted] (DCLeaks post on June 8, 2016 at 13:48 UTC).

[redacted]

[redacted]

staff."[1204] This was the same day that *The Washington Post* first reported the Russian government's suspected hack of the DNC.[1205] The GRU posted additional materials to the DCLeaks Facebook page on June 14, 2016; July 11, 2016; August 3, 2016; and September 5, 15, 22, and 30, 2016, which included "status updates" and "shares" of existing media. The Facebook page itself did not appear to generate significant activity on the platform—831 engagements across all posts[1206]—suggesting that the GRU was either not well postured to, or did not focus on, distributing the hacked documents through Facebook.[1207]

(U) In a limited way, the GRU tried to bolster the DCLeaks Facebook page with other, more established GRU personas. The use of these additional personas was likely intended to generate a broader audience and lend an aura of credibility to the DCLeaks entity. However, technical information demonstrates that the accounts were all controlled by the GRU. For example, on multiple occasions, the GRU used the same IP address to log in to the different administrator accounts for DCLeaks on the same day, within minutes or hours.[1208]

- (U) The individual administrator accounts used to manage the DCLeaks Facebook page were created more than a year prior to the creation of the DCLeaks page. The Donovan and Gingrey accounts were both registered on January 13, 2015, from the same IP address, [redacted]—Donovan at 11:27:58 UTC and Gingrey at 11:03:54 UTC.[1209] The Scott account was registered on February 2, 2015, using IP address [redacted], which was also used to log in to the Gingrey account that same day and the Donovan account several days earlier.[1210]
- (U) All three administrator accounts displayed significant activity, including public postings and private messaging, well before the GRU created the DCLeaks Facebook page. For instance, Committee analysis of messaging metadata indicates that the

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[1204] (U) Facebook, Account ID [redacted] (DCLeaks post on June 14, 2016 at 14:58 UTC).
[1205] (U) Ellen Nakashima, "Russian government hackers penetrated DNC, stole opposition research on Trump," *The Washington Post*, June 14, 2016.
[1206] (U) Facebook, Account ID [redacted] (DCLeaks page information).
[1207] (U) *See* Renee DiResta, Shelby Grossman, *Potemkin Pages & Personas: Assessing GRU Online Operations, 2014-2019*, Stanford Internet Observatory, pp. 7–8.
[1208] (U) Facebook, Account ID [redacted] (DCLeaks administrative logins by Donovan, Gingrey, and Scott).
[1209] (U) Facebook, Account IDs [redacted] (Donovan registration information), [redacted] (Gingrey registration information). The IP address resolves to the U.S. subsidiary of a multinational web hosting provider.
[1210] (U) Facebook, Account IDs [redacted] (Donovan login information), [redacted] (Gingrey login information), [redacted] (Scott login information).

[redacted]

[redacted]

Donovan account engaged in hundreds of chat "threads" with other individual users and groups, sending almost 1,500 private messages.[1211]

- **(U)** The GRU caused some of the administrator accounts to communicate with each other. For example, on March 3, 2015, the Donovan persona sent a private message to the Scott persona.[1212] It is not clear why the GRU chose to do this.

[redacted] The GRU used additional Facebook personas connected to other GRU influence operations to support the DCLeaks campaign. The GRU used one particularly active persona—"Steve Wanders"—to communicate with journalists on behalf of DCLeaks, as described *infra*. [redacted] Notably, the Alice Donovan persona began communicating with the Michael Waters persona in February 2015, and the two accounts continued to communicate until July 12, 2016, after DCLeaks went live.[1214]

[redacted] The GRU also leveraged some of these connections as social engineering techniques to gain access to other social media groups. For exampl [redacted]

(U) Despite the GRU's attempts to legitimize the DCLeaks personas and obfuscate Russian involvement, additional technical information linked the DCLeaks site to the GRU and its other interference efforts. For example:

- [redacted]

[1211] **(U)** Facebook, Account ID [redacted] (Donovan messaging metadata).
[1212] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[1213] [redacted]
[1214] **(U)** Facebook, Account ID [redacted] (Donovan messaging metadata).
[1215] [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

- (U) The GRU operated the DCLeaks Twitter account, @dcleaks_, from the same computer it used for other interference efforts, including the Twitter account @BaltimoreIsWhr, which encouraged a "flash mob" and posting of images to oppose Clinton.[1219]

- (U) The GRU paid for the dcleaks.com domain using a cryptocurrency account that was also used to lease a virtual private server. That virtual private server was registered with an email address that the GRU also used to obtain the account at the URL-shortening service behind the spearphishing links.[1220]

ii. (U) GRU Operation of the Guccifer 2.0 Persona and Rebuttal of Attribution Efforts

(U) In addition to the DCLeaks persona, the GRU created and deployed a persona known as "Guccifer 2.0" to undercut attribution of the attacks to Russia and to promote and disseminate stolen data.

(U) On June 14, 2016, only six days after the DCLeaks website went public, *The Washington Post* reported that the DNC had been hacked by Russian government hackers.[1221] Dmitry Peskov, spokesperson for the Kremlin, responded immediately: "I completely rule out a possibility that the [Russian] government or the government bodies have been involved in this."[1222] Actions by the Russian intelligence services also quickly followed.

[1216] [redacted]
[1217] (U) *Ibid.*
[1218] [redacted]
[1219] (U) *Netyksho* indictment, ¶ 39.
[1220] (U) *Ibid.*, ¶ 35.
[1221] (U) Ellen Nakashima, "Russian government hackers penetrated DNC, stole opposition research on Trump," *The Washington Post*, June 14, 2016.
[1222] (U) Dustin Volz and Emily Stephenson, "Russians steal research on Trump in hack of U.S. Democratic Party," *Reuters*, June 14, 2016.

[redacted]

[redacted]

(U) The next day, the GRU created a WordPress site under the Guccifer 2.0 persona and published its first blog post, entitled "Guccifer 2.0 DNC's servers hacked by a lone hacker"[1223]:



(U) In the blog post, the GRU provided a sample of hacked documents. It also sought to rebut reporting that Russia hacked the DNC and DCCC, and instead suggest that the hacks were the work of a single cybercriminal. The post read:

> *Worldwide known cyber security company CrowdStrike announced that the Democratic National Committee (DNC) servers had been hacked by "sophisticated" hacker groups.*
> *I'm very pleased the company appreciated my skills so highly))) But in fact, it was easy, very easy.*
> *Guccifer may have been the first one who penetrated Hillary Clinton's and other Democrats' mail servers. But he certainly wasn't the last. No wonder any other hacker could easily get access to the DNC's servers.*
> *Shame on CrowdStrike: Do you think I've been in the DNC's networks for almost a year and saved only 2 documents? Do you really believe it?*
> *Here are just a few docs from many thousands I extracted when hacking into DNC's network.*
> . . .
> *Some hundred sheets! This's a serious case isn't it?*
> *And it's just a tiny part of all docs I downloaded from the Democrats networks.*
> . . .
> *The main part of the papers, thousands of files and mails, I gave to Wikileaks. They will publish them soon.*

[1223] **(U)** Internet Archive, Capture of guccifer2.wordpress.com/2016/06/15/dnc/, June15, 2016.

[redacted]

[redacted]

I guess CrowdStrike customers should think twice about company's competence Fuck the Illuminati and their conspiracies!!!!!!!! Fuck CrowdStrike!!!!!!!![1224]

(U) The text of the blog post provided evidence of GRU control. As outlined by the SCO, the post included a variety of terms and phrases that GRU hackers had searched for online earlier that day from a computer used by FPN 74455, such as "some hundred sheets," "dcleaks," "illuminati," "worldwide known," "think twice about," and "company's competence."[1225]

(U) Other Russian government actors and WikiLeaks bolstered Guccifer 2.0's efforts to direct attention away from Russian responsibility. For example, Russian government media outlet RT announced: "'Guccifer 2.0' releases hacked DNC docs revealing mega donors, Clinton collusion." It continued: "This contradicts the initial DNC reports that Russia was behind the attack."[1226] WikiLeaks also publicized the release on Twitter, but not the alleged Russian involvement, stating: "DNC 'hacker' releases 200+ page internal report on Trump, says gave WikiLeaks the all [sic] rest."[1227]

(U) The Guccifer 2.0 persona released thousands of documents over the course of another 16 posts on the blog. The posts began with additional efforts to publish stolen DNC documents, combined with purported "background" information about Guccifer 2.0's alleged identity.[1228] By mid-August, the posts began to include documents stolen from the DCCC in an effort to promote a narrative that U.S. elections were "becoming a farce."[1229] As the general election neared, the GRU sought to build distrust in the democratic process, claiming that "the Democrats may rig the elections on November 8."[1230]

(U) The documents were not released randomly; rather, they were organized around specific issues or states, suggesting that the GRU had spent time reviewing and organizing the

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[1224] **(U)** Internet Archive, Capture of guccifer2.wordpress.com/2016/06/15/dnc/, June 15, 2016 (document links and images omitted).
[1225] **(U)** *Netyksho* indictment, ¶¶ 41–42.
[1226] **(U)** "Guccifer 2.0 releases hacked DNC docs revealing mega donors, Clinton collusion," *RT*, June 16, 2016.
[1227] **(U)** Tweet, @wikileaks, June 16, 2016.
[1228] **(U)** *See* Internet Archive, Captures of guccifer2.wordpress.com, July 31, 2017 (listing blog posts from June 18, 2016 to July 14, 2016).
[1229] **(U)** Internet Archive, Capture of guccifer2.wordpress.com, August 12, 2016 (under post entitled "Guccifer 2.0 Hacked DCCC," calling presidential election "a farce"); *see also* Internet Archive, Capture of guccifer2.wordpress.com, August 15, 2016 (under post entitled "DCCC Internal Docs on Primaries in Florida," calling congressional primaries "a farce").
[1230] **(U)** Internet Archive, Capture of guccifer2.wordpress.com, November 4, 2016 (November 4, 2016 post entitled "Info from Inside the FEC: the Democrats may rig the elections").

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stolen documents and attempting to identify materials that would provoke the most interest.[1231] For example, the GRU released specific sets of DCCC documents related to races in Florida on August 15, 2016,[1232] and to races in Pennsylvania on August 21, 2016.[1233] In addition, the GRU released opposition research documents, internal policy recommendations related to politically sensitive issues, and analyses of specific congressional races.[1234]

(U) The GRU relied heavily on the Guccifer 2.0 Twitter account, "@Guccifer_2," to promote postings and engage directly with media and U.S. persons, although it again used proxy accounts to hide the GRU's control. The account, which was registered on June 20, 2016, used the email address "guccifer20@gmx.us" and was connected to an Israeli phone number on June 23, 2016. The account was registered from a French IP address and administered at varying times from IP addresses across the globe.[1235] Committee analysis indicates that the account's first direct messages occurred the next day, June 21, and the GRU used the platform extensively, engaging in private, direct communications with over 1,200 unique users, involving approximately 15,000 unique messages.[1236] Analysis of the timing of the messages—often spanning every hour of the day—indicated that the account was likely administered by multiple individuals.[1237] Public reporting also suggests that the persona's syntax and language proficiency changed over the course of chats.[1238]

iii. (U) GRU Social Engineering to Promote and Disseminate Information via Third Parties

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[1231] (U) Documents were posted to the Guccifer 2.0 blog on June 18, 20, and 21; July 6 and 14; August 12, 15, 21, and 31; September 15 and 23; October 4 and 18; and November 4, 2016. *See generally* Internet Archive, Captures of guccifer2.wordpress.com, June 15, 2016–January 12, 2017; *see also SCO Report*, Vol. I, p. 43.

[1232] (U) Internet Archive, Capture of guccifer2.wordpress.com, August 15, 2016 (post entitled "DCCC Internal Docs on Primaries in Florida")

[1233] (U) Internet Archive, Capture of guccifer2.wordpress.com, August 21, 2016 (post entitled "DCCC Docs on Pennsylvania")

[1234] (U) *See, e.g.*, Internet Archive, Capture of guccifer2.wordpress.com, August 31, 2016 (post entitled "DCCC Docs from Pelosi's PC"); Internet Archive, Capture of guccifer2.wordpress.com, September 15, 2016 (post entitled "Dems Internal Workings in New Hampshire, Ohio, Illinois, North Carolina"). Even after the election, the GRU used the persona to undermine the IC assessment attributing the influence campaign to Russia in a January 12, 2017 post. *See* Internet Archive, Capture of guccifer2.wordpress.com, January 12, 2017 (under post entitled "Here I am again, my friends," stating "The U.S. intelligence agencies have published several reports of late claiming I have ties with Russia. I'd like to make it clear enough that these accusations are unfounded. I have totally no relation to the Russian government.").

[1235] (U) Twitter, @Guccifer_2 (registration information and IP audit).

[1236] (U) Twitter, @Guccifer_2 (direct messaging metadata).

[1237] (U) *Ibid.*

[1238] (U) *See, e.g.*, Lorenzo Franceschi-Bicchierai, "Why Does DNC Hacker 'Guccifer 2.0' Talk Like This?," *VICE*, June 23, 2016.

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(U) While it was disseminating the fruits of its hacking publicly, the GRU also used its personas to contact individuals associated with the Trump Campaign and journalists interested in publicizing the materials. Although the Committee does not have access to the contents of all of these communications, select information illustrates some of the GRU's strategic outreach to and social engineering of key targets. The GRU's collaboration with established outlets and individuals appeared to be more successful at generating attention and engagement with the hacked documents than GRU attempts to promote content through fake personas.

a. (U) General Media Outreach

(U) The GRU's outreach using the Guccifer 2.0 persona focused in large part on the media. The GRU communicated publicly and privately using the Guccifer 2.0 persona, including on the WordPress blog and through Twitter direct messages.

(U) On June 22, 2016, as part of the GRU's continued effort to redirect attribution for the DNC and DCCC hacks away from Russia, the GRU posted on its blog, "Want to Know More About Guccifer 2.0?":

> *Hi All! I see many people wanna know a little more about me and ask a lot of questions. And I'm ready to tell you what you're interested in if it doesn't threaten my safety. Unfortunately I can't give personal answers to everybody. That's why I'd like journalists to send me their questions via Twitter Direct Messages. I'll post the most popular questions and answers in this blog so that everybody can read them in original and doesn't distort my words as some journalists try to do. So I'm eager to see your questions and will be glad to give my responses. My Twitter account @Guccifer_2.*[1239]

(U) After receiving the questions, the GRU posted responses on June 30 under a post entitled "FAQ From Guccifer 2.0," which reiterated its false claim that Guccifer 2.0 was an independent hacker from Eastern Europe not connected to Russia.[1240]

(U) The GRU also pursued extensive contact with targeted outlets and personalities and attempted to seed information with them.

[1239] (U) Internet Archive, Capture of guccifer2.wordpress.com/2016/06/22/about-guccifer2, June 23, 2016.
[1240] (U) Internet Archive, Capture of guccifer2.wordpress.com/2016/06/30/faq, June 30, 2016. The post also made a number of statements relating to Romanian hacker Marcel Lazer, whose moniker "Guccifer" had been adopted by the GRU for its persona. *Ibid.*

[redacted]

[redacted]

- (U) Using the Guccifer 2.0 persona, the GRU emailed *The Smoking Gun* news website on June 27, 2016, offering "exclusive access to some leaked emails linked [to] Hillary Clinton's staff."[1241]

- (U) The Guccifer 2.0 persona also communicated approximately 80 times with Cassandra Fairbanks, then a journalist at *Sputnik*, who later reported that Guccifer 2.0 was interested in providing documents to support a class action lawsuit against the DNC, asking "Can it influence the election in any how?"[1242]

(U) The GRU also communicated and shared stolen Florida documents with Aaron Nevins, who runs a Florida-focused political blog called "HelloFLA!" Nevins produced communications with the Guccifer 2.0 persona to the Committee. According to those records, on August 12, 2016, after the GRU released materials taken from the DCCC, Nevins suggested over Twitter direct messages that the Guccifer 2.0 persona send "any Florida based information" to his email address.[1243] On August 12, Nevins's blog also published a commentary on Florida-related documents that the Guccifer 2.0 persona had already released.[1244]

(U) The following week, on August 22, 2016, the Guccifer 2.0 persona messaged Nevins about additional Florida documents and sent him variety of non-public information, which Nevins began to review and publish on his blog.[1245] On September 7, the Guccifer 2.0 persona and Nevins traded additional messages over Twitter about the significance of certain materials relating to a "turnout model."[1246] For example, Nevins wrote on September 7 and 8[1247]:

[1241] (U) *SCO Report*, Vol. I, p. 43.
[1242] (U) Twitter, @Guccifer_2 (direct messaging metadata); Cassandra Fairbanks, "My Strange Interactions With Guccifer 2.0," *Big League Politics*, April 23, 2017.
[1243] (U) Twitter direct messages, @Guccifer_2 and Aaron Nevins, August 12, 2016 (Nevins Production, IMG_4731.png).
[1244] (U) "Guccifer 2.0 Strikes FL-18," *Mark Miewurd's HelloFLA!*, August 12, 2016.
[1245] (U) Twitter direct messages, @Guccifer_2 and Aaron Nevins, August 12, 2016 (Nevins Production); "**Exclusive! **Full DCCC Florida Docs," *Mark Miewurd's HelloFLA!*, August 22, 2016 ("Last week we posted a link to the selected Florida Congressional Primary overviews that were released by Guccifer2, the hacker who dumped the DCCC archives on the web. Earlier, he contacted us with the entire Florida Archive of 250MB! Now, you can only find this EXCLUSIVE content on HelloFLA!").
[1246] (U) Nevins explained to the Guccifer 2.0 persona that anyone with the right software could "build a list and copy their targeting" and then "[b]lunt it with mail" of their own. Twitter direct messages, @Guccifer_2 and Aaron Nevins, September 7, 2016 (Nevins Production, IMG_4744.png).
[1247] (U) Twitter direct messages, @Guccifer_2 and Aaron Nevins, September 7–8, 2016 (Nevins Production).

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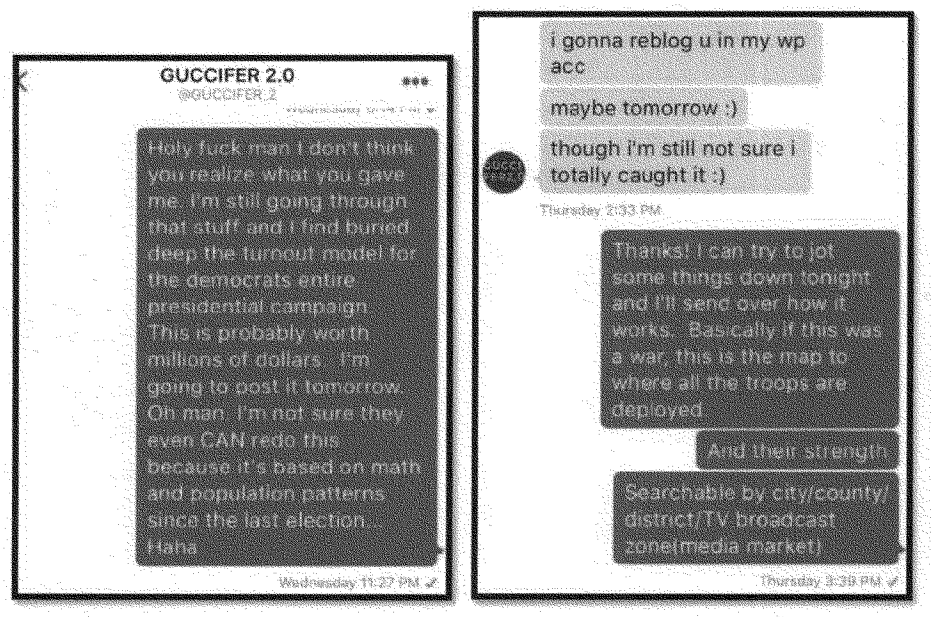

(U) Nevins posted about the "turnout model" as an exclusive on September 8, 2016, and shared the post with the Guccifer 2.0 persona.[1248] The GRU then shared the post with Roger Stone, as described below.

b. (U) Outreach to Roger Stone

(U) Some of the individuals the GRU targeted for outreach with the Guccifer 2.0 persona were closely associated with the Trump Campaign, such as long-time Trump advisor Roger Stone.[1249] On August 5, 2016, Stone penned an opinion piece asserting that Guccifer 2.0, not the

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[1248] **(U)** Twitter, @Guccifer_2 (direct messaging metadata); "**Exclusive! ** Democrats Turnout Model," *Mark Miewurd's HelloFLA!*, September 8, 2016 ("It's been almost two weeks since we received an exclusive package of dcouments directly from Guccifer 2, the hacker that picked the DCCC clean of documents.").

[1249] **(U)** Roger Stone, an experienced political consultant and long-time advisor to, and sometimes friend of, Donald Trump, had worked for the Trump Campaign from approximately December 2014 to August 2015. *See* Transcript of SSCI Interview of Sam Nunberg, January 11, 2019, pp. 59–60; Indictment, *United States v. Roger Jason Stone Jr.*, 1:19-cr-00018-ABJ (D.D.C. January 24, 2019). After Stone left the Campaign, he remained in close contact with Trump and Campaign leadership throughout the remainder of the election. As described more fully below,

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Russians, had hacked the DNC, and repeating the false claims made by the GRU on the Guccifer 2.0 website and Twitter account.[1250] On August 12, the GRU released DCCC records, including the cell phone numbers and email addresses of almost all Democrats in the House of Representatives through the Guccifer 2.0 persona,[1251] and tweeted publicly at Stone: "thanks that u believe in the real #Guccifer2."[1252] When Twitter then suspended the Guccifer 2.0 account, WikiLeaks complained: "@Guccifer_2 has account completely censored by Twitter after publishing some files from Democratic campaign #DCCC."[1253] Stone also tweeted at WikiLeaks and the Guccifer 2.0 persona in response to the suspension, calling it "outrageous"[1254] and referring to Guccifer 2.0 as a "HERO."[1255]

(U) On August 14, following Twitter's reinstatement of the Guccifer 2.0 account, Stone reached out to congratulate the Guccifer 2.0 persona over Twitter direct messaging, stating he was "delighted."[1256] The Guccifer 2.0 persona responded, "wow. thank u for writing back, and thank u for an article about me!!! do you find anyting [sic] interesting in the docs i posted?"[1257] On August 16, Stone requested that Guccifer 2.0 retweet a column Stone had written about how the 2016 election could be "rigged against Donald Trump"; the GRU replied "done."[1258] On August 17, the Guccifer 2.0 persona called Stone "a great man" and asked "if I can help u anyhow," explaining that "it would be a great pleasure to me."[1259] The Committee is not aware of any response by Stone.

(U) On September 9, the Guccifer 2.0 persona shared the *HelloFLA!* blog post with Stone that provided an "exclusive" report of a hacked Democratic turnout model that the GRU

Stone was tasked by Trump, through Paul Manafort and Rick Gates, to conduct outreach to WikiLeaks regarding releases of emails that would be damaging to Clinton and reported his findings back to Trump, Manafort, Gates, and others. The GRU's outreach to Stone through the Guccifer 2.0 persona occurred while Stone was actively seeking information about pending WikiLeaks releases for the Trump Campaign.

[1250] **(U)** Roger Stone, "Dear Hillary: DNC Hack Solved, So Now Stop Blaming Russia," *Breitbart*, August 5, 2016.

[1251] **(U)** Internet Archive, Capture of guccifer2.wordpress.com/2016/08/12/guccifer-2-0-hacked-dccc, August 13, 2016 (posting contact information for Democratic Representatives in the 114th Congress).

[1252] **(U)** Tweet, @Guccifer_2, August 12, 2016.

[1253] **(U)** Tweet, @wikileaks, August 13, 2016.

[1254] **(U)** Tweet, @RogerJStoneJr, August 13, 2016 ("@wikileaks @Guccifer_2 Outrageous ! . . .").

[1255] **(U)** Tweet, @RogerJStoneJr, August 13, 2016 ("Gruccifer2 [sic] is a HERO.").

[1256] **(U)** Roger Stone, "The Smoking Gun Aims, Fires, Misses," *StoneColdTruth*, March 20, 2017 (documenting messages between @RogerJStoneJr and @Guccifer_2 on August 14, 2016). The Committee confirmed the timing and completeness of the direct messages that Stone disclosed online based on metadata produced by Twitter.

[1257] **(U)** *Ibid.* (documenting messages between @RogerJStoneJr and @Guccifer_2 on August 15, 2016).

[1258] **(U)** *Ibid.* (documenting messages between @RogerJStoneJr and @Guccifer_2 on August 16–17, 2016).

[1259] **(U)** *Ibid.* (documenting messages between @RogerJStoneJr and @Guccifer_2 on August 17, 2016).

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had fed to Nevins, noted above, and asked for Stone's opinion. Stone responded, "Pretty standard."[1260]

(U) The nature of these communications suggested that the GRU sought to launder and amplify its stolen information through established outlets and individuals, including by cultivating a relationship with Stone, a known close associate of Trump. This approach provided additional avenues for the GRU to spread the hacked materials to American audiences without relying solely on its websites or online personas. It also permitted the GRU to tap into individual sectors of the American public that it believed would be receptive to specific documents or information.[1261]

c. (U) Outreach to [redacted]

[redacted]

[1260] (U) *Ibid.* (documenting messages between @RogerJStoneJr and @Guccifer_2 on September 9, 2016); *SCO Report*, Vol. I, p. 44. The report referenced by Guccifer 2.0 to Stone was a post by Nevins about information Nevins had been provided by the GRU's persona. *See supra.*

[1261] (U) In this regard, the GRU's approach differed from the IRA's behavior, which focused more on trying to get narratives or content to go viral, as described in Volume 2.

[1262] [redacted]

[1263] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 39.

[1264] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 40.

[1265] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 41.

[1266] (U) *Ibid.*

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That day, Mikael Thalen published an article on the InfoWars website titled "Exclusive: Dem Senator's Private Email Hacked" and subtitled "DCLeaks shows InfoWars emails of Colorado democratic senator."[1271]

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iv. (U) Coordination and Communications Between GRU Personas

(U) The Committee found substantial technical evidence linking the GRU to the DCLeaks and Guccifer 2.0 personas, and the personas to each other. As described above, the accounts used for the GRU's spearphishing attacks can be traced to the GRU's registration of the DCLeaks domain. In addition, the GRU also used overlapping infrastructure and resources to manage accounts for both the DCLeaks and Guccifer 2.0 personas. For example:

[1267] (U) *Ibid.*
[1268] (U) *Ibid.*
[1269] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 41–43.
[1270] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 43–44.
[1271] (U) Mikael Thalen, "Exclusive: Dem Senator's Private Email Hacked," *Infowars.com*, October 27, 2016. Thalen reportedly refused separate outreach by the GRU through the Guccifer 2.0 persona, in which it offered documents purportedly hacked from the DNC that showed the DNC's plans to attack Paul Manafort for his Ukraine work. Max Fisher, "Russian Hackers Find Ready Bullhorns in the Media," *The New York Times*, January 8, 2017.
[1272] [redacted]
[1273] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 44.

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- (U) The GRU used a pool of bitcoin to lease a server in Malaysia where it hosted the DCLeaks website.[1274]
- [redacted]
- (U) The GRU used bitcoin from the same pool to purchase a virtual private network (VPN) account that it subsequently used to administer the Guccifer 2.0 Twitter account in early July.[1277]
- (U) The GRU opened this VPN account from the same server it used to register domains used as part of its hack of the DCCC and DNC.[1278]

(U) The personas also had access to each other's documents. For example, on one occasion, the Guccifer 2.0 persona provided a link and password to *The Smoking Gun* to access a closed portion of the DCLeaks site.[1279] Before doing so, however, the GRU sent the reporter an email on June 27 stating that it had "asked the DCLeaks, the WikiLeaks sub project, to release a part with a closed access" and that *The Smoking Gun* would have a couple of days before it was made available publicly.[1280] The Committee was unable to determine why the GRU chose to disseminate some of the documents through a combination of the Guccifer 2.0 and DCLeaks personas, which had not been otherwise linked.

(U) The GRU may have sought to portray Guccifer 2.0 and DCLeaks as fully independent actors. One factor supporting this hypothesis was the significant number of communications exchanged between the Guccifer 2.0 and DCLeaks accounts over Twitter direct messaging.

- [redacted] The first known Twitter correspondence between the two GRU personas occurred on September 15, 2016, when the Guccifer 2.0 account notified the

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[1274] (U) *Netyksho* indictment, ¶ 45.
[1275] [redacted]
[1276] (U) *Ibid.*
[1277] (U) *Netyksho* indictment, ¶ 45.
[1278] (U) *Ibid.*
[1279] (U) *SCO Report*, Vol. I, p. 43.
[1280] (U) "Tracking The Hackers Who Hit DNC, Clinton," *The Smoking Gun*, August 12, 2016.

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DCLeaks account that WikiLeaks was seeking to communicate with it through secure email.[1281] [redacted] The two accounts messaged a total of 11 times that day.[1283]

- [redacted]

- (U) The accounts exchanged a total of 45 communications from September 15 through October 18.[1285]

(U) The Committee does not have specific insight into why the GRU chose these particular occasions to communicate over a medium known to be accessible to U.S. law enforcement. It may have done so to plant false evidence that the accounts were not linked, or to help the accounts appear more authentic.

6. (U) Russia and WikiLeaks Coordinate On Interference in the U.S. Election

(U) In addition to disseminating hacked materials through its own personas, the GRU gave information to WikiLeaks as part of a joint effort to secure wider distribution of stolen DNC documents and John Podesta emails. WikiLeaks opted to release those materials, first on July 22 and later on an ongoing basis between October 7 and the election. WikiLeaks also actively solicited and then released the documents for maximum effect, despite mounting evidence that they had been stolen by Russian government hackers. Notably, this was not the first instance that WikiLeaks had taken actions for the purpose of harming U.S. interests. Nor is it the only instance of contact between the Russian government and WikiLeaks, which have a history of parallel and sometimes coordinated actions in attacking U.S. institutions.

i. (U) Background on WikiLeaks

(U) Since its emergence in 2010, WikiLeaks has directed its efforts toward publishing a variety of information normally legally restricted from public disclosure. A disproportionate number of WikiLeaks disclosures have targeted the United States and benefited U.S.

[1281] (U) *SCO Report*, pp. 46–47; Twitter, @Guccifer_2, @dcleaks_ (direct messaging metadata).
[1282] [redacted]
[1283] (U) Twitter, @Guccifer_2, @dcleaks_ (direct messaging metadata).
[1284] [redacted]
[1285] (U) Twitter, @Guccifer_2, @dcleaks_ (direct messaging metadata); *SCO Report*, Vol. I, pp. 46–47. Contacts between the GRU and WikiLeaks are described further below.

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adversaries.[1286] Although WikiLeaks seeks to portray itself as a legitimate media organization, its disclosures have jeopardized the safety and privacy of individual Americans and foreign allies because WikiLeaks has made only minimal, and sometimes no efforts to redact sensitive information, and does not seem to weigh whether its disclosures add any public interest value.[1287] While WikiLeaks has systematically targeted the United States in this way, the Committee has identified no corresponding pattern with respect to leaks targeting Russia or its allies. As noted below, WikiLeaks has also coordinated the transfer of restricted information to U.S. adversaries, and encouraged and aided the violation of U.S. law to secure access to classified documents. As a result, WikiLeaks and its senior leadership "resemble a non state hostile intelligence service often abetted by state actors."[1288]

[redacted] The Committee is unaware of information of comparable volume and sensitivity that WikiLeaks has solicited or released about any

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[1286] (U) Jo Becker, et al., "How Russia Often Benefits When Julian Assange Reveals the West's Secrets," *The New York Times*, August 31, 2016 ("[A] New York Times examination of WikiLeaks activities during Mr. Assange's years in exile found a different pattern: . . . WikiLeaks' document releases, along with many of Mr. Assange's statements, have often benefited Russia, at the expense of the West.").

[1287] (U) For example, the indictment of Julian Assange alleges how WikiLeaks knowingly published classified documents about the Iraq and Afghanistan wars without redacting the names of local sources who had reported information and were vulnerable to retribution. *See* Indictment, *United States v. Julian Assange*, Case 1:18-cr-00111-CMH, ¶¶ 39–44 (E.D. Va. May 23, 2019) ("*Assange* indictment"). A former WikiLeaks staffer has described another occasion when WikiLeaks published a large cache of documents that had no newsworthiness without applying any redactions to protect the identities of "activists, opposition politicians, bloggers in autocratic regimes and their real identities, victims of crime and political coercion, and others driven by conscience to speak to the US government." James Ball, "Why I felt I had to turn my back on WikiLeaks," *The Guardian*, September 2, 2011.

[1288] (U) National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2020, P.L. 116-92, Section 6747, December 20, 2019.

[1289] [redacted]

[1290] (U) *Ibid.*

[1291] (U) *Ibid.*

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other national government, including authoritarian and oppressive regimes with substantial records of human rights and civil liberties violations.

- **(U)** WikiLeaks has passed information to U.S. adversaries, including approximately 90,000 U.S. Department of State cables to a Russian national named Israel Shamir. Shamir in turn provided them to Belarus's Aleksandr Lukashenko, an authoritarian leader who relied on the documents to justify the arrest of opposition figures on allegations of spying for the United States.[1292]

- [redacted] Julian Assange has said that he focuses his efforts on the United States because it is the world's "superpower."[1293] A former colleague of Assange has described his work as a "one-dimensional confrontation with the U.S.A.,"[1294] and emails [redacted] probably [redacted] drafted by Assange reflect his ambition to "bring down" the United States with leaks.[1295] The WikiLeaks website previously stated that WikiLeaks "aim[s] for maximum political impact."[1296]

[redacted] Of particular not [redacted]

ii. (U) Russia's Strategic Support for and Partnership with WikiLeaks

(U) The Russian government has pursued a relationship with Julian Assange and WikiLeaks that includes formal partnerships with state-owned media platforms, government assistance for WikiLeaks associates and sources, and information sharing. This relationship has existed since at least 2012 and reflects an alignment between the Russian government and WikiLeaks in seeking to undermine U.S. institutions and security.

(U) RT (formerly Russia Today) has provided both beneficial coverage of WikiLeaks and a formal, compensated media platform for Assange. RT first signed a contract with Assange

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[1292] **(U)** *Ibid.*; James Ball, "Why I felt I had to turn my back on WikiLeaks," *The Guardian*, September 2, 2011.
[1293] [redacted] Julian Assange, *Cypherpunks: Freedom and the Future of the Internet*, November 2012.
[1294] **(U)** "WikiLeaks Spokesman Quits," *Speigel Online*, September 27, 2010 (interview with Daniel Schmitt).
[1295] [redacted] *see* Cryptome.org (leaking email dated December 29, 2006, stating "sufficient leaking will bring down many administrations that rely on concealing reality – including the US administration").
[1296] **(U)** *See, e.g.*, Internet Archive, Capture of wikileaks.org/wiki/WikiLeaks:About, February 24, 2009.
[1297] [redacted]

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in 2012 for ten shows, which aired as "The World Tomorrow."[1298] In August 2013, RT's editor-in-chief, Margarita Simonyan, visited Assange in the Ecuador Embassy in London to renew the contract.[1299] Following the meeting, Russian media quickly touted RT as "the only Russian media company" to establish a relationship with WikiLeaks and receive "new leaks of secret information," indicating that a Russian government-run propaganda outlet could be the ultimate beneficiary of classified WikiLeaks materials.[1300]

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(U) The alliance between RT and WikiLeaks is part of the Russian government's overall strategy to use its state-controlled media to undermine U.S. democratic institutions. The declassified January 2017 ICA states that RT and Sputnik (formerly The Voice of Russia and RIA Novosti)[1303] acted as part of "Russia's state-run propaganda machine" during Russia's interference in the 2016 U.S. elections. The declassified ICA observes that RT "conducts strategic messaging for [the] Russian government" and "seeks to influence politics, [and] fuel discontent in the U.S."[1304] As a result of their ties to the Russian government, the Department of Justice directed the production companies for both RT (T&R Productions LLC) and Sputnik

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[1298] (U) "Exclusive TV series hosted by Julian Assange to premiere on RT in March," *RT*, January 25, 2012; Internet Archive, Capture of worldtomorrow.wikileaks.org, April 15, 2012.
[1299] (U) *Declassified ICA*, p. 3.
[1300] (U) *Ibid.*
[1301] [redacted]
[1302] (U) *Ibid.*
[1303] (U) *See, e.g.*, Jim Rutenberg, "RT, Sputnik and Russia's New Theory of War," *The New York Times*, September 13, 2017.
[1304] (U) *Declassified ICA*, p. 3.

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(RIA Global) to register as foreign agents under FARA.[1305] Both have complied, despite their claims that they exercise editorial independence from the Russian state.[1306]

[redacted]Putin has publicly acknowledged that RT "is funded by the government, so it cannot help but reflect the Russian government's official position."[1307] But the connections are far more malignant. For example, the Kremlin staffs RT with individuals who are ideologically aligned with Russian messaging and supervises its coverage.[1308] [redacted] Aleksey Gromov is also one of RT's founders and Simonyan, who is considered his protégé, has publicly stated that she has benefited from his protection.[1310] [redacted]

[1305] (U) RT has sought to distance itself formally from Russian government control through contractual financing and production arrangements, in part to avoid FARA registration requirements. *See Declassified ICA*, Annex A, p. 12. In its FARA filings, T&R Productions identified ANO TV-Novosti as its foreign principal and represented that RT's shows are produced "pursuant to various commercial agreements with ANO (autonomous non-profit organization) TV-Novosti." TV-Novosti is financed by the Russian government and organized under Russian law. *See* T&R Productions LLC, Registration Statement Pursuant to the Foreign Agents Registration Act of 1938, as amended, and Exhibits, November 10, 2017. Separately, RIA Global filed its registration identifying the Federal State Unitary Enterprise Rossiya Segodnya International Information Agency—a government-owned news agency—as its foreign principal. RIA's shows are also governed by a contractual arrangement with its principal. *See* RIA Global LLC, Registration Statement Pursuant to the Foreign Agents Registration Act of 1938, as amended, and Exhibits, February 16, 2018.

[1306] (U) In May 2019, the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Florida agreed with the Department of Justice's position that RM Broadcasting also acts as an agent of the Russian state-owned Rossiya Segodnya and must register as such under FARA. This ruling marked the first civil enforcement action concerning Russian state-owned media. According to the evidence, RM entered into an agreement with Rossiya Segodnya to broadcast "Sputnik" radio programs, but RM could not alter the programs in any way. As a result, the agreement gave Rossiya Segodnya direction and control over all RM content. *See RM Broadcasting v. United States*, Case No. 9:18-cv-81418 (S.D. Fla. May 13, 2019).

[1307] (U) "Putin talks NSA, Syria, Iran, drones in RT interview," *RT*, June 12, 2013.

[1308] (U) *Declassified ICA*, Annex A, p. 9.

[1309] [redacted]

[1310] (U) *Declassified ICA*, Annex A, p. 9.

[1311] [redacted] For more on Gromov, *see, e.g., infra* Vol. 5, Sec. III.C.5.b.

[1312] [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

(U) Other incidents illustrate close alignment between WikiLeaks and Russia in opposing U.S. interests:

- (U) WikiLeaks and Russian government talking points have closely mirrored each other. In April 2016, Assange and WikiLeaks criticized the release of information in the Panama Papers as a "Putin attack [that] was produced by OCCRP which targets Russia & former USSR and was funded by USAID & Soros,"[1313] a frequent refrain in Russian state-sponsored influence operations.[1314] Putin echoed this two days later, stating: "WikiLeaks has showed us that official people and official organs of the US are behind this."[1315]

- (U) In 2010, after Assange was arrested in England for questioning by Swedish authorities on rape allegations, Putin made statements supportive of Assange. Putin has also referred to the charges against Assange as "politically motivated" and that Assange was being "persecuted for spreading the information he received from the U.S. military regarding the action of the U.S.A. in the Middle East, including Iraq." In 2011, the Kremlin issued Assange a Russian visa.[1316]

- (U) Throughout the 2016 U.S. presidential campaign, RT and Sputnik used their social media accounts to push WikiLeaks-related content that disparaged Hillary Clinton. On at least two occasions, RT announced WikiLeaks releases on Twitter prior to WikiLeaks making that announcement itself.[1317]

- [redacted] or instance, in 2013, WikiLeaks personnel assisted in securing asylum for Edward Snowden from the Russian government

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[1313] (U) Tweet, @wikileaks, April 5, 2016. The Organized Crime and Corruption Reporting Project (OCCRP) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit investigative platform focused on exposing crime and corruption, funded in part by the U.S. Agency for International Development and the U.S. Department of State.

[1314] (U) *See infra* Vol. 5, Sec. III.A.7.vi.

[1315] (U) Alan Luhn and Luke Harding, "Putin dismisses Panama Papers as an attempt to destabilise Russia," *The Guardian*, April 7, 2016.

[1316] (U) Jo Becker, et al., "How Russia Often Benefits When Julian Assange Reveals the West's Secrets," *The New York Times*, August 31, 2016.

[1317] (U) *See, e.g.*, Tweet, @RT_com, October 19, 2016 ("BREAKING: @wikileaks releases fresh batch of emails from Clinton campaign chair #podestaemails"); Tweet, @RT_com, October 17, 2016 ("BREAKING: @wikileaks releases more emails from Clinton campaign chair #Podesta10"); Tweet, @RT_com, October 15, 2016 ("MORE: @wikileaks uploads new batch of 1,000 emails from Clinton's campaign chair #Podesta"); Tweet, @RT_com, October 13, 2016 ("#BREAKING: #WikiLeaks releases 6th #Podesta #email batch on.rt.com/7rtd #PodestaEmails6"). RT has suggested that it was merely monitoring the WikiLeaks website closely and that it posted on Twitter as soon as documents appeared on the website.

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and accompanied him in the Moscow airport while he was awaiting the asylum decision.[1318] [redacted]

In an interview with *DemocracyNow!*, Assange said that he "advised Edward Snowden, that he would be safest in Moscow."[1320]

- [redacted]
- [redacted]
- [redacted] the Russian government has offered indirect means of support that provided Assange with a valuable platform. For example, in April 2012, RT purchased a broadcasting license for Assange's show, "The World Tomorrow," shortly after funding for WikiLeaks reportedly began "drying up."[1324]

[redacted] The Committee observed that Assange received multiple visits at the Ecuador Embassy in London from RT employees during the summer of 2016. Nikolay Bogachikhin, RT's London bureau chief, visited the Embassy twice in early June. He was followed by Afshin Rattansi, another RT journalist, who visited Assange three more times that month, as well as [redacted], both affiliated with RT, in August

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[1318] (U) Sara Corbett, "How a Snowdenista Kept the NSA Leaker Hidden in a Moscow Airport," *Vogue*, February 19, 2015.

[1319] [redacted]

[1320] (U) Jo Becker, et al., "How Russia Often Benefits When Julian Assange Reveals the West's Secrets," *The New York Times*, August 31, 2016.

[1321] [redacted]

[1322] [redacted]

[1323] [redacted]

[1324] (U) Jo Becker, et al., "How Russia Often Benefits When Julian Assange Reveals the West's Secrets," *The New York Times*, August 31, 2016.

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2016.[1325] RT has claimed that these visits reflected its participation in a WikiLeaks Brexit special, and had nothing to do with WikiLeaks activities relating to the U.S. presidential election.[1326]

iii. (U) WikiLeaks's Record of Opposition to Hillary Clinton

(U) In the early parts of the 2016 election, before WikiLeaks had received hacked materials from the GRU, Assange expressed his opposition to Hillary Clinton's candidacy. He did so in private communications and in public announcements, and WikiLeaks took actions to insert itself into the U.S. 2016 elections by publishing a searchable archive of Clinton emails that it believed would encourage the submission of election-related leaks.

(U) As early as November 19, 2015, in a Twitter group chat, WikiLeaks repeatedly disparaged Clinton's prospects as president,[1327] stating, among other things:

- (U) "We believe it would be much better for [the] GOP to win."[1328]
- (U) "She's a bright, well connected, sadistic sociopath."[1329]
- (U) "Hence hillary has greater freedom to start wars than the GOP and has the will to do so."[1330]

(U) Publicly, Assange also argued against Clinton's candidacy based on his perception of her U.S. defense and national security views.[1331] In an August 31 interview with *The New York Times*, Assange referred to Clinton as a "demon that is going to put nooses around

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[1325] [redacted] Stephanie Kirchgaessner, et al., "Assange's guest list: the RT reporters, hackers and film-makers who visited the embassy," *The Guardian*, May 18, 2018; Marshall Cohen, "Exclusive: Security reports reveal how Assange turned an embassy into a command post for election meddling," *CNN*, July 15, 2019.

[1326] (U) Stephanie Kirchgaessner, et al., "Assange's guest list: the RT reporters, hackers and film-makers who visited the embassy," *The Guardian*, May 18, 2018.

[1327] (U) The contents of these chats are described in the *SCO Report*, Vol. I, p. 44, and were also publicly released online at emma.best/2018/07/29/1100-messages-from-private-wikileaks-chat-released/.

[1328] (U) *SCO Report*, Vol. I, p. 44.

[1329] (U) *Ibid.*

[1330] (U) *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 45.

[1331] (U) Tweet, @wikileaks, February 11, 2016 (""#Assange: Hillary Clinton gets an unseemly emotional rush out of killing people"); Tweet, @wikileaks, February 10, 2016 ("#Assange: Hillary Clinton shouldn't be let near a gun shop, let alone an army"); Tweet, @wikileaks, February 9, 2016 ("#Assange: A vote today for Hillary Clinton is a vote for endless, stupid war").

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everyone's necks as soon as she wins the election."[1332] His statements echoed his March 2016 opposition in the private Twitter chat that "HC [Hillary Clinton] in whitehouse with her bloodlutt [sic] and amitions [sic] of empire with hawkish liberal-interventionist appointees."[1333]

(U) On March 16, 2016, shortly after the GRU began its spearphishing campaign, WikiLeaks also began publishing a searchable archive of Clinton emails that had already been publicly released by the U.S. Department of State in response to a FOIA request.[1334] The archive included over 30,000 emails and attachments sent to or from Clinton between June 2010 and August 2014, but did not include any previously non-public information. According to one WikiLeaks associate, while part of the goal was to "become 'the place' to search for background on hillary's plotting at the state department," creating the archive would also allow WikiLeaks to "be seen to be a resource/player in the US election, because eit [sic] may en[]courage people to send us even more important leaks."[1335]

iv. (U) Coordination Between the GRU and WikiLeaks on the Release of Hacked Documents

(U) In June 2016, following the GRU's initial releases of stolen documents, WikiLeaks and the GRU personas exchanged the first of their many Twitter direct messages. These initial contacts eventually led to a coordinated release of documents on the eve of the 2016 Democratic National Convention and later on the heels of the October 7 publication of the *Access Hollywood* tape.[1336] As described below, the GRU used both DCLeaks and Guccifer 2.0 personas to communicate with WikiLeaks, using private Twitter direct messaging, as well as encrypted channels, possibly including the email of encrypted files and WikiLeaks's private communication system.[1337] The GRU transferred the hacked DNC materials to WikiLeaks electronically by July 18, 2016. As discussed *infra*, the GRU may have transferred the hacked John Podesta emails, either electronically or via a human courier, in or about mid-September, although the precise timing is unclear.

[1332] (U) Kelsey Sutton, "Julian Assange: American press supports 'demon' Hillary Clinton," *Politico*, August 31, 2016.

[1333] (U) *SCO Report*, Vol. I, p. 45.

[1334] (U) *See* "Hillary Clinton Email Archive," wikileaks.org/clinton-emails/.

[1335] (U) *SCO Report*, Vol. I, p. 45.

[1336] (U) At approximately 4:00 p.m. that day, *The Washington Post* released a video tape of Trump discussing grabbing women by their genitals during a hot mic during a conversation with Billy Bush of *Access Hollywood* (the "*Access Hollywood* tape"). David Farenthold, "Trump recorded having extremely lewd conversation about women in 2005," *The Washington Post*, October 8, 2016.

[1337] (U) It is unclear why the personas would have used Twitter to connect with WikiLeaks, given the readily available and more secure alternatives. However, Andrew Muller-Maguhn, a close associate of Julian Assange, has suggested that Assange "lives on Twitter" and a direct message is the only reliable way to contact him. *See* Ellen Nakashima, et al., "A German hacker offers a rare look inside the secretive world of Julian Assange and WikiLeaks," *The Washington Post*, January 17, 2018.

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(U) The GRU's decision to use WikiLeaks to release documents was [redacted]. The IC assesses, with high confidence, that "the GRU relayed material it acquired . . . to WikiLeaks," and that Putin ordered the 2016 influence campaign against the U.S. presidential election.[1338]

[redacted]

[redacted] However, the Committee found significant evidence to suggest that, in the summer of 2016, WikiLeaks was knowingly collaborating with Russian government officials [redacted]

- [redacted]
- [redacted]

[1338] (U) *Declassified ICA*, pp. 1, 3. [redacted]

[1339] [redacted]

[1340] [redacted]

[1341] [redacted]

[1342] [redacted] there was substantial public information describing the likely Russian government role in hacking the DNC emails. Reporting by victims, cyber security firms, and news organizations beginning in June 2016 attributed the hack and related influence activities by DCLeaks and Guccifer 2.0 as Russian-government backed activity. In one notable example, on July 26, 2016, *The New York*

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a. (U) Communications and Transfer of Data Related to the DNC Release

(U) On June 12, 2016, Julian Assange gave an interview on ITV indicating publicly—and for the first time that summer—that WikiLeaks would be releasing materials on Hillary Clinton. During the interview, he claimed that WikiLeaks had "emails related to Hillary Clinton which are pending publication."[1343] Days later, on June 14, DCLeaks reached out to WikiLeaks on Twitter direct message:

> *You announced your organization was preparing to publish more Hillary's emails. We are ready to support you. We have some sensitive information too, in particular, her financial documents. Let's do it together. What do you think about publishing our info at the same moment? Thank you.*[1344]

(U) WikiLeaks did not respond on Twitter.[1345] But on June 15, the day after *The Washington Post* published the first article detailing suspected Russian hacking of the DNC, the GRU's Guccifer 2.0 persona referenced WikiLeaks in its first blog post, claiming that it had given "thousands of files and mails" stolen from the DNC to Wikileaks, which would "publish them soon."[1346] That day, Guccifer 2.0 emailed some of the stolen documents to two websites, *Gawker* and *The Smoking Gun*, and stated that the materials sent to WikiLeaks included "election programs, strategies, plans against Reps, financial reports, etc."[1347]

Times reported that "American intelligence agencies have told the White House they now have 'high confidence' that the Russian government was behind the theft of emails and documents from the Democratic National Committee." David E. Sanger, Eric Schmitt, "Spy Agency Consensus Grows That Russia Hacked D.N.C.," *The New York Times*, July 26, 2016. Assange would have been aware of the ongoing commentary on Russian involvement, as demonstrated by his public statements deflecting such attribution. Open-source research, which was widely reported at the time, also identified technical indicators of Russian involvement in the documents that were being released by those two personas. These indicators included unique code and Russian language in the metadata for the hacked documents. *See, e.g.*, Dan Goodin, "'Guccifer' leak of DNC Trump research has a Russian's fingerprints on it," *ArsTechnica*, June 16, 2016. Further, on October 7, prior to WikiLeaks releasing Podesta's stolen emails, the U.S. Government publicly attributed the hack-and-leak effort to Russia's intelligence agencies. *See* DHS, ODNI, Joint Statement on Election Security, October 7, 2016.

[1343] (U) "Assange on Peston on Sunday: 'More Clinton Leaks to Come,'" *ITV.com*, June 12, 2016. It remains unclear what emails Assange was referring to. For example, he could have been referring to Clinton emails released by the Department of State under FOIA that WikiLeaks had been collecting and publishing on its website in March 2016. *See supra.* The Department of State was producing Clinton emails under FOIA throughout 2016. *See* foia.state.gov/search/collections/aspx.

[1344] (U) *SCO Report*, Vol. I, p. 45.

[1345] (U) *See* Twitter, @wikileaks and @dcleaks_ (direct messaging metadata).

[1346] (U) Internet Archive, Capture of guccifer2.wordpress.com/2016/06/15/dnc/, June 15, 2016.

[1347] (U) Sam Biddle and Garbrielle Bluestone, "This Looks Like the DNC's Hacked Trump Oppo File," *Gawker*, June 15, 2016; "DNC Hacker Releases Trump Oppo Report," *The Smoking Gun*, June 15, 2016.

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(U) As discussed below, the GRU transferred hacked materials to WikiLeaks on or about July 14, 2016, approximately one month after this June 15 blog post. The Committee could not determine if the GRU also transferred hacked DNC materials prior to June 15, as it represented in that blog post and as Assange's comments seem to suggest.[1348]

(U) Judging from the timing and content of numerous Twitter direct messages, it took several weeks for the GRU to transfer the hacked DNC materials to WikiLeaks, and the two parties appeared to encounter a number of technical difficulties in exchanging the materials.

(U) On June 22, after the Guccifer 2.0 persona had posted three additional sets of DNC documents to its WordPress site on June 18, 20 and 21, WikiLeaks reached out to Guccifer 2.0 via Twitter. In a direct message, WikiLeaks asked Guccifer 2.0, "Do you have secure communications?" and suggested that Guccifer 2.0 "[s]end any new material [stolen from the DNC] here for us to review and it will have a much higher impact than what you are doing."[1349] The two accounts exchanged seven additional messages that day over Twitter, including further discussion about establishing secure communications, such as through the use of a program for exchanging encrypted information known as "GPG," and messages about the materials WikiLeaks claimed to possess already.[1350] The two exchanged eight more messages on June 24 and June 27: on June 24, they discussed the use of the messaging service "Jabber," and WikiLeaks provided instructions on how to send it an email with an encrypted message, including a key to encrypt the message; later, on June 27, Guccifer 2.0 wrote to WikiLeaks that it had sent "an email with a text message encrypted and an open key," and it was "waiting for ur response."[1351] On June 29, the GRU used a Guccifer 2.0 email account to send a large encrypted file to a WikiLeaks email account, which appeared to be unsuccessful.[1352]

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(U) On July 6, 2016, WikiLeaks contacted Guccifer 2.0 again through a Twitter direct message and instructed: "if you have anything hillary related we want it in the next tweo [sic] days prefable [sic] because the DNC is approaching and she will solidify bernie supporters

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[1348] (U) On June 17, shortly after the Guccifer 2.0 blog post, WikiLeaks posted an 88-gigabyte encrypted file, "Torrent WIKILEAKS INSURANCE 2016-06-03," purporting to "protect our coming publications." Tweet, @wikileaks, June 17, 2016. The contents of the file are unknown to the Committee and may have no relation to the 2016 election, but the timing and reference to "coming publications" are suggestive.
[1349] (U) Affidavit in Support of Application for Search Warrant, Case 1:17-mj-00821, November 11, 2017, ¶ 22.
[1350] (U) *Ibid.*
[1351] (U) *Ibid.*, ¶¶ 23–24; Twitter, @Guccifer_2 (direct messaging metadata).
[1352] (U) According to the *SCO Report*, the email did not appear to have been delivered. *SCO Report*, Vol. I, p. 46.
[1353] [redacted]

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behind her after."[1354] Guccifer 2.0 responded: "ok . . . i see."[1355] WikiLeaks went on to explain: "we think trump has only a 25% chance of winning against hillary . . . so conflict between bernie and hillary is interesting."[1356] WikiLeaks also wrote: "[W]e think the public interest is greatest now and in early [O]ctober."[1357] The accounts exchanged a total of 82 messages that day alone.[1358] Although again the Committee does not know the content of all of the communications, the Guccifer 2.0 persona messaged WikiLeaks that, among other things, it had sent "yesterday, an archive of about 1 gb. via [website link]," to which WikiLeaks later responded, "Please don't make anything you send to us public. It's a lot of work to go through it and the impact is severely reduced if we are not the first to publish it."[1359] On July 7, the GRU asked WikiLeaks whether it had "another way [besides email] to receive large volumes of data" because a GRU email containing "a check archive from another email box" had not been successfully delivered.[1360] The GRU sent WikiLeaks another eight messages on July 11, 2016, including one message that the GRU had "sent it via ur submission."[1361]

(U) On July 14, the GRU used the Guccifer 2.0 persona to email WikiLeaks an encrypted attachment with the file name "wk dnc link1.txt.gpg."[1362] The subject of the email stated "big archive" and the message body said "a new attempt,"[1363] suggesting that previous efforts to share the data through other channels had failed. On the same day, Guccifer 2.0 and WikiLeaks exchanged Twitter direct messages once again, during which the GRU sent WikiLeaks an encrypted file and instructions on opening it.[1364]

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[1354] **(U)** *SCO Report*, Vol. I, p. 45.
[1355] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[1356] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[1357] **(U)** Affidavit in Support of Application for Search Warrant, Case 1:17-mj-00821, November 11, 2017, ¶ 31.
[1358] **(U)** Twitter, @Guccifer_2 (direct messaging metadata).
[1359] **(U)** Affidavit in Support of Application for Search Warrant, Case 1:17-mj-00821, November 11, 2017, ¶ 26. Some of the Guccifer 2.0 messages discussed documents it was trying to share with WikiLeaks that related to Brexit.
[1360] **(U)** *Ibid.*, ¶ 33.
[1361] **(U)** *Ibid.*, ¶ 34.
[1362] **(U)** *SCO Report*, Vol. I, p. 46. The file extension "gpg" indicates that the file was encrypted using GNU Privacy Guard, which is an open-source analog of Pretty Good Privacy (PGP) encryption.
[1363] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[1364] **(U)** *Ibid.* The GRU advised WikiLeaks, "Check ur email. sent u a link to a big archive and a pass." Affidavit in Support of Application for Search Warrant, Case 1:17-mj-00821, November 11, 2017, ¶ 35.

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(U) On July 18, WikiLeaks confirmed receipt to the Guccifer 2.0 persona via Twitter, stating that it had "the 1Gb or so archive" and would be releasing the files "this week."[1366] The accounts exchanged another 29 messages that day.[1367] Among other things, WikiLeaks also asked Guccifer 2.0 if it had "any bigger datasets" and whether it had received "our fast transfer details," and suggested that WikiLeaks had taken the step of "arrang[ing] that server just for that purpose" presumably referring to the transfer of more data. The two entities then discussed the optimal timing for the GRU to transfer the remainder of its documents; whereas WikiLeaks pushed for the data transfer to happen soon, the GRU seemed reluctant to do so before WikiLeaks had released the initial tranche of DNC information, advising "i'll ponder it."[1368]

(U) The DNC emails were released four days later, on July 22, 2016, three days before the July 25 Democratic National Convention. WikiLeaks released 19,252 emails and 8,034 attachments obtained from seven email accounts at the DNC. The emails covered the period of January 2015 through May 25, 2016, the first date that the GRU exfiltrated data from the DNC email server.[1369] The Trump Campaign's awareness of and reaction to the release is discussed *infra*.

(U) After the July release, Assange left no doubt that his intention was to influence the election with the DNC information. For example, on July 29, 2016, Assange gave an interview to *CNN* and agreed that the release was timed for "maximum impact," further stating "that's when we knew that there would be maximum interest by readers."[1370] He also gave an interview to *DemocracyNow!* stating that the release was handled differently than normal "because of the pending D[emocratic] N[ational] C[onvention]."[1371]

[1365] [redacted]

[1366] (U) *SCO Report*, Vol. I, p. 46.

[1367] (U) Twitter, @Guccifer_2 (direct messaging metadata).

[1368] (U) Affidavit in Support of Application for Search Warrant, Case 1:17-mj-00821, November 11, 2017, ¶¶ 35–36.

[1369] (U) *See* www.wikileaks.org/dnc-emails/; *SCO Report*, Vol. I, pp. 40–41. The SCO noted that "the last-in-time DNC email released by WikiLeaks was dated May 25, 2016, the same period of time during which the GRU gained access to the DN's email server." *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 41.

[1370] (U) Anderson Cooper 360, " Julian Assange: We have more material on Clinton," *CNN*, July 29, 2016.

[1371] (U) "EXCLUSIVE: WikiLeaks' Julian Assange on Releasing DNC Emails That Ousted Debbie Wasserman Schultz," *DemocracyNow!*, July 25, 2016 ("Often it's the case that we have to do a lot of exploration and marketing of the material we publish ourselves to get a big political impact for it. But in this case, we knew, because of the pending DNC, because of the degree of interest in the U.S. election, we didn't need to establish partnerships . . . we took the data set, analyzed it, verified it, made it in a presentable, searchable form, presented it for all journalists and the public to mine.").

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b. (U) Communications and Transfer of Data Related to the Podesta Release

(U) WikiLeaks did not release additional hacked documents relating to the 2016 U.S. election until October 7, 2016, when it began a month-long process of leaking stolen Podesta emails. The Committee, like the SCO, was unable to determine precisely when and how the GRU transferred the hacked John Podesta emails to WikiLeaks. Communications between WikiLeaks and GRU personas, coupled with forensic analysis of documents, suggest that at least some Podesta emails could have been transferred as late as September 2016.[1372] Information reviewed by the Committee, detailed below, further suggests the GRU may have transferred the Podesta emails using encrypted email or, alternatively, by human courier.

(U) Communications between the GRU's DCLeaks persona and WikiLeaks provide some indications that the GRU used the DCLeaks persona to transfer data in the lead up to the Podesta release. On September 15, the DCLeaks persona reached out to WikiLeaks on Twitter:

> *hi there! I'm from DC Leaks. How could we discuss some submission-related issues? Am trying to reach out to you via your secured chat but getting no response. I've got something that might interest you. You won't be disappointed, I promise.*[1373]

After having seemingly ignored the prior Twitter messages, WikiLeaks responded, "Hi there."[1374] No additional communications occurred on Twitter that day between DCLeaks and WikiLeaks.[1375]

(U) However, later on the same day, Guccifer 2.0 messaged the DCLeaks persona, also over Twitter, that "WikiLeaks was trying to contact DCLeaks and arrange for a way to speak through encrypted emails."[1376] This was the first of many Twitter messages between the two

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[1372] (U) However, Assange was hinting publicly about additional releases between July 22 and mid-September, suggesting that he could have been aware of additional content that had already been secured by the GRU and would be provided to him or, alternatively, that he may have had already acquired some content that he intended to release. For example, in an August 24, 2016 interview, Assange discussed soon-to-be-released information that would be damaging to Hillary Clinton. Kelly File, "Assange: WikiLeaks to release 'significant' Clinton material," *Fox News*, August 24, 2016.

[1373] (U) *SCO Report*, Vol. I, p. 46.

[1374] (U) *Ibid.*

[1375] (U) Twitter, @wikileaks, @dcleaks_ (direct messaging metadata). The Committee does not know if the GRU and WikiLeaks communicated in other ways around this time.

[1376] (U) *SCO Report*, Vol. I, pp. 46–47.

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GRU-controlled accounts, as discussed above.[1377] The message indicates that WikiLeaks suspected Guccifer 2.0 could assist it in communicating with DCLeaks.

(U) On September 19, 2016, DCLeaks and WikiLeaks exchanged further Twitter messages. Thereafter, on September 22, the GRU used a DCLeaks email account (dcleaksproject@gmail.com) to send an email to WikiLeaks. The subject line of the email was "Submission" and the body of the message stated "Hi from DCLeaks," and it included a PGP-encrypted message with the file name "wiki_mail.txt.gpg." Although this file resembled the one previously shared by the GRU with WikiLeaks on July 14, 2016, using the Guccifer 2.0 persona, the contents and attributes of the file are unknown. On the same day, the DCLeaks Twitter account sent a string of characters to the WikiLeaks account that was potentially a password to access a file archive it had made available.[1378]

(U) Some evidence suggests that the GRU transferred the Podesta emails to WikiLeaks either via this encrypted email or through other means during the same time frame. Forensic data from the stolen Podesta emails showed a creation date of September 19, 2016, in the midst of these exchanges.[1379] According to Ecuador Embassy officials, Assange had access to Apple desktop and laptop computers inside the Embassy.[1380] Based on an assessment by the SCO of the Apple operating systems possibly running on Assange's computer, this could reflect the date the GRU staged the stolen emails for transfer to WikiLeaks, because the default setting on some Apple operating systems retains the file creation date of a downloaded file from the original host computer.[1381] Although some of the attachments and files showed a later creation date of October 2, 2016, that actually appears to reflect the date that attachments were staged individually on the WikiLeaks site.[1382]

(U) As sophisticated actors, WikiLeaks and the GRU were almost certainly aware that their emails and Twitter messages were in plain text and could be obtained by U.S. law enforcement.[1383] WikiLeaks had specifically requested that they communicate in an encrypted

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[1377] **(U)** Twitter, @dcleaks_, @Guccifer_2 (direct messaging metadata).
[1378] **(U)** *SCO Report*, Vol. I, p. 47.
[1379] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[1380] [redacted]
[1381] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[1382] **(U)** *Ibid.* The timing of this staging indicates that WikiLeaks was prepared to release emails as promised by October 3, and therefore also prepared to release emails quickly on October 7, as discussed *infra*.
[1383] **(U)** For example, on August 23, 2016, in response to question from *The Smoking Gun* about Guccifer 2.0 persona's contact with Stone, the GRU wrote from the Guccifer 2.0 Twitter account: "the fbi's tracing me, reading my dm [direct messages] and giving u hints." William Bastone, "Roger Stone's Russian Hacking 'Hero,'" *The Smoking Gun*, March 8, 2017.

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channel. In addition, the GRU had very likely used direct messaging between the Guccifer 2.0 and DCLeaks personas to mask the hand of the Russian government.[1384] Despite this, both WikiLeaks and the GRU used unencrypted emails and U.S. providers to communicate. This behavior raises the possibility that both parties expected the messages to be read by U.S. authorities, exchanged these messages in order to mislead investigators, and in fact chose to transmit the data in a different way.

(U) For example, it is also possible that files were transferred to WikiLeaks by individuals who visited Assange in person. Assange, who was residing at the time at the Ecuador Embassy in London, had frequent visitors in the summer and fall of 2016. Several individuals of note stood out [redacted].

- [redacted] One of these visitors, Andrew Müller-Maguhn, a German national, supporter of WikiLeaks and founding member of the hacker collective Chaos Computer Club,[1385] [redacted]
- [redacted]
- [redacted] In addition, [redacted] other WikiLeaks associates, including Assange's two assistants, visited him multiple times per week, although [redacted].[1388]

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[1384] **(U)** *See infra* Vol. 5, Sec. III.B.5.iv.
[1385] **(U)** Ellen Nakashima, et al., "A German hacker offers a rare look inside the secretive world of Julian Assange and WikiLeaks," *The Washington Post*, January 17, 2018.
[1386] [redacted]
[1387] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[1388] [redacted]

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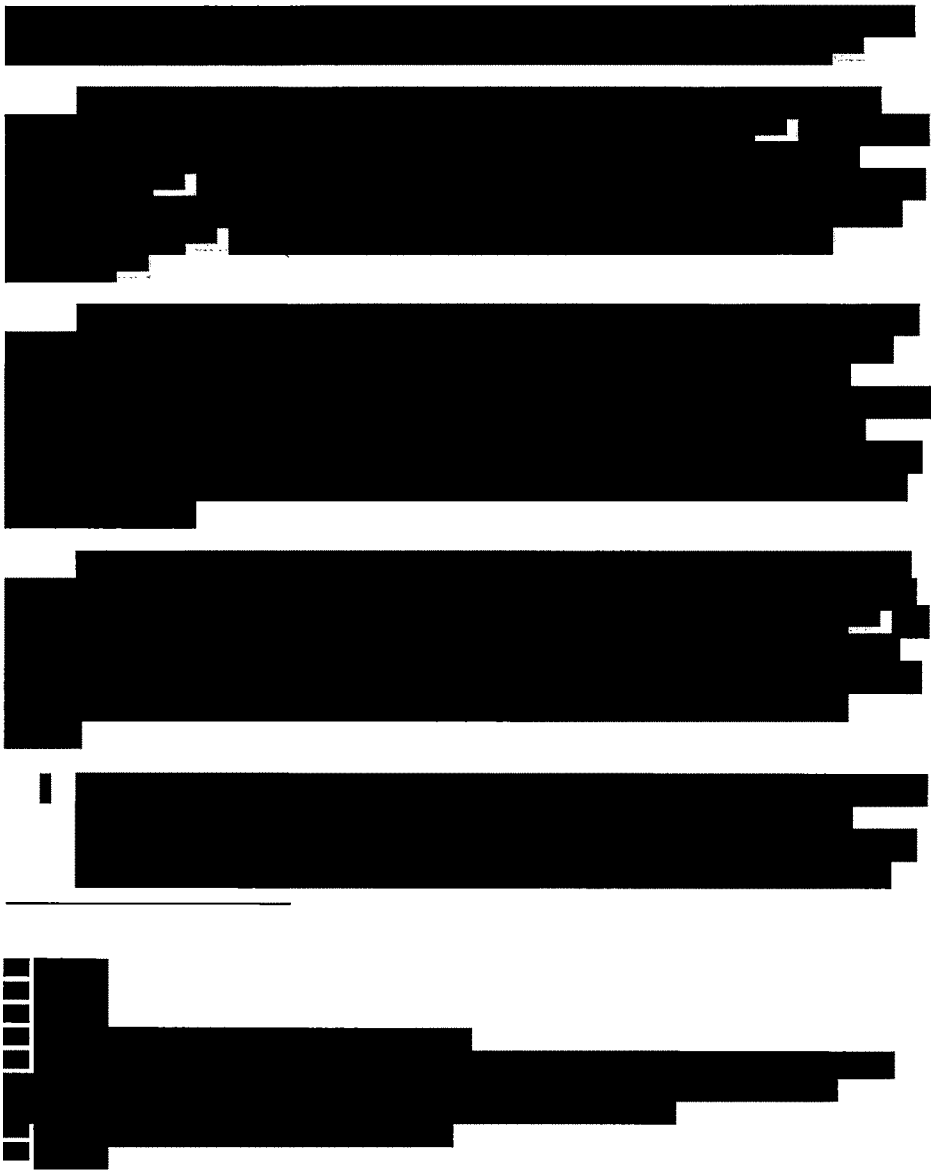

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[redacted] Müller-Maguhn had also visted Assange on July 28.

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(U) Andrew Müller-Maguhn admitted to reporters that once, in 2016, he transported a flash drive containing what he believed (but could not be certain) were personal messages to Assange, but did not identify the sender. He also did not identify when this occurred. However, he asserted in that article that he was never in possession of the hacked emails before they were posted, and never transported them.[1419]

v. (U) WikiLeaks Promotes Alternative, False Theories About the Source of the GRU Materials

(U) Assange and WikiLeaks undertook efforts to obscure the source of the stolen emails, including through false narratives. Assange's use of such disinformation suggests Assange possibly knew of and sought to hide Russian involvement. One narrative from Assange involved a conspiracy theory that Seth Rich, a DNC staffer killed in a botched robbery, was the source of the DNC email leak and had been murdered in response. On August 9, Assange gave an interview on Dutch television implying that Rich was the source of the DNC emails,[1420] and that day WikiLeaks announced that it would be issuing a reward for information about Rich's murder.[1421] In a subsequent interview, Assange commented about the WikiLeaks interest in the Rich case as concerning "someone who's potentially connected to our publication."[1422] The Committee found that no credible evidence supports this narrative.

(U) Assange also attempted to rebut criticism that WikiLeaks does not release documents critical of or damaging to Russia. For example, on September 19, 2017, WikiLeaks released 35 internal documents from a Russian IT company that services Moscow's wiretap system.[1423] The existence and nature of the system was already well known to Russian and American researchers and was not assessed to be damaging to Russia.[1424] Nonetheless, Assange

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[1418] (U) *Ibid.*
[1419] (U) Ellen Nakashima, et al., "A German hacker offers a rare look inside the secretive world of Julian Assange and WikiLeaks," *The Washington Post*, January 17, 2018. The Committee did not interview Müller-Maguhn.
[1420] (U) "Interview of Julian Assange," *Nieuwsuur*, August 9, 2016 ("I am suggesting that our sources take risks.").
[1421] (U) Tweet, @wikileaks, August 9, 2016.
[1422] (U) "Assange: 'Murdered DNC Staffer Was Potential WikiLeaks Source,'" *Fox News*, August 25, 2016 (video of Assange interview). WikiLeaks also issued a vaguely-worded statement that did not confirm or deny whether Rich was a source. *See* Tweet, @wikileaks, August 10, 2016.
[1423] (U) *See* https://wikileaks.org/spyfiles/russia/.
[1424] (U) Adam Taylor, "WikiLeaks releases files that appear to offer details of Russian surveillance system," *The Washington Post*, September 19, 2017.

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complained that U.S. media had not paid sufficient attention to the release.[1425] The timing and limited nature of this release is consistent with indications that WikiLeaks knowingly aided the Russian 2016 election influence campaign.

(U) In 2017, Assange also promised to provide evidence to then-Congressman Dana Rohrabacher that Russia was not his source, but only in exchange for protection from U.S. authorities. Rohrabacher had been "told by a number of experts that it was impossible" for the DNC data "to have been sucked out of the machine and hacked back to Russia." Rather, Rohrabacher believed it had been "someone on the inside who downloaded it with some sort of quick download."[1426] Rohrabacher, convinced that "the Russians were now being accused of something they didn't do," instead "felt like [he] needed to go see how [he] could prove that one way or the other" by speaking with Assange.[1427] The meeting took place in the Ecuador Embassy on August 16, 2017,[1428] and was also attended by Charles Johnson, a conservative political activist who helped Rohrabacher set up the meeting,[1429] and Assange's lawyer.[1430]

(U) According to Rohrabacher, Assange "made it very clear to me that he was saying that the Russians did not do it" and "he had proof" of who was responsible.[1431] In exchange, Assange wanted an "assurance"—whether in the form of a pardon or otherwise—that he would not be taken into custody when he left the Ecuador Embassy.[1432] Rohrabacher promised to "go back to the White House and see if we can arrange something where you won't be arrested."[1433] He then attempted but was "not permitted" to speak to Trump on the subject, and told the Committee that he did not communicate again with Assange about the potential deal.[1434] The Committee found no evidence to support Rohrabacher's theories or Assange's claims.[1435]

7. (U) Efforts to Capitalize on WikiLeaks, Gain Advance Information on Releases

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[1425] (U) *See, e.g.*, Tweet, @wikileaks, January 26, 2019 (replying to @MeetThePress and linking to "Spy Files Russia").
[1426] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Dana Rohrabacher, December 19, 2017, pp. 8, 18–19.
[1427] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 8–9.
[1428] [redacted]
[1429] (U) Rohrabacher Tr., p. 11.
[1430] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 17.
[1431] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 18.
[1432] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 18–19.
[1433] (U) *Ibid.*
[1434] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 19–20. Rohrabacher said that then-White House Chief of Staff John Kelly was "concerned any conversation with myself and the President on this issue might be declared obstruction of justice." *Ibid.* p. 19.
[1435] (U) CrowdStrike's forensic analysis of the DNC computers also reflected that there were no USB entries. *See generally* Crowdstrike, *DNC Report*. Sean Henry testified that CrowdStrike did not detect any threat actors other than "the two Bears." SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Sean Henry, October 5, 2017, p. 82.

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(U) While the GRU and WikiLeaks were coordinating the release of hacked DNC, DCCC, and Podesta documents, Trump and senior Campaign officials sought information relating to "missing" Hillary Clinton emails as part of the Campaign's opposition research and press strategies. Beginning in April or May 2016, Roger Stone repeatedly conveyed to Trump and senior Campaign staff that WikiLeaks would be releasing information damaging to Clinton. After the July 22 WikiLeaks release, Trump and senior Campaign officials believed Stone had access to non-public information about WikiLeaks's ability and intent to release emails harmful to Clinton.

(U) Thereafter, Trump directed Campaign officials to stay in touch with Roger Stone about future WikiLeaks activities regarding Clinton-related emails. Manafort in turn tasked Stone to contact Julian Assange, and Stone endeavored to reach Assange through several intermediaries. Stone reported back to senior Campaign officials and associates, and to Trump directly, and provided advance information about another expected release relating to John Podesta, which he said would be damaging to Clinton. After WikiLeaks published the Podesta emails on October 7, Trump and the Campaign believed Stone had again acquired accurate, non-public information. The Committee could not reliably trace the provision of non-public information from WikiLeaks to Stone, and as a result could not evaluate the full scope of Stone's non-public knowledge of WikiLeaks's activities.

(U) The Trump Campaign strategically monitored and promoted the WikiLeaks releases of John Podesta's emails from October 7 until the election. The Campaign tried to cast doubt on the October 7 joint DHS/ODNI assessment formally attributing the activity to Russia, and was indifferent to the significance of acquiring, promoting, or disseminating materials from a Russian intelligence services hack-and-leak campaign.[1436]

i. (U) The July 22 WikiLeaks DNC Release

(U) In the spring of 2016, the Trump Campaign's opposition research team primarily focused on Clinton's "missing" emails, and financial contributions to the Clinton Foundation.[1437]

[1436] (U) In contrast to the Campaign's decision, other lawmakers refused to engage in such exploitation of the stolen material. For example, in an October 2016 interview, Senator Marco Rubio said that he would "not discuss any issue that has become public solely on the basis of WikiLeaks," noting that "these leaks are an effort by a foreign government to interfere with our electoral process, and I will not indulge it." Jonathan Karl and Benjamin Siegel, "Exclusive: Rubio Won't Talk About WikiLeaks, and Neither Should Donald Trump," *ABC News,* October 19, 2016.

[1437] (U) FBI, FD-302, Gates 4/10/2018. The Committee assesses that, at this time, the references to Clinton's "emails" reflected a focus on allegedly missing or deleted emails from Clinton's personal server during her tenure as Secretary of State. As described *infra* Vol. 5, Sec. III.L.1, there was parallel effort to obtain Clinton's "missing" emails by Peter W. Smith and Barbara Ledeen, both of whom had a connection to the Trump Campaign through Flynn.

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In April and May, the Campaign's interest in the Clinton emails increased as the Campaign became convinced that public interest in the emails could benefit Trump's chances to win.[1438] According to Rick Gates, Trump Jr. would ask where the Clinton emails were during "family meetings," regularly-scheduled meetings of senior Trump Campaign officials and Trump family members.[1439] Other senior advisors, including Flynn, Kushner, Manafort, Lewandowski, then-Senator Jeff Sessions, and Campaign policy advisor Sam Clovis also expressed interest in obtaining the emails.[1440]

(U) Around the same time, in approximately May 2016, Roger Stone alerted Rick Gates and Paul Manafort that WikiLeaks would be releasing information about Clinton, but provided no details about the timing.[1441] Stone had known Trump for years and had served as an advisor to the Trump Campaign from late 2014 until approximately August 2015. Although Stone no longer had a formal position on the Campaign at this time, the Campaign "still had people he knew," including Trump, Gates, Paul Manafort, and (later) Steve Bannon, and Stone "had the ability to access these people."[1442] Stone stayed in close communication with the Campaign. In April and May 2016, Stone and Gates had approximately 67 phone calls; during the same time period, Stone and Manafort spoke by phone approximately 64 times, and Stone also spoke 67 times with Trump donor Erik Prince.[1443]

(U) Manafort also recalled hearing from Stone sometime in June 2016 that "a source close to WikiLeaks confirmed that WikiLeaks had the emails from Clinton's server."[1444] Like Gates, Manafort recalled Stone telling him that the emails would be released "soon," but Stone

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[1438] (U) FBI, FD-302, Gates 4/10/2018.

[1439] (U) *Ibid.* The existence and nature of the "family meetings" are further described in connection with the June 9, 2016 meeting, *see infra* Vol. 5, Sec. III.C.5.

[1440] (U) FBI, FD-302, Gates 4/10/2018.

[1441] (U) Testimony of Richard Gates, *United States v. Roger Stone*, pp. 921, 928; FBI, FD-302, Gates 10/25/2018. Gates also said at trial that Stone may have passed him this information as early as April 2016. Gates, who pleaded guilty to various offenses and false statements, has been consistent in his statements about Stone conveying this information. For example, Gates also told the SCO in a debriefing that he recalled Stone saying to both him and Manafort, at least a couple of weeks prior to June 12, 2016, that this information would be released. *See* FBI, FD-302, Gates 10/25/18. The *SCO Report* similarly states: "Before Assange's June 12 announcement, Gates and Stone had a phone conversation in which Stone said something 'big' was coming and had to do with a leak of information." *SCO Report*, p. 52. Stone's comments occurred after WikiLeaks created a searchable archive in March 2016 of Clinton Department of State emails that were released pursuant to a FOIA request, but these emails were part of a set that had already been made public. *See* wikileaks.org/elinton-emails/.

[1442] (U) Testimony of Richard Gates, *United States v. Roger Stone*, pp. 920–921. Although Bannon did not take a formal position on the Campaign until August 2016, Stone spoke with him several times across March, April, July, and August 2016. *See* AT&T toll records, Roger Stone/Drake Ventures.

[1443] (U) *United States v. Roger Stone*, Gov. Ex. 167 (summary chart of Stone/Campaign phone calls); AT&T toll records, Roger Stone/Drake Ventures.

[1444] (U) FBI, FD-302, Manafort 9/13/2018.

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"did not know when."[1445] Manafort, who was not convinced that the documents were coming out, directed Gates to check in with Stone "from time to time" to see if his WikiLeaks information remained "real and viable."[1446]

(U) Although Manafort did not identify a precise date for his June conversation with Stone about WikiLeaks, phone records reflect six phone calls between the two during that month, including on June 4, June 12, June 20, and June 23.[1447] According to Manafort's Campaign calendar, Manafort and Stone were scheduled to meet in person at 12:30 p.m. on June 23 in the Trump Tower cafeteria for 30 minutes.[1448] The Committee received no further information about the purpose of the meeting.[1449] Nonetheless, phone records and calendar entries depict a pattern of communication involving Manafort, Gates, and Stone. Phone records for June and July reflect a total of 28 calls between Gates and Stone and a total of 18 between Manafort and Stone, including those described below.[1450] From early June to the July 22 WikiLeaks release, Manafort and Gates both called to ask Stone when the release would happen and Stone repeated that the information was coming.[1451]

(U) In one call during that period, Stone also told Gates that the WikiLeaks information could be from the Russians. However, Gates did not recall Stone suggesting a connection between WikiLeaks and Russia. Gates also thought that Stone could have based his theory of Russian involvement on publicly available information.[1452]

(U) According to Gates, Stone was the only person conveying this information to the Campaign at the time,[1453] and he did so before WikiLeaks began publicizing its access to Clinton documents on June 12.[1454] On June 12, Julian Assange gave an interview in which he said that WikiLeaks was planning to release information on Hillary Clinton.[1455] The Trump Campaign

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[1445] (U) *Ibid.*

[1446] (U) Testimony of Richard Gates, *United States v. Roger Stone*, p. 932; *see also* FBI, FD-302, Gates 10/25/2018.

[1447] (U) AT&T toll records, Roger Stone/Drake Ventures.

[1448] (U) *See* Daily Schedule for Paul Manafort, June 23, 2016 (DJTFP00022874).

[1449] (U) Kushner testified that he was not aware of the meeting. *See* Kushner Tr. II, p. 58. Gates recalled accompanying Manafort to an in-person meeting with Stone in either April or May 2016, but it is unknown whether this is the same meeting that Gates recalled. *See* FBI, FD-302, Gates 3/1/2018.

[1450] (U) *United States v. Roger Stone*, Gov. Ex. 167 (summary chart of Stone/Campaign phone calls); AT&T toll records, Roger Stone/Drake Ventures. The Committee was able to identify relevant calls in Stone's phone records based on open source information, document production from other witnesses, as well as a factual stipulation and other evidence entered in the *United States v. Roger Stone* trial.

[1451] (U) FBI, FD-302, Gates 10/25/2018.

[1452] (U) *Ibid.* According to Gates, Stone floated the "inside job" theory at a later point in time.

[1453] (U) Testimony of Richard Gates, *United States v. Roger Stone*, p. 921.

[1454] (U) FBI, FD-302, Gates 10/25/2018.

[1455] (U) *See* "Assange on Peston on Sunday: 'More Clinton leaks to come,'" *ITV.com*, June 12, 2016 (stating WikiLeaks had "upcoming leaks in relation to Hillary Clinton . . . . We have emails pending publication.").

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was elated by the news about WikiLeaks's plans, which it considered an unexpected "gift."[1456] Gates said that the Campaign believed the comments had to do with missing Clinton emails, and Manafort said that Stone got "half credit" because Stone's prediction had been corroborated.[1457] However, some in the Campaign were uncertain that WikiLeaks had these materials because Stone had been making representations about WikiLeaks "for so long" and there was no other evidence of the emails being released.[1458]

(U) The day after Assange's announcement, Stone emailed Gates to schedule a call for "guidance on many things."[1459] They spoke that evening for 20 minutes.[1460] Gates said that one of the issues Stone needed "guidance" on was WikiLeaks.[1461] He did not say exactly what guidance he provided.

(U) On June 14, 2016, only two days after Assange's interview, the DNC announced that it had been compromised by Russian government hackers.[1462] That evening, at 9:03 p.m., Stone called Trump at Trump's home number.[1463] Trump returned Stone's call from his cell phone two times, at 9:53 p.m. and 9:56 p.m.: the calls lasted about two-and-a-half minutes and two minutes, respectively.[1464] The Committee does not know the substance of these conversations, but the pattern and timing of Stone's calls with Trump and others during this period suggest that the two could have discussed the DNC hack and WikiLeaks.

(U) Campaign leadership reacted positively to the news that the DNC had been hacked by the Russians. Gates described the reaction in part as "disbelief," but also given "what we were told that information might be about," the Campaign "felt it would give [them] a leg up" if released.[1465]

[1456] (U) Testimony of Richard Gates, *United States v. Roger Stone*, p. 927.
[1457] (U) FBI, FD-302, Gates 10/25/2018.
[1458] (U) Testimony of Richard Gates, *United States v. Roger Stone*, p. 927.
[1459] (U) Email correspondence between Roger Stone and Rick Gates, June 13, 2016, *United States v. Roger Stone*, Gov. Ex. 21.
[1460] (U) *See* AT&T toll records, Roger Stone/Drake Ventures.
[1461] (U) Testimony of Richard Gates, *United States v. Roger Stone*, pp. 928–929.
[1462] (U) Ellen Nakashima, "Russian government hackers penetrated DNC, stole opposition research on Trump," *The Washington Post*, June 14, 2016.
[1463] (U) *See United States v. Stone*, Gov. Ex. 148; AT&T toll records, Roger Stone/Drake Ventures.
[1464] (U) *Ibid.* The calls from Trump were made from a blocked number, which the Committee was able to identify as Trump's based on corresponding information admitted as evidence in the trial against Roger Stone. Trump's use of a blocked number generally made it difficult for the Committee to identify all of the pertinent contacts between the two. The blocked number was likely Trump's cell phone; other Trump Org. phones, including Trump's direct line, appeared in both the Stone and Trump Org. records that the Committee obtained.
[1465] (U) Testimony of Richard Gates, *United States v. Roger Stone*, pp. 928–929. This—and a variety of other information the Committee found relating to the Campaign's interest in the hacked materials—is in contrast to what

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(U) In response to the Assange announcement, Stone's information, and presumably the news of the DNC hack, the Campaign planned a "press strategy, a communications campaign, and messaging based on the possibility the emails existed," and conversations were held "about what the campaign could plan for in the way of emails."[1466] Before WikiLeaks had released any materials, Trump was reportedly frustrated that the Clinton emails had not been found.[1467] Michael Cohen, Trump's personal attorney and longtime confidant, recalled Trump commenting: "I wonder where they are. Somebody's got to have them."[1468] Cohen described Trump as "obsessed . . . the same way he was obsessed with finding Barack Obama's birth certificate."[1469]

(U) Just after midnight on June 16, Stone and Gates discussed the DNC hack by phone.[1470] Hours earlier on June 15, the GRU had released for the first time, through the Guccifer 2.0 persona, documents stolen from the DNC, as described above. During the over-30-minute call, Stone told Gates that "more information would be coming out of the DNC hack."[1471] Stone then requested contact information from Gates for Jared Kushner, in order to "brief" Kushner on WikiLeaks documents.[1472] Gates then sent Kushner's contact information to Stone.[1473] Kushner told the Committee: "I have only met Roger Stone once in my life, and I shook his hand briefly during the transition, and I never met him before that."[1474]

(U) Because Manafort was initially dubious that Stone had accurate information about WikiLeaks, he instructed Stone "not to tell Trump until they could confirm it." Manafort said

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some witnesses claimed to the Committee: that the hack had no immediate impact on the Campaign. For example, Bannon said the releases were a "non-event." Bannon Tr., pp. 169–170.

[1466] (U) FBI, FD-302, Gates 4/11/2018. The Committee did not determine exactly when the messaging strategy began, but it predated the July 22 WikiLeaks release of DNC documents. For example, Trump and the Campaign were already focused on Clinton emails prior to the release, the Campaign had already been in contact with Stone about a potential release, and Assange had already suggested he had Clinton emails. Gates estimated that it took place in the June/July 2016 time frame, as the Campaign began to anticipate a release of information. FBI, FD-302, Gates 10/25/2018.

[1467] (U) FBI, FD-302, Gates 10/25/2018. As described elsewhere in this Report, there were various lines of unsuccessful efforts to locate the "missing" emails from Clinton's server by various individuals with ties to the Campaign.

[1468] (U) FBI, FD-302, Cohen 8/7/2018.

[1469] (U) *Ibid.*

[1470] (U) Testimony of Richard Gates, *United States v. Roger Stone*, pp. 930–931; Text messages, Stone and Gates, June 15, 2016, *United States v. Roger Stone*, Gov. Ex. 20 ("Call me. Important.").

[1471] (U) Testimony of Richard Gates, *United States v. Roger Stone*, pp. 930–931; AT&T toll records, Roger Stone/Drake Ventures.

[1472] (U) Testimony of Richard Gates, *United States v. Roger Stone*, pp. 931–932; Emails, Stone and Gates, June 13, 2016, *United States v. Roger Stone*, Gov. Ex. 22.

[1473] (U) Emails, Stone and Gates, June 13, 2016, *United States v. Roger Stone*, Gov. Ex. 22.

[1474] (U) Kushner Tr., p. 98. In its limited review, the Committee did not identify any calls with the one known Kushner number in Stone's cell phone records.

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that he wanted to keep Trump focused on speeches and meeting members of Congress, not distracted "by the titillation of a WikiLeaks release."[1475] But while Manafort claimed that he was reluctant to tell Trump and cautioned Stone against doing so, Stone could—and did—contact Trump directly, as Stone did on June 14. In addition, Manafort believed Stone would have told Trump anyway because he "wanted the credit for knowing in advance."[1476]

(U) Witness testimony and documentary evidence support that Stone spoke to Trump about the WikiLeaks information prior to its release. Gates was aware that Stone called Trump during the campaign.[1477] Cohen similarly noted that "Stone called Trump all the time," and "could call Trump's cell phone, especially if at night."[1478] Trump himself acknowledged that he "spoke by telephone with Roger Stone from time to time during the campaign."[1479]

(U) Though the records obtained by the Committee are limited, they show numerous phone calls throughout June and July between Trump and Stone.[1480] In addition to the June 14 phone call, Stone received brief calls from a Trump Organization number on June 21 and 28,

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[1475] (U) FBI, FD-302, Manafort 9/13/2018. Gates also suggested that Manafort tried to keep conversation about Stone's claims minimal because Manafort thought people would lose faith in him if they knew information was coming from Stone. FBI, FD-302, Gates 10/25/2018.

[1476] (U) FBI, FD-302, Manafort 9/13/18. In fact, Stone had remained actively involved with the Campaign long after he had been fired, and was involved in getting Manafort hired. *See infra* Vol. 5, Sec. III.A.5.i. Lewandowski testified: "When Mr. Manafort came to the campaign Mr. Stone had renewed access to the campaign. He and Paul spent a considerable amount of time on the phone together discussing strategy. I believe Paul would allow him on conference calls that Roger really had no business being on. He wasn't part of the team, but Roger was there." Lewandowski Tr., p. 127.

[1477] (U) FBI, FD-302, Gates 10/25/2018.

[1478] (U) FBI, FD-302, Cohen 8/7/2018.

[1479] (U) *SCO Report*, Appendix C, pp. C-18–19.

[1480] (U) According to Stone's cell phone call records and call records from the Trump Organization, in addition to records obtained by the SCO, Trump and Stone had multiple calls in June and July 2016, all before the July 22 release, either between Stone and Trump or Stone and another Trump Organization phone number. *See generally* AT&T toll records, Roger Stone/Drake Ventures; Trump Corp., Outbound Call Detail, Invoices of July 1, 2016–August 1, 2016 (TRUMPORG_73_000005–8); *United States v. Roger Stone*, Gov. Ex. 167 (summary chart of Stone/Campaign phone calls). These data points only represent what the Committee could confirm from Stone's cell phone call records and Trump Organization document productions, as supplemented by information presented by the United States in the trial against Roger Stone. In addition, the Trump Organization used a "trunk line" system, so its records reflected outgoing calls to Roger Stone from a central line, but did not identify the individual or extension making the call and did not include incoming calls at all. *See* Email, Trump Organization to Committee, April 9, 2019. However, the Committee could infer from witness testimony and contemporaneous communications that calls made by Stone to Trump Org. numbers other than Trump's direct line generally reflected communications or attempted communications from Stone to Trump. For example, Tom Barrack noted that Trump "was easily accessible" through his assistant, Rhona Graff, "who Roger knew well." Barrack Tr., p. 45. In addition, multiple witnesses testified that it was commonplace for Trump to make and receive calls on others' phones, records for which the Committee does not possess. For example, Trump may have tried to hide his communications with Stone from campaign advisors by using others' phones, such as Keith Schiller's. Nunberg Tr., p. 73.

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although these calls did not appear to connect.[1481] Shortly after the June 28 call, Stone called Michael Cohen for nine minutes.[1482] On June 30 (another day that Guccifer 2.0 posted commentary online), Stone called Rhona Graff's line at the Trump Organization for eight minutes.[1483] Later that same day, he traded missed calls with Trump at various numbers, culminating in a four-minute call from Stone to Trump's direct line.[1484] Any of these calls would have provided Stone with an opportunity to share additional information about WikiLeaks directly with Trump, and given the content of his conversations with Manafort and Gates combined with Trump's known interest in the issue, the Committee assesses he likely did.

(U) Still, some senior Campaign officials the Committee interviewed claimed to have no knowledge of these communications, and the Campaign sought to distance itself publicly from Stone.[1485] For instance, Jared Kushner said he "never saw [Trump] speak with [Stone]" and "never saw [Stone] around at anything," so he did not think "there was too much involvement in the campaign in any way."[1486] Others appeared to minimize Stone's influence. Bannon—who joined the Campaign later on—insisted that Stone had "no engagement" with the Campaign while Bannon was involved, and that he was not aware of any communications between Stone and Trump during that time.[1487] However, phone records reflect at least three calls between Stone and Bannon after Bannon had joined the Campaign, suggesting Bannon was himself was later in contact with Stone about Campaign issues.[1488]

(U) In addition to working with Stone, in late June, the Trump Campaign was searching for "noteworthy" DNC documents that had been posted by the GRU under the Guccifer 2.0 persona.[1489] At the time, WikiLeaks had not released any hacked DNC documents. Nonetheless, an internal Campaign email regarding use of the mid-June DNC document releases by Guccifer

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[1481] (U) Trump Corp., Outbound Call Detail, Invoice of July 1, 2016 (TRUMPORG_73_000006).
[1482] (U) AT&T toll records, Roger Stone/Drake Ventures (ATTSSCI00032); *see also* AT&T Mobility, Cohen phone records (number ending in [redacted]
[1483] (U) AT&T toll records, Roger Stone/Drake Ventures (ATTSSCI00033).
[1484] (U) *See ibid.*; Trump Corp., Outbound Call Detail, Invoice of July 1, 2016 (TRUMPORG_73_000007); *United States v. Stone*, Gov. Ex. 148.
[1485] (U) *See* Email, Hicks to O'Neill, August 8, 2016 (DJTFP00023443) (asserting that "Roger is not affiliated with the campaign"); *see also* SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Boris Epshteyn, November 30, 2018, p. 137 ("Roger Stone was not a player as far as any of us was concerned.").
[1486] (U) Kushner Tr., pp. 104–105.
[1487] (U) Bannon Tr., pp. 150–151.
[1488] (U) *See* AT&T toll records, Roger Stone/Drake Ventures. Some of these calls took place in August, shortly after Bannon became Campaign CEO. Records indicate Stone and Bannon had been in touch prior to that point as well. On September 7, 2016, Stone and Bannon texted to arrange a meeting, and Bannon asked Stone if he could "come by trump tower now?" Affidavit in Support of an Application for a Search Warrant, Case 1:18-sc-00662, March 14, 2018, ¶ 32.
[1489] (U) Email, Mashburn to Perdue and Barrow, June 18, 2016 (DJTFP00003429) ("Re: 2nd DNC Dump from hacker," noting that he was looking for "anything noteworthy folks higher up should know?").

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2.0 foreshadowed the Campaign's approach to WikiLeaks. Before downloading the newest batch of Guccifer 2.0 emails and "sending them to the team," a Campaign staffer asked if "Senate or campaign rules preclude us from possessing data that's been hacked from a third party and distributed via the internet."[1490] John Mashburn, the Policy Director for the Trump Campaign, replied: "I don't see a problem. Just like WikiLeaks material."[1491]

(U) Nonetheless, a possible WikiLeaks release appeared central to the Campaign's strategic focus. For example, after the June 12 announcement by Assange, Gates described learning from Manafort that the RNC was "energized" by the potential of a WikiLeaks release. Further, Manafort told Gates that the RNC was going to "run the WikiLeaks issue to ground."[1492] Trump and Kushner were reportedly willing to "cooperate" with the RNC's efforts on this front, overcoming their earlier skepticism of working with the RNC, and demonstrating that both were focused on the possibility of WikiLeaks releasing Clinton documents.[1493]

(U) Witness testimony indicates that Stone may have raised WikiLeaks again to Trump in late July, shortly before the DNC release occurred. Although Manafort did not know whether Stone and Trump spoke about WikiLeaks that week, he assumed they did.[1494] Michael Cohen recalled overhearing a phone call from Stone in Trump's office on what he believed was the 18th or 19th of July. As recalled by Cohen:

> *I was sitting in Mr. Trump's office when Rhona Graff yelled out: "Mr. Trump, Roger Stone on line 1." And as the way Mr. Trump's habit is, he doesn't use the handset of the phone. He uses a little black box. A speaker box that [he] maintains on his desk. And without telling Roger Stone that I was in the office, Mr. Trump hit the power button and Roger Stone responded: "Mr. Trump," he said. "Roger, how are you?" He says: "Good, I just want to let you know I got off the telephone a moment ago with Julian Assange. And in a couple of days, there's going to be a massive dump of emails that's going to be extremely*

[1490] (U) Emails, Perdue and Mashburn, June 18, 2016 (DJTFP00029314) (discussing "2nd DNC dump from hacker").

[1491] (U) *Ibid.*; *see also* Email, Perdue to Mashburn, Gordon, et al., June 18, 2016 (DJTFP00029316) (distributing documents stolen from DNC and released by Guccifer 2.0).

[1492] (U) FBI, FD-302, Gates 4/10/2018. Gates also said that the RNC "indicated they knew the timing of the upcoming releases," but did not convey who specifically had this information, how it was acquired, or when. The RNC has denied that it had advance knowledge of the timing of WikiLeaks releases.

[1493] (U) *Ibid.* It is not clear to the Committee exactly when the notion of cooperation between the RNC and the Campaign arose, and Kushner never mentioned it in any interviews with the Committee. However, the context of these statements suggests that this was in response to early warnings about a pending WikiLeaks document dump and before the July 22 release occurred. The Committee did not examine the RNC's activity or its interactions with the Campaign on this topic.

[1494] (U) FBI, FD-302, Manafort 9/13/2018.

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damaging to the Clinton campaign." Mr. Trump said: "Uh, that's good. Keep me posted." To which point, after they hung up, Mr. Trump looked at me and he said to me: "Do you believe him? Do you think Roger really spoke to Assange?" And I responded: "I don't know. Roger is Roger, and for all you know, he was looking on his Twitter account. I don't know the answer."[1495]

(U) The limited records reviewed by the Committee did not reflect a call from Stone's known cell phone to a Trump-associated number on either of those days, which conflicts with Cohen's testimony.[1496] However, the Committee cannot rule out the possibility that either Stone or Trump used alternative numbers.[1497] The Committee did not obtain the phone records for Stone's residences in Florida or New York, or records reflecting the transmission or receipt of text messages. In addition, the Committee did not seek to obtain the phone records for Trump's cell phone, which Stone could sometimes call.[1498]

(U) However, Stone's phone records show that Keith Schiller placed a five-minute call to Stone on the afternoon of July 17, 2016.[1499] Witnesses said that Trump often used Schiller's phone to hide his communications. For example, Sam Nunberg recalled Stone commenting in the late 2015 to early 2016 time frame that Trump would call Stone from Keith Schiller's phone because he did not want his advisors to know they were talking.[1500]

(U) In June and July 2016, prior to the release of DNC materials by WikiLeaks, the Campaign worked on a "messaging strategy" based on "the possible content of an upcoming release.[1501] Gates described the effort as "brainstorming sessions" to determine what the Campaign would say if materials—including the 33,000 "missing" Clinton emails—were released.[1502] Manafort was involved in creating the strategy, as were Gates, Stephen Miller, and

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[1495] **(U)** Cohen Tr. II, pp. 7–8

[1496] **(U)** *See generally* AT&T toll records, Roger Stone/Drake Ventures.

[1497] **(U)** In addition, as previously noted, the Trump Org. system did not record incoming calls, according to counsel.

[1498] **(U)** FBI, FD-302, Cohen 8/7/2018.

[1499] **(U)** AT&T toll records, Roger Stone/Drake Ventures. This call—likely made by or on behalf of Trump—appeared to take place before Michael Cohen's flight from Rome, Italy (Alitalia Flight 602) had landed at New York's JFK International Airport, suggesting that he would not have been present for this call. *See* DHS, TECS Person Encounter List, Cohen (CBP000006).

[1500] **(U)** Nunberg Tr., pp. 73–74. Michael Cohen described other reasons that Trump would use Schiller's phone. *See infra* Vol. 5, Sec. III.C.3.iv.

[1501] **(U)** FBI, FD-302, Gates 4/11/2018.

[1502] **(U)** Testimony of Rick Gates, *United States v. Roger Stone*, p. 934; FBI, FD-302, Gates 10/25/2018.

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Jason Miller.[1503] Among other things, the strategy included a focus on Clinton's perceived low-level of trustworthiness and her emails.[1504]

(U) On July 22, 2016, WikiLeaks released and publicized 20,000 emails the GRU had stolen from the DNC.[1505]

(U) After the July 22 release, Trump and his Campaign immediately pivoted to leveraging the WikiLeaks documents. Gates recalled that Manafort "express[ed] excitement" about the release.[1506] On the afternoon of July 22, Manafort and Trump discussed how they could use the DNC emails relating to Debbie Wasserman Schultz.[1507] Although Manafort was confused by Stone's prediction, which was that WikiLeaks had emails from "Clinton's server," whereas the document released that day came from the DNC, he still used the "fact of the hack and the substance of the emails" to attack Clinton and deflect attention from Trump's comments towards Senator Ted Cruz and Cruz's wife.[1508] Cohen and Trump also discussed "the usefulness of the released emails," including in relation to Bernie Sanders, Donna Brazile, and Wasserman Shultz.[1509] Gates recalled that following the email release, he was with Trump on Trump's plane on the tarmac, and takeoff was delayed for thirty minutes so that Trump could work the emails into his next speech.[1510]

(U) According to Michael Cohen, after the DNC release, Trump confided to him: "I guess Roger was right."[1511] Cohen also said that Trump told him "he guessed Stone knew what he was talking about."[1512] Similarly, despite Manafort's initial skepticism, after the email release

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[1503] (U) Testimony of Rick Gates, *United States v. Roger Stone*, p. 934. Gates also said that Hope Hicks and Bryan Lanza were involved in the brainstorming sessions. FBI, FD-302, Gates 10/25/2018.

[1504] (U) FBI, FD-302, Gates 10/25/2018; *see* email, Manafort to Fabrizio, Parscale, Reed, and Gates, May 27, 2019 (FAB002247) (identifying messaging themes for Fabrizio as "honesty, trustworthiness, competence, character, will do anything to win"). Stone spoke at length by phone with the Campaign's pollster, Tony Fabrizio, on several occasions, including on July 14 for 16 minutes. AT&T toll records, Roger Stone/Drake Ventures (ATTSSCI00035).

[1505] (U) Tweet, @WikiLeaks, July 22, 2016 ("RELEASE: 19,252 emails from the US Democratic National Committee wikileaks.org/dnc-emails/").

[1506] (U) FBI, FD-302, Gates 4/11/2018; FBI, FD-302, Gates 10/25/2018.

[1507] (U) FBI, FD-302, Manafort 9/13/2018.

[1508] (U) *Ibid.*; FBI, FD-302, Gates 4/11/2018. For example, Manafort sought to "draw [a] comparison to [the] fact that the Dems attack Russia for hacking them but want us to believe that the server in HC['s] home was safe from hacking" and that Clinton had "put national security at risk." Email, Manafort to Spicer, Miller, Parscale, Reed, Gates, Fabrizio, and Kushner, July 24, 2016 (DJTFP00012961). This was also a theme he discussed with Roger Stone. *See* FBI, FD-302, Manafort 9/13/2018 ("If WikiLeaks had the emails, it would prove the argument that Clinton put the country at risk.").

[1509] (U) FBI, FD-302, Cohen 8/7/2018.

[1510] (U) FBI, FD-302, Gates 2/12/2018.

[1511] (U) *SCO Report*, Vol. I, p. 53.

[1512] (U) FBI, FD-302, Cohen 8/7/2018.

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on July 22, Manafort "thought that Stone had been right."[1513] The Committee did not identify who, if anyone, was Roger Stone's source of information in advance of the July 22 WikiLeaks release.

(U) On July 23, the Campaign used the release to attack the Democratic Party, saying that the "anti-Bernie DNC email leak issue threatens to destroy their party."[1514] Trump also highlighted the release in a July 23 tweet: "The Wikileaks e-mail release today was so bad to Sanders that it will make it impossible for him to support her, unless he is a fraud!"[1515] On July 25, Trump's talking points highlighted the WikiLeaks materials, including the "rigging of the system" and emphasizing the division between Clinton and Sanders supporters.[1516] These attacks mirrored the discussion between WikiLeaks and Guccifer 2.0 about using the emails to create conflict within the Democratic Party by splitting Clinton and Sanders supporters, discussed *supra*. They also echoed social media efforts by Russia to drive a wedge between supporters of Clinton and Sanders, as described in Volume 2.

(U) At a news conference on July 27, Trump also declared: "Russia, if you're listening, I hope you're able to find the 30,000 emails that are missing. I think you will probably be rewarded mightily by our press."[1517] Senior Campaign officials believed that the statement was unscripted.[1518] However, Gates also recalled Stone mentioning that Russia was probably the source of the materials, and Gates also acknowledged there were public indications at the time that Russia was responsible.[1519] Within five hours of Trump's statement, GRU hackers spearphished non-public email accounts of Clinton's personal office for the first time and targeted seventy-six email accounts hosted by the Clinton Campaign's domain.[1520]

ii. (U) The October 7 Podesta Release

(U) Following July 22, the Campaign believed that WikiLeaks would release further materials and, as a result, began to more actively pursue leads on WikiLeaks activities.[1521] Manafort reminded Trump that Stone had predicted the release and claimed to have access to

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[1513] (U) FBI, FD-302, Manafort 9/13/2018.
[1514] (U) Email, J. Miller to J. Miller, July 23, 2016 (DJTFP00012930–12931).
[1515] (U) Tweet, @realDonaldTrump, July 23, 2016. This tweet echoed the Trump Campaign's press team messaging. *See* Email, J. Miller to J. Miller, July 23, 2016 (DJTFP00012930–12931).
[1516] (U) Email, Abboud to J. Miller, Hicks, and Lanza, July 25, 2016 (DJTFP00012984–12985); Email, Smith to Conway, Gordon, Denysyk, et al., July 25, 2016 (DJTFP00023180–23181).
[1517] (U) *See, e.g.*, Ashley Parker, David E. Sanger, "Donald Trump Calls on Russia to Find Hillary Clinton's Missing Emails," *The New York Times*, July 27, 2016 (containing video of Trump's remarks).
[1518] (U) *See* FBI, FD-302, Gates 4/11/2018; FBI, FD-302, Manafort 9/13/2018; Bannon Tr., pp. 173–174.
[1519] (U) FBI, FD-302, Gates, 10/25/2018.
[1520] (U) *SCO Report*, Vol. I, p. 49; *Netyksho* indictment, ¶ 22.
[1521] (U) FBI, FD-302, Gates 4/11/2018.

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WikiLeaks.[1522] In response, Trump directed Manafort to stay in touch with Stone to see if there were more emails coming out.[1523] Manafort then spoke with Stone during the week of the Democratic National Convention.[1524] At the time, Stone said he did not know what else would come out or when, but he agreed to follow up, although he did not say when he would do so.[1525]

(U) Manafort also instructed Gates to follow up with Stone on occasion to find out when additional information might be released and told Gates that he would be "updating other people on the Campaign, including the candidate."[1526] Gates himself recalled having a conversation with Stone in which Stone said that the WikiLeaks July 22 release was what Stone had previously predicted would come out, and that additional information would be coming.[1527] But while Manafort and Gates tasked Stone with communicating with WikiLeaks, Manafort advised Gates and others throughout the Campaign that no one should "touch" Assange, even though there was a "growing belief that Assange was, in fact, assisting their effort."[1528]

(U) After receiving Trump's directive via Manafort, Stone channeled his efforts to reach Assange through Jerome Corsi. Corsi, who at the time worked for WorldNetDaily (WND), an online publication, had developed a working relationship with Stone during the first half of 2016 when he began interviewing Stone for WND.[1529] Corsi occasionally assisted Stone with research projects.[1530] Although Corsi was aware that Stone had left the Trump Campaign, Stone claimed

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[1522] (U) *SCO Report*, Vol. I, p. 53.
[1523] (U) FBI, FD-302, Manafort 9/13/2018; *SCO Report*, Vol. I, p. 53.
[1524] (U) *Ibid.* Stone was in Cleveland for the Republican National Convention, which occurred directly prior to the Democratic National Convention.
[1525] (U) *Ibid.*
[1526] (U) Testimony of Rick Gates, *United States v. Roger Stone*, p. 938.
[1527] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 936–37; FBI, FD-302, Gates 10/25/2018.
[1528] (U) FBI, FD-302, Gates 3/1/2018. Although the intent of Manafort's statement is unclear, it suggests that Manafort was aware that direct communication between the Campaign and WikiLeaks, other than through Stone, could be perceived as problematic.
[1529] (U) Corsi purportedly originated the "birther" conspiracy about Barack Obama and the "swift boat" attack on John Kerry. *See* SCO Report, Vol. I, p. 54.
[1530] (U) FBI, FD-302, Corsi 9/6/2018. The Committee reviewed five FBI FD-302s documenting five interviews of Corsi conducted by the SCO. During the FBI's initial interview of Corsi on September 6, 2018, Corsi provided inaccurate information, denying that he had communicated with Stone about WikiLeaks and that he had taken any actions to contact Assange, despite clear evidence to the contrary. He subsequently revised those statements in interviews conducted on September 17 and 21, only to later walk back some of these new admissions during interviews on November 1 and 2, 2018. In the November 1 interview, he said that "the way he wanted to remember things was not actually how things happened" and that he had "self promoted himself to Stone and made it sound like he knew what he was talking about and had sources to WikiLeaks." As a result, although some of Corsi's testimony was consistent and could be corroborated by documents and phone records, the Committee encountered difficulty in determining the veracity of Corsi's conflicting statements regarding how he had obtained information about WikiLeaks possessing information on John Podesta—namely, whether he had been told the information by a source or had deduced it on his own.

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to Corsi that he spoke with Trump "every day" and could "get a message" to Trump "at any time."[1531] Gates recalled that Corsi himself was present around Trump Tower often and that Trump liked him.[1532]

(U) Corsi recalled that he and Stone had discussed, either in phone or in person, Corsi's "ability to get to Assange."[1533] This may have been on the evening of July 22, when the two spoke for 28 minutes by phone, or on July 25, when they spoke for another 27 minutes.[1534]

(U) On July 25, 2016, Stone emailed Jerome Corsi, with the subject line "Get to Assange," telling him to "**Get to Assange**" (emphasis in the original). An hour later, Corsi forwarded the email to Ted Malloch, an American author who lived in London and was believed to have contacts with associates of Assange, writing: "From Roger Stone."[1535]

[1531] (U) FBI, FD-302, Corsi 9/6/2018.
[1532] (U) FBI, FD-302, Gates 4/19/2018.
[1533] (U) FBI, FD-302, Corsi 9/6/2018.
[1534] (U) AT&T toll records, Roger Stone/Drake Ventures.
[1535] (U) Email, Corsi to Malloch, July 25, 2016 (Corsi production) (highlights and writing in original, as produced by Corsi to the Committee).

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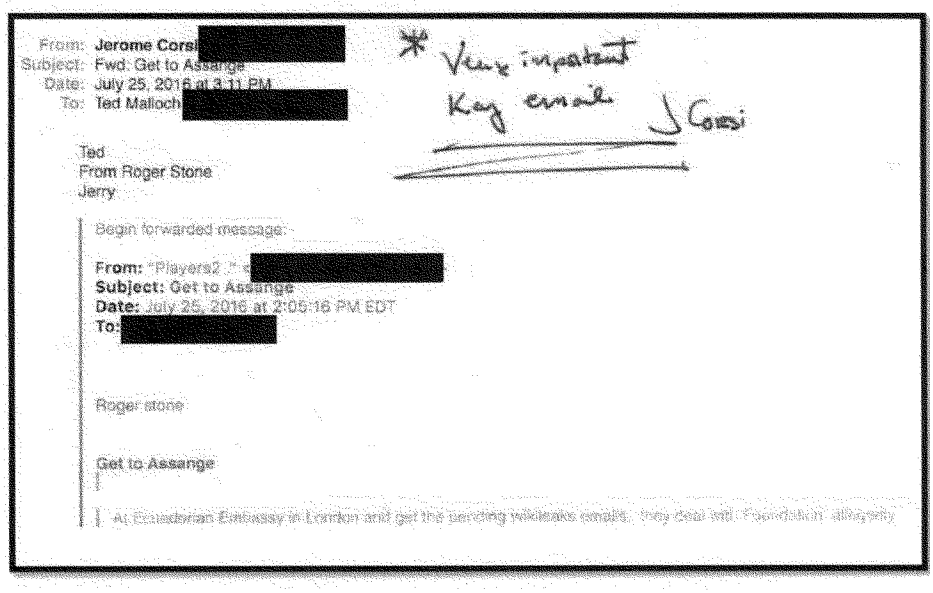
COMMITTEE SENSITIVE – RUSSIA INVESTIGATION ONLY



From: Jerome Corsi [redacted]
Subject: Fwd: Get to Assange
Date: July 25, 2016 at 3:11 PM
To: Ted Malloch [redacted]

* Very important
Key email
J Corsi

Ted
From Roger Stone
Jerry

Begin forwarded message:

From: "Players2 ." [redacted]
Subject: Get to Assange
Date: July 25, 2016 at 2:05:16 PM EDT
To: [redacted]

Roger stone

Get to Assange

At Ecuadorian Embassy in London and get the pending wikileaks emails....they deal with Podesta in allegedly

(U) Corsi had previously been involved in publishing Ted Malloch's memoirs, and had introduced Malloch and Stone earlier in 2016, when Malloch sought involvement in the Campaign.[1536] Malloch had also met Trump and Corey Lewandowski at the Council for National Policy candidate forum.[1537] In May 2016, Malloch traveled to New York City.[1538] While he was there, Malloch visited Trump Tower with Corsi and met Campaign staffers. His "objective was to communicate his willingness to assist the Campaign with whatever they needed."[1539] On either May 15 or 16, he had dinner with Stone and Corsi, and Malloch understood that Stone "still had an unofficial role in the campaign and Trump listened to him," so Malloch stayed in touch and offered to help with opposition research. [1540]

[1536] **(U)** *SCO Report*, Vol. I, p. 55.
[1537] **(U)** FBI, FD-302, Malloch 6/8/2018. The SCO interviewed Malloch twice. In the first interview on March 27, 2018, Malloch denied communicating with Corsi and Stone about WikiLeaks. He corrected his statement in the second interview on June 8, 2018.
[1538] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[1539] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[1540] **(U)** *Ibid.*

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(U) According to Malloch, at about this same time, he and Corsi had a FaceTime conversation about the July 22 release. During the conversation, Corsi asked him "if he could facilitate an interview with Julian Assange" or if he knew anyone in Nigel Farage's circle who could help.[1541] According to Malloch, Corsi had no connection to either Assange or Farage, and Malloch did not try to use Farage to reach Assange.[1542] Corsi stated that he never heard back about this request,[1543] and gave conflicting accounts about whether he told Stone that Malloch had been tasked.[1544]

(U) Phone records indicate that Stone remained in contact with Trump and the Campaign at the same time he was coordinating with Corsi. Records reflect one-minute calls (suggesting no connection) between Stone and Manafort on July 28 and 29.[1545] On July 29, Stone messaged Manafort about finding a time for the two of them to communicate, writing that there was "good shit happening."[1546] The back-and-forth between Stone and Manafort ultimately culminated in a 68-minute call on July 30, the longest call between the two of which the Committee is aware.[1547]

(U) Gates may have been present for this call between Stone and Manafort. Gates recalled a conversation between Manafort and Stone shortly after the July 22 release that Manafort placed on speaker phone, during which Stone indicated that "additional information would be coming out down the road."[1548] Manafort was "surprised" and "thought that would be great."[1549]

(U) On Sunday July 31, at 9:15 p.m., the day after speaking at length with Manafort, Stone called Gates.[1550] Ten minutes later, Stone had two phone calls with Trump that lasted over

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[1541] [redacted] *Ibid.* Farage had several interactions with the Trump Campaign and Transition. On June 28, Bannon spoke with Farage about Farage addressing the Republican National Convention, and Bannon emailed Kushner and Manafort about that possibility the following day. Email, Bannon to Kushner and Manafort, June 29, 2016 (SKB_SSCI-0001140). On August 24, Farage spoke at a Trump rally. Matthew Teague, "Farage at Trump rally: 'I wouldn't vote for Clinton if you paid me,'" *The Guardian*, August 25, 2016. Trump Jr. also recalled seeing him at a few campaign events. *See* Trump Jr. Tr. II, pp. 91–92. Following the election, on or about December 15, 2016, Farage requested and was scheduled to meet with K.T. McFarland at Trump Tower for a briefing. Email, McFarland to Bannon, Flynn, et al., December 15, 2016 (TFA0017787); List of McFarland Foreign Contact Meetings (TFA0016252). [redacted]

[1542] (U) FBI, FD-302, Malloch 6/8/2018.
[1543] (U) FBI, FD-302, Corsi 11/1/2018.
[1544] (U) FBI, FD-302, Corsi 9/17/2018; FBI, FD-302, Corsi 11/1/2018.
[1545] (U) AT&T toll records, Roger Stone/Drake Ventures.
[1546] (U) Email, Stone to Manafort, July 29, 2016 (*United States v. Stone*, Gov. Ex. 24).
[1547] (U) AT&T toll records, Roger Stone/Drake Ventures.
[1548] (U) Testimony of Rick Gates, *United States v. Roger Stone*, p. 936.
[1549] (U) *Ibid.*
[1550] (U) AT&T toll records, Roger Stone/Drake Ventures.

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ten minutes.[1551] Stone then emailed Jessica Macchia, one of Trump's assistants, eight draft tweets for Trump, under the subject line "Tweets Mr. Trump requested last night."[1552] Many of the draft tweets attacked Clinton for her adversarial posture toward Russia and mentioned a new peace deal with Putin, such as "I want a new detente with Russia under Putin."[1553]

(U) At 10:45 p.m. that same evening, Stone emailed Corsi again with the subject line "Call me MON[day]" and writing that "Malloch should see Assange."[1554]

(U) The next morning, August 1, Stone again spoke twice with Trump.[1555] Stone later informed Gates of these calls.[1556] According to an email that morning from Stone to Macchia, Trump had "asked [Stone] for some other things" that Stone said he was "writing now."[1557]

(U) Corsi, who was in Italy at the time, responded to Stone's email about Assange on August 2:

> *Word is friend in embassy plans 2 more dumps. One shortly after I'm back. 2nd in Oct. Impact planned to be very damaging.*
>
> . . .

[1551] (U) Records reviewed by the Committee showed a six minute call from Stone to Trump on July 31 at approximately 9:25 p.m. and a five-minute call from Stone to himself at approximately 9:36 p.m.. *See* AT&T Toll records, Roger Stone/Drake Ventures (ATTSSCI00039). Evidence introduced at trial against Stone showed corresponding calls with Trump at those same times and for the same length of time, including a call from Trump at the number "-1" to Stone at 9:36 p.m. *See United States v. Stone*, Gov. Ex. 148; *United States v. Stone*, Gov. Ex. 164; Testimony of Michelle Taylor, *United States v. Stone*, pp. 348–349. This suggests that that Trump's phone would sometimes appear in another person's phone records as that person calling him or herself, or as a call with phone number "-1." A number of such calls appear in Stone's records and others, including records provided by Donald Trump Jr., during relevant time periods, but the Committee did not investigate those additional calls further.

[1552] (U) Email, Stone to Macchia, July 31, 2016 (TRUMPORG_18_001307).

[1553] (U) *Ibid.* One draft tweet referenced the Clinton Foundation. Stone followed up about the tweets with Rhona Graff the following morning, August 1, to make sure Trump received them. Email, Stone to Graff, August 1, 2016 (TRUMPORG_18_001310).

[1554] (U) Email, Stone to Corsi, July 31, 2016 (*United States v. Stone*, Gov. Ex. 36). Stone also asked Corsi to follow up on two other tasks intended to attack the Clintons: (1) to talk to Bernie Sanders' brother "who called Bill a rapist – turn him for Trump"; and (2) to "find Eileen Wellstone or more proof of Bill getting kicked out." Although Corsi produced some of his communications about WikiLeaks to the Committee, he had already deleted many of the most incriminating exchanges with Stone, including this email. The Committee did not have the forensic capabilities to review Corsi's electronic media and therefore relied on the government's exhibits for this information. These deleted emails were obtained by the SCO through the use of Apple "Time Machine" backups, which provided snapshots of Corsi's hard drive prior to his deleting the documents.

[1555] (U) AT&T toll records, Roger Stone/Drake Ventures.

[1556] (U) Text message, Stone to Gates, August 2, 2016 (*United States v. Stone*, Gov. Ex. 20) ("Spoke to Trump a cpl of times.").

[1557] (U) Email, Stone to Macchia, August 1, 2016 (TRUMPORG_18_001315).

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Time to let more than Podesta to be exposed as in bed w[ith] enemy if they are not ready to drop HRC.
That appears to be the game hackers are now about. Would not hurt to start suggesting HRC old, memory bad, has stroke – neither he nor she well. I expect that much of next dump focus, setting stage for Foundation debacle.[1558]

(U) Stone spoke by phone with Gates that night, and then called Manafort the next morning, but appeared unable to connect.[1559] Shortly after placing that call, Stone emailed Manafort with the subject line "I have an idea" and with the message text "to save Trump's ass."[1560] Later that morning, Manafort called Stone back, and Stone tried to reach Gates again that afternoon.[1561]

(U) During this period, Stone announced his affiliation with Julian Assange publicly and privately—claims that he later retracted. For example, in early August, Sam Nunberg, an associate of Stone's and a former Trump Campaign official, recalled emailing Stone asking his whereabouts.[1562] Nunberg recalled Stone responding on August 4 that he had just returned from London, where he had dinner with Julian Assange.[1563] Nunberg, who was in frequent contact with Stone that month,[1564] recalled that Stone told him that he had "met with Julian Assange about the emails"; when Nunberg asked Stone if the next release would deal with Benghazi, Stone told him that the emails would relate to the Clinton Foundation.[1565] When he later learned that Nunberg had been subpoenaed to testify before the Grand Jury, Stone denied meeting with Assange and claimed he had been joking.[1566] He also publicly denied having traveled to London during that time.[1567]

(U) Stone, however, also advertised his association with WikiLeaks in public. On August 8, Stone gave a speech to the Southwest Broward Republican Organization. After his remarks, a member of the audience asked: "With regard to the October surprise, what would be your forecast on that given what Julian Assange has intimated he's going to do?" Stone replied, "Well, it could be any number of things. I actually have communicated with Assange. I believe

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[1558] **(U)** Email, Corsi to Stone, August 2, 2016 (*United States v. Stone*, Gov. Ex. 37). The email is time-stamped 3:40 a.m.
[1559] **(U)** AT&T toll records, Roger Stone/Drake Ventures (ATTSSCI00039).
[1560] **(U)** Email, Stone to Manafort, August 3, 2016 (*United States v. Stone*; Gov. Ex. 25).
[1561] **(U)** AT&T toll records, Roger Stone/Drake Ventures.
[1562] **(U)** Nunberg Tr., pp. 84, 90, 96.
[1563] **(U)** *Ibid.*, pp. 84, 90, 96.
[1564] **(U)** *See* AT&T toll records, Roger Stone/Drake Ventures (ATTSSCI00039–ATTSSCI00046).
[1565] **(U)** Nunberg Tr., pp. 84, 90, 96.
[1566] **(U)** *Ibid.*, pp. 90–91, 99–100.
[1567] **(U)** Shelby Holliday and Rob Barry, "Roger Stone's Claim of a 2016 Julian Assange Meeting Draws Scrutiny," *The Wall Street Journal*, April 2, 2018.

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the next tranche of his documents pertain to the Clinton Foundation but there's no telling what the October surprise may be."[1568] This was Stone's first public statement claiming to communicate with Assange, and he clarified on August 16 that this communication was through a "mutual acquaintance."[1569] Corsi assumed that he was the "mutual acquaintance," because the two had spoken the day before about John Podesta.[1570]

(U) On Twitter, WikiLeaks denied contact with Stone. On August 9, WikiLeaks tweeted: "We are not aware of having communicated with Roger Stone. We do however take, and verify, anonymous tips."[1571]

(U) The Committee is uncertain how Corsi determined that Assange had John Podesta's emails. Corsi initially explained in an interview with the SCO that during his trip to Italy, someone told him Assange had the Podesta emails. Corsi also recalled learning that Assange was going to "release the emails seriatim and not all at once."[1572] However, Corsi claimed not to remember who provided him with this information, saying he could only recall that "it feels like a man" who told him.[1573]

(U) Corsi further recalled that on August 15, after he returned from Italy, he conveyed this information to Stone by phone.[1574] According to Corsi, the information was new to Stone. Stone seemed "happy to hear it," and the two of them "discussed how the emails would be very damaging" to Clinton.[1575] Corsi also reiterated by both text and email to Stone on August 15 that there was "[m]ore to come than anyone realizes. Won't really get started until after Labor Day."[1576]

[1568] (U) YouTube, "Roger Stone at the Southwest Broward Republican Organization," *Stone Cold Truth*, August 10, 2016.
[1569] (U) YouTube, "Roger Stone Discusses The Future Plans of WikiLeaks," *BlazeTV*, August 16, 2016.
[1570] (U) FBI, FD-302, Corsi 11/1/2018; AT&T toll records, Roger Stone/Drake Ventures (documenting a 24-minute phone call between Stone and Corsi at 12:14 p.m. on August 15, 2016).
[1571] (U) Tweet, @wikileaks, August 9, 2016.
[1572] (U) FBI, FD-302, Corsi 9/17/2018.
[1573] (U) *Ibid.*
[1574] (U) *Ibid.*; FBI, FD-302, Corsi 9/21/2018. Location information contained in phone records produced by Corsi to the Committee indicate that he was in Italy until at least August 11 and had returned to New Jersey by August 13. According to Roger Stone's phone records, Corsi's first phone call with Stone following the trip was for 24 minutes on August 15. *See* AT&T toll records, Roger Stone/Drake Ventures.
[1575] (U) FBI, FD-302, Corsi 9/21/2018.
[1576] (U) Text message, Corsi to Stone, August 15, 2016 (*United States v. Stone*, Gov. Ex. 38); Email, Corsi to Stone, August 15, 2016 (*United States v. Roger Stone*, Gov. Ex. 39). On August 15, Corsi also published an article on *WorldNetDaily*, reporting an unverified claim by Stone that he had been hacked in retaliation for commenting about WikiLeaks's plans. *See* Jerome Corsi, "Trump adviser: Wikileaks plotting email dump to derail Hillary," *WorldNetDaily*, August 15, 2016. On August 8, 13 and 16, 2016, Stone tweeted that he had been hacked. *See* Tweets, @RogerJStoneJr, August 8, 13, and 16, 2016.

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(U) However, during a later interview with the SCO, Corsi revised how he had learned that Assange would be releasing Podesta's emails. Corsi claimed that, rather than being told this information by a source, he had deduced it from Assange's public statements. In particular, Corsi said he had determined that when "Assange said something damaging to Clinton was coming out, it meant something related to Podesta."[1577] However, he thought it would be "more believable" to tell Stone that he had "sources," which also "made it sound like he knew what he was talking about."[1578] The Committee did not interview Corsi, who asserted his Fifth Amendment rights in response to a Committee subpoena, and could not determine if either of the two versions of these events was accurate.

(U) Separately, Gates recalled Stone advising him, prior to the release of an August 14 article in *The New York Times* about Paul Manafort's "secret ledger," that damaging information was going to be released about Podesta.[1579] Gates understood that Stone was referring to non-public information. Gates further recalled later conversations with Stone about how to save Manafort's role on the Campaign, and that Stone was focused on getting information about John Podesta, but said that Stone did not reveal the "inner workings" of that plan to Gates.[1580]

(U) Stone appeared to believe Corsi's prediction to him that John Podesta was WikiLeaks's next target. On August 21, a month-and-a-half before WikiLeaks ultimately released its first batch of stolen John Podesta emails, Roger Stone tweeted[1581]:

[1577] (U) FBI, FD-302, Corsi 11/1/2018. Corsi did not specify the Assange statement that purportedly triggered his belief.

[1578] (U) *Ibid.* Despite Corsi's claim that he had deduced the information about Podesta on his own, as opposed to getting the information from a source, Corsi did not tell Stone that "there was nothing to hide" when Stone was called to testify before Congress. FBI, FD-302, Corsi 11/1/2018.

[1579] (U) FBI, FD-302, Gates 10/25/2018; *see* Andrew Kramer, et al., "Secret Ledger in Ukraine Lists Cash for Donald Trump's Campaign Chief," *The New York Times*, August 14, 2016. Because the timing of this conversation pre-dates Corsi's August 15 call with Stone, it is not clear that Gates is entirely accurate in his recollection. Most of the communications between Stone and Corsi appear to have taken place over the phone, and records indicate that Gates and Stone did not speak over their cell phones between August 3 and August 17, which suggests that Stone actually informed Gates of the Podesta information two days *after* the August 15 call with Corsi. AT&T toll records, Roger Stone/Drake Ventures. Although both Stone and Gates may have used encrypted apps, there is no information to indicate that they did so when communicating with one another. It is also possible that Gates did not read *The New York Times* article about Manafort until later, even though it was first published on August 14.

[1580] (U) FBI, FD-302, Gates 10/25/2018.

[1581] (U) Tweet, @RogerJStoneJr, August 21, 2016.

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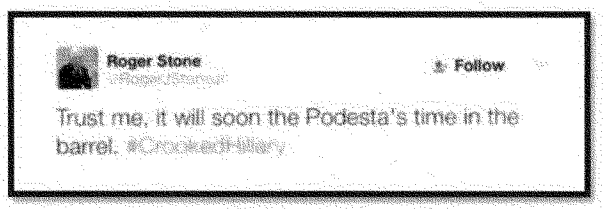

(U) Corsi and Stone had numerous phone calls later in August.[1582] Corsi said that "Stone was asking for further information" about "timing and content of the Podesta email release."[1583] Corsi believed Assange would release the documents as an "October surprise."[1584] Stone told Corsi that he was talking to Trump, and Corsi assumed that Stone was conveying Corsi's information to the Campaign.[1585] Records show that Stone had at least 25 phone calls with Manafort, 20 phone calls with Gates, two calls with Bannon and two calls with Trump in the month of August 2016 alone.[1586]

(U) Bannon recalled discussing WikiLeaks and Assange with Stone both before and after taking over as the chief executive officer of the Trump Campaign on August 13, 2016.[1587] Bannon recalled that, prior to joining the Campaign, "Stone told him that he had a connection to Assange" and "implied that he had inside information about WikiLeaks."[1588] After Bannon assumed the role of Campaign CEO, Stone repeated to him that he "had a relationship with Assange and said that WikiLeaks was going to dump additional materials that would be bad for the Clinton Campaign."[1589]

(U) Corsi recalled that, at the end of August, Stone grew concerned about having made a statement about the release of Podesta materials before WikiLeaks had released any documents.[1590] On August 30, Stone and Corsi agreed to fabricate a story that Stone's knowledge and his August 21 Podesta tweet were both based on a public article and subsequent

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[1582] **(U)** AT&T toll records, Roger Stone/Drake Ventures.
[1583] **(U)** FBI, FD-302, Corsi 9/21/2018.
[1584] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[1585] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[1586] **(U)** *See* Summary Chart of Stone Calls with Campaign (*United States v. Stone*, Gov. Ex. 167); AT&T toll records, Roger Stone/Drake Ventures.
[1587] **(U)** *SCO Report*, Vol. I, p. 54; Testimony of Steve Bannon, *United States v. Stone*, p. 850. Bannon also said that he "might" have communicated with Ted Malloch during the campaign, but did not say when or what they discussed. *Ibid.*, p. 856.
[1588] **(U)** *SCO Report*, Vol. I, p. 54.
[1589] **(U)** *Ibid.*; Testimony of Steve Bannon, *United States v. Stone*, pp. 850, 857–861. In an email on August 18, Stone wrote to Bannon: "I do know how to win this but it ain't pretty." Email, Stone to Bannon, August 18, 2016 (*United States v. Stone*, Gov. Ex. 28). Bannon responded, "Let's talk ASAP." *Ibid.*
[1590] **(U)** FBI, FD-302, Corsi 11/1/2018.

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memorandum from Corsi.[1591] However, Corsi understood that he was Stone's actual source of information and admitted that this "cover story" was "bullshit."[1592] The next day, August 31, he wrote a fake memorandum to Stone highlighting a "much overlooked" CNN article dated August 19 that reported on an alleged investigation into the Podesta Group.[1593]

(U) Stone also began communicating with radio host and comedian Randy Credico about WikiLeaks during this period. Credico, a comedian who describes himself as a "political satirist" and "activist," is the former director of the William Moses Kunstler Fund for Racial Justice and has run for political office in New York multiple times.[1594] Stone and Credico have known each other for years and overlapped on political campaigns.[1595] On August 19, Stone learned from Randy Credico that Julian Assange was slated to be a guest on his (Credico's) radio show the following Thursday, August 25.[1596]

(U) Stone then appeared on Credico's show on August 23, and Credico asked him: "What about the October surprise? I mean, you've been in touch indirectly with Julian Assange. What—can you give us any kind of insight? Is there an October surprise happening?"[1597] Stone responded: "Well, first of all, I don't want to intimate in any way that I control or have influence with Assange, because I do not. . . . We have a mutual friend, somebody we both trust, and therefore I am a recipient of good information."[1598] Credico did not know who Stone was referring to, although Stone later described the source as a "guy" and a "journalist."[1599]

(U) During Assange's interview with Credico on August 25, Assange denied contact with Stone, stating "we have not had any communications with him whatsoever."[1600] On August 26, after Assange appeared on the show, Credico informed Stone that Assange had talked about him: "He didn't say anything bad but we were talking about how the Press is trying to make it

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[1591] **(U)** *Ibid.*

[1592] **(U)** FBI, FD-302, Corsi 9/21/2018.

[1593] **(U)** FBI, FD-302, Corsi 11/1/2018; *see* Memorandum, Corsi to Stone, "John Podesta Ties to Russia," August 31, 2016 (Corsi Production).

[1594] **(U)** *See* Program page, "Randy Credico – Live on the Fly," WBAI; Jessica Kwong, "Who is Randy Credico? Roger Stone Threatened to Take Away Associate's Dog if He Cooperated with Russia Investigation: Indictment," *Newsweek*, January 25, 2019.

[1595] **(U)** Josh Gerstein and Darren Samuelsohn, "Stone's odd friendship with Randy Credico," *Politico*, November 8, 2019.

[1596] **(U)** Text messages, Stone and Credico, August 19, 2016 (*United States v. Stone*, Gov. Ex. 189). Stone had lengthy phone calls with Manafort on both August 19 and 21. *See* AT&T toll records, Roger Stone/Drake Ventures.

[1597] **(U)** WBAI Radio Interview, Randy Credico and Roger Stone, August 25, 2016 (*United States v. Stone*, Gov. Ex. 134).

[1598] **(U)** *Ibid.*; Testimony of Randy Credico, *United States v. Stone*, p. 607.

[1599] **(U)** Testimony of Randy Credico, *United States v. Stone*, pp. 607, 616.

[1600] **(U)** Ari Melber, Interview with Randy Credico, *MSNBC*, March 21, 2018 (playing recording of interview between Credico and Assange).

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look like you and he are in cahoots."[1601] The next day, Credico updated Stone that the station was "working on a Julian Assange radio show" and he was "in charge" of the project; Credico later texted Stone that "Assange has kryptonite on Hillary."[1602] According to Credico, this was the first time they had discussed what information Assange might have.[1603] Credico testified that his statement was based on "public statements" by Assange.[1604]

(U) On September 18, Stone texted Credico that he was "e-mailing u a request to pass on to [A]ssange." Credico agreed to be a messenger, but then added: "Just remember do not name me as your connection to Assange[,] you had one before that you referred to."[1605] That day, Stone emailed Credico an article with allegations about then-candidate Clinton related to her service as Secretary of State and wrote: "Please ask Assange for any State or HRC e-mail from August 10 to August 30—particularly on August 20, 2011 that mention Dr. R.K[.] Paul or confirm this narrative."[1606] Stone followed up the next day, September 19, and texted Credico: "Pass my message . . . to Assange." Credico responded: "I did,"[1607] and then, on September 20, forwarded Stone's message to an attorney with the ability to contact Assange, and blind-copied Stone on the message[1608]:

WIKILEAK SEARCH..DO YOU KNOW IF

From:	Randy Credico [redacted]
To:	Margaret Ratner Kunstler [redacted]
Bcc:	Players2 . [redacted]
Date:	Tue, 20 Sep 2016 09:13:25 -0400
Attachments:	Clinton and Libya FINAL.pdf (23.74 MB)

CAN YOU FIND OUT FROM JA IF THERE IS A S tate or HRC e-mail from August 10 to August 30--particularly on August 20, 2011 that mention Dr. R.K Paul or confirm this narrative

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[1601] **(U)** Text messages, Stone and Credico, August 26, 2016 (*United States v. Stone*, Gov. Ex. 189).
[1602] **(U)** Text messages, Stone and Credico, August 27, 2016 (*United States v. Stone*, Gov. Ex. 189).
[1603] **(U)** Testimony of Randy Credico, *United States v. Stone*, p. 613.
[1604] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[1605] **(U)** Text messages, Stone and Credico, September 18, 2016 (*United States v. Stone*, Gov. Ex. 48).
[1606] **(U)** Email, Stone to Credico, September 18, 2016 (*United States v. Stone*, Gov. Ex. 50).
[1607] **(U)** Text messages, Stone and Credico, September 19, 2016 (*United States v. Stone*, Gov. Ex. 48).
[1608] **(U)** Email, Credico to Kunstler (blind copying Stone), September 20, 2016 (*United States v. Stone*, Gov. Ex. 55).

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(U) Credico insinuated to Stone that he was communicating regularly with WikiLeaks, commenting, "That batch probably coming out in the next drop . . . I can't ask them favors every other day. I asked one of his lawyers."[1609] The attorney was Margaret Ratner Kunstler, who assisted in representing WikiLeaks and Assange in 2015 and 2016 and helped to coordinate Assange's interview with Credico.[1610] Kunstler was also referenced by Assange in a Twitter message to Donald Trump Jr. as his point-of-contact for submissions.[1611] [redacted][1612] At trial, Kunstler testified that she did not do anything with the September 20 request from Credico.[1613]

(U) Stone spoke with Credico again on September 26, 27 and 28.[1614] In addition, Stone and Corsi had further phone calls on September 21, 24, and 25.[1615]

(U) At the end of September, Stone privately conveyed information about a future WikiLeaks release to Trump and Manafort. Manafort, who had left the Campaign in August,[1616] recalled speaking with Stone around the first presidential debate between Trump and Clinton, which took place on September 26, 2016.[1617] Stone told Manafort that "John Podesta was going to be in the barrel" and that "there were going to be leaks of John Podesta's emails."[1618]

(U) On September 29, a call took place between Stone and Trump while Trump and Gates were on the way to LaGuardia Airport. After the call ended, Trump told Gates that "more releases of damaging information would be coming."[1619] Phone records show that this was not the first phone call between them that day. Trump called Stone three times just before 10:00 a.m. on the morning of September 29, but could not connect.[1620] Stone returned the call to a

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[1609] (U) Email, Credico to Stone, September 19, 2016, (*United States v. Stone*, Gov. Ex. 51). Credico testified at Stone's trial that this email was not based on any inside information. Testimony of Randy Credico, *United States v. Stone*, pp. 619–620.

[1610] (U) Testimony of Margaret Kunstler, *United States v. Stone*, p. 836.

[1611] (U) Twitter direct message, @wikileaks to @DonaldJTrumpJr, July 11, 2017 (Trump Jr. Production).

[1612] [redacted].

[1613] (U) *See* Testimony of Margaret Kunstler, *United States v. Stone*, p. 836. Kunstler did not respond to the Committee's voluntary request for documents and an interview.

[1614] (U) AT&T toll records, Roger Stone/Drake Ventures.

[1615] (U) *Ibid.* On September 24, Stone spoke with Corsi for a total of 23 minutes.

[1616] (U) Manafort, however, stayed in contact with senior Campaign officials, including Trump. *See infra* Vol. 5, Sec. III.A.6.i.

[1617] (U) FBI, FD-302, Manafort 9/13/2018.

[1618] (U) *Ibid.*

[1619] (U) *SCO Report*, Vol. I, p. 54; Testimony of Rick Gates, *United States v. Stone*, p. 946.

[1620] (U) *See United States v. Stone*, Gov. Ex. 148.

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Trump Organization number two hours later, but the call lasted only two minutes.[1621] Then, at approximately 1:40 p.m., Stone received a one-minute call from Keith Schiller's phone number, which records show originating from East Elmhurst, New York—in proximity to LaGuardia Airport.[1622] Stone returned the call to Schiller at 1:51 p.m. for three minutes.[1623] This call matches the conversation between Stone and Trump that Gates remembered.

(U) Trump, in written responses to the SCO, stated: "I do not recall discussing WikiLeaks with [Stone], nor do I recall being aware of Mr. Stone having discussed WikiLeaks with individuals associated with my campaign."[1624] Trump further claimed that he had "no recollection of the specifics of any conversations I had with Mr. Stone between June 1, 2016 and November 8, 2016."[1625] Despite Trump's recollection, the Committee assesses that Trump did, in fact, speak with Stone about WikiLeaks and with members of his Campaign about Stone's access to WikiLeaks on multiple occasions.

(U) On September 27, it was reported that Assange would be making an "announcement" on October 4 at the Ecuador Embassy.[1626] On September 30, the announcement was reportedly canceled due to "security concerns."[1627] That same day, Credico texted Stone a photo of himself standing outside the Ecuador Embassy.[1628] Credico was in London to see a friend and had agreed to deliver a letter to Assange from Berthold Reimers, Manager of the WBAI radio station.[1629] Credico said that he handed the letter to someone at the door of the Embassy, but never made it inside.[1630]

[1621] (U) AT&T toll records, Roger Stone/Drake Ventures (ATTSSCI00053).
[1622] (U) Invoice, Call Detail for Keith Schiller (TRUMPORG_73_000020).
[1623] (U) *Ibid.*; AT&T toll records, Roger Stone/Drake Ventures (ATTSSCI00053).
[1624] (U) *SCO Report*, Appendix C, p. C-19.
[1625] (U) *Ibid.*, Appendix C, pp. C-18–19.
[1626] (U) Tweet, @JesseRodriguez, September 27, 2016 ("Julian Assange set to make an announcement from his balcony in London next Tuesday, according to @wikileaks.").
[1627] (U) Tweet, @JesseRodriguez, September 30, 2016 ("Due to security concerns at the Ecuadorian Embassy, Julian Assange's balcony announcement on Tues has been canceled, per @wikileaks.").
[1628] (U) Text messages, Stone and Credico, September 30, 2016 (*United States v. Stone*, Gov. Ex. 190). Credico shared the image publicly on Twitter several days later. Tweet, @Credico2016, October 5, 2016 ("leaving Ecuador Embassy London past scarey brit agent").
[1629] (U) Testimony of Randy Credico, *United States v. Stone*, pp. 623–624.
[1630] [redacted] *Ibid.*, p. 624. [redacted] While he was making the delivery, Credico noticed people "following [him] around," which reinforced his belief that "something is happening here" and "something was coming out" from Assange. Testimony of Randy Credico, *United States v. Stone*, pp. 625–626.

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(U) On the evening of October 1, Credico sent Stone new messages about an upcoming WikiLeaks release.[1631] In the text messages to Stone, Credico conveyed that there would be "big news Wednesday" (October 5) and that "Hillary's campaign will die this week."[1632] Credico also wrote, "now pretend u don't know me," to which Stone responded "U died 5 years ago."[1633]

(U) On October 2, WikiLeaks announced that Assange would be appearing by video at a Berlin press conference on Tuesday, October 4.[1634] Later that day, Stone emailed Credico an article about the change in Assange's announcement, to which Credico responded, "head fake."[1635] Stone also texted Credico, "Did Assange back off," to which Credico replied the following day, "I can't tal[k] about it."[1636]

(U) Stone commented publicly regarding Assange's change in plans. On October 2, Stone tweeted, "Wednesday @HillaryClinton is done. #WikiLeaks."[1637] That day, Stone also appeared on The Alex Jones Show and advised that he had been "assured" by an intermediary to Assange that "the mother lode is coming Wednesday." He continued: "It wouldn't be an October surprise if I told you what it was but I have reason to believe that it is devastating because people with political judgment who are aware of the subject matter tell me this."[1638]

(U) On October 3, WikiLeaks announced on Twitter that it would be hosting a "WikiLeaks press conference Tuesday 10:00 am Berlin time on the past, present & future of WikiLeaks."[1639] Stone and Corsi also had a 24-minute phone call.[1640] In addition, following more text messages from Stone, Credico advised him: "I think it's on for tomorrow."[1641] That day, Stone tweeted: "I have total confidence that @wikileaks and my hero Julian Assange will educate the American people soon #LockHerUp."[1642]

[1631] (U) Text messages, Stone and Credico, October 1, 2016 (*United States v. Stone*, Gov. Ex. 190).
[1632] (U) *Ibid.*
[1633] (U) *Ibid.*
[1634] (U) Julia Boccagno, "WikiLeaks changes venue for 'October surprise' announcement," *CBS News*, October 3, 2016.
[1635] (U) Emails, Stone and Credico, October 2, 2016, (*United States v. Stone*, Gov. Ex. 59) (although there was no text other than a link to the article, the subject line of Stone's email was "WTF?").
[1636] (U) Text messages, Stone and Credico, October 2–3, 2016, (*United States v. Stone*, Gov. Ex. 190).
[1637] (U) Tweet, @RogerJStoneJr, October 2, 2016.
[1638] (U) "Trump Advisor Roger Stone Says He's Been 'Assured' Through An Assange Intermediary That 'The Mother Lode is Coming," *Media Matters*, October 3, 2016 (date of posting).
[1639] (U) Tweet, @wikileaks, October 3, 2016.
[1640] (U) AT&T toll records, Roger Stone/Drake Ventures.
[1641] (U) Text messages, Stone and Credico, October 3, 2016, (*United States v. Stone*, Gov. Ex. 190). Credico's comment was part of a longer October 3 dialogue on the expected WikiLeaks announcement, during which Stone references using Signal to communicate, because it considers it to be "secure."
[1642] (U) Tweet, @RogerJStoneJr, October 3, 2016.

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(U) The Trump Campaign tracked Stone's commentary and the news about WikiLeaks. On October 2, Andrew Surabian, who ran the Campaign's war room, emailed Stone's Twitter prediction about a Wednesday release to Bannon, Kellyanne Conway, and the Trump Campaign press team.[1643] On October 3, Dan Scavino emailed the October 3 WikiLeaks Twitter announcement to Bannon.[1644] That evening, Bannon reached out to two *Breitbart* editors, Wynton Hall and Peter Schweizer, to ask if they would be awake "to get what he [Assange] has live."[1645]

(U) Separately, also on October 3, Bannon received an email from Matthew Boyle, another *Breitbart* editor, forwarding Boyle's correspondence from earlier that day with Stone. In it, Boyle had asked Stone, "Assange – what's he got? Hope it's good." Stone responded, "It is. I'd tell Bannon but he doesn't call me back." In his email to Bannon, Boyle advised Bannon to call Stone, and when Bannon said he had "important stuff to worry about," Boyle replied, "Well clearly he knows what Assange has. I'd say that's important."[1646]

(U) Stone also emailed Erik Prince on October 3, telling him: "Spoke to my friend in London last night. The payload is still coming."[1647]

(U) In the midst of the speculation, WikiLeaks reached out directly to Donald Trump Jr. and asked him to "comment on/push" a report about Clinton asking whether Assange could be droned. Trump Jr. responded that he had already done so.[1648] Two minutes later, Trump Jr. wrote to WikiLeaks: "What's behind this Wednesday leak I keep reading about?"[1649] He did not receive a response. Trump Jr. testified to the Committee that he did not recall how he had heard about a "Wednesday leak."[1650]

(U) On Tuesday, October 4, 2016, the 10th anniversary of WikiLeaks, Assange announced that he would be releasing more documents starting that week, including those "affecting three powerful organizations in three different states as well as, of course, information previously referred to about the U.S. election process," which he characterized as

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[1643] (U) Email, Surabian to Bannon, Conway, and Team Press, October 2, 2016 (SKB_SSCI-0001941).
[1644] (U) Email, Scavino to Bannon, October 3, 2016 (SKB_SSCI-0001795).
[1645] (U) Email, Bannon to Hall and Schweizer, October 3, 2016 (SKB_SSCI-0001773).
[1646] (U) Michael Schmidt, et al., "Read the Emails: The Trump Campaign and Roger Stone," *The New York Times*, November 1, 2018. Bannon did not produce these emails to the Committee, but when confronted with them as reproduced in *The New York Times*, said that he was familiar with them and that although he did not "know if they are accurate," he "assume[d] they are." Bannon Tr., p. 188.
[1647] (U) Email, Stone and Prince, October 3, 2016 (*United States v. Stone*, Gov. Ex. 31).
[1648] (U) Tweet, @DonaldJTrumpJr, November 13, 2017 (posting October 3, 2016 direct message exchange with @wikileaks); Trump Jr. Tr., pp. 187–188.
[1649] (U) Twitter direct message, @DonaldJTrumpJ. to @wikileaks, October 3, 2016 (Trump Jr. Production).
[1650] (U) Trump Jr. Tr., p. 190.

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"significant."[1651] He also said that WikiLeaks would be "publishing every week for the next 10 weeks" so that "all the U.S. election-related documents" would come out before November 8.[1652] Assange made no specific reference to Clinton or Podesta, and WikiLeaks did not release any documents.

(U) Trump was frustrated with the absence of a WikiLeaks release on October 4. Gates recalled that Trump had anticipated something would be released and later asked: "When is the other stuff coming out?"[1653]

(U) Following the announcement, Bannon complained to Stone by email about the lack of any new releases, asking "what was that this morning???"[1654] Bannon wrote to Stone because Stone had said he "knew WikiLeaks and knew Julian Assange."[1655] Stone responded, echoing information he had received from Credico and Assange's own announcement: "Fear. Serious security concern. He thinks they are going to kill him and the London police are standing done [sic]. However—a load every week going forward."[1656]

(U) On October 4, Prince also asked Stone whether Assange had "chicken[ed] out." Stone responded that he was "[n]ot sure," but "checking." Later that day, Prince texted Stone again to ask whether he had "hear[d] anymore from London." Stone wrote, "Yes—want to talk on a secure line—got Whatsapp?" and previewed that it was "good."[1657] Prince recalled later speaking with Stone, who told him that WikiLeaks would release more materials harmful to the Clinton Campaign. Prince also described Stone having the equivalent of "insider stock trading" information about Assange.[1658]

(U) WikiLeaks did not release any documents the following day, Wednesday, October 5, as Credico and Stone had originally expected. Stone, however, maintained his prediction that Assange would be releasing Clinton materials. On October 5, Stone tweeted: "Libs thinking

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[1651] (U) Andrea Shalal, "WikiLeaks' Assange signals release of documents before U.S. election," *Reuters*, October 4, 2016 (linking to video).
[1652] (U) Tim Hains, "Julian Assange: First 'October Surprise' Leak Will Be Released This Week," *RealClearPolitics*, October 4, 2016 (linking to video).
[1653] (U) FBI, FD-302, Gates 10/25/2018.
[1654] (U) Email, Bannon to Stone, October 4, 2016 (*United States v. Stone*, Gov. Ex. 32).
[1655] (U) Testimony of Steve Bannon, *United States v. Stone*, p. 876.
[1656] (U) Email, Stone to Bannon, October 4, 2016 (*United States v. Stone*, Gov. Ex. 32).
[1657] (U) Text messages, Stone and Prince, October 4, 2016 (*United States v. Stone*, Gov. Ex. 33). In text messages, Prince promised to call Stone on October 5. *Ibid.*
[1658] (U) *SCO Report*, Vol., p. 57.

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Assange will stand down are wishful thinking. Payload coming #Lockthemup."[1659] On the evening of October 5, Stone and Credico spoke for 12 minutes.[1660]

(U) WikiLeaks did not release anything on October 6. Nevertheless, on October 6, Stone tweeted: "Julian Assange will deliver a devastating expose on Hillary at a time of his choosing. I stand by my prediction. #handcuffs4hillary."[1661] Stone and Credico had five additional calls that day.[1662]

(U) On the afternoon of October 6, Stone received a call from Keith Schiller's number. Stone returned the call about 20 minutes later, and spoke—almost certainly to Trump—for six minutes.[1663] The substance of that conversation is not known to the Committee. However, at the time, Stone was focused on the potential for a WikiLeaks release, the Campaign was following WikiLeaks's announcements, and Trump's prior call with Stone on September 29, also using Schiller's phone, related to a WikiLeaks release. Given these facts, it appears quite likely that Stone and Trump spoke about WikiLeaks.

(U) At approximately 4 p.m. on October 7, *The Washington Post* released the *Access Hollywood* tape.[1664] Witnesses involved in Trump's debate preparation recalled that the team first heard of the tape about an hour prior to its public release.[1665] According to Jerome Corsi, however, news of the release also made its way to Roger Stone.[1666] Corsi and Stone spoke twice that day at length: once at 1:42 p.m. for 18 minutes, and once at 2:18 p.m. for 21 minutes.[1667] Corsi recalled learning from Stone that the *Access Hollywood* tape would be coming out, and that Stone "[w]anted the Podesta stuff to balance the news cycle" either "right then or at least

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[1659] (U) Tweet, @RogerJStoneJr, October 5, 2016.
[1660] (U) AT&T toll records, Roger Stone/Drake Ventures.
[1661] (U) Tweet, @RogerJStoneJr, October 6, 2016.
[1662] (U) AT&T toll records, Roger Stone/Drake Ventures.
[1663] (U) *Ibid.*; Trump Org. call records, Keith Schiller (TRUMPORG_73_000021). As noted above, Trump would use Schiller's phone to make and receive calls, including with Stone, as also illustrated by the September 29 phone calls.
[1664] (U) *See* David A. Farenthold, "Trump recorded having extremely lewd conversation about women in 2005," *The Washington Post*, October 7, 2016 (linking to video).
[1665] (U) Bannon Tr., p. 206.
[1666] (U) FBI, FD-302, Corsi 9/21/2018.
[1667] (U) In an email to the SCO that he later produced to the Committee, Corsi also stated that he called and spoke to Stone at 11:47 a.m. about the "status of the Wikileaks publication of the Podesta emails and Roger's concern that Assange should start publishing immediately the Podesta emails." *See* Email, Corsi to Gray, October 2, 2018 (Corsi Production). Corsi's phone records reflect only one minute of call time, suggesting that a conversation, if one occurred, was short. *See* Corsi Phone Records, October 7, 2016 (Corsi Production).

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coincident."[1668] According to Corsi, Stone also told him to have WikiLeaks "drop the Podesta emails immediately."[1669]

(U) When the tape later became public, Corsi claimed that he was not surprised by the graphic language because he had already heard it.[1670] Corsi recalled previewing the *Access Hollywood* tape with conference call participants during one or two calls that day: a *WorldNetDaily* staff call at 1:08 p.m., or a 2 p.m. call involving Total Banking Solutions that included Malloch.[1671] Corsi remembered telling conference participants that the tape was a problem and to contact Assange.[1672] Corsi then "watched all day to see what Assange would do," and when the Podesta emails were released, he thought to himself that Malloch "had finally got to Assange."[1673] However, Corsi later told investigators that he did not call Malloch or Stone after the WikiLeaks release to convey this reaction because, in contradiction to his earlier statements, he was "doubtful" that Malloch had succeeded.[1674]

(U) Corsi also claimed that he tweeted publicly at WikiLeaks in order to get them to release documents, but no such tweets could be located.[1675] The SCO was unable to identify any conference call participants who recalled getting non-public information about the tape from Corsi that day; the Committee did not seek to confirm those findings.[1676]

(U) At approximately 4:32 p.m. on October 7—approximately 32 minutes after the release of the *Access Hollywood* tape—WikiLeaks released 2,050 emails that the GRU had stolen from John Podesta, repeatedly announcing the leak on Twitter and linking to a searchable archive of the documents.[1677]

(U) After the Podesta emails were released on October 7, 2016, Trump and senior Campaign officials acknowledged internally and to Stone that Stone had predicted the WikiLeaks release about Podesta. Manafort recalled Trump acknowledging to him that "Stone

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[1668] (U) FBI, FD-302, Corsi 11/1/2018. It is not clear how Stone received news of the tape. Stone's phone records did not reflect any calls that day with the Trump Campaign and only one 18-minute call with a *Washington Post* number—but, according to the SCO, the records do not, on their face, indicate that the call involved any of the reporters who broke the *Access Hollywood* story. *See* AT&T toll records, Roger Stone/Drake Ventures; *SCO Report*, Vol. I, p. 59.
[1669] (U) FBI, FD-302, Corsi 9/21/2018.
[1670] (U) *Ibid.*
[1671] (U) *Ibid.*; FBI, FD-302, Corsi 11/1/2018.
[1672] (U) *Ibid.*
[1673] (U) *Ibid.*
[1674] (U) *Ibid.*
[1675] (U) FBI, FD-302, Corsi 9/21/2018. The SCO was also unable to locate the alleged tweets. *SCO Report*, Vol. I, p. 59.
[1676] (U) *SCO Report*, Vol. I, p. 59.
[1677] (U) Tweet, @wikileaks, October 7, 2016

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had information on the release in advance" of it becoming public.[1678] Manafort spoke with Stone by phone and told Stone that Stone had been right.[1679] Gates also spoke with Stone shortly after the release, and Stone confirmed that this was the information he had said would be coming out.[1680] On October 8, Stone messaged Corsi: "Lunch postponed – have to go see T," referring to Trump.[1681]

(U) Corsi said that after the October 7 WikiLeaks release, he and Stone agreed that they deserved credit and that "Trump should reward us."[1682] However, Corsi said that Stone was concerned about having advance information about the Podesta release, and that Stone recruited Corsi to make sure no one knew Stone had advance knowledge of that information. After the October 7 release, Corsi claimed that Stone directed him to delete emails relating to the Podesta information.[1683] As outlined in his indictment and presented at trial, in subsequent congressional testimony to the HPSCI, Stone hid his communications with Corsi about WikiLeaks, and instead identified Credico as his intermediary; he also concealed communications he made directing both Corsi and Credico to obtain advance information about future WikiLeaks releases; and he made misleading and false statements about his communications with the Trump Campaign and individuals associated with the Campaign.[1684] Following this testimony, Corsi said that Stone directed him to "stick to the plan"; Stone also threatened Credico to prevent him from testifying to HPSCI and contradicting Stone's story.[1685]

(U) On October 13, 2016, after WikiLeaks had publicly disclaimed any connection to Stone,[1686] Stone wrote directly to the WikiLeaks Twitter account: "Since I was all over national TV, cable and print defending wikileaks and assange against the claim that you are Russian agents and debunking the false charges of sexual assault as trumped up bs you may want to

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[1678] (U) FBI, FD-302, Manafort 9/13/2018.

[1679] (U) *Ibid.* Stone's cell phone records show a 17-minute call with Manafort on October 12, although they may have been in touch through other means following the Podesta release. AT&T toll records, Roger Stone/Drake Ventures (ATTSSCI00058). Manafort told Gates that the release was three months late. FBI, FD-302, Gates 10/25/2018.

[1680] (U) Testimony of Rick Gates, *United States v. Roger Stone*, pp. 946–947. Gates did not recall Stone saying that he had orchestrated the timing of the release, although Stone told Gates that the release would "help." FBI, FD-302, Gates 10/25/2018.

[1681] (U) Affidavit in Support of an Application for a Search Warrant, Case 1:18-sc-02524, July 27, 2018, ¶ 66. It is unknown if Stone and Trump in fact met.

[1682] (U) FBI, FD-302, Corsi 9/21/2018.

[1683] (U) FBI, FD-302, Corsi 11/1/2018.

[1684] (U) *See, e.g.*, *Stone* indictment, ¶¶ 11–39.

[1685] (U) FBI, FD-302, Corsi 9/21/2018. On November 15, 2019, following trial, Stone was convicted of obstruction of justice, witness tampering, and false statements for conduct relating to these events. He was sentenced to 40 months in prison.

[1686] (U) *See, e.g.*, Tweet, @wikileaks, October 12, 2016 ("As we have already stated clearly: WikiLeaks has had no contact wiith [sic] Roger Stone.").

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rexamine [sic] the strategy of attacking me."[1687] WikiLeaks responded: "We appreciate that. However, the false claims of association are being used by the democrats to undermine the impact of our publications. Don't go there if you don't want us to correct you."[1688] Stone ther replied: "Ha! The more you 'correct' me the more people think you're lying. Your operation leaks like a sieve. You need to figure out who you friends are."[1689]

(U) Following the October 7 release, WikiLeaks released thirty-three more sets of stol materials before Election Day, amounting to over 50,000 documents, advertising the materials Twitter each time.[1690]

iii. (U) Trump Campaign's Continued Use of WikiLeaks After October 7

(U) Despite the contemporaneous statement by the U.S. Government warning of Russi responsibility for the hacking and leaking of the DNC, DCCC, and Clinton Campaign docume and emails, the Trump Campaign considered the release of these materials to be its "October surprise."[1691] The Trump Campaign's press team first found out about the WikiLeaks release when it "hit the press" on October 7,[1692] and the Campaign quickly turned to capitalize on the Podesta emails: the following morning, October 8, the communications team began compiling information from the release that it could use to attack Clinton.[1693] WikiLeaks information wa

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[1687] **(U)** *See* Affidavit in Support of Application for a Search Warrant, Case 1:17-mj-00661, September 11, 2017, 31 (documenting October 13, 2016 messages)..

[1688] **(U)** *Ibid.*, ¶ 32 (documenting October 13, 2016 messages).

[1689] **(U)** *Ibid.*, ¶ 33 (documenting October 16, 2016 messages). On November 9, 2016, the day after the U.S. presidential election, WikiLeaks messaged Stone, "Happy?" and "We are now more free to communicate." *Ibid.*, 34 (documenting November 9, 2016 messages). They corresponded further on June 4, 2017, when Stone messag a Twitter account associated with Assange, @JulianAssange, that among other things, "If the U.S. government moves on you I will bring down the entire house of cards." *Ibid.*, ¶ 35 (documenting June 4, 2017 messages). O June 10, 2017, Stone added: "I am doing everything possible to address the issues at the highest level of Government. Fed treatment of you and WikiLeaks is an outrage. Must be circumspect in this forum as experienc demonstrates it is monitored." *Ibid.*, ¶ 36 (documenting June 10, 2017 messages).

[1690] **(U)** *Netyksho* indictment, ¶ 49; *see also* Tweets, @wikleaks, October 7, 2016 to November 7, 2016.

[1691] **(U)** FBI, FD-302, Gates 4/19/2018.

[1692] **(U)** Epshteyn Tr., p. 212.

[1693] **(U)** *See, e.g.*, Email, Shah to Ditto, Cheung, J. Miller, and Hicks, October 8, 2016 (DJTFP00019278) (attachi document titled "Wikileaks October 7, 2016 John Podesta Email Release"); Email, Epshteyn to Ellis, October 8, 2016 (DJTFP00019302–19304) (requesting "talkers on this asap" in reference to leaked speech excerpts). In his testimony, Bannon downplayed the relative importance of the WikiLeaks release in light of the *Access Hollywoo* tape. Bannon recalled that the Campaign learned of the tape approximately 60 minutes before it was released, in middle of debate preparation with Trump. *See* Bannon Tr., p. 206. According to Bannon, the tape was an "extinction level event," and precipitated Republican Party efforts to "remove the candidate" the following day. *Ibid.*, pp. 207–208. Bannon claimed that he not recall finding out about the WikiLeaks release or speaking about with Trump until the evening after the debate. *Ibid.*, pp. 206–207.

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later integrated with Trump's tweets,[1694] into his speeches,[1695] and into his press releases.[1696] Other members of the Trump family also scrutinized the news.[1697] And, the Campaign tracked WikiLeaks releases in order to populate a fake Clinton Campaign website, clintonkaine.com.[1698]

(U) Witnesses did not describe a formalized process for integrating WikiLeaks materials into the Campaign. Rather, the Campaign would "look to see what's the most newsworthy" when emails were released.[1699] Gates described this as a "wait-and-see" approach.[1700] When asked what steps the Campaign took to promote WikiLeaks releases, Jared Kushner explained:

> *[W]hen [the hacked emails] would come out, we'd get them – the Internet would crowdsource them and we'd kind of see which ones were hot. And then we would kind of debate ways to try to get them out further, whether it be having the candidate read them at rallies, or tweet about them, or whatever it is.*[1701]

Kushner said the discussions were "not like a traditional command and control structure," but rather "a bunch of people who were helping figure it out."[1702] Participants included Trump and his senior Campaign officials, such as Dan Scavino, Hope Hicks, Bannon, Kushner, Stephen Miller, and Jason Miller.[1703]

(U) While the Campaign was using the WikiLeaks documents, Trump cast doubt on the assessment that Russian government hackers were responsible for the hack-and-leak campaign. At the second presidential debate on October 9, Trump asserted: "maybe there is no hacking."[1704]

[1694] (U) Email, J. Miller to Giuliani, Hicks, Scavino, and S. Miller, October 11, 2016 (DJTFP00019376) (linking to WikiLeaks story in the *LA Times*).
[1695] (U) Email, Gabriel to S. Miller and Ditto, October 27, 2016 (DJTFP00020051) (providing teleprompter script for Springfield, Ohio speech referencing WikiLeaks).
[1696] (U) Email, Gates to Bannon, October 27, 2016 (SKB_SSCI-0001369-1370) (stating "This is good and exactly what we need," and forwarding written Trump statement using WikiLeaks releases to attack Clinton under the subject line, "FW: Donald J. Trump Statement.").
[1697] (U) Email, J. Miller to Shah, et al., October 9, 2016 (DJTFP00024165) (discussing Eric Trump's question about the WikiLeaks release, "Are we discussing Hillary selling weapons to Isis [sic] as per WikiLeaks email dump?").
[1698] (U) Email, Hemming to Parscale, Bannon, and Hall, "Re: Top Twenty-Five Wikileaks Revelations," October 15, 2016 (SKB_SSCI-0001528–1530).
[1699] (U) S. Miller Tr., p. 110.
[1700] (U) FBI, FD-302, Gates 4/19/2018.
[1701] (U) Kushner II Tr., p. 69.
[1702] (U) *Ibid.*
[1703] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 70; *see, e.g.*, Email, J. Miller to Bannon, Conway, Bossie, S. Miller, and Hicks, October 12, 2016 (SKB_SSCI-0001615) (commenting "More!" and forwarding a GOP communications alert noting a WikiLeaks tweet announcing "The Podesta Emails, Part 4"); Email, Burgess to "Team Press," Conway, Bannon, and Bossie, October 12, 2016 (SKB_SSCI-0001616) (forwarding the same and commenting "Flagging – more wikileaks documents. Wanted to make sure everyone saw them.").
[1704] (U) "Full Video: Second Presidential Debate," *The New York Times*, October 9, 2016.

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In testimony to the Committee, Stephen Miller claimed that the Campaign did not know who was responsible for the hacks "one way or the other."[1705] But this uncertainty did not stop Trump or Campaign officials from minimizing Russian involvement at other times, suggesting that it was an "absurd claim" to say that the Kremlin was promoting the Trump Campaign[1706]; that "the DNC did the 'hacking'" as a distraction[1707]; that the Democrats were "putting [it] out" that the Russians were responsible; and that it was "unlikely" that the Russians did it[1708] or that nobody knew it was Russia, and it "could also be China" or "lots of other people."[1709] According to Gates, the Campaign was "not concerned with how or who hacked" the documents, but just sought to release emails as quickly as possible.[1710]

(U) Among the theories espoused by Trump Campaign officials, Manafort expressed a belief that the Ukrainians were responsible, not the Russians.[1711] Gates said that this "parroted a narrative [Konstantin] Kilimnik often supported."[1712] According to Gates, Kilimnik also asserted that the hack could have been done by "Russian operatives in Ukraine."[1713] Gates was not aware of Manafort asking Kilimnik "to reach out to his Russian contacts" about the source of the leaked materials, and was not himself asked to contact Kilimnik about it.[1714] The Committee has determined that this theory espoused by Kilimnik and Manafort has no factual basis.[1715] Gates and others also decided to promote the story that a DNC insider had been involved in the hacks.[1716]

(U) Within the Campaign, there was no policy that governed using materials released by WikiLeaks.[1717] To the contrary, the Campaign treated the releases as just another form of

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[1705] (U) S. Miller Tr., p. 95.
[1706] (U) Email, Abboud to J. Miller, Hicks, and Lanza, July 25, 2016 (DJTFP00012984).
[1707] (U) Eric Bradner, "Trump: DNC hacked itself," *CNN*, June 15, 2016.
[1708] (U) Trump made the statement to Larry King on *RT America* on September 9, 2016. Theodore Schleifer, "On Russian TV, Trump says it's 'unlikely' Putin trying to sway election," *CNN*, September 9, 2016. On September 2, 2016, Putin similarly deflected questions about Russia's involvement in an interview, stating: "Is it really important who hacked this information from Clinton's election campaign? What's important is the content of what was made public." Laura Mills, "Putin Denies Kremlin Hand in DNC Hacking Breach," *The Wall Street Journal*, September 2, 2016.
[1709] (U) "Full Video: First Presidential Debate," *The New York Times*, September 26, 2016. Statements by Trump casting doubt on attribution for Russia's election interference campaign continued following the election.
[1710] (U) FBI, FD-302, Gates 2/12/2018.
[1711] (U) FBI, FD-302, Gates 4/10/2018.
[1712] (U) *Ibid.*
[1713] (U) FBI, FD-302, Gates 4/11/2018.
[1714] (U) *Ibid.*
[1715] [redacted] Further information relating to Kilimnik and Manafort's role in the Campaign and matters related to this disinformation campaign is provided *infra* Vol. 5, Sec. III.A.7.vi.
[1716] (U) FBI, FD-302, Gates 3/1/2018; FBI, FD-302, Gates 4/10/2018.
[1717] (U) Bannon Tr., p. 177; S. Miller Tr., p. 110.

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opposition research.[1718] Bannon's view was that "anything negative that comes out [against an opponent] is clearly helpful to a campaign."[1719] According to Stephen Miller, "[i]t would have been political malpractice not to use the WikiLeaks material once it became public."[1720] Gates described a "growing belief" within the Campaign that Assange was, in fact, assisting their effort."[1721]

(U) Rather than regulating the Campaign's use of WikiLeaks materials, Trump praised and promoted WikiLeaks repeatedly in the closing month of the campaign[1722]:

- (U) October 10, 2016: "This just came out. WikiLeaks, I love WikiLeaks."
- (U) October 12, 2016: "This WikiLeaks stuff is unbelievable. It tells you the inner heart, you gotta read it."
- (U) October 13, 2016: "It's been amazing what's coming out on WikiLeaks."
- (U) October 31, 2016: "Another one came in today. This WikiLeaks is like a treasure trove."
- (U) November 2, 2016: "WikiLeaks, it sounds like, is going to be dropping some more. If we met tomorrow I'd tell you about it tomorrow."
- (U) November 4, 2016: "Getting off the plane, they were just announcing new WikiLeaks, and I wanted to stay there, but I didn't want to keep you waiting. Boy, I love reading those WikiLeaks."

(U) Using Trump to promote WikiLeaks was a deliberate strategy employed by the Campaign, not only in his remarks, but also on social media. In mid-October, Ivanka Trump tasked the Campaign's senior officials (including Bannon, Scavino, Stephen Miller and Jason

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[1718] (U) For example, Hope Hicks told the Committee: "[E]veryone has opposition research, and this just happened to be available to everyone." Hicks Tr., pp. 66–67. Kushner described the releases as a "popular topic" that "everyone was talking about." Kushner II Tr., pp. 52–54.

[1719] (U) Bannon Tr., p. 171–172.

[1720] (U) S. Miller Tr., p. 91.

[1721] (U) FBI, FD-302, Gates 3/1/2018.

[1722] (U) Some of these are reproduced in a video by *The Washington Post*. "Watch Trump Praise WikiLeaks," *The Washington Post*, April 11, 2019. Public tabulations of the number of references in speeches, interviews, rallies, and debates vary, but place it in excess of 100 mentions. *See, e.g.*, Gabrielle Healy, "Did Trump really mention WikiLeaks over 160 times in the last month of the election cycle?" *PolitiFact*, April 21, 2017; David Choi and John Haltiwanger, "5 times Trump praised WikiLeaks during his 2016 election campaign," *Business Insider*, April 11, 2019.

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Miller) with preparing two Trump tweets every day linking to WikiLeaks content, which, she said, would help "refocus the narrative."[1723] Trump tweeted direct references to WikiLeaks throughout October and November 2016, including on October 11, 12, 16, 17, 21 (twice), 22, 24, 27 and November 1.[1724]

(U) WikiLeaks contacted the Trump Campaign directly, through Donald Trump Jr., on several occasions. On September 21, WikiLeaks used a direct message on Twitter to reach out to Trump Jr. for a comment about a website, "putintrump.org," and provided Trump Jr. a password to access the website before it launched.[1725] Trump Jr. responded, "Off the record I don't know who that is, but I'll ask around."[1726] He then forwarded the message to senior Campaign officials in an email, and asked for their thoughts, indicating that he had visited the website:

> *Guys I got a weird Twitter DM from wikileaks. See below. I tried the password and it works and the about section they reference contains the next pic in terms of who is behind it. Not sure if this is anything but it seems like it's really wikileaks asking me as I follow them and it is a DM. Do you know the people mentioned and what the conspiracy they are looking for could be? These are just screen shots but it's a fully built out page claiming to be a PAC let me know your thoughts and if we want to look into it.*[1727]

Trump Jr. expressed concern about the webpage, though not about WikiLeaks itself: "The way they asked the question it almost seemed like there was some connection we should be aware of though. Do any of the political people recognize the names there?"[1728] Some members of the Campaign responded to Trump Jr., but he did not communicate further with WikiLeaks on the topic.[1729]

[1723] **(U)** Email, I. Trump to Bannon, S. Miller, et al., October 15, 2016 (TRUMPORG_69_010687).
[1724] **(U)** Tweets, @realDonaldTrump, October 11–November 1, 2016.
[1725] **(U)** Twitter direct message, @wikileaks to @DonaldJTrumpJr, September 21, 2016.
[1726] **(U)** Twitter direct message, @DonaldJTrumpJr to @wikileaks, September 21, 2016.
[1727] **(U)** Email, Trump Jr. to Conway, Bannon, Kushner, Bossie, and Parscale, September 21, 2016 (DJTFP00023909–23911) (attaching screenshots of Twitter direct message from WikiLeaks). The email garnered some responses. Brad Parscale suggested setting up a competing website so that "searches come to us." Email, Parscale to Trump Jr. et al., September 21, 2016 (DJTFP00023912). Jared Kushner forwarded the email to Hope Hicks without comment. Email, Kushner to Hicks, September 21, 2016 (DJTFP00023916–23918). The SCO declined to charge Trump Jr. for violating the Computer Fraud and Abuse Act based on his unauthorized use of the password to access the website. *See SCO Report*, Vol. I, p. 179.
[1728] **(U)** Email, Trump Jr. to Parscale, Bannon, Conway, Kushner, and Bossie, September 21, 2016, (DJTFP00023919).
[1729] **(U)** When asked about Trump Jr.'s communications with WikiLeaks on this topic, Bannon said: "I'd describe Don Junior, who I think very highly of, as a guy who believes everything on Breitbart is true." Bannon Tr., p. 88.

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(U) WikiLeaks also sought to coordinate its distribution of stolen documents with the Campaign. After Trump proclaimed at an October 10 rally, "I love WikiLeaks" and then posted about it on Twitter,[1730] WikiLeaks resumed messaging with Trump Jr. On October 12, it said: "Strongly suggest your dad tweets this link if he mentions us . . . there's many great stories the press are missing and we're sure some of your follows [sic] will find it. btw we just released Podesta Emails Part 4."[1731] Shortly afterward, Trump tweeted: "Very little pick-up by the dishonest media of incredible information provided by WikiLeaks. So dishonest! Rigged System!"[1732] Two days later, Donald Trump Jr. tweeted the link himself: "For those who have the time to read about all the corruption and hypocrisy all the @wikileaks emails are right here: wlsearch.tk."[1733] Trump Jr. admitted that this may have been in response to the request from WikiLeaks, but also suggested that it could have been part of a general practice of retweeting the WikiLeaks releases when they came out.[1734]

(U) According to public information, Trump Jr. retweeted WikiLeaks content numerous times in October and November 2016, frequently encouraging others to go to WikiLeaks or elsewhere to review the hacked emails.[1735] Trump Jr. defended his treatment of WikiLeaks as "a media organization," asserting that "they're reaching out to me to essentially promote what they had put out."[1736] He considered the emails "relevant" and said that "other people should see it."[1737] He admitted, however, that he did not think about whether WikiLeaks was acting as a pass-through for Russia or otherwise consider WikiLeaks's history of hostile actions against the United States.[1738]

[1730] (U) Tweet, @realDonaldTrump, October 11, 2016.
[1731] (U) Twitter direct messages, @wikileaks and @DonaldJTrumpJr, October 12, 2016.
[1732] (U) Tweet, @realDonaldTrump, October 12, 2016.
[1733] (U) Tweet, @DonaldJTrumpJr, October 14, 2016.
[1734] (U) Trump Jr. Tr., pp. 195–196, 198–199.
[1735] (U) *See ibid.*, p. 202; *see generally* Tweets, @DonaldJTrumpJr, October 1–November 8, 2016. A publicly accessible database purporting to have archived, in close to real time, tweets by Trump Jr., indicates at least 70 tweets responding to or retweeting WikiLeaks, and many others referencing its releases. *See* Trump Twitter Archive, @donaldjtrumpjr, October 1–November 8, 2016. Twitter's search function at the time of this writing revealed a lower number; it is unclear what caused the discrepancy, but tweets can be deleted after they are posted.
[1736] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 164–166.
[1737] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 202.
[1738] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 164–166. WikiLeaks continued to interact with Trump Jr. after the general election on November 8, 2016. On November 9, 2016, WikiLeaks wrote to Trump Jr.: "Wow. Obama people will surely try to delete records on the way out. Just a heads up." In December 2016, WikiLeaks contacted Trump Jr. again to ask that Trump issue a statement in support of Assange. In July 2017, following initial public reporting, WikiLeaks requested that Trump Jr. provide WikiLeaks with his emails about the June 9, 2016 meeting for publication, through Margaret Kunstler. Trump Jr. did not respond to these messages. *See* Twitter direct messages, @wikileaks and @DonaldJTrumpJr, November 9, 2016–July 11, 2017.

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(U) The Campaign's preoccupation with WikiLeaks continued until the general election. As the general election approached, Scavino, a member of the communications team who also had a role in administering Trump's Twitter account during the campaign,[1739] increasingly forwarded updates relating to WikiLeaks to other Campaign officials, using subject lines like "WIKI ABOUT TO DROP SOME BOMBS … 4 pmE" and "The WikiLeaks BOMB!" and linking to the latest WikiLeaks twitter post or its website.[1740] To one, Donald Trump Jr. responded: "Blow it out."[1741]

[1739] (U) Epshteyn Tr., p. 135.

[1740] (U) Email, Scavino to Bannon, E. Trump, Trump Jr., Kushner, S. Miller, and Hicks, October 31, 2016 (TRUMPORG_69_016159); Email, Scavino to Bannon, Hicks, Kushner, S. Miller, Trump Jr., and E. Trump, (TRUMPORG_69_016934). *See also* Email, Scavino to Bannon, Hicks, Conway, and S. Miller, November 4, 2016 (TRUMPORG_69_017232) ("Tweet by WikiLeaks on Twitter"); Email, Scavino to Scavino, November 6, 2016 (TRUMPORG_69_017455) ("8,263 DNC EMAILS RELEASED" and linking to WikiLeaks tweet); Email, Scavino to Bannon, S. Miller, Kushner, E. Trump, Trump Jr., November 7, 2016 (TRUMPORG_69_017463) (subject "Wiki – CHICAGO PROTESTS COSTS" and linking to WikiLeaks documents).

[1741] (U) Email, Trump Jr. to Scavino, Bannon, E. Trump, Kushner, S. Miller, and Hicks, October 31, 2016 (TRUMPORG_69_016164).

[redacted]

[redacted]

C. (U) The Agalarovs and the June 9, 2016 Trump Tower Meeting

1. (U) Introduction and Findings

(U) Aras Agalarov, a prominent Russian oligarch originally from Azerbaijan, and his son Emin Agalarov, a musician and real estate executive, have since 2013 maintained both a business and personal relationship with Donald Trump. That relationship began with the planning of the 2013 Miss Universe pageant in Moscow and subsequently included negotiations over a Trump Tower Moscow in 2014. Aras and Emin Agalarov were later involved in arranging a June 9, 2016 meeting at Trump Tower between Natalia Veselnitskaya, a Russian lawyer with government connections, several of her associates, and Donald Trump Jr., Jared Kushner, and Paul Manafort. That meeting was arranged based on an offer of derogatory information on Hillary Clinton, which was ultimately not delivered.

(U) The Committee sought to understand the relationship between Donald Trump and the Agalarov family in Russia, as well as the relationship between the Trump Organization and the Agalarovs' company, the Crocus Group, more broadly. The Committee also sought to understand the nature of the Agalarovs' and Veselnitskaya's connections to the Russian government and Russian intelligence services.

(U) In this effort, the Committee interviewed a number of individuals with direct insight regarding the Agalarovs and non-public awareness of the Trump-Agalarov relationship's history or specific events. Nevertheless, the Committee faced significant limitations in its efforts to fully understand the relationship with the Agalarovs. In particular, events related to the Agalarovs often occurred in Russia, which significantly limited the availability of documents and witnesses that the Committee sought. Additionally, the passage of time complicated the collection of documents and reliable testimony regarding some aspects of the relationship. Witness testimony, while helpful, was often incomplete or contradicted other testimony or documents. The Committee was often not able to reconcile some of these challenges. The absence of cooperation from several individuals hindered the Committee's ability to fully address some aspects of the relationship.

(U) The relationship between Donald Trump and the Agalarovs, which began in 2013, continued through the 2016 U.S. election. This relationship included both business and personal communications, and was composed of in-person visits both in Russia and in the United States, as well as written correspondence, text messages, calls, social media, and gifts. The relationship also extended to Agalarov associates and family members, and to Trump associates and family members, who in some cases were in frequent contact. The Agalarovs, who have ties to the Russian government, may have been aware of Trump's intention to run for president prior to the Campaign's public announcement.

[redacted]

[redacted]

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(U) Aras Agalarov was personally involved in pushing for the meeting between Veselnitskaya and the Trump Campaign, and also pushed for a second meeting for Veselnitskaya following the election, which did not take place. The Committee found that Agalarov likely sought to arrange these meetings on behalf of individuals affiliated with the Russian government.

(U) The Committee found that it was the intent of the Campaign participants in the meeting, particularly Donald Trump Jr., to receive derogatory information that would be of benefit to the Campaign from a source known, at least by Trump Jr., to have connections to the Russian government. Actions were taken by Campaign participants to operationalize that intent. The Committee found no reliable evidence that information of benefit to the Trump Campaign was transmitted at the June 9, 2016 meeting, or that Trump had foreknowledge of the June 9, 2016 meeting.

(U) The information that Natalia Veselnitskaya, the Russian lawyer, offered during the June 9, 2016 meeting, and planned to offer again at the follow up meeting requested by Aras Agalarov, was part of a broader influence operation targeting the United States that was coordinated, at least in part, with elements of the Russian government. That Russian effort was focused on U.S. sanctions against Russia. Some of the same information used by Veselnitskaya at the meeting was also used [redacted] The Committee found no evidence that the meeting participants from the Campaign were aware of this Russian influence operation when accepting the meeting or participating in it. Participants on both sides of the meeting were ultimately disappointed with how it transpired.

(U) The Committee assesses that at least two participants in the June 9, 2016 meeting, Veselnitskaya and Rinat Akhmetshin, have significant connections to the Russian government, including the Russian intelligence services. Those connections, particularly regarding Veselnitskaya, were far more extensive and concerning than what had been publicly known, and neither Veselnitskaya nor Akhmetshin were forthcoming with the Committee regarding those connections. Both Veselnitskaya and Akhmetshin may have sought, in some cases, to obfuscate the true intent of their work in the United States.

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COMMITTEE SENSITIVE – RUSSIA INVESTIGATION ONLY

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(U) Around the time of the 2013 Miss Universe pageant in Moscow, the Agalarovs employed Artem Klyushin to help promote Emin Agalarov on social media. In that capacity, Klyushin and his then-wife spent some time with Trump during the pageant weekend. Klyushin is a Kremlin-linked bot developer who has supported Russian social media influence operations in other countries. The Committee did not find information indicating that Trump had awareness of this at the time, or any subsequent communication with Klyushin.

2. (U) Background on the Agalarovs

[redacted] Aras Agalarov is a Russian oligarch, originally from Azerbaijan, and is the head of the Crocus Group. Crocus is involved in construction and real estate development, as well as ownership and operation of shopping centers and other businesses in Russia. Agalarov is based in Moscow and his net worth is approximately $1.7 billion.[1743] The Agalarovs have significant ties to Russian organized crime and have been closely affiliated with individuals involved in murder, prostitution, weapons trafficking, kidnapping, extortion, narcotics trafficking, money laundering and other significant criminal enterprises. Some of those activities have extended outside of Russia, including to the United States.[1744] Agalarov and his associates have also, for years, participated in a variety of large-volume [redacted].[1745]

(U) Aras Agalarov also has significant ties to the Russian government, including to individuals involved in influence operations targeting the 2016 U.S. election. He has access to President Putin and to Putin's close aide Dimitry Peskov.[1746] Agalarov is also an associate of Yuri Chaika, who until 2020 was the Russian Prosecutor General, a position which is similar to that of the U.S. Attorney General.[1747] Agalarov may have a connection to First Deputy Premier

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1742 [redacted]
1743 (U) Forbes, "#1227 Aras Agalarov," September 11, 2019.
1744 [redacted]
1745 [redacted]
1746 [redacted] Email, Shugart to Graff, October 28, 2013 (PS-SEN-0000095).
1747 (U) *SCO Report*, Vol. I p. 110. Chaika stepped down in January 2020.

[redacted]

[redacted]

Igor Shuvalov,[1748] and is also connected to Mikhail Mishustin, the now-Prime Minister of Russia.[1749]

[redacted]

[1748] [redacted] SSCI Transcript of the interview with Emin Agalarov, February 27, 2020, p. 72; Andrew Roth, "The man who drives Trump's Russia connection," *The Washington Post*, July 22, 2017. [redacted]

[1749] (U) E. Agalarov Tr., pp. 70-71.

[1750] [redacted]

[1751] [redacted]

[1752] [redacted]

[1753] [redacted]

[1754] [redacted]

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(U) According to a Russian press report, in October 2010 when Russian intelligence held a celebration for the 60th anniversary of the GRU's special missions department, the event was hosted at Agalarov's Crocus City Hall.[1775]

[redacted]

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(U) Aras Agalarov is an associate of Natalia Veselnitskaya, a Russian lawyer who has connections to Russian intelligence and security services.[1776]

(U) Agalarov has also been a longtime employer of Irakli Kaveladze, who has been involved in probable money laundering activity on behalf of Agalarov in the United States.

(U) Kaveladze is a Georgian-American businessman who immigrated to the United States in 1991. He has been employed by Aras Agalarov and the Crocus Group since 1989. At times in his work for the Crocus Group, Kaveladze would travel frequently to Moscow, sometimes for extended periods.[1777]

- (U) According to a report by the United States General Accounting Office (GAO) in October 2000, Kaveladze has been involved in a range of activities in the United States that raise serious concerns regarding Russian money laundering.[1778] According to GAO, companies created by Kaveladze established approximately 2,000 corporations, some of which had made up names, for Russian brokers. Kaveladze's companies moved more than $1 billion in wire transfer transactions into 236 accounts at two U.S. banks, most of which was then transferred back to accounts in Eastern Europe again for Russian brokers. Kaveladze has insisted that he had no involvement in any wrongdoing, calling the GAO investigation a "witch hunt." [redacted][1779]

(U) Emin Agalarov is the son of Aras Agalarov. He is Executive Vice President of Crocus group and is also a musician. Emin Agalarov is connected to Grigoriy Lepsveridze, who has been sanctioned by the United States for his role in Russian organized crime.[1780] Emin

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[1776] [redacted]; SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Natalia Veselnitskaya, March 26, 2018, pp. 69-70. For interactions with the Committee, the Agalarovs retained Scott Balber, an attorney who has also represented Donald Trump. Dylan Stableford, "Trump releases birth certificate to Bill Maher, demands $5 million," *Yahoo News*, January 9, 2013. Early 2017 text messages between Veselnitskaya and Agalarov employee Irakli Kaveladze indicate that Balber may have worked on a "government task" or "state assignment." The Committee has no further information on the nature of this work. [redacted] For Veselnitskaya's involvement in the June 9, 2016 meeting, *see infra* Vol. 5, Sec. III.C.5.

[1777] (U) FBI, FD-302, Kaveladze 11/16/2017; SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Irakli Kaveladze, October 18, 2017, pp. 4, 28.

[1778] (U) GAO, "Suspicious Banking Activities: Possible Money Laundering by U.S. Corporations Formed for Russian Entities," October 2000, p. 11; Raymond Bonner, "Laundering of Money Seen as 'Easy,'" *The New York Times*, November 29, 2000.

[1779] [redacted] Raymond Bonner, "Laundering of Money Seen as 'Easy,'" *The New York Times*, November 29, 2000; [redacted]

[1780] (U) Treasury, "Treasury Designates Associate of Key Brothers' Circle Members," October 30, 2013.

[redacted]

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[redacted]

Agalarov previously employed Artem Klyushin, a Kremlin-linked bot developer who has supported Russian influence operations, to help promote Agalarov on social media. Emin Agalarov grew up, in part, in New Jersey, but is currently based in Moscow.[1781]



(U) According to Michael Cohen, around the time of the 2013 Miss Universe pageant in Moscow, a friend, Giorgi Rtskhiladze, cautioned that he "did not care for the Agalarovs, thought they were gangsters and didn't do business with them." According to Cohen, when Rtskhiladze heard that Donald Trump Jr. was considering a real estate development project with the Agalarovs, Rtskhiladze again warned Cohen that the Agalarovs, and particularly Aras Agalarov, "are really rough."[1786] Rtskhiladze's description to the Committee of his limited relationship with the Agalarovs did not include this information.[1787]

3. (U) Origins of the Trump-Agalarov Relationship

[1781] (U) In February 2020, Agalarov produced documents and testified pursuant to a Committee subpoena served in January 2020.

[1782] [redacted]

[1783] [redacted]

[1784] [redacted]

[1785] [redacted]

[1786] [redacted]

[1787] (U) Written Responses, Rtskhiladze, August 23, 2019; Written Responses, Rtskhiladze, September 16, 2019.

[redacted]

[redacted]

(U) Donald Trump first met the Agalarovs in 2013 in an effort to bring the annual Miss Universe pageant to Moscow.[1788] The Miss Universe Organization had been co-owned by Trump since 1996.[1789]

(U) There was at least one previous attempt to bring the pageant to Moscow prior to 2013. In 2005, Paula Shugart, the president of the Miss Universe Organization, took an exploratory visit to Moscow to determine its suitability for hosting the event. After Shugart's trip, Trump wrote a letter to Mikhail Kusnirovich, a Russian businessman whom Shugart met on the trip. In his letter, Trump praised Moscow as a "spectacular venue" for the Miss Universe pageant.[1790]

[1788] **(U)** *See* RG000010–000031 (hereinafter Agalarov *Washington Post* Tr.).
[1789] **(U)** The Miss Universe Organization includes Miss USA and Miss Teen USA.
[1790] **(U)** Letter, Trump to Kusnirovich, October 25, 2005 (TRUMPORG_18_10).

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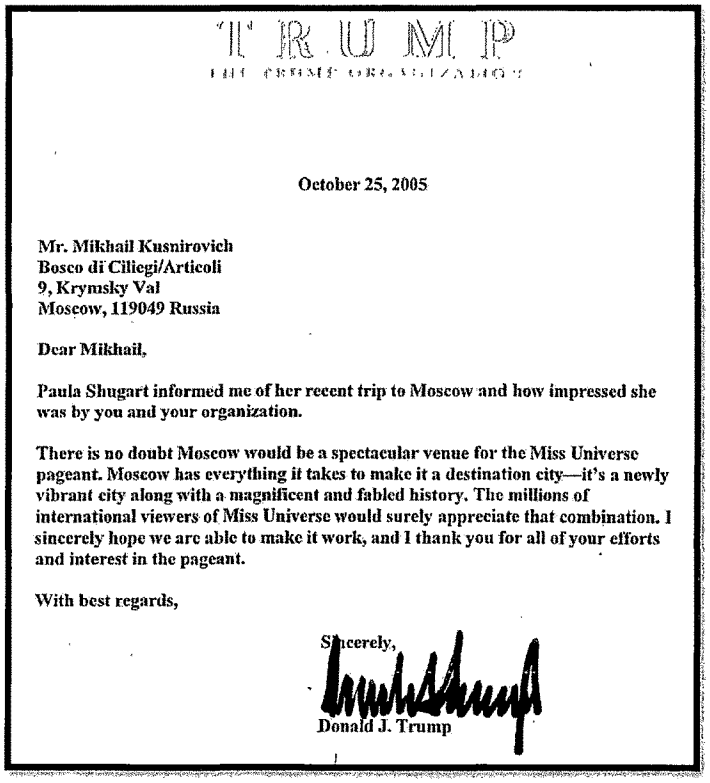

TRUMP
THE TRUMP ORGANIZATION

October 25, 2005

Mr. Mikhail Kusnirovich
Bosco di Ciliegi/Articoli
9, Krymsky Val
Moscow, 119049 Russia

Dear Mikhail,

Paula Shugart informed me of her recent trip to Moscow and how impressed she was by you and your organization.

There is no doubt Moscow would be a spectacular venue for the Miss Universe pageant. Moscow has everything it takes to make it a destination city—it's a newly vibrant city along with a magnificent and fabled history. The millions of international viewers of Miss Universe would surely appreciate that combination. I sincerely hope we are able to make it work, and I thank you for all of your efforts and interest in the pageant.

With best regards,

Sincerely,

Donald J. Trump

(U) Shugart recalled only meeting with Kusnirovich, not with any Russian government officials, while she was in Moscow. Efforts to bring the pageant to Moscow at that time were unsuccessful.[1791] According to Rob Goldstone, who later served as Emin Agalarov's promoter and aide, there was "too much red tape," making bringing the Miss Universe pageant to Moscow "too difficult to do."[1792]

i. (U) Planning Miss Universe Moscow

[1791] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Paula Shugart, April 30, 2018, pp. 10-11, 17–23.
[1792] (U) Goldstone Tr., p. 41.

[redacted]

[redacted]

(U) The first correspondence the Committee is aware of regarding Miss Universe Moscow occurred on January 7, 2013, when Emel Kiral emailed Emin Agalarov and wrote that she enjoyed meeting him, suggested that they meet with her "contact" at Miss Universe, and suggested that Agalarov could perform at a Miss Universe pageant that was hosted in Moscow. Kiral also attached a slide presentation on the potential benefits of hosting a Miss Universe pageant in Russia.[1793] Agalarov responded, thanking her and saying that he would look at the slides.[1794] It does not appear that any further involvement with Kiral took place.

(U) Separately, also in early 2013, Rob Goldstone reached out to a previous winner of the Miss Universe pageant regarding a potential role for the woman in an upcoming Emin Agalarov music video.[1795] Although the woman was unavailable, she connected Goldstone with Shugart, the president of the Miss Universe Organization, as someone who might be able to make another recommendation for the music video.[1796] In March 2013, Shugart offered to meet with Goldstone and Emin Agalarov. During the meeting, Goldstone suggested that Agalarov could perform at a future Miss Universe pageant.[1797]

(U) According to Goldstone, Emin Agalarov asked about hosting the pageant in Moscow. Shugart explained that she had previously hoped to host the pageant there, but those efforts were unsuccessful. Shugart identified Crocus City Hall as a potential location, and was impressed to learn that Emin Agalarov's father owned the venue.[1798]

(U) Emin Agalarov then asked Shugart about Miss Universe's fee structure and about what would be involved in bringing the pageant to Russia. Goldstone said that Agalarov was optimistic that he would be able to perform at the pageant if it were held at Crocus City Hall, and believed that it would generate international exposure for his music career. In part to foster this new relationship, Shugart offered Miss Universe 2012 for Agalarov's music video.[1799]

(U) Kaveladze recalled that Aras Agalarov was initially very skeptical about hosting the pageant, but Emin Agalarov was excited and lobbied his father.[1800] Kaveladze believed that

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[1793] (U) Email, Kiral to E. Agalarov, January 7, 2013 (EA-SSCI-00001). Shugart told the Committee that Kiral had been introduced to the Miss Universe Organization by Rhona Graff, but that neither Shugart nor Agalarov had any meaningful connection to her. Shugart Tr., pp. 41-42; Krial has also gone by the name Emel Dilek.
[1794] (U) Email, E. Agalarov to Kiral, January 7, 2013 (TRUMPORG_18_000998).
[1795] (U) Goldstone Tr., pp. 45–47.
[1796] (U) *Ibid.*
[1797] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 46–48.
[1798] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 47–48.
[1799] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 48-50.
[1800] (U) Kaveladze Tr., p. 14-15.

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Crocus would lose a substantial amount of money and repeatedly advised against hosting the event.[1801]

(U) On April 18, Goldstone emailed Agalarov to tell him that Trump and the Miss Universe Organization had met and were willing to "pull out all the stops to get this to Moscow."[1802] In May 2013, the Miss Universe Organization was under increasing pressure to secure a location for the upcoming pageant.[1803] At that time, Emin Agalarov invited Shugart and several other Miss Universe representatives to Moscow to visit the venue and other related facilities such as hotels.[1804] During that visit to Moscow, Aras Agalarov agreed to pay to host the pageant.[1805] Despite Shugart providing recommendations regarding financing structures that might involve governments or tourism departments as well as private entities, the Agalarovs indicated that the financing for the Moscow pageant would be strictly private.[1806]

(U) Ultimately, Crocus Group paid approximately $6 million for a licensing fee and incurred an additional $6 million in expenses. The Agalarovs only recouped about $2 million in sales, resulting in an approximately $10 million loss for the event.[1807] According to Shugart, Moscow was one of the most lucrative deals that the Miss Universe Organization had ever participated in.[1808]

(U) Following the commitment from Agalarov to finance the pageant, Shugart notified Donald Trump. Shugart recalled that Trump was "very happy" and believed the Agalarovs were "the real deal." Shugart recalled that Trump told her she was "finally introducing him to the people he needed to be meeting."[1809]

(U) At the conclusion of the Russia trip, a Letter of Intent was signed.[1810] Goldstone recalled that Trump wanted to announce the locations of the upcoming Miss Universe pageant during the awards ceremony for the Miss USA pageant in Las Vegas, Nevada, in June 2013.

[1801] [redacted]

[1802] (U) Email, Goldstone to E. Agalarov, April 18, 2013 (EA-SSCI-00057). According the same email from Goldstone, Shugart had also "asked if there was any word back from the Government folks your father emailed etc."

[1803] (U) Shugart Tr., pp. 14, 24.

[1804] (U) Goldstone Tr., pp. 45–50. This account is generally consistent with testimony to the Committee from Paula Shugart. Shugart Tr., pp. 17–23.

[1805] (U) Shugart Tr., pp. 17-23, 50–51; Goldstone Tr., pp. 53–54.

[1806] (U) Shugart Tr., p. 22.

[1807] (U) Attorney Proffer, Kaveladze, September 28, 2017.

[1808] (U) Shugart Tr., pp. 32-33.

[1809] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 47–48.

[1810] (U) Goldstone Tr., pp. 53–54.

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Goldstone recalled that the groups were "very much under pressure to get that all agreed, so a contract could be signed in Vegas."[1811]

(U) Shugart told the Committee that "once Aras decided it was happening, we moved very quickly," and the two sides drafted a contract.[1812] Kaveladze, who served as Crocus's lead on the contract, told the Committee that he worked with representatives from the Miss Universe organization for a month and a half to prepare the documents and final contract that needed to be signed to finalize the deal.[1813] Shugart told the Committee that Trump made no input on the details of the deal.[1814]

ii. (U) The First Meeting: Las Vegas

(U) In June 2013, the Miss Universe Organization invited the Agalarovs to Las Vegas to sign the contract and make the announcement alongside Trump during the Miss USA pageant.[1815] Arriving on June 15, 2013, the day before the pageant, Trump and the Agalarovs met for the first time in the lobby of the Trump Hotel in Las Vegas.

(U) Following their initial introduction, Trump and the Agalarovs went upstairs to a suite to sign the final contract for Miss Universe Moscow. Shugart and Aras Agalarov were the signatories.[1816] Roman Beniaminov, a close friend and aide to Emin Agalarov, recalled that at the signing the Miss Universe Organization group presented Aras Agalarov with a bottle of tequila to celebrate the occasion.[1817]

(U) The same day, Goldstone recalled receiving a phone call from Keith Schiller, Donald Trump's head of security. According to Goldstone, Schiller said, "I hear from Paula that you guys are going to dinner tonight. Mr. Trump would like to join." Goldstone continued, "I hung up. I called Emin and said: You have a guest tonight; Mr. Trump's now coming to dinner. And he goes: Very funny. I said: No, no; he is coming to dinner."[1818]

[1811] (U) Goldstone Tr., pp. 50–51.
[1812] (U) Shugart Tr., p. 44.
[1813] (U) Kaveladze Tr., p. 14.
[1814] (U) Shugart Tr., p. 51–53.
[1815] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 52.
[1816] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 56-58, 67; Itinerary for Donald Trump, et al. (TRUMPORG_18_000028); SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Roman Beniaminov, February 23, 2018, pp. 77-79.
[1817] (U) Beniaminov Tr., p. 79.
[1818] (U) Goldstone Tr., pp. 61–62.

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(U) The dinner that night ultimately included members of the Agalarov family, Trump Organization, Miss Universe Organization, and a number of Emin Agalarov's friends.[1819] Michael Cohen attended with Trump and Schiller.[1820] During the meal, Goldstone recalled being approached by Schiller, who asked Goldstone if the Agalarov group had plans after the meal. Goldstone recalled telling Schiller that one of Emin Agalarov's associates, Murtaza Akbar, was an investor in a club called The Act and that the group planned to go. According to Goldstone, Schiller responded by telling Goldstone that "Mr. Trump wants to come."[1821]

(U) Following dinner, the group, which included the Agalarovs, their associates, and the Trump Organization group, went to The Act. Goldstone described The Act as, "a bit Cirque du Soleil and a bit burlesquey thrown into one."[1822] Cohen recalled that the club was "more than a burlesque club" and was a "wild place."[1823]

(U) The group, including Trump, stayed at The Act for several hours.[1824]

[1819] (U) According to Beniaminov, attendees at the dinner included Aras Agalarov, Donald Trump, Aras Agalarov's wife and daughter, Emin Agalarov, Emin Agalarov's friends Murad and Timur Beniaminov, Roman Beniaminov (no relation), Rob Goldstone, Goldstone and Agalarov's associate Murtaza Akbar, Trump Organization employees Keith Schiller and Michael Cohen, Miss Universe employee Esther Swan, former-Miss Universe Olivia Culpo, and others. Beniaminov Tr., pp. 71–75. Lawrence Glick from the Trump Organization may have also attended. Shugart Tr., p. 56-58.

[1820] (U) Cohen served as a board member of the Miss Universe Organization, which he described as a "perk" of his job at the Trump Organization. Cohen Tr. II, p. 108.

[1821] (U) Goldstone Tr., pp. 63–64.

[1822] (U) Goldstone Tr., p. 64.

[1823] (U) Cohen Tr. II, pp. 109–110 ("It's a club that puts on shows, and you never really know what the show is going to be. In this specific case they brought out a young man who was in a leotard body suit, who, to me, I would diagnose him as a thalidomide baby. And he was blind as well, but he sang like Pavarotti. And while he was singing—I forget the song, it was like a 'God Bless America'-type song—there was a woman who was in a thong bikini, who was large, performing sex acts on him while he was singing. Interesting, because I was with Mr. Trump at the time. It was not really a place I expected to be with him at. He looked over to me when he was finished, and I'll never forget this, he looked me right in the face. He goes, 'That's a tough way to make a living.'"); Cohen told the Committee he did not remember the name of the club. Based on testimony from other witnesses, the club was The Act. Shugart Tr., pp. 62. Goldstone Tr., pp. 63–66; Tim O'Reiley, "Curtain comes down on nearly half of edgy skits at The Act nightclub," *Las Vegas Review-Journal*, September 13, 2013.

[1824] (U) A series of late night and early morning text messages between Beniaminov and Goldstone indicate Trump's presence at the club with the Agalarovs. Text message, Goldstone to Beniaminov, June 15, 2013 (RB001136–1137). Goldstone told the Committee that, at some point, Emin Agalarov asked him, "How do we get rid of him? When does he go? How long will he stay?" Sometime after that, Schiller approached Goldstone. Goldstone told the Committee, "Then Keith came up and said: 'Mr. Trump's going to leave.' And he made an interesting comment. He goes: 'By the way, you've hosted him really well; he must really like you guys, because he doesn't do this kind of thing and he doesn't stay. Thank you very much.'" Goldstone Tr., pp. 63–66. Beniaminov recalled going to the club after dinner, and that it was a late night, but his memory of the details were vague or non-existent. He recalled that there had been someone dancing on stage in a "mirror type of suit outfit." Beniaminov Tr., p. 81. Shugart recalled hearing the next morning that it had been a late night at the club and that everyone got

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(U) The following day there was a dress rehearsal and the Miss USA pageant at which Aras and Emin Agalarov sat beside Trump. The pageant was followed by the official Miss Universe Moscow announcement, a ceremonial signing of the contract and a press conference.[1825]

(U) On June 17, 2013, Emin Agalarov instructed that a Crocus Group and Agalarov Estate brochure be sent by messenger to Trump.[1826]

(U) On June 18, 2013, Donald Trump wrote on Twitter, "Do you think Putin will be going to the Miss Universe pageant in November in Moscow? If so, will he become my new best friend?" The same day, Emin Agalarov responded on Twitter, "Mr. @realDonaldTrump anyone you meet becomes your best friend – so I'm sure Mr. Putin will not be an exception in Moscow @crocuscityhall."[1827]

iii. (U) Planning Miss Universe Moscow

(U) Following the contract signing in Las Vegas in June, planning began for the November 2013 Miss Universe pageant in Moscow. In addition to arranging the pageant itself, Trump and Aras Agalarov repeatedly contacted President Putin and his staff, both to invite Putin to the event, and to offer a personal meeting with Trump.

(U) On June 21, 2013, Goldstone emailed Emin Agalarov with the subject line "Putin" to inform him that, "He [Trump] has a personal email [address] for VP" but had asked for a mailing address for the letter.[1828] On June 22, 2013, Goldstone emailed Emin Agalarov the text of a draft letter from Trump inviting Putin to attend the Miss Universe pageant and requesting a personal private meeting in Moscow. The email included the subject line, "Draft of Putin letter for Donald Trump - please show to Aras and let me know before I send to Trump." Emin Agalarov approved.[1829]

(U) On June 24, 2013, Rhona Graff, Trump's assistant, wrote to Shugart, informing her that, "DT wants to send a letter to Putin inviting him to Miss Universe. I asked Rob G. to draft something we could tweak. If you see the letter below, he references a trip to Moscow by DT in

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along. She believed the club was called The Act. Shugart Tr., pp. 61–64. Schiller said he had no recollection of going to any club. SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Keith Schiller, February 7, 2018, pp. 43–45.

[1825] (U) Shugart Tr., pp. 65–66; Goldstone Tr., p. 66.

[1826] (U) Agalarov Estate brochure (DJTJR00502–607); Crocus Group brochure (DJTJR00610–849); Email, Goldstone to Graff, June 18, 2013 (TRUMPORG_18_000999).

[1827] (U) Tweet, @realDonaldTrump, June 18, 2013; Tweet, @eminofficial, June 18, 2013.

[1828] (U) Email, Goldstone to E. Agalarov, June 21, 2013 (EA-SSCI-00466).

[1829] (U) Email, Goldstone to E. Agalarov and Beniaminov, June 22, 2013 (RB-000858).

[redacted]

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advance of the actual pageant. What is he talking about?"[1830] Graff included a version of the draft letter from Trump to President Putin, written by Rob Goldstone, which stated: "I have always valued your kind offer for me to visit Moscow, and I will be doing so later this year prior to the contest. I want to personally invite you as my guest of honor to the November 9th Miss Universe Pageant, and would also hope to meet privately with you during my stay in Moscow."[1831]

(U) Later on June 24, Shugart responded to Graff's email, writing, "I have no idea, I'm finding out now."[1832] Shugart told the Committee that she found out that Trump had said to the Agalarovs that he would come a few days earlier to "facilitate a meeting" with Putin.[1833]

(U) On June 27, 2013, Goldstone wrote to Emin Agalarov stating that Trump's assistant wanted to know where to send "the letter for Putin." Emin Agalarov wrote back, "On it."[1834] Later that day Goldstone sent Graff and Shugart the address and email of "who to forward letter from Mr. Trump to President Putin" and included the mailing address, title, and email address of Dmitry Peskov.[1835] In an email Goldstone explained that this individual "is in direct daily contact with the President and has been briefed to expect an email and physical letter."[1836]

(U) On June 27, 2013, Graff emailed a draft letter titled "Dear President Putin.docx" to an assistant, writing, "Please print this out for me on DT's heavy letterhead (with envelope)."[1837] On June 28, 2013, Graff emailed Shugart and Goldstone and attached a final signed copy of the letter. The signed copy had several changes to Goldstone's draft, including the omission of the extended stay in Moscow and the personal meeting request.[1838]

[1830] (U) Email, Graff to Shugart, June 24, 2013 (PS-SEN-0000016–17).
[1831] (U) Email, Goldstone to Graff, June 24, 2013 (PS-SEN-0000016–17).
[1832] (U) Email, Shugart to Graff, June 24, 2013 (TRUMPORG_18_001016).
[1833] (U) Shugart Tr., pp. 76–77.
[1834] (U) Email, Emin to Goldstone and Beniaminov, June 27, 2013 (RB-000856).
[1835] (U) For more on Dmitry Peskov, *see infra* Vol. 5, Sec. III.C.5.i.b.
[1836] (U) Email, Goldstone to Graff and Shugart, June 27, 2013 (PS-SEN-0000015).
[1837] (U) Email, Graff to Kelly, June 27, 2013 (TRUMPORG_18_001022).
[1838] (U) Letter, Trump to Putin, June 26, 2013 (TRUMPORG_18_000031).

[redacted]

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THE TRUMP ORGANIZATION

June 26, 2013

President Vladimir Putin
c/o Dmitiri Sergeevich Peskov
Press Secretary of President Vladimir Putin
Staraya Ploshad 10/4, 3rd floor, Office 304
Moscow
Russia, 10132

Dear Mr. President:

I hope you have heard by now the exciting news that we are bringing the Miss Universe 2013 Pageant to Russia for the first time in the 62 year history of the Pageant.

We will partner with Crocus Group and Aras Agalarov to stage the event on November 9th at Crocus City Hall. The Miss Universe Pageant is watched by over 1 billion people worldwide and is one of the most watched TV shows anywhere in the world.

I know that our Moscow pageant will be our biggest and best Miss Universe ever, and we are already overwhelmed with a very positive and extensive response from both international and Russian media. We turned down many other competing countries in favor of Russia.

I want to take this opportunity to personally invite you to be my guest of honor in Moscow on November 9th. I know you will have a great time

With best wishes.

Sincerely,

Donald J. Trump

THE WORLD'S MOST BEAUTIFUL WOMEN!

(U) Several months later, on September 9, 2013, planning efforts were focused on securing hotel rooms for the pageant leadership and judges. Goldstone wrote several emails to Kaveladze, Emin Agalarov, Beniaminov, and three Russian employees of Crocus Group

[redacted]

[redacted]

regarding hotel options for the pageant.[1839] Goldstone wrote that he would like to visit the "Intercontinental Hotel and check out their top suites for Donald Trump to stay as it is our sponsor hotel group. At the moment we have him in an $11k a night suite at Ritz Carlton - and I am assured by Trump's office that he is happy to stay at Intercontinental in a top suite and it should save us a lot of money."[1840] However, later that day, Emin Agalarov wrote to Roman Beniaminov and Crocus employee Katia Kosenkova, directing them to arrange for Trump to stay at the Ritz Carlton. He wrote, "trump will stay at the ritz comply with me [sic]," and requested that room options be sent to him.[1841]

(U) Roman Beniaminov told the Committee that guests of Aras Agalarov had previously had reservations made for them at the Ritz Carlton for Crocus business.[1842]

(U) On September 12, 2013, Agalarov and Trump efforts turned back to outreach to Putin. Goldstone wrote to Graff and Shugart with a follow up request for another signed letter from Trump. Goldstone's request mentioned asking for a personal meeting between Trump and Putin, "as discussed." Goldstone wrote: [1843]

[1839] (U) Email, Goldstone to Kaveladze, E. Agalarov, et al., September 9, 2013 (RB-000388). The additional Crocus email recipients were Svetlana Bignova, Katia Kosenkova, and Sergey Sharov.
[1840] (U) Email, Goldstone to Kaveladze, E. Agalarov, et al., September 9, 2013 (RB-000388).
[1841] (U) Email, E. Agalarov to Kosenkova and Beniaminov, September 9, 2013 (RB-000020). Shugart told the Committee that she did not know who made the hotel reservations, but that it would have been someone on the Russian side of the planning for the event. Shugart said that the Miss Universe Organization would have approved the choice, but "we were just notified that they had the Ritz." Shugart Tr., p. 118.
[1842] (U) Beniaminov Tr., p. 185.
[1843] (U) Email, Goldstone to Graff and Shugart, September 12, 2013 (PS-SEN-0000034).

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Sent: Thursday, September 12, 2013 4:29 PM
To: Rhona Graff
Cc: 'Paula Shugart'
Subject: Letter from Mr Trump to President Putin
Importance: High

Hi Ladies

I am off to Moscow tomorrow and might have an opportunity to meet with Putin's personal private secretary next week.
During the visit I would bring up the request for Mr. Trump to meet with President Putin during the Miss Universe week as discussed and requested in previous letter to him.
It has been suggested that I bring a hand signed copy of the letter with me in case it is asked for and also that we put some dates in there say Nov 5 to 9 for a meeting, so he could get it on Putin's calendar.
Do you think you could maybe add in those dates to the original letter and I could get an original hand signed copy? I was thinking maybe Rachel or Larry or even Olivia could bring it next week to Moscow and I could deliver it (possibly even with Olivia) to his personal secretary.

Rob Goldstone

(U) Shugart told the Committee that she understood Goldstone to be discussing meeting with Dmitry Peskov. Shugart said she took Goldstone's outreach regarding Peskov seriously because Goldstone was in close contact with the Agalarovs, and she believed that Aras Agalarov had that level of access to Putin.[1844]

(U) Graff responded to Goldstone's email, writing, "Not a bad idea. Let me talk to Mr. Trump about it and I will get back to you asap."[1845] Later on September 12, Graff replied, "He'll sign it in the morning and I'll let you know Paula when someone can come over to pick it up."[1846] Separately, also on September 12, Goldstone emailed Emin Agalarov, Kaveladze, and Beniaminov. He wrote, "I will have a hand signed letter from Donald Trump to President Putin asking to meet when he is in Moscow Nov 5 to 9th. Hopefully we can get this letter to Peskov or some other person next week in Moscow."[1847]

(U) The June 26 and September 13 letters to Putin are similar but not the same. Several small changes were made to the June 26 letter, including the re-addition of a line regarding

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[1844] **(U)** Shugart Tr., pp. 84, 87.
[1845] **(U)** Email, Graff to Goldstone and Shugart, September 12, 2013 (PS-SEN-0000033).
[1846] **(U)** Email, Graff to Shugart, September 12, 2013 (PS-SEN-0000031).
[1847] **(U)** Email, Goldstone to E. Agalarov, Kaveladze, and Beniaminov, September 12, 2013 (RB-000093).

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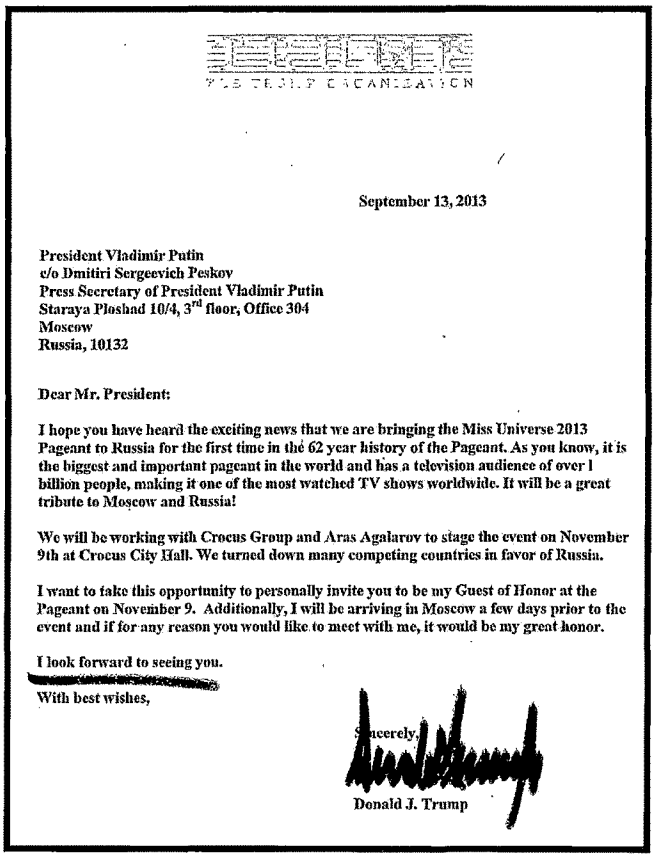
Trump making an extended stay in Moscow and an offer for a personal meeting with Trump separate from the pageant.[1848] Shugart said that while she had asked Trump to write letters to heads of state on behalf of Miss Universe, "an invitation like this had never happened before" and that this was not typical of other foreign pageants they had done elsewhere.[1849]



September 13, 2013

President Vladimir Putin
c/o Dmitiri Sergeevich Peskov
Press Secretary of President Vladimir Putin
Staraya Ploshad 10/4, 3rd floor, Office 304
Moscow
Russia, 10132

Dear Mr. President:

I hope you have heard the exciting news that we are bringing the Miss Universe 2013 Pageant to Russia for the first time in the 62 year history of the Pageant. As you know, it is the biggest and important pageant in the world and has a television audience of over 1 billion people, making it one of the most watched TV shows worldwide. It will be a great tribute to Moscow and Russia!

We will be working with Crocus Group and Aras Agalarov to stage the event on November 9th at Crocus City Hall. We turned down many competing countries in favor of Russia.

I want to take this opportunity to personally invite you to be my Guest of Honor at the Pageant on November 9. Additionally, I will be arriving in Moscow a few days prior to the event and if for any reason you would like to meet with me, it would be my great honor.

I look forward to seeing you.

[redacted]

With best wishes,

Sincerely,

Donald J. Trump

[1848] (U) Letter, Trump to Putin, September 13, 2013 (TRUMPORG_18_000033).
[1849] (U) Shugart Tr., p. 78, 85.

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(U) On September 18, Emin Agalarov wrote to Goldstone, simply stating, "Trumps letter is with Peskov he will pass on to the president."[1850] On September 19, Goldstone emailed Emin Agalarov, writing that, "According to his [Trump's] office, he is keen to make himself available at any time to meet President Putin, and if necessary, would fly in earlier on Nov 6th."[1851] Emin Agalarov told the Committee, "Trump was always asking if Putin's coming or not."[1852]

(U) Shugart told the Committee that during this time period Trump discussed Putin with her specifically. She recalled, "Donald wanted to meet Putin," and that, "He wanted to make sure we arranged a meeting."[1853] Shugart told the Committee that, "When we would speak in the lead-up to the pageant, he [Trump] wanted to – he just would reiterate his desire to meet Putin," but he didn't explain why.[1854] Shugart told the Committee that Trump followed up on the Putin meeting whenever they spoke. She recalled, "that was the reason for a lot of these letters – we were all trying to ensure that this meeting happened for Donald with Mr. Putin, because that was the request whenever we spoke about it, whenever we spoke about the pageant and the event."[1855]

(U) In addition to the meeting, another topic of focus for pageant organizers and Trump Organization employees was the guests that Trump wanted to bring to the pageant in Moscow. On October 10, 2013, Graff wrote an email titled "DT's Guests on Trip to Moscow" to Shugart. Graff wrote that Trump "was bringing two guests with him other than Keith [Schiller] and Michael [Cohen]). Their names are Alex Sapir and Rotem Rosen."[1856] Additionally, in mid-October there was email correspondence regarding the hotel arrangements for Phil Ruffin, a close friend of Trump, and Ruffin's wife, Oleksandra Nikolayenko. In late October, Graff wrote to Shugart to notify her that Trump had invited a friend, Joe Cinque, to the pageant, and that Cinque would need a room at the Ritz Carlton and would be flying home with Trump.[1857] Despite planning for their attendance, neither Michael Cohen nor Cinque ultimately traveled to

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[1850] (U) Email, E. Agalarov to Goldstone, September 18, 2013 (PS-SEN-0000192).
[1851] (U) Email, Goldstone to E. Agalarov et al., September 19, 2013 (EA-SSCI-00637).
[1852] (U) E. Agalarov Tr., p. 36.
[1853] (U) Shugart Tr., p. 69.
[1854] (U) Shugart Tr., p. 69.
[1855] (U) Shugart Tr., p. 85.
[1856] [redacted] Email, Graff to Shugart, October 10, 2013 (PS-SEN-0000052). Rotem Rosen is linked to Putin associate Lev Leviev, who reportedly has ties to organized crime and a number of Russian oligarchs. [redacted]
[1857] (U) Email, Shugart to Graff, et al., October 30, 2013 (PS-SEN-0000100); Shugart Tr., pp. 106-109.

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Moscow.[1858] However, the Ruffins, Alex Sapir, and Rotem Rosen did attend. Other information indicates that a Trump acquaintance, David Geovanis, may have attended the pageant.[1859]

(U) On October 18, Goldstone drafted an email that Emin Agalarov planned to send to Shugart. The draft email to Shugart stated that, "there is still a huge issue we need to resolve. We have just tabulated our final budget and income and project a shortfall of $8.9 million." Emin Agalarov and Goldstone sought a reduction in the $6.5 million licensing fee, and believed that Shugart would take the request to Trump.[1860]

(U) By October 18, a meeting with Putin still had not been secured, and Graff wrote to Shugart to inform her that Trump would no longer be arriving early in Moscow, but instead would arrive the day before the pageant. On October 28, Shugart responded:

> *Could we speak about Mr. Trump's schedule? Aras Agalarov, Emin's father, expressed concern that DT would only be in on November 8th. Apparently in Las Vegas Mr. Trump told him he would come in a day or two earlier than he normally does. Aras and SperBank [sic] wanted to arrange a breakfast or lunch with the business leaders of Russia with Mr. Trump as the guest of honor. This is the first time Aras has expressed disappointment about anything.*[1861]

(U) Securing Trump's attendance at the Sberbank event may have been particularly important to Aras Agalarov given his need for financing from the bank for a major upcoming construction project.[1862]

(U) Despite the change in travel schedule, Shugart told the Committee that as the pageant got closer Trump grew more emphatic about the need to secure the meeting with Putin.[1863]

(U) On October 23, Goldstone sent an email to Emin Agalarov with the subject line "Putin Trump meeting?" He wrote, "What is the status on a possible meeting between Trump And Mr Putin? Trump Office is asking." Later that day Emin Agalarov replied, "Roman

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[1858] (U) Shugart Tr., p. 108; Cohen Tr. II, p. 108.
[1859] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Bob Foresman, January 9, 2019, p. 221; Written Responses, McFarren, January 18, 2019. For more on Geovanis, *see infra* Vol. 5, Sec. III.I.
[1860] (U) Email Goldstone to E. Agalarov, October 18, 2013 (EA-SSCI-00713-714), email Goldstone to E. Agalarov, October 18, 2013 (EA-SSCI-00707).
[1861] (U) Email, Shugart to Graff, October 28, 2013 (PS-SEN-0000095).
[1862] (U) Alexander Panin, "Sberbank Funds $2.4 Billion Construction at Crocus City," *The Moscow Times*, November 19, 2013.
[1863] (U) Shugart Tr., p. 90.

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[Grachev] will find out."[1864] Grachev, the director of Crocus City Hall, was in touch with Dmitry Peskov and had been involved in the prior transmittal of the letter from Trump to Putin.[1865] On October 24, Goldstone emailed again, pushing for a response on the meeting. On Sunday, October 27, Svetlana Bignova, Grachev's deputy, sent an email to Goldstone, Emin Agalarov, Kaveladze, Grachev, and Beniaminov. She wrote, "Please let them know that on Tuesday Mr. Putin will make his decision."[1866]

(U) Aras Agalarov was personally involved in the effort to secure a meeting. Irakli Kaveladze recalled that, in approximately October, Aras Agalarov received a call from Dmitry Peskov, Putin's press secretary. Kaveladze was in Aras Agalarov's office and overheard Agalarov relay Trump's interest to meet with Putin. Kaveladze believes Peskov told Aras Agalarov that he would get back to Agalarov.[1867]

(U) According to Aras Agalarov, "when I told the Presidential Administration that Trump was coming, and I told them what kind of event we were hosting, and how it will be seen by many people all over the world, the Presidential Administration responded that Vladimir Putin would like to meet Mr. Trump."[1868]

(U) In an interview with Aras Agalarov that has only partially been published, Agalarov was asked why Putin wanted to meet with Trump. Agalarov replied:

> *Well, first of all, I convinced him to. You know the government here often pays visits to exhibitions, and we have a lot of national exhibitions taking place here. And I remember once when Putin was visiting one of the exhibition[s], I told him that we will have Donald Trump here for one of these events and we would have an audience of [many people]... Putin pays attention to events like the Olympic Games, Formula 1, FIFA World Cup. He is interested in global events, and of course he was interested in this event. He thought he should meet this person who brought this global event to Russia. That was the main reason.*[1869]

(U) In late October 2013, Aras Agalarov was scheduled to receive the Order of Honor, one of the highest civilian awards in Russia, from President Putin. In an October 28 email to

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[1864] (U) Emails, Goldstone and E. Agalarov, October 23, 2013 (Beniaminov Production).
[1865] (U) Beniaminov Tr., p. 100.
[1866] (U) Email, Bignova to Goldstone, E. Agalarov, et al., October 27, 2013 (Beniaminov Production).
[1867] (U) FBI, FD-302, Kaveladze 11/16/2017.
[1868] (U) Agalarov *Washington Post* Tr.
[1869] (U) *Ibid.*

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Graff, Shugart noted that "Aras is being awarded some sort of Medal of Freedom by Putin at the Kremlin tomorrow and he is hoping to set a meeting with Mr. Trump."[1870]

(U) On October 29, 2013, Shugart, who was in Moscow,[1871] emailed Graff a series of photos of Aras Agalarov receiving the award from Putin. She wrote, "This was just sent to me. They were discussing DJT while this was happening. Stay tuned."[1872] Later that day Graff responded, "Well, I think if this is a serious and substantial offer to meet Putin, DJT would reconsider his travel plans. Let's talk when you know more."[1873] Shugart replied, "I'll know more in the morning but it sounds serious. I told my contact it would be major reshuffling and it would need to be worth it. Did you give him [Donald Trump] a heads up?" Graff responded she had.[1874] The following day, October 30, Graff wrote to Shugart, "Any news on Putin?"[1875] Shugart replied, "No but at least I made Emin aware of the situation tonight at the event. We are following up in the AM. He said the meeting is definitely happening, he just isn't sure if Putin wants 7th, 8th or 9th. He was told 7th but hasn't received confirmation on information."[1876]

(U) On October 30, 2013, Roman Beniaminov and Goldstone, who both work for Emin Agalarov, exchanged an email titled "To do." The text of the email consists of a list of tasks, primarily related to Emin Agalarov. One item on the list was simply: "Trump-Putin."[1877]

(U) Shugart recalled, she "knew there was a desire" to meet with Putin and "they all felt that they were going to be able to make it happen."[1878] Shugart said she was working on arranging the meeting on a daily basis and that "every time I spoke to him [Trump] leading up to the pageant, he wanted to know if it was set."[1879]

[1870] (U) Email, Shugart to Graff, October 28, 2013 (PS-SEN-0000095).
[1871] (U) Several weeks prior to the pageant, staff working to organize the event, including Shugart and Goldstone, relocated to Moscow. Goldstone told the Committee, "I arrived in Moscow approximately three weeks before the event, and that was timed to coincide with when the main part of the final logistics took place, and including when the contestants arrived." According to Goldstone, those who arrived early primarily stayed at the Crown Plaza in Moscow, then moved to the Ritz Carlton shortly before the pageant. Goldstone Tr., pp. 73–74.
[1872] (U) Email, Shugart to Graff, October 29, 2013 (PS-SEN-0000081).
[1873] (U) Email, Graff to Shugart, October 29, 2013 (PS-SEN-0000081).
[1874] (U) Email, Graff to Shugart, October 30, 2013 (PS-SEN-0000072–73). Shugart told the Committee that she believed that her "contact" in this case was Irakli Kaveladze. Shugart Tr., p. 102.
[1875] (U) Email, Graff to Shugart, October 30, 2013 (PS-SEN-0000092).
[1876] (U) Email, Shugart to Graff, October 30, 2013 (PS-SEN-0000078; Shugart Tr., p. 110.
[1877] (U) Email, Beniaminov to Goldsone, October 30, 2013 (RB001988).
[1878] (U) Shugart told the Committee that she believed Emin Agalarov had told her that the meeting was definitely happening. Shugart Tr., p. 109-110.
[1879] (U) Shugart Tr., p. 111. Rhona Graff stated that she did not recall communications regarding Peskov or a meeting with Putin in Moscow. SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Rhona Graff, February 16, 2018, pp. 100–105.

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(U) Kaveladze has said that a few days before the pageant, Kaveladze was in Aras Agalarov's office and Agalarov mentioned that he was trying to invite President Vladimir Putin to the pageant.[1880]

(U) Ultimately, a date for meeting with Putin prior to the pageant was not secured, and Trump did not arrive in Moscow early.[1881] Putin attending the pageant on short notice appeared unlikely, however the question of whether there would be a meeting with Putin while Trump was in Moscow remained unresolved.[1882]

iv. (U) The Miss Universe Pageant in Moscow

(U) On October 31, 2013, the Crocus Group and the Miss Universe Organization hosted a charity auction.[1883] The initial guest list for the event, which includes individuals with ties to the highest levels of the Russian government, military, intelligence services, organized crime, Russian banks, and Russian energy companies, among others, offers some insight into the Agalarovs' social and professional network in Moscow. Some of the individuals on the Agalarovs' guest list have participated in Russian influence operations targeting the United States and its allies, some have significant connections to the Russian intelligence services, and some are currently sanctioned by the United States.[1884]

(U) On Thursday, November 7, Donald Trump was scheduled to attend Billy Graham's birthday in North Carolina with Melania Trump. At 9:00 p.m. on November 7, Donald Trump

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[1880] (U) FBI, FD-302, Kaveladze 11/16/2017.
[1881] (U) Shugart Tr., p. 97.
[1882] (U) Shugart Tr., pp. 169-170; Beniaminov Tr., pp. 102-104.
[1883] (U) Email, Goldstone to Shugart, et al., September 11, 2013 (PS-SEN-0000021). A letter from Roman Beniaminov's counsel indicates that the charity event took place "that weekend," indicating that it was the same weekend as the pageant. This is consistent with Rob Goldstone's interest, expressed over email, in scheduling the charity event while Donald Trump was in Moscow. Nevertheless, publicly available documents indicate that the auction took place on October 31, 2013. Letter, Yi to SSCI, March 14, 2019.
[1884] (U) The initial invite list obtained by the Committee is not a final list, nor does it necessarily reflect who ultimately attended. Nevertheless, it is informative as a preliminary reflection of the Agalarov's network. The list included Dmitry Medvedev, Sergey Shoygu, Sergei Stepashin, Vladislav Surkov, Vladimir Kozhin, Petr Aven, Vagit Alekperov, Valentina Matviyenko, Polina Deripaska,Vladimir Yakunin, Roman Abramovich, Vyacheslav Lebedev, Vasily Titov, Mikhail Mishustin, Igor Shuvalov, Arkady Dvorkovich, Kirill Androsov, Boris Gromov, Herman Gref, and others. Also on the Agalarov's invite list was Anatoly Kucherena, the Russian lawyer with reported links to the FSB who was representing Edward Snowden. Invitation, Crocus charity auction, (RB002671–2680). Snowden arrived in Moscow in July 2013, several months prior to the Miss Universe pageant being hosted there. Emin Agalarov told the Committee that he knows Kucherena and has been friends with Polina Deripaska since the early 2000s. E. Agalarov Tr., pp. 73, 69. Steven Lee Myers, "Snowden's Lawyer Comes with High Profile and Kremlin Ties," *The New York Times*, July 27, 2013.

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and Keith Schiller were scheduled to board the private airplane of Phil Ruffin.[1885] Flight records indicate that the flight departed at 9:15 p.m. for Moscow.[1886]

a. (U) Friday, November 8

(U) Trump's flight from North Carolina was scheduled to arrive at Moscow's Vnukovo Airport at 2:45 p.m. on November 8.[1887]

(U) Schiller and Trump were scheduled to be met at the airport in Moscow by Nelson Feliciano, the head of security for the Miss Universe Organization.[1888] Trump was scheduled to be picked up by two cars, an armored Mercedes S550 for Trump and Schiller, and a second car that would include Feliciano and members of Emin Agalarov's security team. The cars were to be accompanied by a Russian police escort to the Ritz Carlton hotel.[1889] Shugart recalled that the police escort was provided by local authorities, and that Trump's driver in Moscow was hired by the Agalarovs specifically for the Miss Universe event.[1890] Roman Beniaminov told the Committee that he was "aware of people who work with Emin serving in the military and have some special training in the military" and that several private security firms were involved in the pageant in Moscow.[1891]

[1885] (U) Ruffin and his wife likely flew to Moscow for the pageant on a separate aircraft. (U) Email, Graff to Shugart, et al., November 7, 2013 (PS-SEN-0000139–142).

[1886] (U) Vernon Silver, "Flight Records Illuminate Mystery of Trump's Moscow Nights," *Bloomberg Government*, April 23, 2018.

[1887] (U) Email, Graff to Shugart, et al., November 7, 2013 (PS-SEN-0000139–141). Shugart told the Committee that Trump "arrived early in the morning on Friday the 8th" and estimated that the flight arrived around 7:00 a.m. This is not consistent with other information obtained by the Committee. The Committee was not able to reconcile this discrepancy. Shugart Tr., pp.137–138;

[1888] (U) *Ibid.* Multiple people interviewed by the Committee expressed some concern about Feliciano. In 2015, Goldstone recommended in an email that Feliciano not be hired for a job because "MUO let him go for some shady activity." Text message, Goldstone to Beniaminov, November 2, 2015 (RB001148). Beniaminov told the Committee, "I'm aware of him being eventually let go from the Miss Universe Organization for something that had gone on internally." Beniaminov Tr., p. 143. Shugart said that Feliciano had been on bad terms with Schiller following the pageant and "had been charged with something, some sort of credit card sting," prior to the pageant. Shugart contended that Feliciano had not left the organization on bad terms. Shugart Tr., p. 122-123.

[1889] (U) Email, Feliciano to Bignova, Shugart, et al., November 7, 2013 (Beniaminov Production).

[1890] (U) Shugart Tr., pp. 128–134.

[1891] (U) Beniaminov recalled that one of the private security firms involved in the pageant was called Karat. In addition, the Crocus Group had its own security, which was provided by a different private security firm. There was consideration of Emin Agalarov's security team also providing security for Trump; however, the second unidentified private security firm was ultimately brought in for this purpose. Beniaminov Tr., pp. 136–140.

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(U) On November 7, Emin Agalarov directed Beniaminov to work with Agalarov's head of security to confirm Trump's security guard.[1892] Shugart recalled that the Agalarovs designated the security guard. Shugart said that because Trump was not there long, Trump "had a police escort and I know a car and driver. . . . there were a couple of people that were there. I just don't know who they were, but they were definitely local."[1893]

(U) Schiller told the Committee he did not recall who picked them up at the airport, or who drove them, or what vehicle they were in, or where they went. He also did not recall doing any vetting of the transportation entities or arrangements for Donald Trump, or having any communication with the Agalarov's organization to coordinate.[1894]

(U) According to Graff's itinerary, Trump was scheduled to arrive at the Ritz Carlton hotel at 4:00 p.m. According to the itinerary, Trump was scheduled to do a short interview with a television host, A.J. Calloway, at the Ritz Carlton at 5:10 p.m.[1895] Publicly available information indicates that the interview with Calloway took place, though the timing is not clear.[1896]

(U) Trump was scheduled to depart the hotel at 5:15 p.m. for an event at Nobu, a restaurant, that was hosted by Aras Agalarov and Russia's largest bank, the state-owned Sberbank, from 5:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.[1897] This included a 20-minute question and answer and meet and greet, followed by an optional private dinner.[1898] According to Goldstone, who attended, Trump was the focus of the event, which had been organized for approximately 20 prominent Russian business and banking leaders. According to Emin Agalarov, the event was for "Sberbank top partners and clients." Neither Emin Agalarov nor Goldstone recalled the

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[1892] (U) Email, E. Agalarov to Beniaminov, Bignova, and Goldstone, November 7, 2013 (Beniaminov Production); *see also* E. Agalarov Tr., p. 29.
[1893] (U) Shugart Tr., p. 127.
[1894] (U) Schiller Tr., p. 62, 66–68.
[1895] (U) Email, Graff to Shugart, et al. including Trump's ittinerary, November 7, 2013 (PS-SEN-0000139–141) ("If time is tight, will do [the Calloway interview] on return from Nobu.").
[1896] (U) "'Extra' Interviews Donald Trump About Miss Universe in Moscow," *Extra*, archival footage posted January 11, 2017. Goldstone told the Committee that Trump came directly from the airport to Nobu, but the reliability of this recollection was unclear. Goldstone Tr., p. 83.
[1897] (U) Email, Graff to Shugart, et al., November 7, 2013 (PS-SEN-0000139–141). The identities of almost all of the attendees at the Nobu event continue to be unknown, and as many as 35 people may have attended. Email, E. Agalarov to Goldstone, et al., October 29, 2013 (EA–SSCI-00746). Sergey Gorkov, a graduate of Russia's FSB Academy, was a senior Sberbank official at the time of the event.
[1898] (U) *Ibid.*

[redacted]

[redacted]

names of any of the attendees other than the head of Sberbank, Herman Gref.[1899] Gref has significant ties to Putin.

[redacted]

(U) Following the pageant, Trump wrote to Gref:[1902]

[1899] (U) E. Agalarov, Tr., pp. 17–18. Goldstone told the Committee that the Agalarovs hired a translator for Trump. According to Goldstone the translator was generally present at the Nobu event and the same translator was used for the duration of the trip. Goldstone Tr., pp. 85–93.

[1900] [redacted]

[1901] [redacted]

[1902] (U) TRUMPORG_18_000011. On November 19, 2013, Sberbank agreed to finance $2.4 billion of construction at the Agalarovs's Crocus City complex in Moscow. It was reportedly the largest real estate loan in the history of Sberbank. *See* Alexander Panin, "Sberbank Funds $2.4 Billion Construction at Crocus City," *The Moscow Times*, November 19, 2013.

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COMMITTEE SENSITIVE – RUSSIA INVESTIGATION ONLY

THE TRUMP ORGANIZATION

November 11, 2013

Mr. Herman Gref
Chairman and CEO
SBERBANK
19 Vavilova Str.,
117997 Moscow, Russia

Dear Herman,

It was wonderful being with you in Moscow --- I hope you enjoyed yourself as much as I did.

You have done an absolutely fantastic job and I look forward to seeing SBERBANK in the number one position (not easy) in the not too distant future.

Whenever you are in New York, please feel free to call and we will have lunch or dinner.

With best wishes,

Sincerely,

Donald J. Trump

PS --- Mr. Agalarov is wonderful man and developer.

[redacted]

COMMITTEE SENSITIVE – RUSSIA INVESTIGATION ONLY

[redacted]

(U) Goldstone told the Committee that the Nobu event lasted 30 to 45 minutes.[1903] Goldstone did not recall additional substantive information about the meeting.[1904]

(U) Trump may have gone to the hotel following the Nobu event.[1905] At 9:30 p.m. on November 8, Trump was scheduled to depart for Crocus City Hall, where the Miss Universe rehearsal had been taking place from 8:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.[1906]

(U) Shugart recalled Emin Agalarov showing Trump around the Crocus City complex on Friday, November 8.[1907] Shugart also recalled that there was a meeting where the building of a Trump Tower in Moscow was briefly discussed. She recalled:

> *It was an impromptu meeting with Emin, which is the only time I heard a Trump Tower Moscow being discussed. It was [Friday], because Emin had shown his whole Crocus City Complex. Emin had a plan to call it – to do part of that complex and call it 'Manhattan.' So that's when I remember them saying: 'Oh, and a Trump Tower for Manhattan would be good.'*[1908]

Shugart further recalled: "I want to say that [meeting] was during rehearsal [on Friday], when he met – right after he met the contestants." Shugart said that Phil Ruffin joined the meeting but Aras Agalarov did not.[1909]

[1903] (U) Shugart, who was in Moscow but not at the event, told the Committee that the event lasted "about two hours." When asked what gave her that impression, she responded: "Rob, just judging from the schedule and hearing when I would check in to hear how they were doing. Donald said it was a few hours, but I think it was probably about two. And just I think I kept track of the schedule." Shugart Tr., p. 142.

[1904] (U) Goldstone Tr., pp. 91-92 ("somebody asked Mr. Trump for his comments on the European debt crisis and especially as it related to the Greek bailout. Mr. Trump said: 'Have any of you ever watched The Apprentice? It's a TV show I created with Mark Burnett, and it's a major money-spinner for NBC. And let me tell you how it's a major money-spinner and how it works and what it's about, and how amazing it is, and it has a prime viewership on a Sunday night in America.' And he then said: 'Thank you very much for inviting me. Your economy's doing great, you're all doing great.' And he stood up and got a standing ovation for that answer. And that is what I recall of that meeting primarily."). Schiller claimed he had no recollection of the event at Nobu. Schiller Tr., p. 73.

[1905] (U) Goldstone told the Committee: "Our suggestion was that after Nobu he [Trump] went to the hotel, checked in, and got ready. That was our suggestion to him, and we had cars and drivers to take him and Keith there; and to the best of my knowledge, he went there." Goldstone's recollection is inconsistent with Trump's itinerary. The Committee was not able to reconcile this discrepancy. Goldstone Tr., p. 97.

[1906] (U) Email, Graff to Shugart, et al., November 7, 2013 (PS-SEN-0000139–141).

[1907] (U) Shugart Tr., pp. 163-164.

[1908] (U) *Ibid.*

[1909] (U) Shugart told the Committee that she did not see Trump on Saturday until he was backstage because she was very busy with the pageant preparations, so she believed she wouldn't have recalled a meeting if it happened on Saturday. Shugart Tr., p. 164.

[redacted]

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(U) Trump wrote a letter to Phil Ruffin following the pageant that referenced "making the rounds of the city" but the timing of that activity is unclear:[1910]

November 13, 2013

Mr. Phil Ruffin
[redacted]

Dear Phil:

It was great spending time with you in Moscow and making the rounds of the city in the hopes of the purchase or development of a project.

If we decide to go forward, which I hope we will, I have no doubt it will be a wonderful success. Personally, I like the concept of a residential tower but perhaps a mixed use building would be best.

Let's see how it all turns out --- it is important that we make a good decision!

With best wishes,

Sincerely,

Donald J. Trump

(U) The night before the pageant, Trump was scheduled to attend Aras Agalarov's birthday party at 10:00 p.m.[1911] All 86 Miss Universe contestants were also scheduled to

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[1910] (U) Letter, Trump to Ruffin, November 13, 2013 (TRUMPORG_18_000012). On December 4, 2013, Trump again wrote to Ruffin, thanking Ruffin for allowing Trump to use Ruffin's airplane to travel to the pageant in Moscow. Letter, Trump to Ruffin, December 4, 2013 (TRUMPORG_18_000013).

[1911] (U) Shugart Tr., pp. 144–146 ("He [Trump] came to the rehearsal. There was a rehearsal going the day before. He came out for that at one point, and then he stayed out there, because Aras was having his birthday party and Aras had actually moved his birthday party out there, so people wouldn't have to come back in town and Donald wouldn't have to come back in for the traffic.").

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attend.[1912] The event was held at Zafferano, a restaurant in the Crocus complex, and was attended by several hundred people.[1913] Shugart, who went to the party, was told that the "Russian elite" were in attendance, along with the contestants and many of Aras Agalarov's friends and family members.[1914]

[redacted] At the event, Trump was photographed with Igor Krutoy. [redacted] khmetov is an associate of Paul Manafort, Konstantin Kilimnik, and others.[1915]

(U) Shugart recalled that she stayed with Trump for most of the party, and that she was there for "a few hours." Shugart recalled that she left the party around midnight and that Trump and Schiller were still there.[1916] Goldstone estimated that, "the earliest he [Trump] would have left is probably 1:00 a.m., maybe a little after that. Then you've got this 40-minute or so drive back into the center of Moscow."[1917] Goldstone recalled that he remained at the party until Trump and Schiller left to return to the hotel, again with a police escort and security.[1918] Emin Agalarov told the Committee that he stayed at the party and did not return to the hotel with Trump and Schiller.[1919] Several items on the hotel room bill may indicate additional social activity following the birthday party.[1920]

(U) According to documents produced by Ritz Carlton Moscow, Trump was initially booked in the Presidential Suite, but that reservation was later canceled, and Trump was moved

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[1912] (U) Email, Graff to Shugart, et al., November 7, 2013 (PS-SEN-0000139–141).
[1913] (U) Goldstone estimated 500 or more. Goldstone Tr., p. 95. Kaveladze estimated 200. Kaveladze Tr., p. 26. Shugart estimated 200. Shugart Tr., p. 144. Beniaminov said "a few hundred." Beniaminov Tr., p. 157.
[1914] (U) Shugart Tr., p. 148.
[1915] [redacted] For more on the relationship between Manafort and Akhmetov, *see infra* Vol. 5, Sec. III.A.
[1916] (U) Shugart Tr., p. 151. Kaveladze, who attended, estimated that he left at midnight, and that the party was still going. Kaveladze Tr., p. 26. Schiller said he did not recall attending a birthday party. Schiller Tr., pp. 73.
[1917] (U) Goldstone Tr., p. 103.
[1918] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 102-103.
[1919] (U) E. Agalarov Tr., p. 26.
[1920] (U) Invoice, Ritz Carlton Moscow, November 10, 2013 (RC-Moscow 053). The Ritz Carlton Moscow charged Trump's room approximately $720 at the O2 Lounge, which is on the roof of the hotel, possibly early in the morning of November 9. Separately, the room was also charged approximately $306 for shisha, which is offered at the O2 Lounge, also possibly early in the morning of November 9. There were also approximately $146 in charges to the in-room bar, the timing of which are unclear. Other charges include meals at restaurants and room service.

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to a different room, a Carlton Suite.[1921] Despite Trump's scheduled arrival on November 8 being known significantly in advance, his room was reserved, and paid for, for an additional two nights prior to arrival, starting on November 6.[1922] The Committee was not able to determine why this advance reservation took place.[1923]

(U) On November 7, Feliciano emailed to Svetlana Bignova, Paula Shugart and others, stating that, "Keith has also requested a person to stand in front of room when Trump is in the rooms I will work on that and hope to have someone provide."[1924] Witnesses the Committee spoke with did not have any knowledge of this taking place. Schiller told the Committee that, usually, after Trump was in his room, Schiller "would stand out there maybe for a little bit" and then go to his room, and that was what happened in Moscow.[1925]

(U) Schiller told the Committee that, generally, the preference when traveling was for Schiller to have the room next to Trump, however that was not always possible.[1926] On Friday, November 8, Goldstone emailed a Crocus employee named Katia Kosenkova to inform her that "[i]t appears Trump needed a second room for his head of security Keith" but that room had not been previously booked. Goldstone wrote that, "they got a Second room but Emin says for you to handle the Charge [sic]."[1927] It is not clear which room Schiller stayed in.

(U) On the way to Trump's room, possibly on the evening of November 8, Schiller recalled telling Trump that Schiller had been approached at a meeting earlier in the day by a man who offered to send five women to Trump and Schiller's rooms.[1928] Schiller recalled:

[1921] (U) Email, Zaitseva to Kuhlen, et al., January 11, 2017 (RC-Moscow 012) (reflecting Trump's stay in a "Carlton Suite," room #727).
[1922] (U) Email, Sukhanova to Kuhlen, et al., January 11, 2017 (RC-Moscow 011) (stating the room was reserved and paid for by a Russian company, Academservice). Invoice, Ritz Carlton Moscow (RC-Moscow 001). Records from the Ritz Carlton Moscow indicate that, despite the room being booked starting on November 6, the hotel was aware that the guest would not arrive until two days later. Document titled "VIPs of the weekend," Ritz Carlton Moscow (RC-Moscow 032). Goldstone told the Committee that Svetlana Bignova, who works for the Agalarovs, was responsible for arranging the hotel. Goldstone Tr., p. 79. Ultimately, Trump was in Moscow for two nights, November 8 and November 9, departing in the early morning hours of November 10.
[1923] (U) Schiller told the Committee he did not know who reserved the hotel rooms, and did not recall being involved in reviewing the hotel selection. Schiller did not recall taking any security precautions regarding Trump's room other than looking to see that there was no one else in it. Schiller told the Committee he did not recall how many nights they were in Russia, or what hotel they stayed at. Schiller Tr., pp. 70, 72-73, 85, 98.
[1924] (U) Email, Feliciano to Bignova, Shugart, et al., November 7, 2013 (Beniaminov Production).
[1925] (U) Schiller Tr., p. 84, 90.
[1926] (U) Schiller Tr., p. 24.
[1927] (U) Email, Goldstone to Kosenkova and Beniaminov, November 8, 2013 (Beniaminov Production).
[1928] (U) Schiller Tr., pp. 85–90.

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I told him [Trump] that later on that evening. . . . We just laughed. I thought it was as a joke. I told him as we were walking to the room. I said: One of these clowns, or something to that effect, made this proposal and I thought it was funny. And he [Trump] just laughed, and that was the end of it.[1929]

(U) It is not clear, based on Schiller's recollection, where or when the offer was made, or by whom. Schiller told the Committee that the offer was not made by either of the Agalarovs, who were the only people in the room that Schiller recognized. The man who approached Schiller was wearing a suit and tie, and made the offer in English.[1930] Schiller recalled that the man who made the offer was one of the people in a meeting, and that "[t]here was a bunch of people in suits and ties talking," sitting around a "large table," and there were "restaurant-type" people serving hors d'oeuvres.[1931] Schiller recalled Emin and Aras Agalarov being at the meeting, and Schiller referred to it as a business-related meeting.[1932] Schiller believed that there may have been Europeans and Russians present at the meeting, but that English was being spoken.[1933] According to Schiller, the offer was not made in front of a group, but there were other people in the room.[1934]

(U) Regarding the offer, Schiller told the Committee, "I don't know if it was a joke, but I took it as a joke."[1935] Nevertheless, Schiller also told the Committee, "I took it serious and I made it very clear: Don't even try that, don't even attempt, and it's not happening. I put an end to it immediately."[1936] Schiller said, "I would remember if that happened. I don't recall. I know that didn't happen." When asked how he knew nothing happened, Schiller told the Committee, "Because, well, while I was with him I know it wouldn't happen, because he would never tolerate that; and I would never allow it as well, not on my watch. So I know; it just wouldn't happen. It's never happened."[1937]

[1929] **(U)** *Ibid.*

[1930] **(U)** Schiller Tr., pp. 99-100.

[1931] **(U)** *Ibid.*, pp. 86, 80, 78.

[1932] **(U)** *Ibid.*, p. 78.

[1933] **(U)** *Ibid.*, p. 100.

[1934] **(U)** *Ibid.*, p. 87. Schiller told the Committee that he was standing at the time of the offer and had the sense that the man who made the offer may have been lower-level in seniority. Schiller said that the offer may have taken place at the hotel, however he did not have a clear recollection of the timing or location of the offer. *Ibid.*, pp. 80, 100. Schiller's description of the meeting at which the offer took place may be generally consistent with the Sberbank event earlier on Friday, November 8, which took place at Nobu. Goldstone recalled that the Sberbank meeting took place initially standing, and then seated at a large dining table, which "almost looked like a conference table," with Russian business leaders, Emin and Aras Agalarov, and drinks and food. Goldstone Tr., pp. 89–90.

[1935] **(U)** Schiller Tr., p. 100.

[1936] **(U)** *Ibid.*, p. 86.

[1937] **(U)** *Ibid.*, p. 85. Cohen has testified that, "Keith is the ultimate protector, and he was his [Trump's] bodyguard, his attaché for many, many years. And he was the keeper of Mr. Trump's secrets. So, for example, if he was going

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b. (U) Saturday, November 9, 2013

(U) On Saturday, November 9, at 11:00 a.m., Trump was scheduled to participate in filming a music video with Emin Agalarov at the Ritz Carlton Moscow.[1938] Roman Beniaminov recalled that after Trump arrived to film the video he briefly greeted people in the room, then was given a microphone and makeup. Beniaminov told the Committee, "I remember him [Trump] sitting down at a conference table . . . a couple takes. It didn't take long at all, and then he departed. . . . It was all very quick and mechanical almost."[1939] Emin Agalarov has said that Trump was only present at the music video filming for 10 minutes.[1940]

(U) At 12:00 p.m. Trump was scheduled to depart for a press conference at Crocus City Hall that was taking place at 12:30 p.m.[1941] According to Shugart, following the press conference Trump did an interview with Thomas Roberts of *MSNBC,* who was a host for the pageant.[1942]

(U) Between 3:00 p.m. and 5:00 p.m., Trump's schedule included "Full Dress Rehearsal" and "Return to Hotel" without specific times.[1943] Shugart recalled that Trump did return to the hotel mid-day.[1944] The next event on the itinerary was not until 7:30 p.m., when Trump was scheduled to depart the hotel for the pageant.

(U) There are several events that may have taken place during this unscheduled time. Kaveladze told the Committee that Trump visited Agalarov Estate.[1945] Emin Agalarov did not recall if Trump visited Agalarov Estate. Agalarov said that Kaveladze would have been the one

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to text a female, he would have Keith do it on his phone." Cohen has also testified that he has seen Schiller lie for Trump. HPSCI Transcript of the Interview with Michael Cohen, Part 2, March 6, 2019, p. 236.

[1938] (U) Email, Graff to Shugart et al, November 7, 2013 (PS-SEN-0000139–141). The video filming was originally scheduled for 11:30 a.m., and Emin Agalarov asked that it be moved later. Email, E. Agalarov to Goldstone, November 6, 2013 (EA-SSCI-00794). Shugart told the Committee that the video may have been filmed at 10:00 a.m., but that she wouldn't have scheduled it early in the morning because she was being protective of Trump's schedule. Shugart Tr., p. 154.

[1939] (U) Beniaminov Tr., p. 167–168. Regarding the music video, Emin Agalarov has said, "He [Trump] really did me a favor by being in the video. You know he Tweeted out 'check out Emin's amazing new video and song and track,' which is cool. I think that's the support you cannot buy. Only through a relationship." Agalarov *Washington Post* Tr.

[1940] (U) Agalarov *Washington Post* Tr. Schiller told the Committee he had no recollection of a music video being filmed; Schiller Tr., p. 76.

[1941] (U) Tweet, @ARTEM_KLYUSHIN, November 9, 2013.

[1942] (U) Shugart Tr., p. 155; Tweet, @AlferovaYulyaE, November 9, 2013.

[1943] (U) Email, Graff to Shugart, et al., November 7, 2013 (PS-SEN-0000139–141).

[1944] (U) Shugart Tr., p. 162.

[1945] (U) Kaveladze Tr., p. 31.

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to arrange it, and that Aras Agalarov would have wanted to show Trump the property. Emin Agalarov told the Committee that he had been busy preparing for the pageant concert, and may have skipped the visit.[1946] Scenes from Emin Agalarov's music video were filmed at Agalarov Estate, however the music video scenes that feature Trump appear to have been filmed at the hotel.[1947]

(U) On November 9, 2013, Trump wrote on Twitter that he had received "a great tour of Moscow."[1948] Goldstone told the Committee that in the afternoon Emin Agalarov had shown Trump around Crocus, and that Trump had "gone on this little drive around the property."[1949] Goldstone stated that, "Emin wanted to show him [Trump] some of the Crocus structure and parts, and that was it. He [Emin] said he would do that before the press conference."[1950] Goldstone told the Committee that Emin showed Trump "some of the new developments . . . at that point they were talking about this idea of possibly a Trump Tower. He [Emin] showed him [Trump] where that might be built."[1951] Emin Agalarov told the Committee that he did not recall taking Trump on a tour or doing any sightseeing however he did recall pointing out parts of the city surrounding Trump's hotel.[1952]

(U) By November 9, 2013, joint business discussions appeared to be moving forward. *RT*, the Russian-government sponsored news outlet, quoted Trump as saying, "I have plans for the establishment of business in Russia. Now, I am in talks with several Russian companies to establish this skyscraper."[1953] The same *RT* story quoted Aras Agalarov telling the Russian News Agency ITAR-TASS, "We started talking about joint work in the field of real estate a few days ago."[1954]

(U) Separately, the issue of a Trump-Putin meeting remained unresolved. Goldstone told the Committee that the unscheduled time on the afternoon of Saturday, November 9, was

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[1946] (U) E. Agalarov Tr., pp. 30–31. Aras Agalarov may have indicated that he showed Trump around Moscow. *See* Evgenia Pismennaya, et al., "The Day Trump Came to Moscow: Oligarchs, Miss Universe and Nobu," *Bloomberg Government*, December 21, 2016.
[1947] (U) Beniaminov Tr., pp. 160–161, 165.
[1948] (U) Tweet, @RealDonaldTrump, November 9, 2013. Emin Agalarov has said that although Trump's movement and destination would typically need to be provided to "his security staff," Trump told his security detail, "don't bother them [the Agalarovs]. I [am] going wherever I'm going with them. I trust them." Agalarov *Washington Post* Tr.
[1949] (U) Goldstone Tr., p. 132.
[1950] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 119.
[1951] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 132–133. It is not clear if these real estate-related events on Saturday are the same as, or are different than, the real estate-related events on Friday that were recalled by Shugart.
[1952] (U) E. Agalarov Tr., pp. 23–24.
[1953] (U) "US 'Miss Universe' billionaire plans Russian Trump Tower," *RT*, November 9, 2013.
[1954] (U) *Ibid.*

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intentionally left open on Trump's itinerary in the event that the meeting with Putin was accepted at the last minute.

(U) Goldstone recalled:

> *[W]e allowed a period of time on the [day of the pageant] around 4:00 p.m., 3:00 or 4:00 p.m. We didn't fill it with anything, just in case there was a meeting, maybe there was a call, maybe there was something. We left a little bit of time so that if it did happen he would be able to react. . . . Me personally, I asked on numerous occasions to Emin: Is there going to be a call, is there going to be a meeting? We have to know. The schedule's very, very tight. And the answer was always: We'll hear from my dad, we'll hear from the Kremlin.*[1955]

(U) Goldstone continued:

> *The most likely time looked to be around 4:00. What in fact happened was at about that time that's when this – that's when a call took place. . . . So we were told that there was a call. We were called into a room a bit like this, a conference room, and Emin said: You know, my dad's going to get the answer, is there going to be a meeting, is there not going to be a meeting. Mr. Trump was there, Paula, myself, Aras, Emin. I'm not sure who else, probably Keith. Aras took a call . . . [which was translated] through Emin. He's saying that the call is from a man named Dimitry Peskov, who is the spokesperson, who has a message that says that President Putin is very sorry, but because the King of Holland has been delayed on an official visit to the Kremlin, he's unable to make time to receive Mr. Trump. He wishes him well, and he says that he'd like to invite him on his next visit to meet with him, whenever or wherever that should be within Russia. And he actually said to him that, if he could, he'd like to invite him to the Sochi Winter Olympics. If not, at the next possible time that Mr. Trump might be in Russia he would do everything he could to meet with him. And that was it. We knew at that point there was no meeting, no call going to take place, and that was the call that determined that.*[1956]

(U) Regarding the call, Goldstone was uncertain but told the Committee, "Aras may have passed over the phone briefly to Mr. Trump to say 'thank you, hello, and thank you.' But if he did, it was literally a 'hello and thank you.' It's in my mind that that may have happened, but

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[1955] **(U)** Goldstone Tr., p. 111-112.
[1956] **(U)** *Ibid.*, pp. 120–121.

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the bulk of it was Aras and Peskov."[1957] Goldstone believed the call took place before a press conference that Trump participated in later that day.[1958]

(U) At 7:30 p.m., Trump was scheduled to depart to Crocus City Hall for the Miss Universe pageant. The red carpet prior to the pageant was scheduled to begin at 8 p.m.[1959] Alex Sapir and Rotem Rosen may have ridden with Trump and Schiller to the event.[1960] Additionally, at some point on the evening of June 9, likely after the pageant, Trump signed a plaque in the shape of a star for Aras Agalarov and Emin Agalarov.[1961]

(U) Shugart recalled Trump being backstage at approximately 9 p.m.[1962] According to Trump's itinerary, from 10 p.m. to midnight the Miss Universe live show was scheduled to take place. Trump sat next to Aras Agalarov, and Agalarov social media manager Artem Klyushin and his then-wife sat behind them.[1963]

(U) Although Putin did not attend the pageant, he reportedly sent a senior Kremlin official, Vladimir Kozhin, in his place.[1964] Kozhin may have already had a connection to Aras Agalarov.[1965]

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[1957] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 123–124.
[1958] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 121.
[1959] (U) Email, Graff to Shugart, et al., November 7, 2013 (PS-SEN-0000142).
[1960] (U) Email, Rosen to I. Trump, Macchia, and Sapir, January 11, 2017 (TRUMPORG_16_000004). On January 11, 2017, Alex Sapir and Rotem Rosen wrote a message to Trump rejecting any allegation of impropriety by Trump during the 2013 weekend in Moscow. In the message, they claimed to have been with Trump throughout his stay, including riding with him to the pageant. Although both men attended at least some of the events in Moscow, the recollections of a number of people who spent significant time with Trump during the trip were not consistent with some of Sapir and Rosen's assertions. *See, e.g.*, Shugart Tr., pp. 160–161, 136 (stating she did not recognize either man and they would not have fit in Trump's car); Schiller Tr., pp. 96–97 (stating he had no recollection of either man at the events or in the car); Goldstone Tr., p. 288 (stating he had no recollection of either man).
[1961] (U) Email, Agalarov to Parado, cc Gorokhova, January 29, 2017 (EA-SSCI-02078). The star was for a Crocus version of the Hollywood Walk of Fame in the Vegas Mall. Goldstone Tr., p. 132.
[1962] (U) Shugart Tr., p. 159.
[1963] (U) Instagram, artem_klyushin, November 9, 2013; Tweet, @AlferovaYulya, November 10, 2013.
[1964] (U) Michael Stott and Catherine Belton, "Trump's Russian Connections," *Financial Times*, December 13, 2016.
[1965] (U) Invitation, Crocus charity auction, (RB002671–2680); Andrew Roth, "The man who drives Trump's Russia connection," *The Washington Post*, July 22, 2017; Mikhail Klimentyev, *Sputnik*, Kremlin Pool Photo via the Associated Press, September 6, 2012.

[redacted]

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[redacted]

(U) Shugart told the Committee, "While we were there at the pageant, he [Trump] had told me—it might have been right afterwards, but I think it came up at the pageant—that if anyone asked, for me to allude to the fact that Putin had been there; and that he said that no one would know because he could have come in when the lights went down for the show."[1967]

(U) The pageant was followed by a press event, coronation ball, and an after party at Crocus Expo Hall 16 from midnight to 3:00 a.m.[1968] Goldstone told the Committee, "It was a very fluid thing. If Trump wanted to [go to the party]. We knew he had to leave that night to be back in the States, and nobody knew exactly when he was going to leave. I had asked a number of times to Paula and to Keith. Nobody knew exactly when. But then he said he would go to the after-party."[1969]

(U) Shugart recalled that Trump had a press conference following the pageant and arrived at the after-party around 12:30 a.m.[1970] Goldstone recalled that Trump was seated in a VIP enclave but that there were lots of people around. Shugart told the Committee that there were approximately 200 people in the VIP area.[1971]

(U) Goldstone said that Trump appeared to be having a good time, and stayed later than they had planned, leaving around 3:00 a.m.[1972] Goldstone said he was told that the bags had been packed and were in the car and that Trump left the party directly to the airport, but he had

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[1966] [redacted]

[1967] (U) Shugart Tr., p. 203.

[1968] (U) Email, Graff to Shugart, et al., November 7, 2013 (PS-SEN-0000139–142); Tweet, @ARTEM_KLYUSHIN, November 9, 2013; Tweet, @AlferovaYulyaE, November 9, 2013.

[1969] (U) Goldstone Tr., pp. 138–140.

[1970] (U) Shugart Tr., pp. 172–173. This is generally consistent with Goldstone's recollection that Trump arrived at midnight. Goldstone Tr., p. 140.

[1971] (U) Shugart Tr., pp. 173–175. Roustam Tariko, a Russian billionaire who has said that he has "known Trump for many years" and was a sponsor of the pageant, may have been present. *See* Evgenia Pismennaya, et al., "The Day Trump Came to Moscow: Oligarchs, Miss Universe and Nobu," *Bloomberg Government*, December 21, 2016. *See also* Jeffrey Toobin, "Trump's Miss Universe Gambit," *The New Yorker*, February 19, 2018.

[1972] (U) Goldstone Tr., pp. 140, 147-148. This is generally consistent with Paula Shugart who estimated that Trump stayed until 3:30 a.m. Shugart Tr., pp. 172–173.

[redacted]

[redacted]

no personal knowledge of this other than seeing Trump leave the party. Paula Shugart also recalled that Trump left directly for the airport.

(U) According to Goldstone, "at the last minute" A.J. Calloway asked Trump if he could fly home with Trump, and likely did join the flight.[1973] Although Trump used Phil Ruffin's airplane in both directions, and although Ruffin and his wife attended the pageant, it appears that they flew separately in both directions.[1974]

(U) At 2:30 a.m. on November 10, Trump was scheduled to depart the after-party for Moscow's Vnukovo airport. Trump's flight was scheduled to depart for Newark, New Jersey, at 3:30 a.m. in Moscow, and was scheduled to arrive in Newark at 3:30 a.m. Eastern Standard Time.[1975] Public reporting indicates that the flight was approximately 30 minutes behind schedule, taking off at 3:58 a.m. and landing at 4:11 a.m.[1976]

(U) As the pageant concluded, discussion of future business continued. On November 10, Emin responded to an email from the architect William McGee, informing McGee that, "We may do a tower with him [Trump] now."[1977] The following day, November 11, Trump wrote on Twitter to Aras Agalarov praising the Agalarovs and stating that Trump Tower Moscow would be next.[1978] The following day, Emin Agalarov replied on Twitter with thanks, and wrote that they should make Trump Tower Moscow happen.[1979]

(U) On November 12, Olivia Cellini from the Trump Organization emailed Goldstone and Beniaminov: "Can you please send me Aras' email address? Mr. Trump would like to send him a message."[1980]

v. (U) Communications with the Agalarovs Following Miss Universe Moscow

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[1973] (U) Goldstone Tr., pp. 139–140. This is supported by a copy of Trump's Moscow itinerary with A.J. Calloway's name handwritten in for the return flight. Interary, Trump Organization (TRUMPORG_18_000009).
[1974] (U) Email, Graff to Shugart, et al., November 7, 2013 (PS-SEN-0000139–142); Ben Schreckinger, "Trump's false claims to Comey about Moscow story could aid Mueller," *Politico*, April 23, 2018.
[1975] (U) Email, Graff to Shugart, et al., November 7, 2013 (PS-SEN-0000139–141). According to Trump's itinerary Steve Tyler and Aimee Preston were scheduled to join the flight.
[1976] (U) Vernon Silver, "Flight Records Illuminate Mystery of Trump's Moscow Nights (1)," *Bloomberg Government*, April 23, 2018.
[1977] (U) Email, E. Agalarov to McGee, November 10, 2013 (EA-SSCI-00845).
[1978] (U) Tweet, @realDonaldTrump, November 11, 2013.
[1979] (U) Tweet, @eminofficial, November 12, 2013.
[1980] (U) Email, Cellini to Goldstone and Beniaminov, November 12, 2013 (Beniaminov Production). The Committee has no additional information regarding this communication.

[redacted]

[redacted]

(U) On November 19, 2013, Donald Trump Jr. emailed Emin Agalarov to introduce himself for the first time. Trump Jr. wrote that he had spoken to his father about working with the Agalarovs to develop a Trump Tower or hotel in Moscow, and that his father had asked him to reach out to Emin and Aras Agalarov to discuss moving forward.[1981] Later that day Emin Agalarov replied and said "let's speak and see if we can make things happen."[1982]

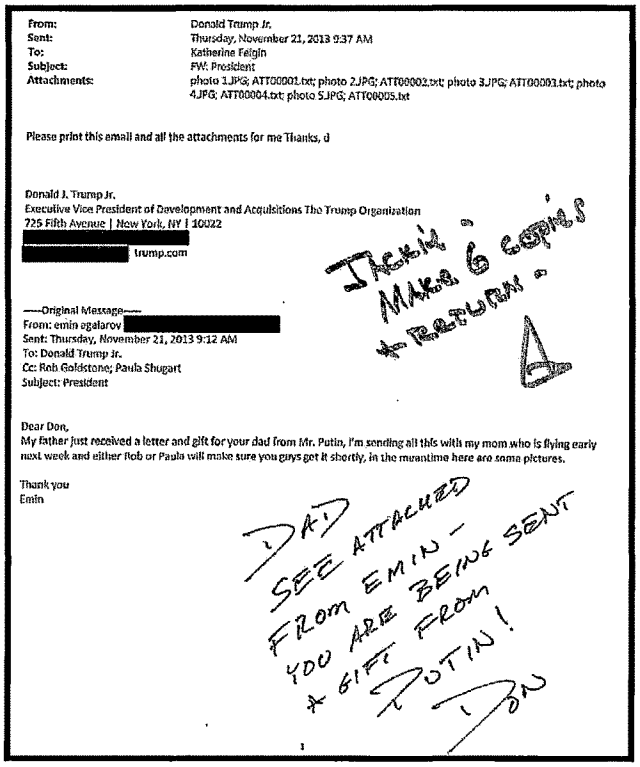
(U) On November 20 Emin Agalarov wrote to Trump Jr. in hopes that Trump Jr. would remind his father to tweet a link to Agalarov's new music video, which featured Donald Trump.[1983] Trump Jr. replied that he would, and wrote that he would be calling "shortly to discuss the potential tower."[1984] Later that day, Donald Trump tweeted a link to Emin Agalarov's video.[1985]

(U) On November 21, 2013, Emin Agalarov sent an email to Donald Trump Jr., and copied Shugart and Goldstone. The subject line of Agalarov's email was, "President," and in the body of the email Agalarov wrote, "My father just received a letter and gift for your dad from Mr. Putin." Agalarov attached images of the gift, which was a *Fedoskino*-style lacquer box, as well as images of the letter from Putin. Trump Jr. appeared to have passed the email and photographs on to his father.[1986]

[1981] (U) Email, Trump Jr. to E. Agalarov, November 19, 2013 (EA-SSCI-00879).
[1982] (U) Email, E. Agalarov to Trump Jr, November 19, 2013 (EA-SSCI-00875).
[1983] (U) Email, E. Agalarov to Trump Jr., November 20, 2013 (EA-SSCI-00879).
[1984] (U) Email, Trump Jr. to E. Agalarov, November 20, 2013 (EA-SSCI-00883).
[1985] (U) Tweet, @realDonaldTrump, November 20, 2013.
[1986] (U) Email, E. Agalarov to Trump Jr., November 21, 2013 (TRUMPORG_18_000035–40); Agalarov *Washington Post* Tr. (RG000014).

[redacted]

[redacted]



From: Donald Trump Jr.
Sent: Thursday, November 21, 2013 9:37 AM
To: Katherine Felgin
Subject: FW: President
Attachments: photo 1.JPG; ATT00001.txt; photo 2.JPG; ATT00002.txt; photo 3.JPG; ATT00003.txt; photo 4.JPG; ATT00004.txt; photo 5.JPG; ATT00005.txt

Please print this email and all the attachments for me Thanks, d

Donald J. Trump Jr.
Executive Vice President of Development and Acquisitions The Trump Organization
725 Fifth Avenue | New York, NY | 10022
[redacted] trump.com

Jackie - Mike 6 copies + return -

----Original Message----
From: emin agalarov [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, November 21, 2013 9:12 AM
To: Donald Trump Jr.
Cc: Rob Goldstone; Paula Shugart
Subject: President

Dear Don,
My father just received a letter and gift for your dad from Mr. Putin, I'm sending all this with my mom who is flying early next week and either Rob or Paula will make sure you guys get it shortly, in the meantime here are some pictures.

Thank you
Emin

DAD - SEE ATTACHED FROM EMIN - YOU ARE BEING SENT A GIFT FROM PUTIN! DJT

(U) Images of the box and letter that were attached are included below[1987]:

[1987] (U) Email, E. Agalarov to Trump Jr., November 21, 2013 (TRUMPORG_18_000035–40); Email, E. Agalarov to Trump Jr., Goldstone, and Shugart, November 11, 21, 2013 (EA-SSCI-00891-00896).

[redacted]

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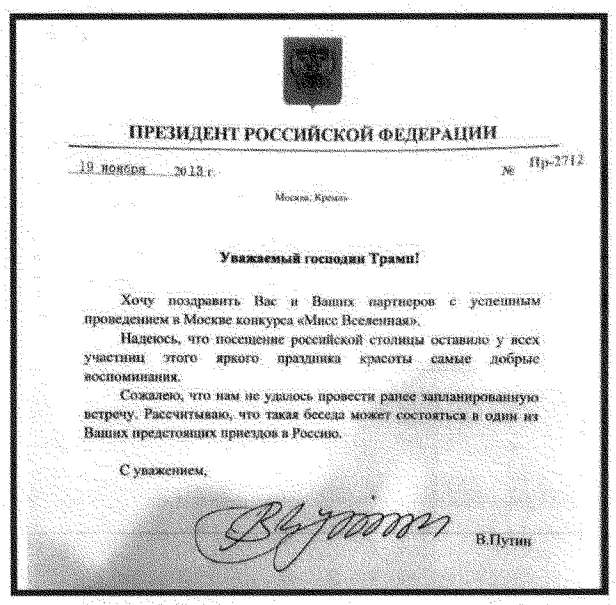
COMMITTEE SENSITIVE – RUSSIA INVESTIGATION ONLY



ПРЕЗИДЕНТ РОССИЙСКОЙ ФЕДЕРАЦИИ

19 ноября 2013 г. № Пр-2712

Москва, Кремль

Уважаемый господин Трамп!

Хочу поздравить Вас и Ваших партнеров с успешным проведением в Москве конкурса «Мисс Вселенная».

Надеюсь, что посещение российской столицы оставило у всех участниц этого яркого праздника красоты самые добрые воспоминания.

Сожалею, что нам не удалось провести ранее запланированную встречу. Рассчитываю, что такая беседа может состояться в один из Ваших предстоящих приездов в Россию.

С уважением,

В.Путин





[redacted]

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[redacted]

(U) The unofficial English translation of the letter that was included states:

Dear Mr. Trump, I would like to congratulate you and your colleagues on successfully holding the Miss Universe contest in Moscow. I hope that all the participants in this remarkable event will go home with good memories of their visit to the Russian capital. It is a pity that we were not able to have our meeting, but I hope we will be able to talk during one of your upcoming visits to Russia. Yours sincerely, V. Putin[1988]

(U) The package with the box from Putin was brought to the United States by Irina Agalarova, Aras Agalarov's wife.[1989]

a. (U) Joint Real Estate Development Effort in Moscow 2013-2014

(U) Shortly after the Miss Universe pageant, discussions began between the Agalarovs' Crocus Group and the Trump Organization about a joint real estate development project.

(U) Goldstone told the Committee that Emin Agalarov believed that Trump's initial reaction to being shown possible sites in Moscow during the Miss Universe contest was positive.[1990] As noted, at Trump's suggestion, on November 19, 2013, Donald Trump Jr. reached out to Emin Agalarov regarding a possible joint development project in Moscow.[1991] On November 22, Emin Agalarov wrote to Trump Jr., stating, "I've spoken to my Father about our conversation and all looks very positive, general terms are suitable for a negotiation, lets identify the land and building (we have a few options) and get the ball rolling contractually." In the interim, Emin Agalarov suggested an exclusivity arrangement.[1992]

(U) On November 27, Yulya Klyushina emailed Emin Agalarov, Rob Goldstone, Artem Klyushin and others, to inform them that Trump had written about the Agalarovs on Twitter and had posted a link to an article about Emin Agalarov's new music video, which Trump was featured in.[1993] On December 2, at Trump's request, one of Trump's employees sent Emin

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[1988] **(U)** Letter, Putin to Trump, November 19, 2013 (TRUMPORG_18_000039).
[1989] **(U)** Emin, Agalarova to Shugart, November 28, 2013 (PS-SEN-0000102).
[1990] **(U)** Goldstone Tr., pp. 150-151.
[1991] **(U)** Email, Trump Jr. to E. Agalarov, November 19, 2013 (EA-SSCI-00879).
[1992] **(U)** Email, E. Agalarov to Trump Jr., November 19, 2013 (EA-SSCI-00971).
[1993] **(U)** Email, Klyushina to E. Agalarov, et al., November 27, 2013 (EA-SSCI-00922); *see also* Tweet, @realDonaldTrump, November 27, 2013. Klyushina and Klyushin had been hired to promote Emin Agalarov online. Beniaminov Tr., pp. 175–177.

[redacted]

[redacted]

Agalarov a copy of the article that Trump posted on Twitter with a hand written note that referenced the possibility of a Trump Tower Moscow.[1994]


The Moscow Times

Donald Trump in New Emin Video

26 November 2013

By B. Sherman Goldbeck

Trump fires Emin in the new clip.

U.S. billionaire real estate developer Donald Trump figures prominently in a new music video released by Emin Agalarov, an Azeri pop star and vice president of Crocus Group.

Emin – You are the greatest! Trump Tower Moscow?

(U) On December 4, Trump Jr. wrote to Emin Agalarov, "I am back and ready to go." Trump Jr. offered to have the Trump Organization draft a letter similar to the one suggested by Emin Agalarov as an initial step.[1995] A preliminary, but formal, agreement was signed on December 5, 2013; the signatories were Trump Jr. and Emin Agalarov.[1996]

[1994] (U) Email, Chelsea Frommer to E. Agalarov, December 2, 2013 (EA-SSCI-00946, 00947).
[1995] (U) Email, Trump Jr. to E. Agalarov, November 19, 2013 (EA-SSCI-00969).
[1996] (U) Letter, Trump Jr. to Crocus Group, December 5, 2013 (Kaveladze Proffer Documents). Kaveladze refered to this document as the Letter of Intent (LOI). Kaveladze Tr., pp. 34, 40–41.

[redacted]

[redacted]

COMMITTEE SENSITIVE – RUSSIA INVESTIGATION ONLY

Trump International Development LLC

December 5, 2013

Crocus International
24/1, Profsoiuznaia Street
Moscow, Russia 117292
Attention: Emin Agalarov

Gentlemen:

The Crocus Group ("you") has expressed interest in acquiring a license to use a derivative of the "Trump" name for the purpose of identifying a to be built super luxury, 5-star comp set real estate project in Moscow. This letter agreement is not a grant of such a license, or an agreement by either you or Trump International Development LLC ("we" or "us") to enter into any license in the future. This letter agreement is simply a good faith accommodation by us of your request that we temporarily refrain from seeking similar licensing agreements in Moscow with other firms while you attempt to identify appropriate land for construction in Moscow and formulate a business plan and proposal.

We agree that, until March 5, 2014 but not thereafter, we will not, nor will we permit any company that we control or that is under common control with us, to directly or indirectly, negotiate, enter into, solicit, or accept any offer to license the "Trump" name for identifying any residential, hotel and/or office project located in Moscow. Notwithstanding the foregoing, we will not be bound by the preceding sentence, even during the period prior to March 5, 2014, if (i) you notify us that you are no longer seeking the above-described license, (ii) we notify you that we believe that you are no longer diligently attempting to identify appropriate land for construction in Moscow or to formulate a business plan and proposal, or (iii) you breach any of your obligations described below.

You agree not to disclose to anyone our interest in any potential licensing arrangement in Moscow or the existence or contents of this letter agreement.

You and we represent to each other that it has not dealt with any broker or finder with respect to the potential transaction described above.

The immediately preceding three paragraphs, and this paragraph, shall be binding. Otherwise, this letter does not contain any binding promises by either party and, without limitation, neither party is obligated to the other to pursue any further discussions or negotiations. This letter agreement shall be governed by the laws of the State of New York, without regard to conflicts of law principles. You and we each consent to sole and exclusive personal and subject matter jurisdiction and venue in the federal and state courts in the City and County of New York, New York. This letter agreement (i) contains the entire agreement between you and us, (ii) may not be modified or waived in whole or in part orally or by e-mail, (iii) is non-assignable and (iv) may be executed in counterparts each of which may be effectively delivered as an attachment to an e-mail.

Very truly yours,

Donald J. Trump, Jr.
Executive Vice President

ACKNOWLEDGED AND AGREED:
CROCUS GROUP

Emin Agalarov

[redacted]

COMMITTEE SENSITIVE – RUSSIA INVESTIGATION ONLY

[redacted]

(U) On December 6, 2013, Emin Agalarov sent the signed agreement to Trump Jr. and introduced him, by email, to Irakli Kaveladze, who Agalarov said had worked on the Miss Universe pageant, had met Trump, and would be working on the Trump Tower deal for Crocus.[1997] Kaveladze told the Committee that his primary interlocutor at the Trump Organization was Trump Jr., and that Emin and Aras Agalarov were both involved on the Crocus side. Kaveladze said that negotiations with the Trump Organization took place primarily by email and conference calls, and that he was against the joint project.[1998]

(U) Kaveladze told the Committee that the joint project was designed as an incentive fee deal for a residential Trump Tower, and that Kaveladze was mostly focused on negotiating with the Trump Organization to lower its fees.[1999] Despite Kaveladze's concerns, negotiations advanced between the Crocus Group and the Trump Organization. Throughout December Kaveladze and Trump Jr. negotiated by email regarding the Trump Organization's fee structure, and ultimately agreed to "an expanded LOI" which Trump Jr. said he could get following the holidays.[2000]

(U) On January 13, 2014, Emin Agalarov and Trump Jr. met in person, along with Goldstone, at Nobu in New York City.[2001] Goldstone recalled that the Trump Tower project was discussed at this meeting and seemed to be moving forward.[2002]

(U) On January 14, 2014, Trump Jr. sent Emin Agalarov an unsigned expanded letter of intent regarding the proposed development of a "super luxury" real estate project in Moscow. This letter and its attachment totaled 10 pages and was significantly more detailed than the original basic letter from December 5.[2003]

(U) On January 15, 2014, Goldstone, Trump Jr., and other Trump Organization staff exchanged a number of emails regarding Ivanka Trump meeting with the Agalarovs in Moscow on February 4 for a "site visit," and Emin Agalarov performing for an upcoming golf event at the Trump property in Doral, Florida.[2004]

(U) Kaveladze told the Committee that he met Ivanka Trump briefly at the Crocus Group office in Moscow in February before she went with Emin Agalarov to visit the proposed site for a Trump Tower, which Kaveladze recalled was at the Crocus City complex on land already

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[1997] (U) Email, E. Agalarov to Trump Jr., December 6, 2013 (EA-SSCI-00993).
[1998] (U) Kaveladze Tr., pp. 33–38; FBI, FD-302, Kaveladze 11/16/2017.
[1999] (U) Kaveladze Tr., pp. 36, 43–44.
[2000] (U) Email, Trump Jr. to Kaveladze, cc E. Agalarov, December 23, 2013 (EA-SSCI-00990–00992).
[2001] (U) Email, Goldstone to Trump Jr., January 15, 2104 (RB000142).
[2002] (U) Goldstone Tr., p. 173.
[2003] (U) Email, Trump Jr. to E. Agalarov, January 14, 2014 (EA-SSCI-01038–01048).
[2004] (U) Emails, Goldstone to Trump Jr., January 15, 2014 (RB000142).

[redacted]

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owned by the Agalarovs.[2005] Following Ivanka Trump's visit to Crocus on February 4, she emailed Emin Agalarov to thank him for the tour. She wrote, "I am very excited about our collaboration and am confident that our families will enjoy great success together. We look forward to meeting with you again in the US in March to review the details of the proposed Trump Tower with your architects."[2006]

(U) On February 11, 2014, at Rob Goldstone's request, Donald Trump Jr. tweeted to promote Emin Agalarov's album.[2007] On February 19, 2014, Donald Trump tweeted to promote an Emin Agalarov performance in Sochi, Russia, on the Today Show. Later that day Agalarov wrote to Donald Trump Jr, and others, with Ivanka Trump copied, to thank them for supporting him.[2008]

(U) On March 5, 2014, Trump Jr. emailed Emin Agalarov, "Do you have any free time this week. Would love to circle up on Moscow." Emin Agalarov replied that he would be flying to Miami the following day, and Trump Jr. suggested that they meet on March 7 after Agalarov arrived.[2009]

(U) On March 8, 2014, Emin Agalarov performed at the Trump golf event in Doral, Florida. He met with Trump, Ivanka Trump, and Trump Jr. while he was there.[2010] Trump Jr. planned to meet with Agalarov on March 10.[2011]

(U) By late March, discussions between the Trump Organization, the Agalarovs, and architects hired by Crocus seemed to be progressing. Discussions included issues ranging from interior design to the square footage of residences, need for balconies, amenities, and the ratio of apartments to parking places.[2012] This level of detailed discussion continued through at least mid-July.[2013]

[2005] (U) Kaveladze Tr., pp. 45–51.
[2006] (U) Email, I. Trump to E. Agalarov, February 5, 2014 (EA-SSCI-01264); Emin Agalarov told the Committee that Ivanka Trump was in Moscow to visit a friend, Miroslava Duma. E. Agalarov Tr., p. 11. During the campaign, in late 2015, Duma was involved in outreach to Trump by Deputy Prime Minister Sergei Prikhodko. *See* Report On The Investigation Into Russian Interference In The 2016 Presidential Election, Special Counsel Robert S. Mueller III, Vol. I, pp. 78– 79; TRUMPORG_16_000057.
[2007] (U) Email, Goldstone to E. Agalarov, February 11, 2014 (EA-SSCI-01274).
[2008] (U) Email, E. Agalarov to Trump Jr., Goldstone, Blavatnik, et al., February 19, 2014 (EA-SSCI-01285–01286).
[2009] (U) Email, Trump Jr., to E. Agalarov, March 5, 2014 (RB000347).
[2010] (U) Trump Jr. Tr. I, pp. 29-30. Goldstone Tr., pp. 153–154; Instagram, eminofficial, March 9, 2014.
[2011] (U) Email, Trump Jr. to E. Agalarov, March 8, 2014 (EA-SSCI-01327). Trump Jr. Tr. I, pp. 29-30.
[2012] (U) Email, Tropea to E. Agalarov, et al., March 27, 2014 (RB000115) (attaching "20131001 Residential tower Alternative massing studies.pdf").
[2013] (U) Email, Khoo to McGee, cc Trump Jr. et al., July 17, 2014 (EA-SSCI-01371-01372).

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(U) The relationship between the Agalarovs and Trump also continued on other fronts. For example, emails from early July 2014, indicate that Trump was seeking Emin Agalarov's mailing address to thank him for a watch.[2014] The watch given to Trump was likely made by U-Boat, a company that Emin Agalarov has a relationship with.[2015]

(U) Eventually, progress on Trump Tower Moscow discussions began to slow. By late summer and early fall 2014, Tropea and Kaveladze expressed frustration internally that the Trump Organization was not being responsive to requests regarding the project.[2016]

(U) However, by mid-November 2014 the two sides had discussed design options and parcels of land. On November 14, architects from the firm Jacobs / KlingStubbins who were working on behalf of Crocus emailed Trump Jr. and Florence Khoo at the Trump Organization and copied Emin Agalarov, Kaveladze, and others. The subject line of the email was "Project: Crocus - Residential Complex (Parcel 11)...Trump Tower - Moscow." In the body of the message architect William McGee referenced previous discussions and wrote that "Mr. Agalarov" had suggested that the "Trump project" be moved to a different site along the river. The attached file was titled: "Trump Tower concept study."[2017]

(U) As of December 2014, Emin Agalarov continued to direct staff work on the project. On December 14, 2014, Jason Tropea emailed a Crocus employee, writing: "Emin has asked me to review and study the Trump org. / Crocus contract for the residential tower."[2018] Tropea asked for a copy of the contract from the employee.[2019]

(U) In December 2014, Trump recorded a video in celebration of Emin Agalarov's 35th birthday.[2020]

(U) It is not clear that the negotiations with the Agalarovs for a Trump Tower Moscow ever formally ended; however, testimony from witnesses who were involved and other

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[2014] (U) Email, Giudice to Beniaminov, July 1, 2014 (RB000079).
[2015] (U) Email, E. Agalarov to Goldstone, May 7, 2014 (EA-SSCI-01334).
[2016] (U) Email, Kaveladze to Tropea, September 29, 2014 (RB000393–394).
[2017] (U) Email, Nat Skerry to Trump Jr., et al., November 13, 2014 (Beniaminov Production). Beniaminov told the Committee: "There have been plans for many years to develop -- within Crocus City there is an undeveloped parcel of land which is part of the Crocus City compound. There's just nothing there. There were plans for years to develop a project called "Little Manhattan." It would include, I believe, at some point something upwards of 11 towers, high-rises, so to say. I believe that one of those towers was the tower to be the Trump Tower . . . that undeveloped parcel of land is behind the Crocus City Hall Expo 3 area. It lies between that and the river embankment." Beniaminov Tr., p. 204.
[2018] (U) Email, Tropea to Sergey [likely Sergey Sharov], December 14, 2014 (RB000104–105).
[2019] (U) *Ibid.*
[2020] (U) YouTube, EminOfficial, December 19, 2014.

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information indicates that communications regarding the project became increasingly infrequent over time, without a specific cause identified.[2021]

(U) Trump Jr. recalled that the project faded. He told the Committee:

> *I don't even recall a specific: "Hey, guys, we're just not going to do it." It was just sort of clear that we're sort of going different directions and it probably wouldn't make sense for either side. So it just sort of went out.*[2022]

(U) Goldstone told the Committee that, during an in-person meeting in Trump Tower between Emin Agalarov and Donald Trump, Agalarov said that Russia's economy had deteriorated and that, "we may have to reevaluate and relook."[2023] Trump Jr. was unsure but estimated that by the end of 2014 it was clear that the project had lost momentum and wouldn't be moving forward.[2024]

(U) Emin Agalarov said, in an April 2016 interview, that the negotiations "kind of faded away, because I think he [Trump] is busy with other things, we are busy with other things. It's not something that we decided, like 'Okay, let's stop.' It wasn't at that point. Teams are still in correspondence. It's a work in progress." When pressed, Emin Agalarov acknowledged that "[s]ince he [Trump] started running for the presidency, I don't think we've had a conversation about Trump Tower."[2025] Nevertheless, in the same interview, Aras Agalarov stated that Crocus was still "the right place for a Trump Tower."[2026]

vi. (U) Continuing Communications

(U) Throughout 2015 and 2016, Aras Agalarov and Emin Agalarov remained in regular contact with Trump and Trump Jr., often through Graff and Goldstone or other staff working for

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[2021] (U) Kaveladze recalled that the Trump Organization was interested in building in downtown Moscow, while the Crocus Group preferred to build on land associated with Crocus City, which is outside the city center. Other issues of contention, according to Kaveladze, were the Trump Organization's fees and the question of how involved the Trump Organization would be in managing the construction of the building. Kaveladze Tr., pp. 40–44. In April 2016, Emin Agalrov said that the joint project was going to be a residential building and that, "Right now we're in a crisis of residential development, so we basically froze our developments in that particular direction. We're developing shopping malls, we're not developing any residential buildings at the moment." Agalarov *Washington Post* Tr.

[2022] (U) Trump Jr. Tr., pp. 66–67.

[2023] (U) Goldstone Tr., p. 39. The exact timing of this conversation is unclear.

[2024] (U) Trump Jr. Tr., p. 67.

[2025] (U) Agalarov *Washington Post* Tr. (RG000019-22).

[2026] (U) *Ibid.* (RG000019).

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[redacted]

the Agalarovs. The contact ranged from personal to substantive to logistical and included written correspondence, gifts, and in person meetings.

(U) Goldstone estimated that in addition to in-person meetings between Trump and Emin Agalarov in Las Vegas, Moscow, and Doral, they met three or four times in Trump Tower for visits when Emin Agalarov was in New York. Goldstone characterized these meetings in Trump Tower as personal, rather than substantive or business oriented.[2027]

(U) One of these meetings occurred on May 20, 2015.[2028] That meeting was likely the last of Emin Agalarov's personal meetings with Trump at Trump Tower. Emin Agalarov told the Committee that Trump discussed running for president at the time, but that Trump said he did not know if he would run.[2029] Goldstone had a different recollection. He told the Committee that the final meeting between Trump and Agalarov "was approximately six weeks before he [Trump] was due to announce that he was going to run for President. The reason is, on the way out he said: I'm going to be running for President, you know; so next time you won't be coming here; you'll be coming to see me at the White House. That's why I specifically remember that."[2030]

(U) Recalling his final meeting with Trump, Emin Agalarov has said, "the last conversation before he ran that he and I had, he was criticizing the United States government for not being able to be friends with Russia. He keeps underlining that he thinks that President Putin is a strong leader. And he thinks America, instead of fighting Russia, should bond and be friends and have common goals with Russia."[2031]

4. (U) The Trump-Agalarov Relationship During the 2016 Presidential Campaign

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[2027] (U) Goldstone Tr., p. 39. Emin Agalarov has said, "Also, just to add an important comment. Every time I am in New York, and Trump is also in New York, I go visit him. We kind of hang out at his office." Agalarov *Washington Post* Tr. (RG000016).

[2028] (U) Email, Goldstone to Trump Jr., April 30, 2015 (Beniaminov Production). Goldstone sent Trump Jr. an invitation to attend Emin Agalarov's upcoming performances in New York or Miami. Goldstone also requested that the invitation be extended to Donald Trump and Ivanka Trump.

[2029] (U) E. Agalarov Tr., p. 8.

[2030] (U) Goldstone Tr., p. 296. On January 28, 2015, Yulya Klyushina, who knew Emin Agalarov and Goldstone, announced on Twitter that Trump would be running for President of the United States. It is not clear what Alferova's foreknowledge was based on, or if it was related to any information provided to Agalarov and Goldstone. Tweet, @AlferovaYulya, January 28, 2015; *see also* Email, Goldstone to E. Agalarov, June 16, 2015 (EA-SSCI-01670).

[2031] (U) Agalarov *Washington Post* Tr. (RG000016).

[redacted]

[redacted]

(U) On June 16, 2015, the day that Trump announced his candidacy, Goldstone emailed Graff and Trump Jr. with the subject line, "Please pass on mine and Emin's best wishes and congratulations to Mr. Trump." The body of the email simply stated, "Wonderful news."[2032]

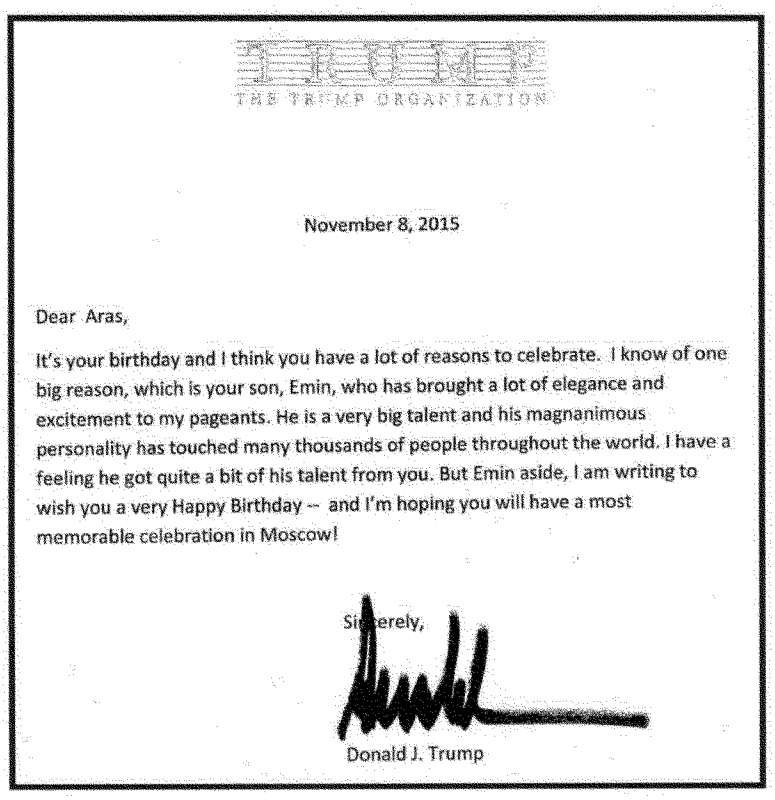
(U) On July 22, 2015, Goldstone wrote to Graff notifying her that Emin Agalarov would like to invite Trump to Aras Agalarov's birthday party in Moscow on November 8, and hoped that Trump would be willing to write a small message of congratulations to Aras Agalarov in a celebratory book. Graff responded, "I will certainly make Mr. Trump aware of this invitation, and I know he will be honored that Emin thought of him. However, given his presidential campaign, it's highly unlikely he would have time on his calender [sic] to go to Moscow in November. Regardless, I am sure he will want to write a congratulatory note." Goldstone replied to Graff that he understood Trump's scheduling constraints regarding traveling to Moscow, "unless maybe he [Trump] would welcome a meeting with President Putin which Emin would set up," and offered to come to the office to pick up the congratulatory note for Aras Agalarov.[2033]

(U) On November 8, 2015, Trump wrote to Aras Agalarov[2034]:

[2032] **(U)** Email, Goldstone to Graff, June 16, 2015 (DJTJR00146).
[2033] **(U)** Emails, Goldstone and Graff, July 22 and 24, 2015 (DJTJR00893).
[2034] **(U)** Letter, Trump to A. Agalarov, November 8, 2015 (TRUMPORG_18_000014).

[redacted]

[redacted]



TRUMP
THE TRUMP ORGANIZATION

November 8, 2015

Dear Aras,

It's your birthday and I think you have a lot of reasons to celebrate. I know of one big reason, which is your son, Emin, who has brought a lot of elegance and excitement to my pageants. He is a very big talent and his magnanimous personality has touched many thousands of people throughout the world. I have a feeling he got quite a bit of his talent from you. But Emin aside, I am writing to wish you a very Happy Birthday -- and I'm hoping you will have a most memorable celebration in Moscow!

Sincerely,

Donald J. Trump

i. (U) First Outreach Regarding the Russian Social Media Company VK

(U) On January 19, 2016, Goldstone emailed Trump Jr. and copied Graff. He wrote:

I hope you are well and congratulations on an outstanding job so far re the campaign. With this in mind, I was just in Moscow and met with a good friend who runs the marketing for VK - which is the largest social media platform in Russia. They have more than 2.7 million Russian Americans using the site (living in the USA) and had an idea to create a campaign page on VK for Mr. Trump and market it to the almost 3 million influential Russian American voters living in the USA. I thought it was a very interesting and sensible idea and so wanted to pass it along. I am not sure who handles this kind of thing for the campaign so I hope you don't mind I sent it directly to you both. I can get massive exposure for Mr. Trump on

[redacted]

[redacted]

the site for sure - and it will be covered in Russian media also - where I noticed your campaign is covered positively almost daily – which [sic] extremely gracious comments from President Putin etc. Please let me know if the campaign is interested and I will connect the dots.[2035]

(U) Goldstone's email included the text of a forwarded email from Konstantin Sidorkov, a "Partner Relations Manager" at VK:[2036]

From: Konstantin Sidorkov [redacted]
Subject: Donald Trump on VK
Date: January 18, 2016 at 12:48:06 PM EST
To: Rob Goldstone [redacted], Rob Goldstone
[redacted]

I want to introduce you the most visited social network in Russia, Ukraine and CIS countries — VK (VKontakte).

Some interesting facts about VK:
— More then 340 million registered users;
— Over 76 million visitors per day;
— Over 2.6 billion page views per day;
— 65% visitors from Russia;
— More then 59% users older then 25 years.

From USA we had 2.7 millions profiles registered and more then 1.5 million visitors monthly.

Our platform includes all types of communication: Messenger + Video + Music + Photo. US press often calls us "Russian facebook", because all other social networks in Russia are rather smaller then VK. For last 2 years VK become a favorite platform for many politics in Russia as the best way to communicate with people. In addition you can find the fool presentation about us with details.

We want to invite Donald Trump to set up an official page on VK, which will have the latest updates from Donald and maybe Russian translation.

Also we will make a huge promotion for it with our marketing instruments and put this page to user's recommendation inc. targeting to all our audience.

Thanks for your attention, will look forward for your answer.

(U) Later that day, January 19, 2016, Graff responded, copying Trump Jr. and Dan Scavino from the Trump Campaign. She wrote, "Thank you for bringing this terrific opportunity

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[2035] (U) Email, Goldstone to Trump Jr. and Graff, January 19, 2016 (RG000003).
[2036] (U) Email, Sidorkov to Goldstone, January 18, 2016 (DJTJR00418–00439).

[redacted]

[redacted]

to our attention. I've copied Dan Scavino, who heads up social media for the campaign, and I am sure he will be in touch with you to help 'connect the dots.'"[2037]

(U) Shortly after Graff's email, Scavino replied to Goldstone, copying Graff and Trump Jr. He wrote:[2038]

Hi Rob!
Please feel free to send me whatever you have on this system! I will share it with the team - as we are currently on the campaign trail right now. Thank you so much - for looking out for Mr. Trump & his presidential campaign. This is great!
Best, Dan

TRUMP

MAKE AMERICA GREAT AGAIN!
DANIEL SCAVINO JR.
Donald J. Trump For President, Inc.
www.DonaldJTrump.com

(U) The Russian government and the Internet Research Agency (IRA) use VK, Russia's version of Facebook, for influence operations.[2039] According to public reporting, the company's original leadership was pushed out, in an effort that involved the Russian FSB, and replaced with Kremlin-aligned ownership in 2013 and 2014.[2040]

[redacted]

[2037] **(U)** Email, Graff to Goldstone, et al, (RG000003).
[2038] **(U)** Email, Scavino to Goldstone, et al., (RG000006).
[2039] [redacted] *See infra* Vol. 2; Adrian Chen, "The Agency," *The New York Times Magazine*, June 2, 2015; Todd C. Helmus et al. "Russian Social Media Influence," RAND, 2018, p. 16; [redacted]
[2040] **(U)** Jennifer Monaghan, "Vkontakte Founder Says Sold Shares Due to FSB Pressure," *The Moscow Times*, April 17, 2014. Alisher Usmanov, an oligarch and close Putin associate, his business partner Ivan Tavrin, and Igor Sechin, another close Putin associate who is sanctioned by the United States, were involved. *See* Olga Razumovskaya, "Alisher Usmanov Cements Control of Social Network," *The Wall Street Journal*, January 25, 2014; "Russia's VKontakte CEO says he was fired, flees Russia," *Reuters*, April 22, 2014.
[2041] [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

The Committee assesses that corporate ownership of VK also raises serious concerns [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted] The Committee's insight into Sidorkov's motivations is extremely limited.[2053] However, targeting Russian speaking voters in the United States is thematically consistent with [redacted] undertaken by the Russian government in support of Trump in the 2016 U.S. election.[2054]

- [redacted]

2049 [redacted]

2050 [redacted]

2051 (U) Geoff Cutmore and Catherine Boyle, "Russia's Richest Man Usmanov: Wait For Next Facebook Surge," *CNBC*, December 21, 2012.

2052 [redacted]

2053 (U) For example, Goldstone has characterized Sidorkov as a "really good ally" of Emin Agalarov, and public information indicates that Sidorkov is also an associate of Yulya Klyushina, who is described elsewhere in this Report. The nature and extent of these relationships remains unknown. Goldstone Tr., 268. Screenshot of Yulya Klyushina and Konstantin Sidorkov, April 29, 2015 [no longer available]. Tweet, @AlferovaYulyaE, December 7, 2013.

2054 [redacted]

2055 [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

(U) On January 20, Konstantin Sidorkov wrote to Scavino, copying Goldstone, Graff and Trump Jr.:[2057]

> Hi, Dan! Nice to meet you and your team! In attachment you can find the last presentation about VK audience.
>
> Please check this details in the end of my first letter:
> — More then 340 million registered users;
> — Over 76 million visitors per day;
> — Over 2.6 billion page views per day;
> — 65% visitors from Russia;
> — More then 59% users older then 25 years.
> From USA we had 2.7 millions profiles registered and more then 1.5 million visitors monthly.
>
> We can help with a registration, adding first information to the page. But further we want ask you to manage page by yourself with last updates like facebook.
>
> It will be cool also to have Russian translation of publication there to get more coverage, because not so many Russian's know English. But for this thing we need to find in your social media department Russian speaking manager.

[redacted] or more on Rogozin, *see infra* Vol. 5, Sec. III.H.

[2057] (U) Email, Sidorkov to Scavino, January 20, 2016 (RG000007). The attachment referenced by Sidorkov may refer to the presentation previously discussed.

[redacted]

[redacted]

(U) In 2016, and into at least the beginning of 2017, contact continued between the Agalarovs and their associates and the Trumps and their associates, through a series of emails, gifts, and letters. Some of the communications, not all of which are captured below, were substantive, others were less so.

(U) On January 25, 2016, Emin Agalarov emailed Trump Jr., "I'm in New York send my best to the family and congratulations on all the amazing success!!! My best to the big boss!!!! Emin."[2058]

(U) On February 29, 2016, Goldstone wrote to Trump Jr. and Graff, copying Emin Agalarov:[2059]

> Good morning.
> Emin's father has asked me to pass on his congratulations in a letter enclosed below for Mr. Trump on the eve of Super Tuesday vote -- offering his support and that of many of his important Russian friends and colleagues - especially with reference to U.S./Russian relations.
> Best of luck to you all and many thanks for passing on this letter.
> Best
> Rob

Attached to Goldstone's email was a letter from Aras Agalarov wishing Trump success on Super Tuesday.[2060]

(U) On March 4, 2016, Graff responded to Goldstone, writing, "Please know that the very thoughtful and kind letter from Mr. Agalarov to Mr. Trump was relayed to him earlier this week."[2061] Graff's confirmation that Trump had received the letter was passed on to Emin Agalarov and other Agalarov staff.

(U) On March 18, 2016, Trump responded in a hand written note on the original letter from Agalarov.[2062]

[2058] **(U)** Email, E. Agalarov to Trump Jr., January 25, 2016 (DJTJR00441).
[2059] **(U)** Email, Goldstone to Graff, et al., February 29, 2016 (RB000056-58).
[2060] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[2061] **(U)** Email, Graff to Goldstone, March 4, 2016 (RB000056).
[2062] **(U)** Handwritten note, Trump to A. Agalarov, March 18, 2016 (DJTJR00406).

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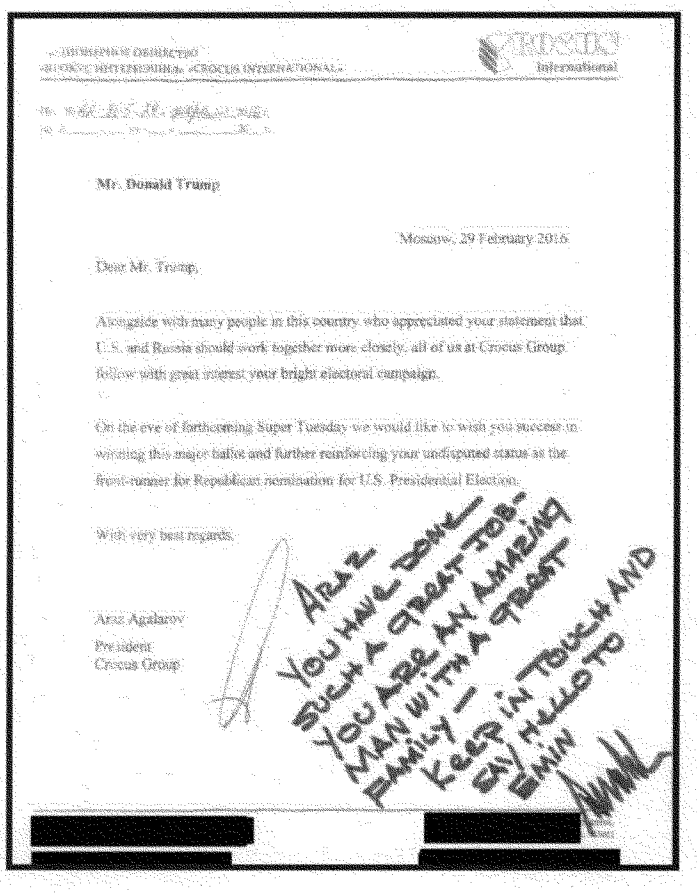
COMMITTEE SENSITIVE – RUSSIA INVESTIGATION ONLY



Mr. Donald Trump

Moscow, 29 February 2016

Dear Mr. Trump,

Alongside with many people in this country who appreciated your statement that U.S. and Russia should work together more closely, all of us at Crocus Group follow with great interest your bright electoral campaign.

On the eve of forthcoming Super Tuesday we would like to wish you success in winning this major ballot and further reinforcing your undisputed status as the front-runner for Republican nomination for U.S. Presidential Election.

With very best regards,

Aras Agalarov
President
Crocus Group

ARAS, YOU HAVE DONE SUCH A GREAT JOB - YOU ARE AN AMAZING MAN WITH A GREAT FAMILY - KEEP IN TOUCH AND SAY HELLO TO EMIN

[redacted]

The letter with the note was emailed by a staffer at the Trump Organization to Emin Agalarov, who responded, "Amazing Thank you."[2063]

(U) The Agalarovs seemed to feel that this note on the letter demonstrated their relationship with Trump. On April 8, 2016, Aras Agalarov brought the letter to an interview

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[2063] **(U)** Email, E. Agalarov to Murphy, March 18, 2016 (DJTJR00407).

[redacted]

COMMITTEE SENSITIVE – RUSSIA INVESTIGATION ONLY

[redacted]

with *The Washington Post*'s Moscow Bureau Chief. When Agalarov produced it in the interview, Emin Agalarov stated, "It's the real deal, not fake."[2064] Aras Agalarov then added:

> *Please note that first of all, he didn't just give this to his secretary to type, he wrote it himself. . . . So, he wrote that himself with his own hand. That tells that this is a person who doesn't suffer from the disease of celebrity. Can you imagine that the future president of the United States, using his own hands, spends time writing letters to his friend in Russia? It's a good sign.*[2065]

[redacted]

(U) On April 13, 2016, Goldstone wrote to Graff to inform her that the *The Washington Post* interview had taken place. He wrote, "Below is a note from Aras Agalarov for Mr. Trump regarding a recent Washington Post business interview in Moscow in which he was asked some questions and topics regarding Russia and Mr. Trump. If you need a transcript, please let me know."[2067] A letter from Aras Agalarov was attached.[2068] On April 15, Graff emailed Goldstone to inform him that Trump had received the letter from Agalarov.[2069]

(U) On April 25, 2016, Graff emailed Goldstone, writing, "Hope all is well! Please see the attached note from Mr. Trump to Mr. Agalarov. Would you kindly relay it to him?"[2070] The following, a handwritten note from Trump on the original letter from Agalarov, was attached:[2071]

[2064] (U) Agalarov *Washington Post* Tr.
[2065] (U) *Ibid.*
[2066] [redacted]
[2067] (U) Email, Goldstone to Graff, April 13, 2016 (DJTJR00179).
[2068] (U) Letter, A. Agalarov to Trump, April 13, 2016 (DJTJR00190).
[2069] (U) Email, Graff to Goldstone, April 15, 2016 (DJTJR00179).
[2070] (U) Email, Graff to Goldstone, April, 25, 2016 (DJTJR01191).
[2071] (U) Handwritten note, Trump to A. Agalarov, April 25, 2016 (DJTJR01192). On April 27, 2016, Goldstone emailed Emin Agalarov with the subject line, "Trump." Goldstone wrote, "Amazing win from Trump tonight winning ALL major 5 out of 5 Primary contests! You [should] send him a congrat tweet in the morning." Agalarov replied later that day, writing only, "Amazing." Emails, Goldstone and E. Agalarov, April 27, 2016 (RG000036).

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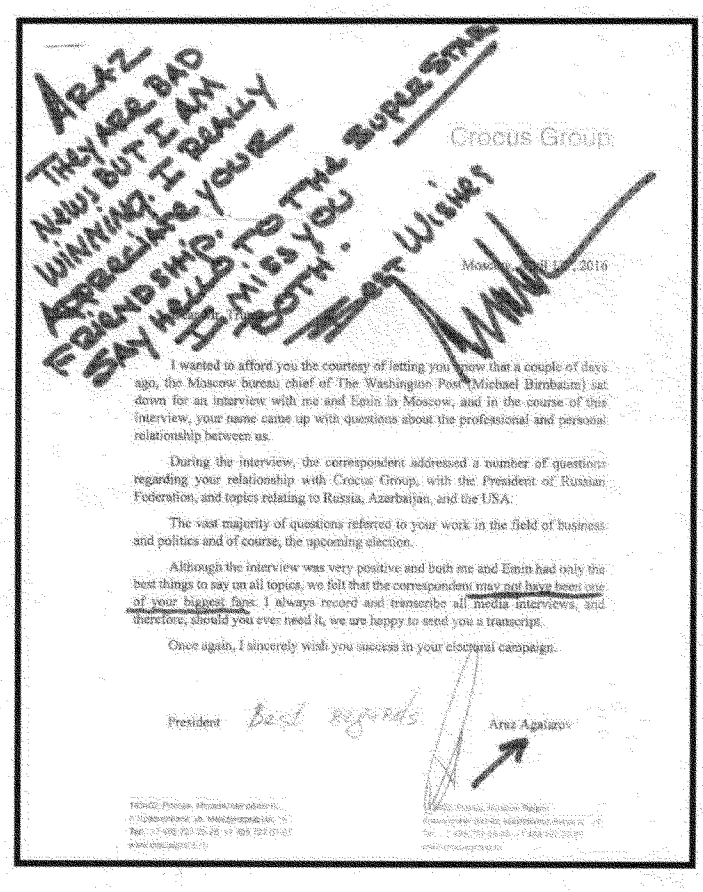

ARAZ
THEY ARE BAD
NEWS BUT I AM
WINNING. I REALLY
APPRECIATE YOUR
FRIENDSHIP. TO THE SUPERSTAR
SAY HELLO TO YOU
I MISS YOU
BOTH.
BEST WISHES

Crocus Group

Moscow, April 27, 2016

I wanted to afford you the courtesy of letting you know that a couple of days ago, the Moscow bureau chief of The Washington Post (Michael Birnbaum) sat down for an interview with me and Emin in Moscow, and in the course of this interview, your name came up with questions about the professional and personal relationship between us.

During the interview, the correspondent addressed a number of questions regarding your relationship with Crocus Group, with the President of Russian Federation, and topics relating to Russia, Azarbaijan, and the USA.

The vast majority of questions referred to your work in the field of business and politics and of course, the upcoming election.

Although the interview was very positive and both me and Emin had only the best things to say on all topics, we felt that the correspondent may not have been one of your biggest fans. I always record and transcribe all media interviews, and therefore, should you ever need it, we are happy to send you a transcript.

Once again, I sincerely wish you success in your electoral campaign.

President Best regards Aras Agalarov

5. (U) The June 9, 2016 Trump Tower Meeting

(U) In addition to business and personal correspondence, the Agalarovs were involved in pushing for a meeting which occurred on June 9, 2016, in Trump Tower ("June 9, 2016 meeting"). The Committee sought to understand the meeting, which involved Donald Trump Jr., Jared Kushner, Paul Manafort, a Russian lawyer named Natalia Veselnitskaya, and four of her associates. The Committee's efforts focused on the motivations for the meeting on both sides, the content of the meeting itself, and communications involving the participants following the meeting.

[redacted]

[redacted]

(U) The Committee interviewed each of the attendees at the meeting, as well as several other individuals who had non-public awareness of the meeting or communications related to it.[2072] Nevertheless, the Committee faced significant limitations in its efforts to fully understand the June 9, 2016 meeting. In particular, the almost complete absence of documentary evidence regarding the content of the meeting itself forced the Committee to rely heavily on witness testimony. That testimony, while helpful, was often incomplete, from an interested party, or contradictory to other testimony or documents. Witnesses were not in agreement on basic facts such as what language was being spoken and who was in the room during the meeting. In some cases, testimony was not consistent across multiple interviews with the same individual. The Committee was unable to reconcile some of these challenges and discrepancies.

i. (U) Background on the Information Provided in the Meeting

(U) The June 9, 2016 meeting with members of the Trump Campaign was part of a larger Russian government-supported effort to counter U.S. sanctions. The Committee assesses that some of the information and themes presented by the Russian lawyer Natalia Veselnitskaya in the meeting, and again following the election via email, had been used previously in an influence effort targeting individuals perceived to be sympathetic to Russia's position. That previous influence effort occurred in Moscow in April 2016, months prior to the June 9, 2016 meeting, when then-Congressman Dana Rohrabacher was provided a folder of information from the Russian government that was largely similar in content to what Veselnitskaya later used in Trump Tower.

a. (U) Information provided to Rohrabacher in April 2016

(U) In April 2016, Rohrabacher, along with several other members of the House of Representatives and their staff, traveled to Europe, including Russia. While in Moscow, Rohrabacher and his staffer, Paul Behrends, separated from the group and, despite the concerns of the U.S. Embassy, met with Vladimir Yakunin.[2073] Yakunin is a close confidant of President Putin.[2074] Yakunin is also the former president of Russian Railways and the president of the Dialogue of Civilizations (DoC), a Berlin-based non-governmental organization. At the time of

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[2072] (U) The Committee conducted a limited interview of Paul Manafort on July 25, 2017. The interview exclusively covered the June 9, 2016 meeting in Trump Tower.

[2073] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Paul Behrends, December 19, 2017, pp. 28–30; Rohrabacher Tr., p. 64. Rohrabacher and others also met with Natalia Veselnitskaya and Rinat Akhmetshin in Moscow on this trip. Akhmetshin, Tr., pp. 41-42.

[2074] [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

the meeting, Yakunin was sanctioned by the United States.[2075] The Committee found that Yakunin is significantly involved in Russian influence activities, including those targeting elections.

[redacted]

[2075] (U) Treasury, "Treasury Sanctions Russian Officials, Members Of The Russian Leadership's Inner Circle, And An Entity For Involvement In The Situation in Ukraine," March 20, 2014.

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[2081] (U) *Ibid.*
[2082] (U) *Ibid.*
[2083] (U) *Ibid.*

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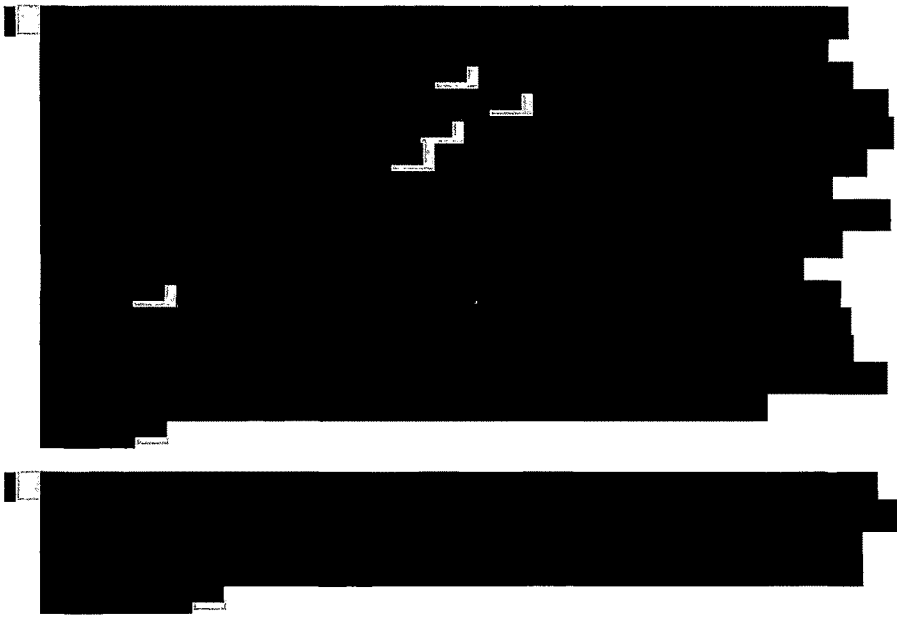

(U) Rohrabacher told the Committee that he was unsure how the April 2016 Moscow meeting with Yakunin was arranged, but that it may have been proposed by then-Russian Ambassador to the United States Sergey Kislyak.[2091] According to Rohrabacher, at the meeting Yakunin spoke about the DoC and was interested in securing Rohrabacher's participation in the DoC's annual Rhodes Forum.[2092] Rohrabacher told the Committee he was unable to attend.[2093]

[redacted]

[2087] (U) *Ibid.*
[2088] (U) *Ibid.*
[2089] (U) *Ibid.*

[redacted]

[2091] (U) Rohrabacher Tr., pp. 64–65. Paul Behrends was unsure about Kislyak's involvement, but recalled that a friend of his, Anthony Salvia, may have been involved. Behrends Tr., p. 29.
[2092] (U) Behrends Tr., pp. 28, 30. Behrends recalled that Yakunin had previously invited Rohrabacher to the DoC's annual Rhodes conference in writing.
[2093] (U) Rohrabacher Tr., pp. 65–66.

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

(U) At the meeting, Yakunin also raised a report that had information he believed Rohrabacher should review. Rohrabacher recalled:

> *[Yakunin] said: Look, our prosecutors have done an investigation into this Magnitsky thing and would you—were you willing to look at the material, their report? And I said: "Sure, I'll look at any report; I'll talk to anybody and I'll read anything." And he said: "Well, they'll try to get it to you at that meeting you're going to have tomorrow with the Duma foreign affairs committee."*[2095]

(U) Following the meeting with Yakunin, Rohrabacher, Behrends, and the other members of the delegation met with Konstantin Kosachev, the Chairman of the Council of the Federation Committee on Foreign Affairs.[2096] The Committee found that Kosachev is significantly involved in Russian influence activities, including those targeting the United States. He was sanctioned by the United States in 2018.[2097]

[redacted]

[2094] [redacted]

[2095] **(U)** Rohrabacher Tr., p. 66.

[2096] **(U)** *Ibid.*, p. 66; Behrends Tr., p. 35.

[2097] **(U)** Treasury, "Treasury Designated Russian Oligarchs, Officials, and Entities in Response to Worldwide Malign Activity," April 6, 2018.

[2098] [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[2104] (U) For additional information on this topic, *see infra* Vol. 5, Sec. III.B.
[2105] [redacted]
[2106] (U) *Ibid.*

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

(U) At end of the meeting with Kosachev, Kosachev passed Rohrabacher a note.[2108] On the note, Kosachev had written a question asking whether Rohrabacher would be willing to receive "sensitive documents."[2109] After responding that he would be willing, Rohrabacher was approached by several individuals who handed him a folder of documents.[2110] Behrends recalled:

> *Mr. Rohrabacher's in the middle, across the table from Mr. Kosachev. And the meeting's winding down. . . . Mr. Kosachev hands Mr. Rohrabacher a note on a piece of paper and says: "Would you be willing to accept sensitive documents?" . . . What I remember is the note said that, "Would you be willing to accept these documents?" And Mr. Rohrabacher looked at me and showed me the note. And I said: "Okay, sure." So Mr. Rohrabacher said: 'Okay.' And then the meeting kind of ended, and it was a little awkward. And these two people who we didn't know who they were, came up and there was like an introduction. But I didn't know who they were. Even if they introduced us by name, I had no context of who these people were . . . [they were] not in the meeting. They somehow got there as if it was prearranged on their side. And these people gave Mr. Rohrabacher the folder, and he said: Thank you very much; we'll take a look at it. If we shook hands, I don't remember. We may have shook hands. All of it took maybe a minute, and then we walked out. But it was a little unusual.*[2111]

(U) Rohrabacher told the Committee that he recalled that the two men who provided the documents were from the Russian prosecutor's office, but otherwise could not identify them.[2112]

(U) The Committee obtained a copy of the documents that Kosachev and his associates provided to Rohrabacher in April 2016.[2113] The primary document focuses on a series of allegations related to U.S. Magnitsky Act sanctions legislation. The document provided to the Congressional delegation following the Kosachev meeting is shorter than the document that Natalia Veselnitskaya later used at the June 9, 2016 meeting and is not the same document.

[2107] (U) *Ibid.*
[2108] (U) Behrends Tr., p. 35.
[2109] (U) *Ibid.*
[2110] (U) *Ibid*, p. 36.
[2111] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 35-36.
[2112] (U) Rohrabacher Tr., p. 67.
[2113] [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

However, the organization and substance of the two documents are similar, and parts of the two documents are nearly, or completely, identical.

b. (U) Natalia Veselnitskaya's Connections to Russian Influence Operations

(U) Natalia Veselnitskaya is a Russian lawyer who previously worked for, and remains in contact with, senior individuals in the Russian government. Veselnitskaya has described herself as a source of information or "informant" for the Russian government, and as a private attorney.[2114] The Committee assesses that Veselnitskaya has previously been involved in [redacted][2115]

(U) Veselnitskaya has traveled frequently to the United States, in part due to her role representing the Russian businessman Denis Katsyv and his Cyprus-based company Prevezon Holdings. In 2013, the U.S. Government alleged that Prevezon Holdings was involved in laundering the proceeds of a $230 million Russian tax fraud scheme that involved corrupt Russian officials.[2116] Veselnitskaya helped represent Prevezon in the case.[2117]

[2114] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Natalia Veselnitskaya, March 26, 2018, p. 90; "Russian lawyer who met with Kushner, Don Jr. admits to being an informant," *NBC News*, April 23, 2018.

[2115] [redacted]

[2116] (U) U.S. Attorney's Office, Southern District of New York, "Manhattan U.S. Attorney Announces Civil Forfeiture Complaint Against Real Estate Corporations Allegedly Involved In Laundering Proceeds Of Russian Tax Refund Fraud Scheme," September 10, 2013. In its complaint, DOJ alleged that Prevezon had "laundered these fraud proceeds into its real estate holdings, including investment in multiple units of high-end commercial space and luxury apartments in Manhattan, and created multiple other corporations, also the subject of forfeiture action, to hold these properties."

[2117] (U) The $230 million fraud was initially uncovered by the Russian tax lawyer Sergei Magnitsky. Magnitsky had been retained by a U.K. investment firm, Hermitage Capital, which was targeted by the scheme. According to the DOJ's complaint in the Prevezon case, members of the organization of Russian criminals and corrupt government officials that perpetrated the scheme then took "illegal actions in order to conceal this fraud and retaliate against individuals who attempted to expose it." Verified Complaint, *United States v. Prevezon Holdings Ltd., et al.*, Case No. 13-CV-6326 (S.D.N.Y. September 10, 2013). Sergei Magnitsky was one of those individuals. In 2008, following his discovery of the fraud, Magnitsky was arrested on false pretenses. According to the Congressional Research Service, Magnistky was "denied medical care, family visits, or due legal process while in custody, as well as beaten and possibly tortured. He died in prison in November 2009, at the age of 37." Following Magnitsky's death, his former employer, William Browder, who is an American-born British citizen and the CEO of Hermitage Capital, drew global attention to Magnitsky's death. In 2012 Congress passed the Sergei Magnitsky Rule of Law Accountability Act (the "Magnitsky Act"), which after its enactment froze assets and blocked visas for a number of Russian individuals, including some who are connected to the government. Dianne Rennack, "The Global Magnitsky Human Rights Accountability Act," *CRS*, June 15, 2018. The Prevezon case was settled with the Department of Justice in May 2017 for $5.9 million. U.S. Attorney's Office, Southern District of New York, "Acting Manhattan U.S. Attorney Announces $5.9 Million Settlement of Civil Money Laundering and Forfeiture Claims Against Real Estate Corporations Alleged To Have Laundered Proceeds Of Russian Tax Fraud," May 12, 2017.

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted] On April 30, 2017, upon arrival from Moscow to New York's JFK airport, Veselnitskaya disclosed that she was traveling with $20,000 in cash.[2119]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

2118 [redacted]

2119 [redacted]

2120 [redacted]

2121 [redacted]

2122 [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

(U) Veselnitskaya was also one of the leading Russian nationals in the lobbying effort against the Magnitsky Act and its sanctions in the United States.

[redacted]

(U) In her efforts, Veselnitskaya has had wealthy and powerful Russian supporters. For example, in early 2016, Vasiliy Anisimov, a Russian oligarch with ties to Vladimir Putin and ties to organized crime, sought to hire Louis Freeh, an American lobbyist and former Director of the FBI, to work with Veselnitskaya on the Prevezon case. The connection between Freeh and Anisimov was facilitated by Imre Pakh, who also has ties to Russian organized crime.[2124]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[2124] (U) Freeh is believed to have previously done additional work for Anisimov and his associates. [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

(U) Freeh is believed to have held multiple meetings in Moscow, likely in 2016, at least one of which included senior Russian government officials, and at least one of which included Veselnitskaya. Strategies regarding the Prevezon case and countering the Magnitsky Act were discussed at both meetings.[2127]

[redacted] An initial meeting in Moscow was attended by Louis Freeh, then-Russian Prosecutor General Yuri Chaika, the Russian Deputy Prosecutor General, Peter Katsyv, Imre Pakh, and the Associate Managing Director at Freeh's firm. [redacted]

> *Two topics were discussed in the meeting. Foremost was the need to resolve the Prevezon litigation. Secondly, the Russian officials stated that the group needed "to start figuring out a solution to the Magnitsky Act . . . [At the meeting] either Chaika or the Deputy Prosecutor General said Freeh should discuss follow-up details with Natalia Veselnitskaya. . . . They added that Freeh should do this because "she's one of us" or "she's part of us," implying she was working for the Russian government.*[2128] *Freeh and the identified Associate Managing Director did have a follow-up meeting with Veselnitskaya regarding both the Prevezon case and the Magnitsky Act on an undisclosed date and then the two returned to the United States.*[2129]

(U) Among her other efforts, Veselnitskaya helped establish an organization called the Human Rights Accountability Global Initiative Foundation (HRAGI).[2130] The Delaware-based foundation served in part as a platform for the influence campaign against the Magnitsky Act, and related sanctions, under the auspices of addressing a retaliatory adoptions policy that was put in place by Russia.[2131]

(U) Veselnitskaya was involved in the production and promotion of a film that targeted the Magnitsky Act and sought to exonerate the Russian government officials who perpetrated the $230 million fraud. The film played in Washington, D.C., on June 13, 2016. In her efforts, Veselnitskaya significantly interacted with at least one member of Congress, Congressman Dana Rohrabacher, both in Washington and in Moscow. Veselnitskaya also at various points worked

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[2127] (U) *Ibid.*

[2128] (U) Likely in early 2017, Freeh met with then-Attorney General Jeff Sessions regarding Freeh's meeting in Moscow about the Prevezon case and the Magnitsky Act. Sessions was reportedly hesitant to get involved at the time. The Prevezon case was settled in May 2017. [redacted]

[2129] [redacted]

[2130] (U) Akhmetshin Tr., pp. 36-37.

[2131] [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

with Glenn Simpson of Fusion GPS, and worked alongside numerous firms related to the Prevezon case and related matters, including BakerHostetler, Quinn Emanuel Urauhart & Sullivan, and Cozen O'Connor.[2132]

(U) In addition to its work on the Magnitsky Act and adoptions, Veselnitskaya's HRAGI was intended to have a broader mission to conduct cultural exchanges to improve Russia's image in the United States. Such exchanges, while not inherently problematic, have been used by Russian NGOs to facilitate influence operations and recruitment by Russian intelligence services.[2133] Although HRAGI signed a contract for services related to conducting cultural exchanges, that effort never came to fruition, and the organization ultimately ceased operations.[2134]

(U) Veselnitskaya's work to counter sanctions legislation in the United States did not take place in isolation. The Committee found that she has significant and concerning connections to Russian government and intelligence officials, and has not been forthcoming about those relationships.

[redacted]

[2132] (U) Veselnitskaya Tr., pp. 27–30, 72; Akhmetshin Tr., pp. 20-21, 61; SSCI interview with Anatoli Samochornov, October 3, 2017, pp. 36-37. For more on Veselnitskaya's work with Simpson, *see infra* Vol. 5, Sec. IV.B.

[2133] [redacted]

[2134] (U) Samochornov Tr., pp. 23–24; Contract, Human Rights Accountability Global Initiative Foundation Contract and Spinario Consulting LLC, May 20, 2016 (Samochornov Production); Akhmetshin Tr., p. 94.

[2135] [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

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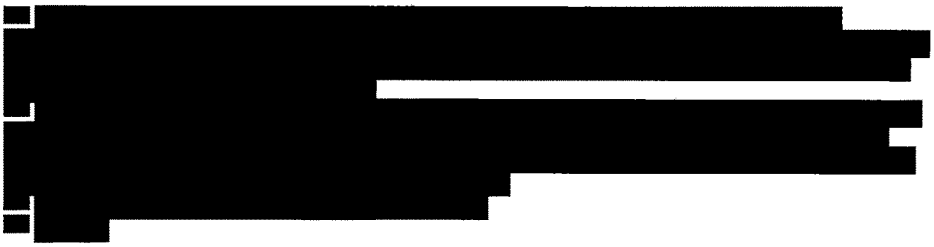

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(U) Veselnitskaya told the Committee that she established Kamerton Consulting, a law firm, in 2003.[2156] According to a press report, Veselnitskaya and Kamerton represented the FSB between 2005 and 2013 in a real estate dispute.[2157]

[redacted]

[2152] (U) Veselnitskaya Tr., pp. 70, 89.

[redacted]

[2156] (U) Veselnitskaya Tr., p. 6.

[2157] (U) Maria Tsvetkova and Jack Stubbs, "Moscow lawyer who met Trump Jr. had Russian spy agency as client," *Reuters*, July 21, 2017.

[redacted]

/eselnitskaya also told the Committee that she represents Aras Agalarov on some
ıs worked for him since 2013 or 2014.[2158] According to Kaveladze, "Ms.
ı represents Crocus in numerous real estate-related, land-related transactions."[2159]

Both Agalarov and Veselnitskaya are connected to Petr Katsyv.[2160]

[redacted]

eparately, Agalarov and Veselnitskaya both have close ties to Yuri Chaika, who
ıs Russia's Prosecutor General.[2162] While Chaika was in that role Veselnitskaya
mittee that she was in contact with the Prosecutor General's office, and would
ief Chaika.[2163] Chaika was a member of President Putin's Security Council, and
; reports have characterized him as part of part of the security establishment at a
ong with Security Council Secretary Nikolay Patrushev and head of the FSB
rtnikov.[2164] Chaika likely has been involved in Russian influence activities, and his
ned by the United States.[2165]

[redacted]

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tskaya Tr., pp. 83–84. Irakli Kaveladze believed that she did not start representing Crocus until
2016, meeting. Kaveladze Tr., p. 82.
ıze Tr., p. 77.
ornov Tr., p. 82; Kaveladze Tr., p. 79.
[redacted]
port, Vol. I, p. 110; Brett Forrest and Paul Sonne, "Russian Lawyer Whom Trump Jr. Met Says She
With Top Russian Prosecutor," *The Wall Street Journal*, July 14, 2017; Samochornov Tr., pp. 58–

tskaya Tr., pp. 70, 89.
[redacted]
y, "United States Sanctions Human Rights Abusers and Corrupt Actors Across the Globe,"
017.
[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

(U) On January 8, 2019, the U.S. Department of Justice charged Veselnitskaya with obstruction of justice related to the Prevezon case.[2171]

c. (U) Rinat Akhmetshin

(U) Rinat Akhmetshin is a Russian-American lobbyist who has worked on a number of foreign lobbying efforts, some of which were undertaken with Veselnitskaya. Akhmetshin first worked with Veselnitskaya on issues related to the Prevezon case.[2172] Akhmetshin also worked with Veselnitskaya through HRAGI, which was described previously, and on HRAGI's efforts related to countering the Magnitsky Act. Akhmetshin told the Committee that after doing research on Browder related to depositions in the Prevezon case, he had the idea to establish HRAGI and proposed it to Veselnitskaya and her client in Russia, Katsyv. Akhmetshin said he didn't know who the financial backers of HRAGI were, but believed that Katsyv was one of the smaller contributors.[2173] In testimony to the Committee, Akhmetshin sought to downplay the extent and nature of his work for HRAGI.[2174]

[redacted]

[2171] (U) DOJ, "Russian Attorney Natalya Veselnitskaya Charged With Obstruction Of Justice In Connection with Civil Money Laundering and Forfeiture Action," January 8, 2019.

[2172] (U) Akhmetshin Tr., pp. 4, 17–20.

[2173] (U) *Ibid.* pp. 31, 33-34, 39-40; When asked who the HRAGI contributors were, Akhmetshin replied, "I do not know. I was given—the director gave me the three names which I put for my form. I asked him for my LDA registration I needed some names, which he gave me, and I put them down. I'm not aware of how much was contributed and who contributed. I have three names, and Katsyv's among them." The other names or entities provided on Akhmetshin's Lobbying Disclosure Act form are: Mikhail Ponomarev, Albert Nasibulin, Vladimir Lelyukh and Berryle Trading Inc. Akhmetshin told the Committee he has never filed under the Foreign Agent Registration Act. Akhmetshin Tr., p. 40.

[2174] (U) Akhmetshin Tr., pp. 32. Akhmetshin's own description of the origins of HRAGI made clear that it was initially conceived as a method for sharing perceived derogatory information regarding William Browder and the Magnistky case, and that this is what interested Veselnitskaya and her clients when Akhmetshin proposed establishing a foundation. Akhmetshin indicated that Browder and Magnitsky continued to be Katsyv's primary motive, and that Katsyv had previously been unaware of the adoption issue. The adoption issue was used for outreach to Congress to "target" offices that were engaged on the topic and "to tell the HRAGI story." Following the 2016 election, less than a year after HRAGI was established, its funders in Russia lost interest and eventually "pulled the plug." *Ibid.* pp. 28, 38-39, 81-82, 94.

[redacted]

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(U) The Committee assesses that Akhmetshin has connections to the Russian government, a Russian oligarch with ties to Putin, and to Russian intelligence. In several cases these ties were more extensive than what has previously been publicly known. The Committee found that Akhmetshin was not fully forthcoming in his testimony.

[redacted]

2175 [redacted]
2176 **(U)** *Ibid.*
2177 **(U)** *Ibid.*
2178 **(U)** *Ibid.*, pp. 35-36
2179 **(U)** *Ibid.*, p. 37.

[redacted]

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[redacted]

[redacted]

2180 [redacted]
2181 [redacted]
2182 (U) *Ibid.*, p. 37-38.
2183 [redacted]
2184 (U) Treasury, "Ukraine-related Designations," March 20, 2014.
2185 [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

(U) Akhmetshin has a history of allegations against him regarding hacking and the dumping of stolen information as part of influence operations.[2189]

[redacted]

[2186] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 47.
[2187] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 48-49.
[2188] (U) Akhmetshin Tr., p. 12.
[2189] [redacted]
[2190] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 39-40.

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[2191] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 40.
[2192] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 41.
[2193] (U) *Ibid.*
[2194] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 37.
[2195] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 47.
[2196] (U) Treasury, "Magnitsky Sanctions Listings," April 12, 2013; Treasury, "Magnitsky Act-Related Designations," December 20, 2017.

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

(U) However, Akhmetshin testified to the Committee that he had never met Manafort in person prior to the June 9, 2016 meeting at Trump Tower, but he had known of Manafort due to Manafort's work in Ukraine and their mutual relationship with Lanny Wiles.[2199]

[redacted]

(U) Akhmetshin has been friends for 15 or 20 years with Sam Patten. Patten, in 2018, pleaded guilty to being an unregistered foreign agent.[2201] Patten was a close business associate of Konstantin Kilimnik, a Russian intelligence officer.[2202] Patten testified to the Committee that Akhmetshin and Kilimnik have met, without Patten present, possibly more than once. The nature of the meeting or meetings between Akhmetshin and Kilimnik, according to Patten, related to then-Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovych visiting New York.[2203] Akhmetshin told

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2197 [redacted]

2198 (U) *Ibid.*, p. 39.

2199 (U) Akhmetshin Tr., pp. 72–73.

2200 [redacted]

2201 (U) Patten Tr., p. 134; Criminal Information, *United States v. W. Samuel Patten*, Case No: 1:18-cr-260 (D.D.C. August 31, 2018).

2202 (U) For more information on the relationship between Sam Patten and Konstantin Kilimnik, *see infra* Vol. 5, Sec. III.A.

2203 (U) Patten Tr., p. 141-142.

[redacted]

the Committee that he has also known Simpson for many years, and that they have had mutual clients like Prevezon, but they have never worked together.[2204]

d. (U) Anatoli Samochornov

(U) Anatoli Samochornov is an interpreter. He was born in Russia in 1968, and came to the United States in 1991. He testified to the Committee that he has been interpreting professionally since roughly 1997 and has worked as a subcontractor for the Department of State, both as a program manager related to the International Visitor Leadership Program and as an interpreter. Samochornov testified to the Committee that he has never worked for the FBI. Samochornov has done some contract work for United Nations (UN) agencies, like UN AIDS and UN Women, but has never worked formally for the UN itself.[2205]

(U) Samochornov first met Natalia Veselnitskaya and Denis Katsyv in the fall of 2015 when Samochornov was asked to fill in for a colleague to do deposition work related to the Prevezon case.[2206] In that capacity, Samochornov was interpreting for BakerHostetler and Quinn Emanuel Urquhart & Sullivan, two law firms that were hired by the defendants. Following his work on the Prevezon case,[2207] Samochornov was approached by Veselnitskaya and BakerHostetler to continue doing interpreting work for HRAGI, and he accepted.[2208]

ii. (U) Origins and Foreknowledge of the June 9, 2016 Meeting

(U) The effort to plan the June 9, 2016 meeting in Trump Tower likely began on June 3, 2016, and consisted of a phone call from Emin Agalarov to Rob Goldstone. Goldstone testified to the Committee:

> *On the morning of, I believe it was June 3rd [2016], Emin called me...and asked if I could possibly contact "the Trumps," was how he called them, because his father had met with a well-connected government lawyer in his office, who had some interesting information about illicit Russian funding to the Democrats and its candidate; and could I pass that on and get the meeting. . . . I asked him what he was talking about, first of all. I said: "Could you articulate, what does that mean? Who is this person?" And he says: "It doesn't matter; all you need to do is get the meeting. Ike [Kaveladze] will coordinate it. You don't have to attend. And you don't have to report back on it to me. You just have to get a meeting."*

[2204] (U) Akhmetshin Tr., pp. 96–98.
[2205] (U) Samochornov Tr., pp. 15-16, 9.
[2206] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 9. For more information on the Prevezon case, *see infra* Vol. 5, Sec. III.C.5.i.
[2207] (U) Samochornov Tr., p. 10.
[2208] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 17. For more information on the HRAGI case, *see infra* Vol. 5, Sec. III.C.5.i.

[redacted]

[redacted]

. . . And I simply asked if he could possibly articulate what it was that I was supposed to be conveying. And he said again that she was very well-connected and she had some potentially damaging information. . . I'm not even sure that he said 'she' at that point. He just said "a Russian lawyer." I again asked: "Who is this person?" And he said "Well-connected." Again, I can be quite flip. I said: 'Well, connected to what, the power grid? She must be connected to something.' And he said 'Connected.' And that was it. I pushed a few times on that and that was my final answer: The lawyer was well-connected. I then said: "You know, this isn't your field of expertise, it isn't my field of expertise, and I'm not comfortable. I don't know what you're asking me to convey. They're going to ask me." And he said again: "There's information, it's potentially damaging to the Democrats and Hillary, and I think you should contact the Trumps; my dad would really like this meeting to take place." My final statement on that, I just said to him: "I really don't want to do this; I know nothing about politics, you don't, and your father certainly doesn't." And he goes: "Please, just ask for the meeting. You don't need to do anything else."[2209]

(U) Kaveladze, who learned about the planned meeting shortly after Emin Agalarov tasked Goldstone, told the Committee that the meeting was Aras Agalarov's "initiative and project" and that Aras Agalarov was "directly and personally involved."[2210] Kaveladze believed that Aras Agalarov was doing a "favor" for "someone" by organizing the meeting.[2211] However, Kaveladze noted that "[w]hoever contacted Mr. Agalarov Senior, I don't know."[2212] Kaveladze explained that Emin Agalarov was only involved because Aras Agalarov would not contact Goldstone directly, but would instead pass the message through Emin Agalarov.[2213]

(U) Emin Agalarov told the Committee that he did not know why, or for whom, his father wanted the Trump Tower meeting with Veselnitskaya to be set up, because Emin Agalarov had not asked. Emin Agalarov stated that, "When my father asks, I cannot say no to him," and that, "He is not the kind of guy you get to ask questions. And I wouldn't. . . . It doesn't matter. If I'm dying, I'm not going to ask him a question."[2214]

[2209] **(U)** Goldstone Tr., pp. 157–160.
[2210] **(U)** Kaveladze Tr., pp. 51-55; 83–85.
[2211] **(U)** *Ibid.*, p. 84. Veselnitskaya told the Committee that Aras Agalarov was aware of her work and its connection to high-level officials in the Russian government. Veselnitskaya Tr., 69-70.
[2212] **(U)** Kaveladze Tr., p. 84.
[2213] **(U)** *Ibid.* Goldstone similarly told the Committee that he was "never" tasked directly by Aras Agalarov, but would be asked to do things through a "chain of command" that either went through assistants, or through Emin Agalarov. Goldstone Tr., pp. 221–222.
[2214] **(U)** E. Agalarov Tr., pp. 50, 58-59.

[redacted]

[redacted]

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(U) Later on June 3, 2016, after the phone call with Emin, Goldstone emailed to Donald Trump Jr. with the subject line "Russia - Clinton - private and confidential."[2215]

> On Jun 3, 2016, at 10:36 AM, Rob Goldstone [redacted] wrote:
>
> Good morning
> Emin just called and asked me to contact you with something very interesting.
> The Crown prosecutor of Russia met with his father Aras this morning and in their meeting offered to provide the Trump campaign with some official documents and information that would incriminate Hillary and her dealings with Russia and would be very useful to your father. This is obviously very high level and sensitive information but is part of Russia and its government's support for Mr. Trump - helped along by Aras and Emin.
> What do you think is the best way to handle this information and would you be able to speak to Emin about it directly?
> I can also send this into to your father via Rhona, but it is ultra sensitive so wanted to send to you first.
> Best
> Rob Goldstone

(U) Goldstone testified to the Committee that his portrayal of the offer of derogatory information being part of "Russia and its government's support for Mr. Trump" was based on his general assessment of Russian enthusiasm for Trump.[2216] Goldstone told the Committee that at the time he did not have any specific information to indicate that Veselnitskaya was connected to the Russian government. Regarding his description of the "Crown prosecutor of Russia," Goldstone clarified that:

> *[F]ederal prosecutors in England are called "crown prosecutors," which is how I still refer to them. So when he told me that she was "well-connected," I made the assumption where she was connected to and that she was probably federal in terms of anything else. When I put "crown," I was using my English expression for a federal prosecutor. . . . I was inferring that she was working for the government, because when I pushed I was told she's connected.*[2217]

(U) Goldstone further explained that he described the information as "ultrasensitive" because "if somebody tells me that somebody may have damaging information on a potential presidential candidate, I believe it's ultrasensitive, no matter what it is."[2218]

(U) Minutes after Goldstone's email, Trump Jr. responded, suggesting that he speak with Emin Agalarov directly and writing "if it's what you say I love it especially later in the summer."[2219]

[2215] **(U)** Email, Goldstone to Trump Jr., June 3, 2016 (RG000061).
[2216] **(U)** Goldstone Tr., p. 167.
[2217] **(U)** Goldstone Tr., p. 162–163.
[2218] **(U)** Goldstone Tr., pp. 169.
[2219] **(U)** Email, Trump Jr. to Goldstone, June 3, 2016 (RG000061).

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From: Donald Trump Jr. [redacted]
Subject: Re: Russia - Clinton - private and confidential
Date: June 3, 2016 at 10:53 AM
To: Rob Goldstone [redacted]

Thanks Rob I appreciate that. I am on the road at the moment but perhaps I just speak to Emin first. Seems we have some time and if it's what you say I love it especially later in the summer. Could we do a call first thing next week when I am back?
Best,
Don

(U) Trump Jr. told the Committee that "I love it" is a colloquial expression he frequently uses to indicate being in favor of something. Trump Jr. stated that he probably wrote "if it's what you say" because he was skeptical. Trump Jr. stated that "[s]eems we have some time" indicated that he was not in a rush to meet Goldstone. When asked if it was related to the timing of the upcoming general election, Trump Jr. responded, "I don't recall specifically what I was thinking at the time." When asked why he indicated that he would love it "especially later in the summer," Trump Jr. responded that it was "[b]ecause I had too much on my plate to deal with it at this time." However, Trump Jr. later said, "I don't recall specifically again what I was thinking."[2220] Trump Jr. also explained that he wanted to speak with Emin first because he had received "a rather sensational email from Rob, who I know to be a rather sensational kind of guy" and as a result, Trump Jr. "didn't know what to make of it."[2221]

(U) Later that day, June 3, 2016, Goldstone emailed Emin Agalarov, telling him that Trump Jr. wanted "to speak personally on the issue with you early next week." Emin Agalarov replied: "Great."[2222]

(U) At some point likely between June 3, 2016, and June 6, 2016, Paul Manafort, who was serving as the Campaign's convention manager at the time, recalled that Trump Jr. had told him either "in the hall or on the phone" that he "had been contacted by some people who had worked with the Trump Organization for the Miss Universe Pageant and they had some information that they wanted to share that could be helpful to the campaign."[2223] Manafort recalled in his interview with the Committee that Trump Jr. had indicated that the businessmen were from Azerbaijan.[2224] Manafort explained that at the time Trump Jr. informed him of the meeting, he warned Trump Jr. that they "usually have an agenda of their own when they're

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[2220] **(U)** Trump Jr. Tr., pp. 92–95.
[2221] **(U)** *Ibid.*, p. 91.
[2222] **(U)** Emails, Goldstone and E. Agalarov, June 3, 2016 (RG000061–62).
[2223] **(U)** SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Paul Manafort, July 25, 2017, pp. 6–7.
[2224] **(U)** *Ibid.* Manafort has also said that Trump Jr. told him prior to the meeting that the individuals were coming from Russia, and that they had derogatory information regarding Hillary Clinton. *See* FBI, FD-302, Manafort 9/11/2018.

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coming from that part of the world."[2225] However, Manafort also recalled that Trump Jr. told him that they had "worked with the Trump Organization and he was comfortable."[2226]

(U) Records and testimony indicate a regularly scheduled "Family Meeting," which included Trump family members and limited senior Campaign staff.[2227] An entry in Manafort's calendar indicates that a "Family Meeting" occurred at approximately 9:30 a.m. on the morning of June 6, 2016, on the 25th floor of Trump Tower.[2228] The meeting was scheduled to take place in Trump Jr.'s office.

(U) Rick Gates, who was serving in a senior position on the Campaign, recalled that at a regular morning meeting in the days leading up to the June 9, 2016 meeting, Trump Jr. announced that he had a lead on negative information about the Clinton Foundation.[2229] Gates recalled that Trump Jr. said that the information was coming from a group in Kyrgyzstan and that he was introduced to the group by a friend.[2230] Gates recalled that in addition to Trump Jr., Eric Trump, Manafort, and Hope Hicks attended the meeting, while Ivanka Trump and Jared Kushner joined the meeting late.[2231] According to Gates, Manafort warned the group that the meeting likely would not yield vital information and they should be careful.[2232]

(U) Manafort recalled that, at the Family Meeting on June 6, Trump Jr. reminded Manafort of the upcoming June 9, 2016 meeting.[2233] Manafort believed that Trump Jr. would not have invited Manafort to attend unless Trump Jr. thought the meeting would potentially be important.[2234]

(U) Trump Jr. confirmed that there were regular morning meetings of Trump family members and senior Campaign staff, though the frequency and attendees could vary. Trump Jr. did not recall whether any Family Meeting took place the week of June 6, 2016. Trump Jr. also did not recall discussing the Agalarov-related meeting during any meeting.[2235] Kushner told the

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[2225] (U) *Ibid.*
[2226] (U) *Ibid.*
[2227] (U) Trump Jr. Tr. II, pp. 26-27; Email, Gates to Trump Jr., et al., June 6, 2016 (TRUMPORG_76_002927–2940); *SCO Report*, Vol. I, p. 115.
[2228] (U) Calendar, Paul Manafort, June 5–11, 2016 (DJTFP00022338).
[2229] (U) *SCO Report*, Vol. I, p. 115.
[2230] (U) *Ibid.*
[2231] (U) *Ibid.* Gates sent an email at 9:03 a.m. on June 6, 2016, about a "Family Meeting" that morning. The email was sent to Donald Trump Jr., Ivanka Trump, and Eric Trump, and copies Paul Manafort, Corey Lewandowski, Hope Hicks, and Jared Kushner. There are several attachments, including an agenda and items related to convention speeches. Email, Gates to Trump Jr., et al., June 6, 2016 (TRUMPORG_76_002927–2940).
[2232] (U) *Ibid.*
[2233] (U) FBI, FD-302, Manafort 9/11/2018.
[2234] (U) *Ibid.*
[2235] (U) Trump Jr. Tr. II, pp. 25–31.

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Committee he remembered that Trump Jr. invited him to the June 9, 2016 meeting, but when asked if Trump Jr. told him anything about that meeting prior to it, Kushner said that he did not recall.[2236] Hope Hicks told the Committee that she did not recall knowing about the meeting prior to reading about it in the press.[2237]

(U) The same day as the Family Meeting, Emin Agalarov emailed Goldstone, asking if there was "any news" related to a possible call with Trump Jr.[2238] Goldstone replied that there was no news yet, explaining that Trump Jr. would likely be available after "Super Tuesday," when Trump would be "'crowned' the official nominee."[2239] Goldstone told Agalarov he would arrange the call with Trump Jr. at that time.[2240]

(U) Later that day, on June 6, 2016, Goldstone emailed Trump Jr., asking him to "[l]et me know when you are free to talk with Emin by phone about this Hillary info."[2241] Trump Jr. responded, asking "could we speak now?"[2242] Goldstone replied that he would try to "track him [Emin] down in Moscow" and asked what phone number Emin could use for the call. At 3:38 p.m., Trump Jr. provided his cell phone number.[2243]

(U) At 3:43 p.m., Goldstone wrote to Trump Jr., "ok he's on stage in Moscow but should be off within 20 Minutes so I am sure can call."[2244] At 4:04 p.m., toll records indicate an incoming call from a Russian phone number associated with Emin Agalarov connecting for two minutes with the phone number Trump Jr. had provided Goldstone.[2245] At 4:31 p.m., toll records indicate an outgoing call from the Trump Jr. phone number to the same Russian phone number,

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[2236] (U) Kushner Tr. II, p. 32.
[2237] (U) Hicks Tr., p. 47.
[2238] (U) Email, E. Agalarov to Goldstone, June 6, 2016 (RG000063).
[2239] (U) Email, Goldstone to E. Agalarov, June 6, 2016 (RG000064).
[2240] (U) *Ibid.*
[2241] (U) Email, Goldstone to Trump Jr., June 6, 2016 (RG000065).
[2242] (U) Email, Trump Jr., to Goldstone, June 6, 2016 (RG000065).
[2243] (U) Email, Trump Jr., to Goldstone, June 6, 2016 (RG000066).
[2244] (U) Email, Goldstone to Trump Jr., June 6, 2016 (RG000067).
[2245] (U) AT&T toll records, Trump Jr. (DJTJR00855). It is not clear whether this was a voice message or a connected call.

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connecting for three minutes.[2246] At 4:38 p.m., Trump Jr. emailed Goldstone, stating only "Rob thanks for the help."[2247] Goldstone responded, "A pleasure."[2248]

(U) Trump Jr. told the Committee that he does not recall speaking with Emin Agalarov on the phone in this time period and does not remember either of the calls.[2249] Goldstone recalled that Emin Agalarov initially did not remember the calls either, but that Agalarov later remembered that the call did happen and noted that it was short. Regarding the content of the call or calls, Goldstone said that it was his understanding that "they would speak, and logic would tell me that if they would speak they would speak about what the meeting was about," but he had no specific knowledge of what was said.[2250]

(U) Emin Agalarov has publicly described the call with Trump Jr.: "I said, 'Listen, there are some people who want to meet you. They obviously want something that could potentially help them resolve things that you could be interested in, or maybe not. If you can spare five minutes of your time I'd be grateful. If not, no problem.' Obviously, Don Jr. being Don Jr. said, 'Of course, I'll do it if you're asking me."[2251] Agalarov told the Committee he did not remember this call.[2252]

(U) Separately, on June 6, 2016, Aras Agalarov contacted Kaveladze and asked him to fly to New York the following day for an "important meeting."[2253] Over the course of several calls, Aras Agalarov instructed Kaveladze to contact Veselnitskaya and to meet her in advance of the meeting at Trump Tower to go over the topics that would be discussed.[2254] Following the initial call from Agalarov, Kaveladze called Veselnitskaya to coordinate the date and time of their meeting. Kaveladze told the Committee that, at that point, he had not met or heard of Veselnitskaya.[2255]

[2246] (U) *Ibid.* On June 6 at 4:27 p.m., the Trump Jr. phone conducted a four-minute call with a blocked number. Later, at 8:40 p.m., another eleven-minute call with a blocked number took place. Trump Jr. testified that he does not remember the contents of either of the calls with the blocked numbers, or who those calls were with. Trump Jr. Tr., pp. 111–112. The Committee was independently able to determine the identity of the two individuals involved in these calls with Trump Jr., and that the calls were likely unrelated to the meeting requested by Emin Agalarov. *See* AT&T Response to SSCI Subpoena, December 14, 2018 (ATTSSCI00001).

[2247] (U) Email, Trump Jr. to Goldstone, June 6, 2016 (DJTJR00445).

[2248] (U) Email, Goldstone to Trump Jr., June 6, 2016 (DJTJR00445).

[2249] (U) Trump Jr. Tr., pp. 100–103, 114.

[2250] (U) Goldstone Tr., pp. 181–182.

[2251] (U) HBO, "We spoke to Emin Agalarov about a conversation Donald Trump Jr. claimed to have forgotten," *Vice News*, July 10, 2018.

[2252] (U) E. Agalarov Tr., pp. 52-54. Agalarov told the Committee, "I do not deny that it could have happened. And if it happened, this is exactly what I would say." *Ibid.* p. 54.

[2253] (U) Kaveladze Tr., p. 52.

[2254] (U) Kaveladze Tr., pp. 51–53, 58, 66.

[2255] (U) Kaveladze Tr., p. 52.

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(U) On June 7, at 12:44 p.m., the same Russian phone number previously identified as being associated with Emin Agalarov called Trump Jr. for two minutes.[2256] Trump Jr. said he had no recollection of that call. [2257]

(U) Later on June 7, Goldstone emailed Trump Jr. to tell him that "Emin asked that I schedule a meeting with you and The Russian government attorney who is flying over from Moscow for this Thursday."[2258] Goldstone stated, "I believe you are aware of the meeting - and so wondered if 3pm or later on Thursday works for you?"[2259] About an hour later, Trump Jr. replied to Goldstone, offering "3 at our offices" for the meeting.[2260] Goldstone replied, stating "Perfect . . . I won't sit in on the meeting, but will bring them at 3pm and introduce you etc." Goldstone also noted that he would send the names of "the two people meeting with you for security when I have them later today."[2261] Trump Jr. responded that it "will likely be Paul Manafort (campaign boss) my brother in law and me."[2262]

(U) During his calls with Aras Agalarov on the previous day, Kaveladze was told that the meeting would be with "Trump people," but that he was given no specifics regarding who would attend.[2263] Initially, Kaveladze thought the meeting would be about business, and was surprised when, on June 7, Aras Agalarov called and informed him that the meeting would be about the Magnitsky Act.[2264] Kaveladze testified to the Committee that he was further confused after receiving an email from Goldstone explaining that they would be meeting with Trump Jr., as well as Manafort and Kushner, who Kaveladze assessed to be "highly positioned individuals."[2265] Kaveladze recalled suggesting to Aras Agalarov multiple times that because Veselnitskaya is a lawyer, they should be meeting with other lawyers.[2266]

(U) Kaveladze explained that he was confused by the level at which the meeting was taking place. Because of this confusion, Kaveladze recalled calling Beniaminov on June 7 to find out more information. Kaveladze testified that he asked Beniaminov:

[2256] (U) AT&T toll records, Trump Jr. (DJTJR00855).
[2257] (U) Trump Jr. Tr., p. 102-103.
[2258] (U) Email, Goldstone to Trump Jr., June 7, 2016 (RG000068).
[2259] (U) *Ibid.*
[2260] (U) *Ibid;* Goldstone emailed Irakli Kaveladze and Natalia Veselnitskaya, including Emin Agalarov, to confirm that the meeting was set for June 9, 2016, at 3:00 p.m. *See* Email, Kaveladze to Veselnitskaya and Emin, June 7, 2016 (RG000070).
[2261] (U) Email, Goldstone to Trump Jr., June 7, 2016 (RG000069).
[2262] (U) Email, Trump Jr. to Goldstone, June 7, 2016 (RG000071).
[2263] (U) Kaveladze Tr., p. 53.
[2264] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 52–53.
[2265] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 58.
[2266] (U) *Ibid.*

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"Roman, what's happening? Why are we meeting with these people to discuss Magnitsky law?" [Roman's] response was he believes there's some negative information on Hillary Clinton, [Veselnitskaya]'s bringing some negative information on Hillary Clinton. And that was completely inconsistent with what I'd heard before.[2267]

(U) Kaveladze told the Committee that this was the first time he had heard that the meeting would be about "negative information" on Clinton, and that it "kind of scared the hell out of me."[2268] According to Kaveladze, Beniaminov had learned this information from Goldstone.[2269]

(U) Kaveladze said that, on June 7, he strongly suggested to Aras Agalarov, again, that they meet with Donald Trump's attorneys, rather than the Campaign leadership, but he did not raise the derogatory information regarding Hillary Clinton.[2270] At some point, on June 7 or June 8, Kaveladze received an email with a four-page document which was a synopsis, in Russian, of what the meeting would be about.[2271] The document contained a series of allegations regarding the Magnitsky Act, Bill Browder, the Ziff brothers and donations to the Democratic party.[2272] According to Kaveladze, the document also contained the allegation that some of these actors could be financing Clinton's campaign as well. The document was sent to Kaveladze by an associate of Aras Agalarov, potentially a secretary.[2273]

(U) Veselnitskaya told the Committee that her primary motivation was to get the U.S. Congress to investigate Browder and the basis for the Magnitsky Act.[2274] In that effort,

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[2267] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 60.
[2268] (U) *Ibid.*
[2269] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 60–61. Beniaminov testified that while he did generally hear about the June 9, 2016 meeting from Goldstone prior to it taking place, regarding pre-meeting communications with Kaveladze, Beniaminov said, "I don't recall any. That is not to say that they didn't happen. I don't particularly recall." Beniaminov Tr., p. 228–229.
[2270] (U) Kaveladze Tr., pp. 55-56.
[2271] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 62-63.
[2272] (U) The Ziff brothers are American investors. *See* Juliet Chung, "Ziff Brothers Investments Set to Gradually Close U.S. Hedge Fund," *Wall Street Journal,* October 31, 2013.
[2273] (U) Kaveladze Tr., pp. 62–63. The Committee showed Kaveladze a similar document, written in English and dated May 31, 2016, which was published by *Foreign Policy* just two days before his interview. *See* Elias Groll, "Here's the Memo the Kremlin-Linked Lawyer Took to the Meeting with Donald Trump Jr.," *Foreign Policy*, October 16, 2017. Kaveladze testified: "It sure looks like it. Yes, it's definitely very close to what I read in Russian." *Ibid.*, pp. 62–63, 65.
[2274] (U) Veselnitskaya Tr., p. 31. Kaveladze told the Committee, "The Russian government was trying to repeal the act as well. My understanding was that certain important people got sanctioned under that Act and government was

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Veselnitskaya was looking for help developing contacts in the United States who could assist her campaign. She told the Committee, "In one of those conversations with some other client of mine—the name of the other client was Mr. Aras Agalarov—he mentioned, he said: Well, let's try."[2275]

(U) Veselnitskaya told the Committee:

> *I know that Aras Agalarov knows that I'm involved in a number of investigations; that it's been quite a long time that I've been involved in the investigation into Mr. Browder; that those investigations, they are subject to the confidence of some high-level authorities of both the Russian Federation and some other countries. I told to Aras that; I reported about this case and about this story; I reported personally to the prosecutor general of the Russian Federation, that he received me.*[2276]

(U) Additionally, Veselnitskaya claimed:

> *[N]obody told me that I was going to meet Trump campaign,*[2277] *and I never asked anybody for that . . . . The point was about a private meeting with a friend of my client's son, that's all . . . . I don't know exactly who was the one who agreed the particular date and place. But what I was told, correspondingly, Aras, my client, when he reacted to my request to think about how he might help me, with whom he might introduce me to in the United States, he gave me the contact details of an individual in the United States, Mr. Irakli Kaveladze. He is a Russian speaker.*[2278]

(U) Veselnitskaya told the Committee that, over the course of several days in late May or early June, she spoke to Kaveladze several times. She stated:

> *When I was told that there is a chance for a meeting, I prepared a memo four pages long, just in case if I would not be granted a visa and there would be no chance for me to travel or, let's say, if there would be no need for a personal*

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trying and lobbying to try to repeal that Act, and she was trying, for [Katsyv], so there was an exchange and cooperation going on." Kaveladze Tr., p. 81.

[2275] (U) Veselnitskaya Tr., p. 31.

[2276] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 69–70. It is unclear, from the transcript, who "he" refers to in the final sentence of the quote. From context, "he" may refer to Aras Agalarov or Donald Trump Jr.; however the Committee has no further information.

[2277] (U) Samochornov recalled in an interview that Veselnitskaya was excited for the meeting and treated it as a special event. FBI, FD-302, Samochornov 7/13/2017.

[2278] (U) Veselnitskaya Tr., pp. 33-34.

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meeting and it would be just enough to provide the information. For those cases, I prepared kind of a memo. So in principle, I was even willing to just send over the memo.[2279]

(U) Early on the morning of June 8, 2016, Kushner emailed his assistant, stating "Lets [sic] try to get time this am to map out how I get my schedule back this week – too many non-essential meetings and I need time to do some things pro-active."[2280] In particular, Kushner asked his assistant to "discuss with me a 130 meeting today at Trump Tower and then a 3pm tom with don jr."[2281] When asked if he had discussed the upcoming June 9, 2016, meeting with his assistant Kushner testified that he did not recall.[2282]

(U) Later in the day on June 8, Goldstone received an email from Kaveladze, explaining that Kaveladze had spoken to Veselnitskaya and that she was scheduled to be in court on the morning of June 9, and requested that the meeting be moved to 4:00 p.m., so as to not be late.[2283] On June 8, at 10:34 a.m., Goldstone emailed Trump Jr. to request that the meeting be rescheduled for 4:00 p.m. to accommodate the "Russian attorney."[2284] At 11:15 a.m., Trump Jr. responded, "Yes Rob I could do that unless they wanted to do 3 today instead . . . just let me know and ill lock it in either way.[2285] Ultimately, Goldstone and Trump Jr. agreed to meet on June 9, 2016, at 4:00 p.m.[2286]

(U) Shortly after this exchange, Goldstone emailed Trump Jr. again about the Russian social media platform VK. Goldstone wrote that he had been to Moscow recently and had "met with the head of marketing for Russia's largest social media network VK."[2287] Goldstone stated that "the subject of Russian American voters in the USA came up" and that the VK head of marketing "is keen to set up a Trump Campaign VOTE page on VK" which would be targeted at Russian and CIS voters in the United States and would "surely secure their votes."[2288] Goldstone attached a VK "mock up" page displaying Trump's image and several of his public comments

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[2279] **(U)** *Ibid.*, pp. 34–35.
[2280] **(U)** Email, Kushner to Vargas, June 8, 2016 (NSSCI00000010).
[2281] **(U)** Email, Kushner to Vargas, June 8, 2016 (NSSCI00000011).
[2282] **(U)** Kushner Tr., p. 38.
[2283] **(U)** Email, Kaveladze to Goldstone, June 8, 2016 (RG000072).
[2284] **(U)** Email, Goldstone to Trump Jr., June 8, 2016 (RG000073).
[2285] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[2286] **(U)** Email, Trump Jr. to Goldstone, June 8, 2016 (RG000074).
[2287] **(U)** Email, Goldstone to Trump Jr., June 8, 2016 (RG000075–76).
[2288] **(U)** *Ibid.* CIS likely refers to Commonwealth of Independent States.

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inserted into the profile. Goldstone said he would bring a print out the following day.[2289] The Committee did not identify any email response to Goldstone's message.

(U) After agreeing to move the time of the meeting back one hour at Goldstone's request, Trump Jr. emailed Kushner and Manafort, forwarding the entirety of his email thread with Goldstone about arranging the meeting.[2290]

To: Jared Kushner [redacted] Paul Manafort [redacted]
From: Donald Trump Jr.
Sent: Wed 6/8/2016 12:02:35 PM
Importance: Normal
Subject: FW: Russia - Clinton - private and confidential
MAIL_RECEIVED: Wed 6/8/2016 12:02:40 PM

Meeting got moved to 4 tomorrow at my offices.
Best,
Don

(U) Kushner told the Committee that he "didn't have time to read every email" and that he did not recall reading the subject line of the email, which read "FW: Russia - Clinton - private and confidential."[2291] Manafort responded to Trump Jr.'s email, writing only "[s]ee you then."[2292] Manafort told the Committee that he did not read the chain of earlier messages between Goldstone and Trump Jr.[2293] Manafort told the Committee:

> *I never got any of those emails until the last one with the time change, which was all that was relevant to me. If I had read down that I would have told him he shouldn't do the meeting, or I would have talked to our legal counsel and asked, is this appropriate, something like that. . . . In other words, I don't know what a "crown prosecutor" is, but I wouldn't have told him to do a meeting with a government, any government official, unless legal had vetted it.*[2294]

[2289] (U) *Ibid.* The introductory nature of Goldstone's email suggests that the initial connection to Scavino in January 2016 had not progressed. Goldstone's email again included a basic message from Sidorkov at VK, though this one also contained a sample VK page for Donald Trump that Sidorkov had sent to Goldstone. *Ibid.*
[2290] (U) Email, Trump Jr. to Kushner and Manafort, June 8, 2016 (NSSCI00000014).
[2291] (U) Kushner Tr., pp. 40–41; Statement of Jared C. Kushner to Congressional Committees, July 24, 2017.
[2292] (U) Email, Manafort to Trump Jr., June 8, 2016 (DJTFP00011895).
[2293] (U) Manafort did receive the full chain of emails, but the documents provided to the Committee do not indicate whether or not he read the prior emails. *Ibid.*
[2294] (U) Manafort Tr., p. 30.

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(U) The Committee sought to understand the extent of Trump's foreknowledge of the June 9, 2016, meeting, if any.

(U) On June 7, several days after Goldstone's offer of information to Trump Jr. and several hours after Trump Jr. confirmed the June 9, 2016 meeting with Goldstone, then-candidate Trump publicly stated, "I'm going to give a major speech on probably Monday of next week and we're going to be discussing all of the things that have taken place with the Clintons. I think you're going to find it very informative and very, very interesting."[2295] That speech did not happen as scheduled.

(U) Stephen Miller, who worked on the Campaign, told the Committee that the speech referenced by Trump may have been postponed due to the Pulse nightclub shooting in Florida. According to Miller, the speech that was originally planned for Monday, June 12, later took place at the Trump SoHo hotel.[2296] Miller recalled working on the speech, and said that it was heavily based off of the book "Clinton Cash," and was not based on anything Russia-related.[2297] This is consistent with Trump's written answers to questions from the SCO. The SCO "did not find evidence that the original idea for the speech was connected to the anticipated June 9 meeting or that the change of topic was attributable to the failure of that meeting to produce concrete evidence about Clinton."[2298]

(U) Michael Cohen testified to the Committee that he was present in Trump's office when Trump Jr. came into the office and, in a manner that was uncommon, walked toward the back of Trump's desk and leaned over and quietly said, "The meeting. It's all set."[2299] Cohen recalled that Trump replied, "Okay. Keep me posted."[2300] Cohen has also said that, "Trump Jr. said to Trump that he was setting up a meeting in order to get dirt on Hillary Clinton." Cohen said that Trump responded with words to the effect of, "That's great. Let me know."[2301]

[2295] (U) Daniel Halper, "Trump to Give Major Hillary Speech Monday," *Washington Examiner*, June 7, 2016.
[2296] (U) On June 22, 2016, then-candidate Trump delivered a speech at the Trump Soho Hotel that fits Miller's general description. Benjy Sarlin and Alex Seitz-Wald, "Donald Trump Tries to Reset Race With Hillary Clinton Onslaught," *NBC News*, June 22, 2016. This topic is additionally addressed in President Trump's written responses to questions from the SCO. *SCO Report*, Appendix C, C-11–15.
[2297] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Stephen Miller, June 15, 2018, pp. 79–80.
[2298] (U) *SCO Report*, Vol. I, p. 116. Jared Kushner said that he did not have any information on why the speech was planned at that time, nor did he have any information about how the speech would focus on the Clintons. Kushner also did not recall working on any such speech, but said that if there was a speech like that he probably would have known about it. When asked if the speech had any relationship to Goldstone telling Trump Jr. that he would be receiving incriminating information about Clinton, Kushner said that he did not know. Kushner Tr. II, pp. 39–40.
[2299] (U) Cohen Tr. II, p. 9.
[2300] (U) Cohen Tr. II, p. 9.
[2301] (U) FBI, FD-302, Cohen 8/7/2018.

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(U) Cohen testified to the Committee that he recalled that other people were in the office at the time, but could not recall who, and that it seemed as if Trump Jr. was trying to keep the meeting a secret.[2302] Cohen said that, at the time, he did not know what meeting Trump Jr. was referring to, and did not ask because he did not feel it was appropriate.[2303] Cohen testified that it was only after he saw news reports regarding the June 9, 2016 meeting that he made the connection to the exchange between Trump Jr. and Trump. Cohen believed Trump Jr. was referring to the June 9, 2016 meeting, but Cohen referred to his belief as "speculation."[2304] Cohen has stated that the interaction between Trump Jr. and his father took place in early June 2016, but the timing of what Cohen remembers remains somewhat unclear.[2305]

(U) Trump Jr. told the Committee he did not recall informing his father of efforts by the Agalarovs to arrange a meeting during the campaign, and believed Trump first learned of the June 9, 2016 meeting in July 2017.[2306] Kushner testified that he did not have reason to believe that Trump Jr. had informed Trump of the meeting prior to it taking place.[2307]

(U) Paul Manafort's calendar for June 9, 2016, shows that he was scheduled to meet with Trump at 10:30 a.m.[2308] Similarly, President Trump stated in response to written questions from

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[2302] (U) Cohen Tr. II, 8–11.
[2303] (U) Cohen Tr. II, pp. 11–12.
[2304] (U) Cohen Tr. II, pp. 8.
[2305] (U) On August 7, 2018, Michael Cohen told the SCO that the exchange between Trump Jr. and Trump occurred on June 6 or June 7, 2016. *SCO Report*, Vol. I, p. 115. On February 27, 2019, Cohen told the U.S. House of Representatives' Committee on Oversight and Reform that the exchange happened "probably in early June 2016." House Committee on Oversight and Reform Transcript of the Interview with Michael Cohen, February 27, 2019. However, on February 26, 2019, the day before his House testimony, Cohen told this Committee that he did not recall when the interaction took place. Cohen Tr. II, pp. 9–10, 375. The Committee was unable to resolve this discrepancy.
[2306] (U) Trump Jr.'s level of insight regarding his father's knowledge during the campaign is unclear. He told the Committee that during the campaign, contact with Trump "could be anywhere from a couple times a day to not speaking for a week. It really depended. But like I said, once things got into full motion, I wasn't with him very often. And I didn't need to speak to him. He's not a small-talk kind of guy. So I knew what I needed to do, he knew what he needed to do, and we executed those roles. But you don't call my dad to say 'Hey, what's up?' in the midst of everything that's going on. That's just not what he's into." Trump Jr. Tr., pp. 26-27. Steve Bannon, who was an informal advisor to the Trump campaign at the time, has been quoted as saying that there was no chance Donald Trump Jr. didn't take the meeting participants to meet his father while they were in Trump Tower. Tucker Higgins, "Steve Bannon says he's certain that Trump met with Russians who were at Trump Tower in 2016," *CNBC*, January 3, 2018. When asked about that statement Bannon did not deny saying it, but told the Committee that he did not know if Donald Trump Jr. made the introduction to his father and had no additional information on the topic. Bannon Tr., p. 36.
[2307] (U) Kushner Tr. II, p. 37.
[2308] (U) Calendar, Manafort, June 5–11, 2016 (DJTFP00022328).

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the SCO, "My desk calendar indicates I was scheduled to meet with Paul Manafort on the morning of June 9, but I do not recall if that meeting took place."[2309]

(U) Manafort told the Committee that he never spoke to Trump about the June 9, 2016 meeting.[2310] According to the SCO, Manafort also did not recall "anyone informing candidate Trump of the meeting, including Trump Jr."[2311] Trump's written responses to questions from the SCO state, "I have no recollection of learning at the time that Donald Trump Jr., Paul Manafort, or Jared Kushner was considering participating in a meeting in June 2016 concerning potentially negative information about Hillary Clinton."[2312]

(U) The Campaign participants in the June 9, 2016 meeting, who were senior officials on the Campaign, each took the time to participate in the meeting, even after it was rescheduled the day before and despite their purportedly busy schedules. The Committee sought to understand why they prioritized the meeting.

(U) Kushner testified that the campaign was fast-paced, that his schedule was very full, and that the volume of incoming emails and meeting requests was a challenge.[2313] Similarly, Manafort told the Committee that his "schedule was totally full, from like 7:00 in the morning to late at night. And there were no meetings setting up meetings. It was me just going from meeting to meeting to meeting based on subject matter."[2314]

(U) Both Kushner and Manafort testified to the Committee that they attended the meeting on June 9, 2016, because Trump Jr. invited them. Kushner testified that, "If Don asks me, then I would do it, 100 percent," and said that he would attend all meetings that Don Jr. invited him to.[2315] Manafort testified that Trump Jr. often set up meetings for the Campaign, "He would typically say, these people might be helpful; let's meet with them and you figure it out."[2316]

(U) Manafort told the Committee:

Well, as has been reported, I have some experience in that part of the world [Russia and the former Soviet Union]. If they were going to be coming from Azerbaijan, which is—even though Don said they worked in Moscow, I assumed

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[2309] (U) *SCO Report*, Appendix C, C-14.
[2310] (U) Manafort Tr., p. 27.
[2311] (U) *SCO Report*, Vol. I, p. 116.
[2312] (U) *Ibid.*, Appendix C, C-13.
[2313] (U) Kushner Tr., pp. 41–42.
[2314] (U) Manafort Tr., pp. 9–10.
[2315] (U) Kushner Tr., p. 39; Kushner Tr. II, p. 40.
[2316] (U) Manafort Tr., p. 7.

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they were coming from Azerbaijan— they probably had an agenda. What it was I had no idea. But Don vetted them really, as far as I was concerned, when he said that they worked for the [Trump] Organization. So my experience when Don had asked me to meet with people up to that point was very positive. So I—in the end, I didn't know why they'd be coming all the way from Azerbaijan to give us information helpful to the campaign.[2317]

(U) Despite having advance knowledge of the upcoming meeting with Donald Trump Jr, that meeting was omitted from Paul Manafort's calendar as of the morning of June 9, 2016.[2318]

(U) When asked why the June 9, 2016 meeting warranted the time of three senior members of a Campaign, including its chairman, Kushner testified that it was "not uncommon" for the senior Campaign staff to be in each other's meetings, and to "jump in and out all the time of different meetings."[2319] Regarding the day-ahead rescheduling request, Kushner told the Committee that, "My schedule was always something that was in flux. We were always moving. You move something back, you move something forward. That's just how it would happen."[2320]

(U) Despite the Campaign being very busy, and Trump Jr. being unsure of the information, Trump Jr. testified that he thought it was worth it to include Kushner and Manafort in the meeting to hear the Russian lawyer out. Trump Jr. told the Committee that, "if we were in the same place, in the same building at the same time, it would be common practice to say: 'Hey, this is going on now; maybe drop by.' Paul obviously had a lot more experience in this stuff than I did."[2321] When asked what "this stuff" referred to, Trump Jr. told the Committee, "Campaigns generally. He was the campaign manager. I thought we should listen and then we could decide what, if anything, to do."[2322]

(U) Kushner testified to the Committee that the Campaign took many different kinds of meetings:

[2317] **(U)** *Ibid.*, pp. 16–17.
[2318] **(U)** Email, Hagan to Manafort and Gates, June 9, 2016 (DJTFP00022347–22349).
[2319] **(U)** Kushner Tr., p. 36.
[2320] **(U)** Kushner Tr. II, p. 33.
[2321] **(U)** Trump Jr. Tr., p. 123. Michael Cohen told the Committee that, in his opinion: "The reason why Jared and Manafort were in that meeting is because Mr. Trump would never have allowed Junior to be in that meeting by himself. Mr. Trump was very quick to tell everybody that he thinks Don Jr. has the worst judgement of anyone he's ever met in the world. And I can assure you that when that meeting, conversation, took place, that Mr. Trump turned around and said: Make sure that Jared and Paul are part of the meeting. Because he would never let Don Jr. handle that meeting by himself." Cohen Tr. II, p. 376; Cohen's statement is notable only because of the access he had to the individuals involved, including Trump, at the time of meeting. The Committee did not find information that corroborate's Cohen's statement, and did find information that contradicts it.
[2322] **(U)** Trump Jr. Tr., p. 124.

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Some meetings that we expected would be worthless turned out to be phenomenal and some of the meetings we thought would be phenomenal turned out to be worthless. But we figured it out at the end of the day. And we, I think again, by running a very entrepreneurial campaign, we looked at a lot of different things and then tried to come up with new ways to make things happen.[2323]

iii. (U) The Events of June 9, 2016[2324]

(U) On the morning of June 9, 2016, Anatoli Samochornov, the interpreter, met Veselnitskaya at her hotel in New York. During their drive downtown, Samochornov learned that they would be meeting with Trump Jr. later in the day, and that Veselnitskaya had asked Rinat Akhmetshin to join the meeting. Veselnitskaya, who was on a phone call, handed Samochornov one of her phones and asked him to translate and transcribe a text message, which she dictated, asking that Akhmetshin be added to the meeting. Samochornov did not know to whom the text message was being sent.[2325]

(U) Samochornov told the Committee:

I wasn't told anything. I was only told: I have a meeting with Donald Trump Junior. It was a pretty busy day because between the appellate court and the meeting, that really—there wasn't sort of a lot of time for social chit-chat kind of thing. So it was really busy. And she tended to work on—she had several phones, so she tended to work her phones quite extensively, and calling to Russia. So very often she did her thing and I was with her, but I was on my phone. Kind of we were not engaged in any kind of conversation. So in the car ride, I remember that that was when I learned that there was going to be a meeting, and I remember typing the message to add Mr. Akhmetshin. . . . Sometimes she would tell me what would be the schedule. Other times she would just ask me to come at 9:00 a.m. at the hotel and I would not know the specific agenda. And her schedule changed a lot. That particular day, I was just told to come for a specific time, specific place.[2326]

[2323] (U) Kushner Tr., p. 37.

[2324] (U) As previously noted, there are significant discrepancies in the memories of the participants in the June 9, 2016, meeting on a range of issues, including basic facts like who was present and what language was spoken. The Committee was often unable to reconcile these numerous discrepancies, in part due to a lack of documentary evidence. Where possible the Committee has endeavored to note the inconsistencies.

[2325] (U) Samochornov Tr., pp. 44–48.

[2326] (U) Samochornov Tr., pp. 46–47.

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(U) Samochornov said he was surprised when he was informed that they would be meeting with Trump Jr., and that it was "unusual."[2327]

(U) Separately, on the morning of June 9, Akhmetshin took the Acela Amtrak train from Washington, D.C., to New York City. He told the Committee he planned to be in New York to attend a play. After checking in at his hotel, he remembered receiving a call from Veselnitskaya asking him to join her for lunch.[2328] According to Akhmetshin, "She said, 'can you come?' I knew that—she said: 'I want to discuss something important.' The fact that she didn't say it on the phone, I thought that was something that was important and I understood, and I came."[2329]

(U) Samochornov told the Committee that Veselnitskaya wanted to go to a particular restaurant, which is close to Trump Tower, for lunch.[2330] At the lunch they were joined by Irakli Kaveladze and possibly Akhmetshin.[2331] It was Samochornov's understanding that Kaveladze was meeting the other participants for the first time, and that he worked for Russian associates of Trump and Trump's family.[2332]

(U) Kaveladze's flight to New York arrived around 7:00 a.m. on June 9, and after checking in at his hotel, he waited for the lunch with Veselnitskaya. The Trump Tower meeting, and the lunch meeting prior to it, was the only purpose for Kaveladze's trip to New York. At the lunch, Kaveladze was primarily concerned with reviewing the updated meeting materials that had been emailed to him by an associate of Aras Agalarov. He recalled:

> *[Veselnitskaya] was I believe 40 minutes late. She was pretty late for the meeting [at the restaurant]. . . . I know we had a very limited amount of time because, according to Mr. [Aras] Agalarov, she would have some more detailed presentation and I needed time to study it. . . . So I was a bit nervous that we're not going to have much time to read it because she was running late. Eventually she showed up. She showed up with a translator, which was news to me. I thought I would be a translator during the meeting. A gentleman named Anatoli Samochornov. Then she gave me some documents and pages and gave me 10 minutes to 15 minutes to study it, which I studied, and it was a detailed version of*

[2327] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 48.
[2328] (U) Akhmetshin Tr., pp. 24–25.
[2329] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 49.
[2330] (U) Multiple participants recalled the lunch meeting taking place at Nello, a restaurant in New York.
[2331] (U) Kaveladze had a specific memory of meeting Akhmetshin after lunch, on the way to Trump Tower, but not at the restaurant. However, Akhmetshin had a specific memory of meeting the group at the restaurant. Akhmetshin's recollection is consistent with Samochornov's.
[2332] (U) Samochornov Tr., pp. 48–50.

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that initial. There was no new information, which kind of calmed me down because I realized there's none of those bad things which I was afraid of.[2333]

(U) Kaveladze said that the "bad things" that he was concerned about related to the "negative information on Hillary Clinton" that he had heard of from Beniaminov. However, Kaveladze said the updated document was about the Magnitsky Act and contained more details about William Browder, not about Clinton.[2334] Kaveladze recalled that the document he reviewed was 10-11 pages and was written in Russian.[2335]

(U) Akhmetshin remembered arriving at the restaurant as the others were finishing, and spent approximately 20 minutes there. He recalled an interaction with Veselnitskaya at the restaurant:

And she tells me: "Guess what? I'm going to see Trump Junior." I said: "Wow." I was surprised that she was able to get it. Then she said: "What do you think I should tell him?" And I tell her this whole—throughout the primaries there's a big—already the issue of U.S.-Russia relations, and there was a lot of—Hillary was obviously very negative about this stuff, and then he seems to say good things. I said that Magnitsky is perfect for this. I thought that to make Magnitsky as a campaign issue would be interesting. It really wouldn't take—it took me a few hours to figure this out. Just anyone could start looking at how this whole thing came together and figure it out, that it's a fabrication. And it would be easy, low-hanging fruit—adoption.[2336]

(U) Akhmetshin felt that he did not need to review the documents that Veselnitskaya brought with her because he assumed that they covered issues that he had heard Veselnitskaya discuss previously, and believed he was already familiar with the documents' contents.[2337] He believed that the documents were written in English. It was Akhmetshin's assumption that Veselnitskaya planned to distribute these documents at the upcoming meeting.[2338]

[2333] (U) Kaveladze Tr., pp. 68–70.
[2334] (U) Kaveladze Tr., pp. 70, 72.
[2335] (U) Senate Judiciary Committee Transcript of the Interview with Irakli Kaveladze, November 3, 2017.
[2336] (U) Although Akhmetshin seemed to suggest that the linkage between Clinton and Magnitsky themes originated with him at the lunch, this is inconsistent with timing of the meeting materials prepared on May 31, 2016, which already mentioned the Clinton Campaign. Akhmetshin Tr., pp. 50–51.
[2337] (U) Regarding the source of Veselnitskaya's information, Akhmetshin told the Committee: "I assume that she used professional help in obtaining this information. There are numerous—I believe that she used—there are many, many private intelligence, due diligence firms. My understanding is the majority of information comes from cyber, so there are firms who just specialize in cyber, cyber and corporate entities. So I don't think she's capable, although I learned not to assume anything these days." Akhmetshin Tr., p. 115.
[2338] (U) Akhmetshin Tr., pp. 53–54, 57–58.

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(U) Samochornov recalled that because everyone at the lunch spoke Russian, he was not needed as an interpreter, but participated in the conversation. He and Akhmetshin both remembered that Browder was a focus of the lunch.[2339] Following lunch the group walked to Trump Tower.[2340]

(U) At Trump Tower the group met Goldstone.[2341] Goldstone was meeting Veselnitskaya, Akhmetshin, and Samochornov for the first time. Kaveladze and Goldstone knew each other because Kaveladze worked for Aras Agalarov and Goldstone worked for Emin Agalarov, but they were not close. Kaveladze said that Goldstone had previously spoken of Goldstone's relationship with, and access to, the Trump family. Given Goldstone's role in arranging the 2013 Miss Universe contest in Moscow, which Trump was involved in, Kaveladze believed Goldstone. Kaveladze stated, "Besides, after that email [to Donald Trump Jr.], after what I saw, the three key figures of the Republican Party electoral campaign attending a meeting with some strange lawyer, yes, that definitely made me believe in the power of Rob Goldstone, believe me."[2342]

(U) After very brief introductions in the lobby of Trump Tower, the group, led by Goldstone, went through security and up to the 25th floor. Only Goldstone's identification was requested.[2343] Goldstone did not intend to stay for the meeting, but recalled that after Trump Jr. arrived and Goldstone made introductions, "I said: 'I'm leaving.' And he looked at me and he goes: 'You don't need to leave; just sit, and you'll take them out at the end,'" and Goldstone agreed.[2344]

(U) According to Samochornov:

> *There is a lobby and it's kind of a glass wall that separates the lobby from the conference room. We were met there in the lobby and ushered into the conference room pretty much straightaway. . . . I remember that the room had a glass wall and it is a corner room that overlooks Fifth Avenue and 57th Street.*

[2339] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 53; Samochornov Tr., p. 50.
[2340] (U) Kaveladze recalled Akhmetshin joining the group during the walk from lunch to Trump Tower. Kaveladze had previously been unaware that Samochornov and Akhmetshin would be joining the meeting, and attempted to notify Goldstone of the additions to the group not knowing that Veselnitskaya had already communicated these requests to Goldstone directly. Kaveladze Tr., pp. 70–71, 87.
[2341] (U) Goldstone Tr., p. 191–192.
[2342] (U) Kaveladze Tr., pp. 58, 73–74.
[2343] (U) Kaveladze Tr., p. 88; Goldstone Tr., p. 193; Samochornov Tr., p. 54. Akhmetshin also remembers not presenting any identification; however, he remembers meeting Goldstone after taking the elevator up. Akhmetshin Tr., p. 65.
[2344] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 194.

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And I believe there was a table either throughout the perimeter of the room or it was kind of a . . . horseshoe table. But it was square. There were no corners. And there were two entrances into the room, the left and the right. I recall us entering through the left side, and we were met by Donald Trump Junior and I believe Mr. Manafort, and exchanged cards, exchanged pleasantries, and we were sat down . . . Mr. Akhmetshin, Ms. Veselnitskaya, and myself sat to the left side, facing—with our backs to the wall, facing 57th Street and the other side of the table. Mr. Donald Trump Junior and Mr. Manafort were at the head of the table.[2345]

(U) Samochornov recalled that Kushner sat across the table.[2346]

(U) According to Goldstone:

[W]e were introduced there [in the large conference room at Trump Tower]. I'd never met Jared Kushner or Paul Manafort before, so we were introduced and seated. And I sat next to Jared Kushner on one side, the Russian grouping sat on the other side, and at the head of the table was Don and Paul Manafort. . . . At first it was "How do you do" and nods, and then the Russian grouping introduced themselves and who they are and what they are.[2347]

(U) Irakli Kaveladze recalled that Goldstone and he were not introduced to the group. He also said that the Trump Campaign participants were not introduced. Veselnitskaya "introduced herself as a private attorney," Akhmetshin was introduced "as a lobbyist and proponent of the anti-Magnitsky Act actions," and Samochornov was introduced "as a translator."[2348]

(U) Several participants, on both sides of the meeting, told the Committee they were surprised by the size of the group. Akhmetshin had only expected Trump Jr., and not Manafort and Kushner.[2349] On the other side, Trump Jr., who had not received an updated attendance list from Goldstone, was surprised by the number of attendees who arrived with Veselnitskaya.[2350]

[2345] **(U)** Samochornov Tr., pp. 57–58. While in some respects Samochornov's memory is specific, the Committee notes that he also stated, "I do not remember Mr. Kaveladze or Mr. Goldstone at that meeting. I do remember that there were other people there. My recollection was that there were eight, maybe more, people." *Ibid.*, p. 58.
[2346] **(U)** Samochornov Tr., pp. 57–58.
[2347] **(U)** Goldstone Tr., p. 195.
[2348] **(U)** Senate Judiciary Committee Transcript of the Interview with Irakli Kaveladze, November 3, 2017, pp. 39–42.
[2349] **(U)** Akhmetshin Tr., p. 71.
[2350] **(U)** Trump Jr. Tr., p. 131.

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(U) Akhmetshin told the Committee that after the introductions and some brief small talk, which included congratulations on securing the nomination, the meeting got underway. Trump Jr. remembered that the 4:00 p.m. meeting generally started on time.[2351] Akhmetshin recalled that Trump Jr. "was very courteous, very polite, I would say. He asked Ms. Veselnitskaya: So, what brings you here? We hear you have some important information for the campaign."[2352]

(U) According to Samochornov:

> *Then Ms. Veselnitskaya took the floor and she delivered a speech which I interpreted, which I think lasted for maybe three or four minutes.*[2353] *And she talked about the research that she had uncovered as part of her research in Mr. Browder, and her allegation was that the Ziff brothers, who are U.S. investors who I believe now are U.K. investors, that they were Mr. Browder's investors and that they laundered money and did not pay taxes in Russia and the United States.*[2354] *She said that they were contributors either to the Democratic National Committee or to Hillary Clinton.*[2355]

(U) Samochornov told the Committee that he had heard Veselnitskaya present this information previously, to the law firm Cozen O'Connor, and that Samochornov found it to be "completely unconvincing."[2356] Trump Jr. told the Committee:

> *She started talking about—again, it was a little hard to tell because it wasn't making all that much sense to me. And I don't know if that's because there wasn't much there or because it was being lost in translation. But she started talking essentially about some people who are American businesspeople, that were large contributors to either Hillary Clinton or the DNC, and how they were also doing business in Russia and somehow managing to avoid paying taxes, something to that effect, in either location, in Russia and-or the United States.*[2357]

[2351] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 147.
[2352] (U) Akhmetshin Tr., p. 76.
[2353] (U) Kaveladze told the Committee that Veselnitskaya spoke for no more than 15 minutes, which with translation was 22 or 23 minutes. Kaveladze Tr., p. 98.
[2354] (U) Veselnitskaya Tr., p. 57. Goldstone recalled Veselnitskaya "reading from something or looking at some notes" during her presentation, and Veselnitskaya told the Committee, "I prepared the Russian text on May 31, 2016 . . . this document dated May 31, it very clearly states every single word that I was sharing verbally." The May 31 document referenced by Veselnitskaya was provided to the Senate Judiciary Committee. Goldstone Tr., p. 201.
[2355] (U) Samochornov Tr., p. 58. There was inconsistency among some of the participants regarding what language Veselnitskaya was speaking. *See ibid.*, pp. 19, 58; Kaveladze Tr., p. 201; Kushner Tr., p. 45.
[2356] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 63.
[2357] (U) Trump Jr. Tr., p. 133.

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(U) Though Trump Jr. didn't recall specific questions being asked by the Campaign participants in the meeting, he told the Committee that, "I do imagine there were questions asked to say, what exactly are you getting at or saying?"[2358]

(U) Akhmetshin told the Committee that, regarding Veselnitskaya's presentation, "Junior said: 'That's very interesting, but so could you show how money goes to Hillary's campaign? Do you think it goes to Hillary's campaign or just DNC?' He said: 'Could you show us how the money goes to Hillary's campaign?'"[2359] Veselnitskaya recalled that Trump Jr., "asked a clarifying question, whether I had the financial records indicating that the particular funds that were obtained . . . in the United States were transferred directly to Clinton Foundation."[2360] When Veselnitskaya said that she did not have more information to share, and suggested that the Campaign continue its own research on the topic, Akhmetshin recalled, "I could tell the light kind of went out of their eyes. They said, 'ah,' and kind of like they checked out from this whole thing."[2361]

(U) Multiple participants described a growing level of both frustration and disengagement from the Campaign participants over the course of the meeting.

(U) Kaveladze told the Committee:

> *I was sitting between Mr. Kushner and Mr. Manafort and at some point of time Mr. Kushner looked very aggravated, very unhappy he was present there. He asked a question. I don't know exactly how the question sounded, but the purpose of the question was: 'Why are we here? Why are we listening to this Magnitsky Act story?' So she then produced this whole Ziff Brothers, and she continued with this vertical of ownership and they might be funding Hillary Clinton's campaign as well; 'I know they're strong supporters and donors of Democratic Party.*[2362]

(U) Similarly, Goldstone recalled:

> *Then Jared said: 'I have no idea what you're talking about,' or words to that effect. 'What are you saying? Can you be more specific? I don't understand.'*

[2358] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 134.
[2359] (U) Akhmetshin Tr., pp. 77–78.
[2360] (U) Veselnitskaya Tr., p. 57.
[2361] (U) Akhmetshin Tr., pp. 77–78. Kaveladze recalled that Akhmetshin, rather than Veselnitskaya, suggested that the Campaign continue researching the topic. Senate Judiciary Committee Transcript of the Interview with Irakli Kaveladze, November 3, 2017, p. 45.
[2362] (U) Kaveladze Tr., p. 89. Veselnitskaya did not recall Kushner saying anything during the meeting. Veselnitskaya Tr., p. 43.

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And she began the exact same presentation again, as if almost reading off a script . . . The exact same thing . . . The first bit, the alleged information she had about Hillary or funding. We just heard what she was now saying again.[2363]

(U) Samochornov has stated that Veselnitskaya believed the information about donations could act as a "carrot." Samochornov believed that Veselnitskaya wanted to provide information of benefit to both parties that could also advance her advocacy against the Magnitsky Act. Samochornov said Veselnitskaya's focus at the meeting was on the Magnitsky Act, not adoptions.[2364]

(U) Manafort has said that Veselnitskaya suggested that Trump call for the repeal of the Magnitsky Act, which she said hurt U.S.-Russia relations. Manafort also said that Veselnitskaya offered to push to lift the Russian restriction on adoptions in exchange for Trump calling for the repeal of the Magnitsky Act.[2365]

(U) Samochornov recalled that Manafort seemed unimpressed by Veselnitskaya's allegation regarding the Ziff brothers being donors to either Clinton or to the DNC. Samochornov told the Committee, "Mr. Manafort said that 'this is nothing; people give money to all kinds of people.' Here [Veselnitskaya] kind of stumbled and she didn't know how to continue. I remember Mr. Manafort pretty much tuning out of the meeting, and I think was looking at his phone. But he was seated sort of half-turned around to her."[2366]

(U) Akhmetshin recalled that Veselnitskaya then changed topics: "Then she said: 'But you know, because of that, adoptions.' And then she goes through another five minutes on adoption stuff."[2367]

(U) Sensing that the meeting was not going well, Akhmetshin stepped in.[2368] "Then I felt like already people are uncomfortable, people checking their phones, typing on things. And I feel like I need to just cut in this thing."[2369] Samochornov told the Committee:

Then Mr. Akhmetshin took the floor and [in English] he talked about the foundation [HRAGI] and the fact that there is this chance. If there is an

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[2363] (U) Goldstone Tr., p. 198.
[2364] (U) FBI, FD-302, Samochornov 7/12/2017.
[2365] (U) FBI, FD-302, Manafort 9/11/2018.
[2366] (U) Samochornov Tr., p. 59. Veselnitskaya did not recall Manafort saying anything during the meeting. Veselnitskaya Tr., p. 59.
[2367] (U) Akhmetshin Tr., p. 78.
[2368] (U) *See* Samochornov Tr., p. 59 (recalling Akhmetshin speaking for 10 or 15 minutes); Akhmetshin Tr., p. 78 (recalling speaking for 90 seconds). *But see* Goldstone Tr., p. 204 (not recalling Akhmetshin speaking).
[2369] (U) Akhmetshin Tr., p. 78.

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independent review, then there is a possibility that the Russians would release those children that they are taking hostage, and that there could be a thaw in the relationship.[2370]

(U) Trump Jr. recalled this shift in direction:

That's sort of again when they went into, transitioned into: "Well, you may be aware that you can't adopt Russian children anymore and that's a big thing for American people." . . . It was sort of—it was: "Well, okay, forget about that; you should really help with this because it's a sentimental thing that affects many American families; you may have heard of it."[2371]

(U) At 4:26 p.m., Kushner sent Manafort a text message, writing only "Waste of time."[2372] At 4:27 p.m., Kushner emailed one of his assistants with only the subject line, "Pls call my cell." Shortly after that, at 4:29 p.m., Kushner emailed a different assistant, this time with the subject line, "Can u pls call me on my cell? Need excuse to get out of meeting."[2373] Kushner told the Committee:

It wasn't because they were discussing anything that was inappropriate. Just again we were operating at that point in time with more things to do than time to do it. So when you get to something that didn't seem like it was productive, I just tried to bail out so I could get to a lot of the other responsibilities that I had.[2374]

Trump Jr. said Kushner left a little more than halfway through the meeting to take a phone call.[2375]

(U) Manafort told the Committee that he was also considering leaving the meeting early once it shifted from Veselnitskaya's initial presentation, but felt he could not after Kushner departed. He recalled that, on the way out, Kushner said to him, "This is a waste of time."[2376]

[2370] (U) Samochornov Tr., p. 59.
[2371] (U) Trump Jr. Tr., p. 135.
[2372] (U) Text message Kushner to Manafort, June 9, 2016 (NSSCI00000145). Manafort replied to Kushner, "Yes." Text message Manafort to Kushner, June 9, 2016 (NSSCI00000145).
[2373] (U) Email, Kushner to Vargas, June 9, 2016 (NSSCI00000019–00000020).
[2374] (U) Kushner Tr., p. 35.
[2375] (U) Trump Jr. Tr., pp. 137, 151. Kaveladze did not recall Kushner leaving early. Kaveladze Tr., p. 97.
[2376] (U) Manafort Tr., p. 14.

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(U) Manafort said the meeting continued for five to ten minutes after Kushner left.[2377] Kaveladze recalled how the meeting concluded:

> *I remember the ending, Donald Trump Junior basically saying that: "Look, we're at the electoral stage; we're not there yet; we don't know if we'll ever win this campaign; if we win the campaign, we could get back to the topic and continue this topic, continue discussion; but at this point we're busy with other things, we're in the electoral campaign." So he politely stopped the meeting.*[2378]

(U) Trump Jr. told the Committee:

> *I think it became pretty apparent to me once they made that transition that this was a way for them to lobby me about some sort of policy. We listened for a few minutes, said it has nothing to do with us, we left. Rob Goldstone apologized to me on the way out. . . . The meeting really wasn't about anything that he said it was going to be about.*[2379]

(U) It is not clear what time the meeting ended, though based on the memories of the participants it likely lasted about 30 minutes.[2380] The participants in the meeting had inconsistent memories regarding what portion of the meeting was dedicated to Veselnitskaya's presentation

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[2377] (U) Manafort took notes on his phone during the meeting. The iCloud file associated with Manafort's notes was last modified at 4:28 p.m. on June 9, 2016. Manafort told the Committee, "I stopped taking notes when they started talking about Russian adoptions." Manafort Tr., pp. 14, 21, 36; Manafort's notes from the meeting consisted of the following: "Bill browder / Offshore – Cyprus / 133m shares / Companies / Not invest – loan / Value in Cyprus as inter / Illici [should be "Illicit," according to Manafort] / Active sponsors of RNC / Browder hired Joanna Glover [Should be, "Juleanna Glover," according to Manafort] / Tied into Cheney / Russian adoption by American families." Notes, Manafort (PJM-SSCI-00000306-307).

[2378] (U) Kaveladze Tr., p. 99. Veselnitskaya recalled, "He [Trump Jr.] said: Your story is very interesting. It can be very exciting. And when or if we come to power, maybe we will get back to that exciting story. But at the current phase, there is nothing that I can help you with and there is nothing that I can recommend to you. That was all. That was how the meeting ended, and we exchanged the very common pleasantries and we parted." Veselnitskaya Tr., pp. 62–63.

[2379] (U) Trump Jr. Tr., pp. 138–139.

[2380] (U) Samochornov had a specific memory of when the meeting ended. He told the Committee, "I remember—here's a funny thing. I don't typically wear a watch, but that day I did. And I remember that when we went down [to the lobby after the meeting] it was 25 minutes after the hour [4:25 p.m.], and I remember the reason it stuck in my mind is I thought that was quick." Samochornov Tr., p. 60. This recollection does not align with the timing of Kushner's emails to his assistants, and may be incorrect. Veselnitskaya told the Committee the meeting could have gone as long as 30 to 40 minutes, due to the simultaneous translation. Veselnitskaya Tr., p. 60. Kaveladze has also estimated the total meeting time, with translation, being in that range. Kaveladze Tr., p. 97; FBI, FD-302, Kaveladze 11/16/2017.

[redacted]

[redacted]

on the Ziff brothers, the DNC, and Clinton, and what portion was taken by the Magnitsky Act, Browder, and Russian adoptions.[2381]

(U) Despite the documents that Veselnitskaya brought with her to the lunch, which she may have read from during her presentation, the meeting participants did not recall any documents being distributed or received at the meeting.[2382]

(U) Kaveladze recalled that, as the group was leaving the conference room, they ran into Ivanka Trump by chance: "We walk out into reception area. We're being greeted by Ivanka Trump. She said hello to everybody. We said hello to her. . . . She was just there. She said hello. So we passed by her, go to elevator, go downstairs. . . ."[2383]

(U) Participants on both sides of the meeting felt the meeting had not met expectations.

(U) Goldstone immediately called Emin Agalarov to tell him that the meeting was embarrassing and that it had been about adoption, which surprised Agalarov.[2384] Goldstone recalled apologizing to Trump Jr. as they were walking out of the meeting. Goldstone said that "allegedly there [was] going to be some big smoking gun," and that "I'd been told by my client that this person had damaging information, basically, about Hillary Clinton and funding and the DNC," but the meeting failed to deliver that, which embarrassed Goldstone.[2385]

(U) Kaveladze, in an email to a family member several days later, stated that "[the] meeting was boring. The Russians did not have any bad info [on] Hillary."[2386] Kaveladze said he believed repeal of the Magnitsky Act was the "true agenda" of the meeting, not adoption issues.[2387] Kaveladze told the Committee, "Look, [the Campaign participants] certainly were not

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[2381] (U) Trump Jr. estimated that it was about evenly divided. Trump Jr. Tr., p. 148. Manafort recalled, "It was a very disconcerting—dysfunctional conversation. Every one of these points until the last point related to Browder, and they were attacking Browder. Most of the conversation was attacking the character of Browder. They were trying to make him into a criminal businessman and therefore the Magnitsky Act was created to protect a lawyer for a criminal." Manafort Tr., pp. 20–21.

[2382] (U) *See, e.g.*, Manafort Tr., p. 28; Samochornov Tr., p. 66; Trump Jr. Tr., p. 148.

[2383] (U) Kaveladze Tr., p. 105.

[2384] (U) Goldstone Tr., pp. 208–209.

[2385] (U) Goldstone Tr., pp. 207–208. Despite Goldstone being embarrassed, as the meeting participants were walking out of the room, Goldstone recalled approaching Trump Jr. and Manafort again regarding VK. Goldstone said, "By the way, I have a friend who works for VK [VKontakte], which is Russia's version of Facebook, wants to know who the best person to send a project idea for Mr. Trump would be." According to Goldstone, he was told Dan Scavino was the best point of contact. *Ibid.*, p. 211. Trump Jr. told the Committee he does not recall this interaction. Trump Jr. Tr., p. 385-389.

[2386] (U) Email, Kaveladze to [A. Kaveladze], June 14, 2016. (KAVELADZE00227).

[2387] (U) Kaveladze Tr., pp. 123-124.

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interested in the Magnitsky law. I think the reason they were present in that room was Rob Goldstone's [email]. They were certainly expecting something else, which they didn't get."[2388]

(U) Manafort and Kushner both recalled speaking to Trump Jr. after the meeting. Manafort told the Committee, "at some point, either that night or the next day, I told Don: That was a total waste of time. And he agreed."[2389] Kushner, who also characterized the meeting as a "waste of time" recalled, "Don and I joked about it after. We said, 'hey, that was kind of funny.' But then you just move forward."[2390] Kushner told the Committee, "Sometimes you take high-probability meetings and sometimes you take low-probability meetings. Sometimes things come in, sometimes they don't."[2391]

(U) Akhmetshin recalled, "I felt a little awkward there [at the meeting]. Everyone, I think they expected something and she expected something, and none of their expectations materialized."[2392] Regarding the Campaign participants' motivations, he said, "I think they wanted to hear about the money. I don't think they cared a bit about this whole adoption stuff."[2393]

(U) Samochornov told the Committee, "Ms. Veselnitskaya did not get what she came there for."[2394] Veselnitskaya echoed that assessment: "I've come to a pre-scheduled meeting with Mr. Donald Trump Junior. And in my memory, everything that still remains in my memory from that meeting is only absolute and total disappointment with the meeting."[2395]

(U) Goldstone recalled that, following the meeting, he spoke to Kaveladze and said: "'This was really embarrassing.' And he was like: 'I know Mr. A [Agalarov] wanted it.' . . . Emin and he both said the same continually: 'I know you didn't want to do this, I know you didn't want to set it up, but Mr. A[galarov] really wanted it, and it's fine.'"[2396] Goldstone also recalled, "I'd said either pre-or post-meeting to Emin, probably Emin, that: 'This is a pretty big favor; I hope it was worth it to your father. Whether that was a favor for us to ask or somebody asking him a favor, it was a pretty big favor.'"[2397]

[2388] (U) Kaveladze Tr., p. 100.
[2389] (U) Manafort Tr., p. 14.
[2390] (U) Kushner Tr., p. 43.
[2391] (U) Kushner Tr. II, p. 45.
[2392] (U) Akhmetshin Tr., p. 80.
[2393] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 95.
[2394] (U) Samochornov Tr., p. 86.
[2395] (U) Veselnitskaya Tr., p. 38.
[2396] (U) Goldstone Tr., p. 214.
[2397] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 217.

[redacted]

[redacted]

(U) Once the meeting was over, the participants generally parted ways. Goldstone went home. Veselnitskaya, Samochornov, Akhmetshin, and Kaveladze went briefly to a bar in Trump Tower for a drink. Samochornov told the Committee:

> *Ms. Veselnitskaya was very disappointed in the meeting. She said something along the lines: 'That was it?' Mr. Akhmetshin and Mr. Kaveladze were trying to tell her: 'Well, you informed them about the issue; this is good; they know about the issue.' So they were kind of telling her something comforting and conciliatory. We had a couple of drinks, and Mr. Kaveladze left first and Mr. Akhmetshin left second. Then I believe that was the end of that drink situation.*[2398]

(U) Kaveladze also recalled the visit to the bar after the meeting:

> *So we had like a maybe 15-minute conversation, during which I received a call from Mr. [Aras] Agalarov and he asked me, 'how did it go?' And I said 'it went well.' And she said—and Natalia asked me if I could hand her the phone, and so I handed her the phone, and she thanked him. She said: 'Thank you, thank you, great; it was wonderful; it's all good information, good news.' Later I'm going to have a second call with Mr. Agalarov without Natalia present and tell him 'this whole thing was a disaster and a loss of time,' so I was more open. Obviously, with them in the picture I couldn't say those things.*[2399]

(U) That night, Akhmetshin, Samochornov, and Veselnitskaya attended a Russian play in New York that featured one of Akhmetshin's relatives.[2400] Kaveladze had already seen the play in Moscow and highly recommended it.[2401]

6. (U) Subsequent Events and Communications

(U) On June 10, 2016, Goldstone emailed Rhona Graff to inform her that "Emin and Aras have a fairly sizable birthday gift for Mr. Trump" and asked how it should be delivered. Graff responded that it would likely have to be delivered through the basement for security screening.[2402]

[2398] (U) Samochornov Tr., pp. 69–70.
[2399] (U) Kaveladze Tr., p. 106. Kaveladze has said that Veselnitskaya and Akhmetshin seemed "kind of happy" after the meeting. Kaveladze did not tell the Committee this, and it is not consistent with accounts from other witnesses. FBI, FD-302, Kaveladze 11/16/2017.
[2400] (U) Veselnitskaya Tr., p. 42.
[2401] (U) Kaveladze Tr., p. 106.
[2402] (U) Emails, Goldstone and Graff, June 10, 2016 (RG000082).

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(U) Roman Beniaminov told the Committee that Aras Agalarov instructed him to deliver the gift, a painting, with Goldstone's assistance.[2403] Emin Agalarov's personal assistant arranged for the painting and two others to be brought into the United States from Russia in a "giant box."[2404] Jason Tropea told the Committee that the Agalarovs using staff to carry packages into the United States is not typical, and that, "We've never flown paintings in before."[2405] Beniaminov recalled that the painting was "pretty big" and measured four or five feet tall.[2406] The box containing the paintings did not fit in the vehicle that had initially been rented to transport it and ultimately required a larger rental truck for the delivery.[2407]

(U) On June 13, 2016, Beniaminov emailed Graff, copying Goldstone and Tropea to coordinate the delivery of one of the paintings.[2408] Shortly thereafter, Beniaminov and Tropea delivered the painting, depicted below, to Trump Tower.[2409] Emails between Graff and a U.S. Secret Service agent on June 13 indicate that the painting was to be held in the sub-cellar after delivery so that it could be screened by security later that night or the following morning.[2410] Beniaminov told the Committee that he delivered the painting directly to Graff in her office.[2411]

[2403] (U) Beniaminov Tr., p. 48.
[2404] (U) Beniaminov Tr., p. 266. Beniaminov believed the painting was delivered as part of checked luggage, explain that "[t]here's no way you could bring that on board. You'd probably have to strap it to the top of the plane." Beniaminov Tr., p. 267.
[2405] (U) Tropea Tr., p. 106.
[2406] (U) Beniaminov Tr., p. 267.
[2407] (U) FBI, FD-302, Beniaminov 1/6/2018.
[2408] (U) Email, Beniaminov to Graff, et al., June 13, 2016 (RG000084).
[2409] (U) Image (DJTJR00500); Tropea Tr., p. 104.
[2410] (U) Email, Graff to [redacted], et al., June 13, 2016 (TRUMPORG_16_000274-275).
[2411] (U) Beniaminov Tr., pp. 263–264. Beniaminov's communications support this. Several months after the delivery, Beniaminov texted Goldstone to say that he had "brought the painting into her [Graff's] office…In to the actual office on the top floor, around the corner from Mr Trumps." *See* Texts messages, Goldstone and Beniaminov, October 11, 2016 (RB001153–1154). Graff only had a vague recollection of the painting being delivered after reviewing documents related to it. Alan Garten, the General Counsel of the Trump Organization, informed the Committee that he later "commandeered" the painting. Graff Tr., pp. 63–65.

[redacted]

[redacted]



(U) A personal note from Emin and Aras Agalarov was attached to the back of the painting.[2412]

[2412] (U) Handwritten note (DJTJR00501); Tropea Tr., p. 104.

[redacted]

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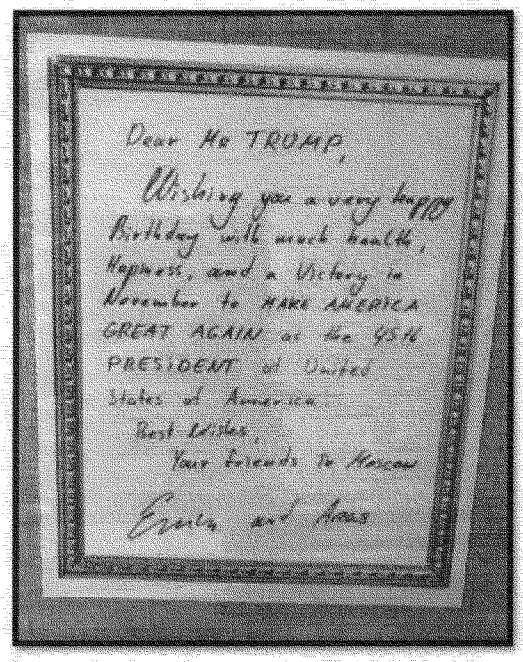

(U) Beniaminov told the Committee that the painting was part of a series of three paintings that made up a complete set. Beniaminov recalled Aras Agalarov calling him to identify the painting to be delivered first and instructing him to hold the remaining paintings, saying that "the following birthday we'll give [Trump] the next one, and the following birthday we'll give the next one."[2413] The two additional paintings, depicted below, were never delivered to Trump.[2414]

[2413] **(U)** Beniaminov Tr., pp. 267–268.
[2414] **(U)** Email, Scott Balber to SSCI, April 30, 2018; Tropea Tr., pp. 105–106.

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(U) Goldstone told the Committee that he believed the paintings were purchased in Russia, and that he was told the value of the three paintings was $100,000.[2415]

(U) On June 14, 2016, Goldstone emailed Graff, writing that he trusted that his colleagues "were able to deliver the birthday painting for Mr. Trump today" and asking her to "[p]lease pass on my sincere birthday good wishes along with those of Emin and Aras and as always thank you for all your help."[2416] Graff responded to Goldstone by confirming the painting's delivery, describing the painting as "truly quite magnificent." Graff relayed to Goldstone that although Trump had been in meetings all day, she hoped to show it to him before he left for a campaign trip, stating that he "will be very pleased with it." Graff also told Goldstone that she would "make sure to have it displayed in a very prominent location."[2417]

(U) Also on June 14, Goldstone emailed Emin Agalarov and Kaveladze and attached a *CNN* article titled, "Russian hackers stole Dems' Trump files, firm says."[2418] Goldstone wrote:

From:	Rob Goldstone [redacted] on behalf of Rob Goldstone
Sent:	Tuesday, June 14, 2016 10:09 AM
To:	emin agalarov; Ike
Subject:	Breaking news
Attachments:	image1.PNG; _.txt

Top story right now - seems eerily weird based on our Trump meeting last week with the Russian lawyers etc

(U) Later on June 14, at 10:22 a.m., Kaveladze replied, only to Goldstone, writing, "Very interesting."[2419]

(U) Goldstone told the Committee:

[2415] (U) Goldstone Tr., p. 276. Goldstone told the Committee that he believed that Beniaminov told him the value of the paintings. Beniaminov told the Committee that he did not know the value of the painting that was delivered. Beniaminov Tr., p. 265.

[2416] (U) Email, Goldstone to Graff, June 14, 2016 (RG000086). Other emails between Graff and Beniaminov indicate that the painting may have been delivered on June 13. Email, Graff to Taddoni, et al., June 13, 2016 (TRUMPORG_16_000275).

[2417] (U) Email, Graff to Goldstone, June 14, 2016 (RG000086). Graff told the Committee that she did not think that Trump hung the painting in his office. Graff Tr., p. 65.

[2418] (U) Email, Goldstone to E. Agalarov and Kaveladze, June 14, 2016 (KAVELADZE00027–00028); Tal Kopan, "Russian hackers stole Dems' Trump files, firm says," *CNN*, June 14, 2016.

[2419] (U) Email, Kaveladze to Goldstone, June 14, 2016 (KAVELADZE00224).

[redacted]

[redacted]

I was watching a CNN broadcast and suddenly they flash up something about Russia and hacking and emails and the DNC. And I look at CNN and I see "Russia" and the "DNC." And I think: Well, that's odd. Didn't I just organize a meeting where allegedly somebody was going to talk about Russia? But my one talked about adoption, so I think that's eerily weird. So the person I send that to was Ike. I think I sent something similar to Emin as well at some point. I may have sent him a text that said: This is so odd, that a couple of weeks or a week after we have a meeting, now this is on, Russia, DNC. Odd.[2420]

(U) Goldstone did not recall any follow up from this exchange, nor did he learn additional information regarding any possible linkage between the two events.[2421]

(U) In this same time period following the June 9, 2016 meeting in Trump Tower, Rob Goldstone had a series of communications with Shugart.

(U) Shugart told the Committee that around June 13, 2016, Goldstone called her and came up to her office.[2422] This was not unusual. During their conversation, Shugart asked Goldstone if he had seen Trump Jr. recently, and Goldstone told her that several days earlier he had had a meeting with Trump Jr. at Trump Tower. Shugart told the Committee:

He did say that he saw Don at a ridiculous meeting, where he went and they supposedly had emails from the Democrats and dirt on Hillary and then it turned out to be something about adoptions; and it was just ridiculous and it was just stupid. That's what he said to me. That was distilling down about 45 minutes of conversation.[2423]

(U) When asked, Shugart confirmed that Goldstone had specifically mentioned emails. She said that it was difficult to recall what Goldstone had said about the emails, but that:

He said 'emails.' I don't know if he identified them as 'Democrat' emails. The word 'Democrat' was in there, because there was something about Russian donors to Hillary, and I believe that was where the word 'Democrat' came. . . .

[2420] **(U)** Goldstone Tr., pp. 218–219.
[2421] **(U)** Goldstone Tr., pp. 218–219; Kaveladze Tr., pp. 108–110.
[2422] **(U)** Shugart noted that she did not remember the date of the interaction with Goldstone, she simply remembered that it was the day before she saw new reports regarding the hacking of the DNC. Shugart Tr., pp. 185-186; That story was first published on June 14, 2016. Ellen Nakashima, "Russian government hackers penetrated DNC, stole opposition research on Trump," *The Washington Post,* June 14, 2016.
[2423] **(U)** Shugart Tr., p. 184.

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But it was basically that was the dirt, was going to be Russian donors to Hillary's campaign that they had through emails.[2424]

(U) The following day, Shugart recalled seeing reports regarding the hack of the DNC and connected the news with what Goldstone had said at their meeting the day before. Shugart called Goldstone. She told the Committee, "After I saw the news report, I called Rob in 2016 and said: This sounds like what you were talking about. At which point he said: Oh, no; that meeting about the adoption, it was all—that's what it was; it was a stupid meeting. So at that point, I was led [by Rob] to believe that I didn't hear what I thought I heard."[2425]

(U) Shugart told the Committee that, "I just dropped it at that point." She and Goldstone continued to see each other regularly, but they did not have further discussions of the meeting in Trump Tower. Then, in June 2017, Alan Garten, a lawyer for the Trump Organization, contacted Goldstone and asked about the June 9, 2016, meeting. Goldstone told Shugart about Garten's outreach. Shugart recalled, "At that point I asked Rob: 'Okay, what was this meeting?' And he mentioned the adoption again. I said: 'Who was at the meeting? Why was this such a big deal?'" It was at that point, for the first time, that Goldstone told Shugart that Manafort and Kushner had participated, as well as Veselnitskaya, and Goldstone described the focus on Browder, who he had not mentioned previously. Shugart recalled, "And that's when I said to him: This sounds much bigger than what you said a year ago." Shugart confirmed her sense that Goldstone's story had changed, including from their discussion in June of 2016 when he mentioned emails, to the 2016 phone call the following day when he said the focus was on adoptions, to the 2017 phone call when he mentioned the focus on Browder.[2426]

(U) On June 17, 2016, Trump sent a personal note of thanks to Emin and Aras Agalarov regarding the painting.[2427] Goldstone appeared to transmit the letter to Emin Agalarov on June 18, 2016.[2428]

[2424] (U) Shugart Tr., pp. 199-200.

[2425] (U) The Committee notes this exchange because it is the only time that the Committee was told that emails were discussed as derogatory information at the June 9, 2016 meeting. It is noteworthy that Shugart recalls the emails being mentioned by Goldstone prior to the news of the DNC hack becoming public, and that she made the connection between the news of the DNC hack and Goldstone's account of the meeting at the time. Nevertheless, Shugart herself was not present at the meeting and noted that Goldstone is an "over-the-top personality, sometimes hard to follow." The Committee found no other evidence indicating that emails were discussed at the June 9, 2016 meeting. The Committee was ultimately not able to reconcile this discrepancy. Shugart Tr., pp. 188, 191, 197.

[2426] (U) Shugart Tr., pp. 188, 191, 197.

[2427] (U) Letter, Trump to E. Agalarov and A. Agalarov, June 17, 2016 (TRUMPORG_18_000034).

[2428] (U) Email, Goldstone to E. Agalarov, June 18, 2016 (RG000087).

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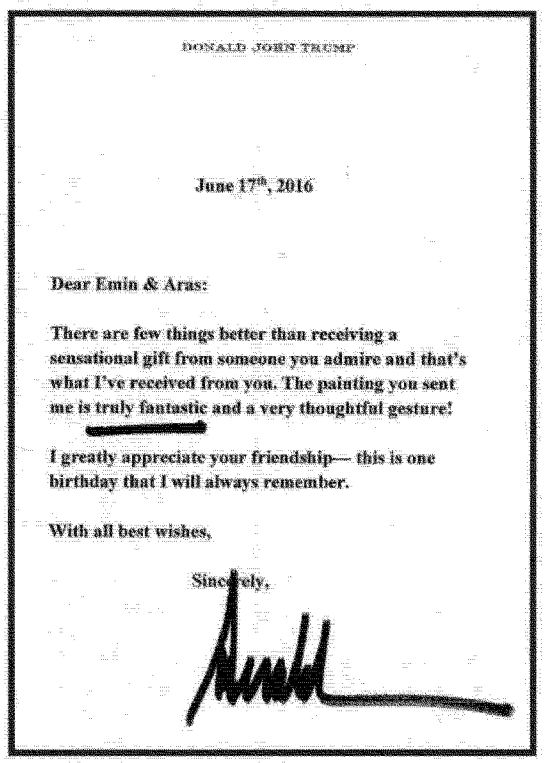

DONALD JOHN TRUMP

June 17th, 2016

Dear Emin & Aras:

There are few things better than receiving a sensational gift from someone you admire and that's what I've received from you. The painting you sent me is truly fantastic and a very thoughtful gesture!

I greatly appreciate your friendship— this is one birthday that I will always remember.

With all best wishes,

Sincerely,

(U) Following the June 9, 2016, meeting in Trump Tower and the birthday painting delivery, Goldstone continued to contact Trump Jr. and others on a range of topics. For example, on June 24, 2016, Goldstone wrote to Trump Jr. after seeing that Trump was in Scotland, stating that the Brexit vote that day "should boost your dad's campaign big time."[2429]

(U) Goldstone also attempted additional outreach to the Campaign about VK. On June 29, 2016, Goldstone emailed Dan Scavino, copying Trump Jr., Graff, and Sidorkov, reiterating

[2429] (U) Email, Goldstone to Trump Jr., June 24, 2016 (DJTJR0453).

[redacted]

[redacted]

his previous offers to create a "VOTE Trump 2016" page on the Russian social networking site. In the email, Goldstone stated that Paul Manafort "had said he would welcome it."[2430]

(U) Goldstone told the Committee that Sidorkov had been very persistant in wanting a connection with the Trump Campaign. Sidorkov had previously been helpful to Emin Agalarov, and Goldstone now wanted to be helpful to him. Goldstone was not aware of Sidorkov being directed by anyone to pursue the Trump connection, and Goldstone was unaware of Sidorkov having any connection to the Russian Government or intelligence services.[2431]

(U) On July 20, 2016, after Trump Jr.'s, speech at the Republican National Convention, Goldstone emailed him: "Greetings from Moscow where we all watched your great speech tonight[.] Congratulations to you and of course to your father."[2432] On July 27, Trump Jr. replied, "Thank you very much my friend," briefly described the experience of giving his speech, and said he hoped to hear more from Goldstone soon.[2433] Later that day, Goldstone responded by telling Trump Jr. that the Agalarovs were being inundated with press requests regarding their relationship with Donald Trump, but that they were declining requests to comment. Trump Jr. thanked Goldstone and commented that he was unconcerned about the press inquiries.[2434]

(U) On October 7, 2016, Goldstone again reached out, this time to Graff, to transmit a letter and a book from Aras Agalarov. Goldstone informed Graff via email that Aras Agalarov wanted Goldstone to deliever the letter and book that same day, "ahead of Sunday's debate."[2435] Graff advised Goldstone that once the package was received she would hand it to Trump.[2436] Later on October 7 Goldstone wrote to Graff, "The package was delivered very late, so as promised here is the scan and Roman will deliver the original along with the book from Aras to Mr. Trump on Monday."[2437] In the attached scanned letter from Aras Agalarov, which was addressed to "Donald," Agalarov wrote that "[w]ith great interest I follow your electoral campaign and cheer for your victories."[2438] Agalarov's letter then made a series of economic and trade observations and recommendations, including suggesting that Trump should promote a

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[2430] (U) Email, Goldstone to Scavino et al., June 29, 2016 (DJTJR0454). Goldstone's email to Scavino included a PDF of a Trump VK page that Sidorkov sent Goldstone. Email, Sidorkov to Goldstone, June 23, 2016 (RG000089).
[2431] (U) Goldstone Tr., p. 269.
[2432] (U) Email, Goldstone to Trump Jr., July 20, 2016 (DJTJR0457).
[2433] (U) Email, Trump Jr. to Goldstone, July 27, 2016 (DJTJR0457).
[2434] (U) Email, Goldstone to Trump Jr., July 27, 2016 (DJTJR0489); Email, Trump Jr. to Goldstone, July 27, 2016 (DJTJR0489).
[2435] (U) Email, Goldstone to Graff and Beniaminov, October 7, 2016 (DJTJR00229). Aras Agalarov's request that the materials be delivered prior to "Sunday's debate" is likely a reference to the presidential debate that took place on October 9, 2016.
[2436] (U) Email, Graff to Goldstone, October 7, 2016 (DJTJR00230).
[2437] (U) Email, Goldstone to Graff, October 7, 2016 (DJTJR00230–231).
[2438] (U) Letter, A. Agalarov to Trump, October 5, 2015 (DJTJR00232–00233).

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"Made in USA" promotion campaign to target international markets.[2439] Agalarov suggested that international trade exhibits "could become an important element of such [a] strategy" and stated that with his "27 years of trade show management experience," that a properly designed trade show strategy could "bring significant economic results."[2440] To accomplish this, Agalarov suggested that a "new organization with worldwide representation for the purpose to promote American goods and services could be formed."[2441] In a post-script, a handwritten note added, "November 8th is the day of my birthday. Your victory would be the best birthday present I have ever received."[2442]

(U) On the morning of October 14, following a number of emails between Graff, Goldstone, and Beniaminov regarding logistics and delivery timing, the book from Aras Agalarov, which was written in Russian, and the original letter, were delivered to Trump Tower via FedEx.[2443] Beniaminov recalled that the book and letter from Aras Agalarov had been flown to the United States from Russia, couriered by Kaveladze.[2444]

(U) On October 27, 2016, Goldstone emailed Trump Jr. with the subject line, "Mazal Tov on the new Hotel opening – looks amazing" and no text in the body of the email. Later that day, Donald Trump Jr. responded, writing "Thanks Rob."[2445] Goldstone's email was likely a reference to the Trump Hotel in Washington, D.C., which opened the day before.

(U) On November 5, 2016, Konstantin Sidorkov from VK again reached out to the Trump Campaign, replying to Goldstone's email to Scavino from June 29.[2446] The Committee identified no response to this email. Despite Graff and Scavino's positive initial responses regarding VK, the Committee found no evidence to indicate that any Trump Campaign action was taken on the proposal.

(U) On November 7, 2016, Goldstone emailed Trump Jr. requesting an invitation to attend an election night party with a mutual friend of Lara and Eric Trump.[2447] Later that day,

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[2439] (U) *Ibid.*
[2440] (U) *Ibid.*
[2441] (U) *Ibid.*
[2442] (U) *Ibid.*
[2443] (U) Email, Beniaminov to Graff, October 14, 2016 (DJTJR00235–00238).
[2444] (U) Beniaminov told the Committee that, due to Aras Agalarov's limited English, the letter was likely translated or dictated, but that the handwriting at the end of the letter matched Aras Agalarov's handwriting. Beniaminov Tr., p. 272.
[2445] (U) Email, Goldstone to Trump Jr., October 27, 2016 (RG000140); Email, Trump Jr. to Goldstone, (RG000140).
[2446] (U) Email, Sidorkov to Scavino, Trump Jr., Graff, and Goldstone, November 5, 2016 (RG000143).
[2447] (U) Email, Goldstone to Trump Jr., November 7, 2016 (RG000145).

[redacted]

[redacted]

Trump Jr. responded, "Sure Rob. CC'ing my asst Lindsay to coordinate for you."[2448] Trump Jr.'s assistant then added Goldstone to a VIP list as a guest.[2449] Goldstone told the Committee that he did not attend the event.[2450]

(U) On November 8, 2016, Election Day, Graff replied to an earlier email from Goldstone asking if the book and letter from Aras Agalarov had been received. Graff confirmed that the book and letter were received, and apologized for the delay in responsiveness due to it being an unusual time. She asked that Goldstone, "Please explain this to Mr. Agalarov and that Mr. Trump greatly appreciates his thoughtfulness and good wishes."[2451]

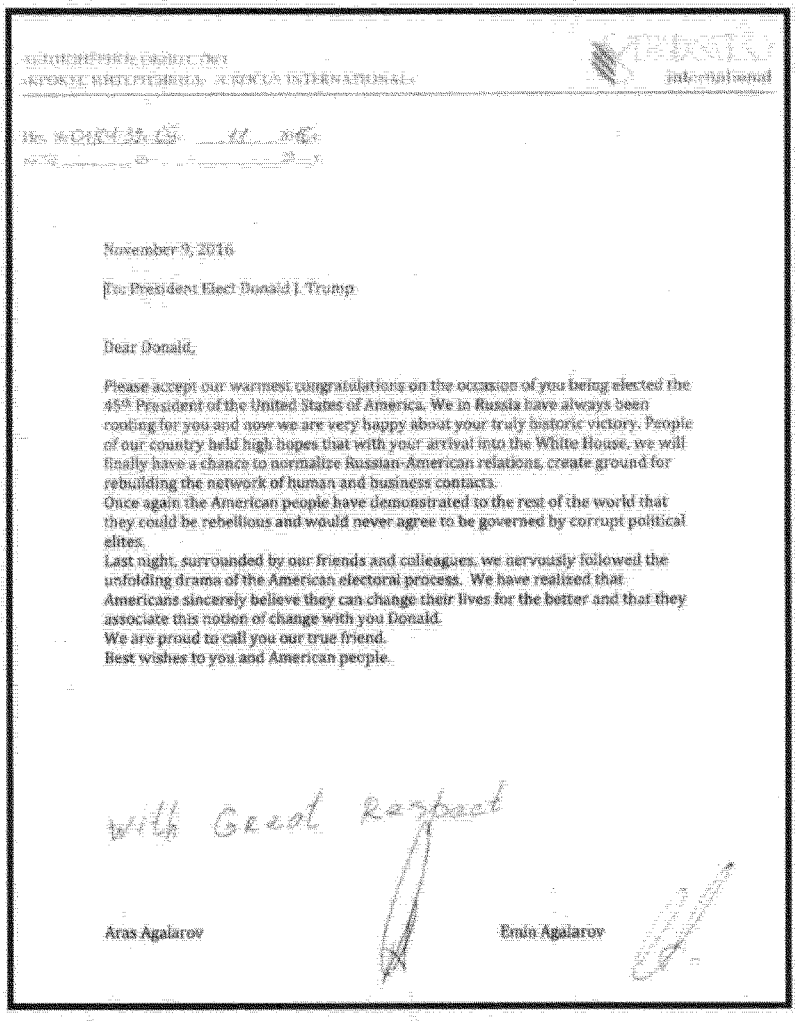
(U) Also on Election Day, Goldstone sent Trump Jr. a text message, writing "What an amazing night so far and you deserve a massive pat on the back for your incredible campaigning – looks like it's gonna pay off big tonight."[2452] At 2:42 a.m. the following morning, Goldstone texted Trump Jr.: "Mazal Tov!"[2453]

(U) On November 9, 2016, Kaveladze emailed Goldstone to inform him that Aras Agalarov wanted to send a congratulatory note to Trump and asked Goldstone to review a draft of the letter.[2454] Later on November 9, Yana Gorokhova from the Crocus Group emailed Goldstone the final signed letter.[2455] Goldstone transmitted the scanned letter to Graff, asking that she "kindly pass this letter from Aras and Emin Agalarov to Mr. Trump."[2456]

[2448] (U) Email, Trump Jr. to Goldstone and Santoro, November 7, 2016 (RG000145).
[2449] (U) Email, Santoro to Dumbauld, et al., November 7, 2016 (DJTJR00127).
[2450] (U) Goldstone Tr., p. 295.
[2451] (U) Email, Graff to Goldstone, November 8, 2016 (DJTJR00125).
[2452] (U) Text message, Goldstone to Trump Jr., November 8, 2016 (RG000146).
[2453] (U) Text message, Goldstone to Trump Jr., November 9, 2016 (RG000146).
[2454] (U) Email, Kaveladze to Goldstone, November 9, 2016 (RG000149).
[2455] (U) Email, Gorokhova to Goldstone, Beniaminov, Tropea, and Kaveladze, November 9, 2016 (RG000151).
[2456] (U) Email, Goldstone to Graff and Trump Jr., November 9, 2016 (DJTJR00164).

[redacted]

[redacted]



November 9, 2016

To: President Elect Donald J. Trump

Dear Donald,

Please accept our warmest congratulations on the occasion of you being elected the 45th President of the United States of America. We in Russia have always been rooting for you and now we are very happy about your truly historic victory. People of our country held high hopes that with your arrival into the White House, we will finally have a chance to normalize Russian-American relations, create ground for rebuilding the network of human and business contacts.
Once again the American people have demonstrated to the rest of the world that they could be rebellious and would never agree to be governed by corrupt political elites.
Last night, surrounded by our friends and colleagues, we nervously followed the unfolding drama of the American electoral process. We have realized that Americans sincerely believe they can change their lives for the better and that they associate this notion of change with you Donald.
We are proud to call you our true friend.
Best wishes to you and American people.

With Great Respect

Aras Agalarov

Emin Agalarov

(U) On November 10, Emin Agalarov sent a text message to Trump Jr:

[redacted]

[redacted]

Don!!! Amazing run and a glorious victory!!!!! Congratulations to you and your dad, we are proud and happy for you !!!!! Always at your disposal her [sic] in Russia) Emin and Aras Agalarov@[2457]

(U) On November 13, Goldstone and Kaveladze exchanged text messages in which Goldstone wrote, "So it seems we are all now in the President's inner circle!! So shocking." Kaveladze responded, "I know. Unbelievable! We are all very excited," and indicated that Aras Agalarov was receiving a lot of outreach from Russian media regarding Trump.[2458]

(U) On November 20, 2016, Graff forwarded the November 9 congratulatory letter from Aras and Emin Agalarov, previously sent by Goldstone, to an assistant at the Trump Organization. Graff wrote, "Can you please print this out and hand it to me. Important."[2459]

(U) Graff told the Committee that Trump responded to the Agalarov's November 9 letter with a note written in black pen.[2460] Although the communication referenced by Graff was not produced in response to Committee requests, an image of the Agalarov's November 9 letter, with what appears to be a note from Trump, is visible in public press reporting.[2461]

[2457] (U) Text message, E. Agalarov to Trump Jr., November 10, 2016 (DJTJR00866). Separately, also on November 10, Kelly Ridgway from the firm WMA, which was contracted on Emin Agalarov's behalf, sent an email to Ric Salmon, who was helping to represent Agalarov. Ridgway outlined the potential benefits and risks of re-releasing Agalarov's music video featuring Trump. Ridgway suggested that, if Goldstone and others wanted to proceed, they could be "more strategic online in [the video's] rollout; i.e. potentially geo-target it to the extremely pro-Trump States on his socials, per the above electoral map, where it would be received more positively. Potentially even as a 'dark post' promoted to those specific fans of Trump in those States only?" The Committee is not aware of any information indicating that such an effort was operationalized on behalf of Agalarov. Email, Ridgway to Salmon, et al., November 10, 2016 (RG000169-170).

[2458] (U) Text message, Goldstone to Kaveladze, November 13, 2016 (RG000191); Text message, Kaveladze to Goldstone, November 13, 2016 (RG000191).

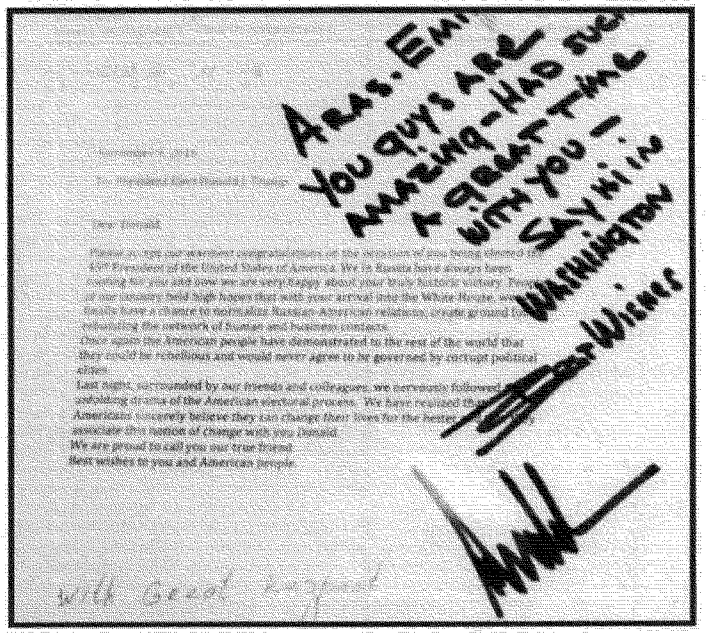
[2459] (U) Email, Graff to Macchia, November 20, 2016 (DJTJR00164). Graff told the Committee it was "not ususual" to present documents in hard copy to show to Trump. Graff Tr., p. 76.

[2460] (U) Graff Tr., p. 74.

[2461] (U) HBO, "We spoke to Emin Agalarov about a conversation Donald Trump Jr. claimed to have forgotten," *Vice News*, July 10, 2018. The date of reply from Trump is unknown.

[redacted]

[redacted]



i. (U) Repeated Requests for a Follow-up to the June 9, 2016 Meeting in Trump Tower

(U) Following the election, Aras Agalarov's interest in influencing U.S. policy continued. In mid-late November, 2016, following the election, Aras Agalarov and Veselnitskaya made an attempt to get a second meeting with Trump representatives. This request was transmitted through Kaveladze and Goldstone.[2462]

(U) On November 23, Veselnitskaya sent Kaveladze an email with the subject line "From RF," which likely refers to "Russian Federation."[2463]

[2462] (U) Email, Goldstone to Graff, November 28, 2016 (DJTJR00118).

[2463] (U) The Committee does not have specific information regarding the meaning of "RF" in this context, but notes that "RF" also appears in the document that was attached to that email, and is used in the following way: "The US Department of Justice was informed of this as well as of other circumstances in July 2016 by the Office of the Prosecutor General of the Russian Federation and by the RF Ministry of Interior under US-Russia MLAT." Email, Veselnitskaya to Kaveladze, November 23, 2016 (KAVELADZE00040, 00042).

[redacted]

[redacted]

(U) The document attached to the email was marked, "Confidential: November 22, 2016," and deals with the Magnitsky Act, William Browder and the Ziff brothers. The fourth page of the document, which is otherwise blank, simply states, "NV iPad." The document attached to the email is similar to, but not the exact same as, the May 31, 2016, document believed to have been used at the June 9, 2016 meeting in Trump Tower.[2464]

(U) The document sent by Veselnitskaya to Kaveladze on November 23 was emailed to Goldstone the same day.[2465]

From: Ike Kaveladze [redacted]
Subject: Synopsis
Date: November 23, 2016 at 11:00 AM
To: [redacted]

Hello Rob
Enclosed please find synopsis of the topic Ms. Natalya wants to discuss with T people. She has arrived into NYC.
Thanks
Ike

2016.11.22_Tr.doc

(U) The initial email from Kaveladze to Goldstone on November 23 resulted in a series of emails and text messages in which Kaveladze sought to get the meeting scheduled while Veselnitskaya was in New York. Goldstone made the request for the meeting, but was generally skeptical that it would be accepted.[2466]

(U) Kaveladze told the Committee:

> *I spoke with Ms. Veselnitskaya sometime in November of 2016 when she was trying to initiate a second meeting with Trump people. I basically requested a synopsis of that second meeting, and she sent me pretty much the same thing she sent the first time. . . . She basically was referring to that statement of Mr. Trump Junior saying that: If we win, then we'll be glad to discuss. So pretty much immediately, like two weeks after the win, she started to try. We politely—Rob*

[2464] (U) Email, Veselnitskaya to Kaveladze, November 23, 2016 (KAVELADZE00041–00044) (with attachment).
[2465] (U) Email, Kaveladze to Goldstone, November 23, 2016 (RG000182).
[2466] (U) Emails, Kaveladze and Goldstone, November 23, 2016 (RG000186–000189); Text messages, Kaveladze and Goldstone, November 27 and 28, 2016 (RG000195-196).

[redacted]

[redacted]

Goldstone told me that it's absolutely unrealistic to arrange a meeting now. People are unpacking, people are leaving for Washington, D.C. It was pre-Thanksgiving, and in every possible way they're not interested in this topic right now, obviously, so there's no way. So we politely kind of gradually tried to explain to her that the meeting is not going to happen, because she's like: I'm here, but then I have to go to Moscow, and then I'm willing to come back; if they confirm a meeting I would definitely come back, and stuff like that. So eventually I'm telling her [Veselnitskaya] that the meeting is not going to happen.[2467]

(U) While this account is generally supported by documents provided to the Committee, it does not fully capture the extent to which Aras Agalarov and Veselnitskaya pushed for the meeting.[2468]

(U) On November 23, 2016, Kaveladze, having already been met with skepticism from Goldstone about a second meeting, indicated to Goldstone that Veselnitskaya was willing to change her flight if needed.[2469] Several days later, on November 27, Kaveladze followed up with Goldstone, apologizing for bothering him on a Sunday, and said that Veselnitskaya "called again asking about the meeting with T [Trump] people."[2470] Goldstone replied that he had reached out but that there had been no response so far, and reiterated his skepticism that the meeting request would be accepted.[2471] The following day, November 28, Kaveladze again followed up with Goldstone, writing, "Hello Rob, Any news regarding the meeting? Mr. A [Agalarov] just called me re this."[2472]

(U) On November 28, having not received a response regarding scheduling the second meeting, Goldstone sent Veselnitskaya's document directly to Rhona Graff:[2473]

[2467] (U) Kaveladze Tr., pp. 111–112.
[2468] (U) Emails, Kaveladze and Goldstone, November 23, 2016 (RG000186–000189); Text messages, Kaveladze and Goldstone, November 27 and 28, 2016 (RG000195-196).
[2469] (U) Email, Kaveladze to Goldstone, November 23, 2016 (RG000188).
[2470] (U) Text message, Kaveladze to Goldstone, November 27, 2016 (RG000195).
[2471] (U) Text message, Goldstone to Kaveladze, November 27, 2016 (RG000195).
[2472] (U) Text message, Kaveladze to Goldstone, November 28, 2016 (RG000195). It is not clear, from document production or interviews who, exactly, Veselnitskaya was hoping to meet with. In her interview with the Committee, Veselnitskaya claimed not to remember Aras Agalarov's efforts to arrange a second meeting for her in November. Veselnitskaya Tr., pp. 82–83, 92. Veselnitskaya's recollection is inconsistent with statements by other witnesses and documents obtained by the Committee.
[2473] (U) Email, Goldstone to Graff, November 28, 2016 (DJTJR00160).

[redacted]

[redacted]

COMMITTEE SENSITIVE – RUSSIA INVESTIGATION ONLY

From: Rob Goldstone [redacted]
Sent: Monday, November 28, 2016 11:49 AM
To: Rhona Graff [redacted]
Subject: For Mr Trump

Hi Rhona
Aras Agalarov has asked me to pass on this document in the hope it can be passed on to the appropriate team.
If needed, a lawyer representing the case is in New York currently and happy to meet with any member of his transition team.
Best
Rob

(U) Goldstone confirmed that the request to send the document came from Aras Agalarov.[2474] Goldstone believed that the request was important to the Agalarovs because "they'd asked again, and I didn't know why it was important to them, but I knew it must be important to them or they wouldn't have made the ask." Goldstone told the Committee that, to the best of his knowledge, neither Aras nor Emin Agalarov had any particular interest in adoption issues.[2475]

(U) Later that day, Graff forwarded the email, and the attached document, to Steve Bannon. She wrote:[2476]

From: Rhona Graff [redacted]
Sent: 11/28/2016 4:34:09 PM
To: Steve Bannon [redacted]
Subject: FW: For Mr Trump
Attachments: 2016.11.22_Tr.doc

Hi Steve:

The PE knows Aras well. Rob is his rep in the US and sent this on. Not sure how to proceed, if at all.

R

[2474] (U) Goldstone said that Aras Agalarov would not ask him to do things directly, but such requests would be relayed though Aras Agalarov's assistant or Emin Agalarov's assistant. Goldstone Tr., pp. 221–222.
[2475] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 222, 224–225.
[2476] (U) Email, Graff to Bannon, November 28, 2016 (DJTJR00160). Graff told the Committee that it was unusual for her to email Bannon, but given that Trump had a relationship with Agalarovs, she was unsure what do with the request. She said that Bannon never responded, and she does not know what he did with the document. Graff Tr., pp. 80–81.

[redacted]

COMMITTEE SENSITIVE – RUSSIA INVESTIGATION ONLY

[redacted]

(U) Bannon said that he did not remember receiving this email, and also did not remember reading the Veselnitskaya document that was attached. In turn, Bannon did not remember what, if anything, he did with the document.[2477]

(U) On November 28, Kaveladze, who was in Moscow and had not received a response from Graff regarding the requested meeting, recommended to Veselnitskaya that she return to Moscow.[2478]

(U) Separately, at least one message following the election appeared to deal with overlapping business interests between the Agalarovs and the Trump Organization. On December 13, 2016, Emin Agalarov sent Trump Jr. a text message about partnering with "the Trump furniture producers from Turkey."[2479]

> *Hi Don! Hope all is well, quick question for you. I've been in duscissuion [sic] with Trump furniture producers from Turkey to open a store and a distribution Chanel [sic] in Moscow. Just wanted to check with you if you are ok with us partnering up with them and launching the project. Wanted to check with you before committing) thank you, Emin (Moscow)@*[2480]

(U) Trump Jr did not recall what this message referred to, but that to his knowledge the Trump Organization did not have additional business with the Agalarovs beyond what has been covered.[2481]

(U) Following the election, Aras Agalarov showed signs of continued interest in demonstrating his relationship with Trump. On February 15, 2017, Goldstone emailed Graff requesting that she help Goldstone find a copy of Aras Agalarov's previous correspondence with Trump.[2482] Goldstone explained that Aras Agalarov asked Goldstone to find a note from Trump the prior year, but Goldstone could not locate it. It is not clear if a copy of the letter was ever located.[2483]

ii. (U) Additional Communications Following the June 9, 2016 Meeting in Trump Tower

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[2477] **(U)** Bannon Tr., p. 45; The withholding of Transition communciations due to claims by the White House of potential executive privilege limited the Committee's insight into what, if anything, was done with this document.
[2478] **(U)** Text message, Kaveladze to Goldstone, November 28, 2016 (RG000196).
[2479] **(U)** Text message, E. Agalarov to Trump Jr., December 13, 2016 (DJTJR00867).
[2480] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[2481] **(U)** Trump Jr. Tr., pp. 39–41.
[2482] **(U)** Email, Goldstone to Graff, February 15, 2017 (RG000200).
[2483] **(U)** Email, Graff to Goldstone, February 24, 2017 (RG000209).

[redacted]

[redacted]

(U) In mid-2017, shortly prior to and following initial public reporting on the June 9, 2016 meeting, there were a number of communications between participants, and in some cases their associates, regarding the meeting. Lawyers for the Trump Organization, Trump Jr., and others also contacted a number of the meeting participants. In most cases these communications did not meaningfully contribute to the Committee's understanding of the meeting, and many are not itemized in this Report.

(U) On July 14, 2017, Jason Tropea sent Roman Beniaminov a screen shot of a conversation that Tropea had with Rob Goldstone "two weeks" earlier. In that conversation Goldstone stated, regarding the June 9, 2016 meeting, "It's being made public apparently next week[.] So will be lovely for us also[.] They want to know why [A]ras asked for it and who was it a favor for[.] That will be lovely[.]" Tropea responded, "We can consider that relationship done[.]" Goldstone then replied, "I would think so. I begged him not to do the meeting at the time and [E]min also[.] Said it was a huge favor that wasn't worth it[.] But maybe it was worth it for [A]ras—we don't know who asked the favor!! Could have been the BIG man."[2484]

(U) Additionally, some witnesses suggested that they felt that others were not giving accurate public statements about the meeting, or felt that they were being pressured to shape their comments in exchange for financial support with legal fees.

(U) Anatoli Samochornov has stated that he was contacted by Robert Arakelian, the president of HRAGI, offering to cover his legal expenses if he was willing to confine his comments regarding the June 9 meeting to public statements already made by Veselnitskaya. Samochornov said he did not believe that Arakelian knew what he was doing, but was "shocked" that Arakelian would propose this over the phone, and declined to take money from HRAGI because Samochornov did not want to be "beholden to them."[2485] Samochornov said that he would not perjure himself just because HRAGI was a good client, would represent himself and would be transparent.[2486]

(U) Kaveladze has said that he believed that Trump Jr.'s public statements regarding the June 9, 2016, meeting in Trump Tower were not accurate. In particular, Kaveladze felt that the statement the meeting focused on adoptions was not correct, and that the meeting had been primarily about the Magnitsky Act, with only a few sentences in which adoptions were mentioned. Additionally, Kaveladze felt that Trump Jr. had represented the meeting as being shorter than it was, and that it was 30-40 minutes, rather than 20 minutes.[2487]

[2484] (U) Text message, Tropea to Beniaminov, July 14, 2017 (RB000459).
[2485] (U) The SCO found that the offer was for $90,000 of legal fees. *SCO Report*, Vol. I, p. 122; *see also* FBI, FD-302, Samochornov 7/12/2017; FBI, FD-302, Samochornov 7/13/2017.
[2486] (U) *Ibid.*
[2487] (U) FBI, FD-302, Kaveladze 11/16/2017.

[redacted]

[redacted]

(U) The Committee notes several arrangements related to participants or associates of the participants. Emin Agalarov, Irakli Kaveladze, and Jason Tropea all shared the same legal representation, Scott Balber. Tropea acknowledged that Emin Agalarov was covering his legal fees.[2488] Balber had represented Donald Trump in at least one matter in 2013.[2489]

(U) Information obtained by the Committee also indicates an effort by Agalarov to pay for Goldstone's legal representation. On July 13, 2017, Beniaminov sent Tropea a text message, writing: "When you get a chance, need to find out the balance on Emins [funds] here. Ike called me, said he spoke with Emin and that he wants us to pay for Robs attorney [sic]."[2490] Tropea told the Committee, "I don't know if I physically made the check out or if it was paid in another manner, but I do recall talking about this."[2491] Beniaminov said that he did not know whether Goldstone's legal fees were ultimately covered by Emin Agalarov, but stated that his own were not.[2492]

(U) Additionally, some of the participants have had continuing relationships following the June 9, 2016 meeting. For example, Kaveladze and Veselnitskaya remained in contact and Kaveladze facilitated at least two additional meetings between Veselnitskaya and Aras Agalarov. The first of those meetings likely took place on December 3, 2016, and the second was likely in late January 2017. Text messages between Veselnitskaya and Kaveladze do not provide meaningful additional information regarding these meetings with Agalarov. Kaveladze also facilitated an introduction between Veselnitskaya and the Agalarovs' lawyer, Scott Balber.[2493]

(U) Balber met with Veselnitskaya at least twice in early 2017. In text messages with Kaveladze, Veselnitskaya rejected a proposed café for a meeting with Balber because there were "too many ears," and advocated for a more private location. Veselnitskaya indicated that she regretted not meeting with Balber earlier because she would have hired "them," referring to Balber and his team, to work on her case, but she noted that this would have prevented Balber and his team from working on the "government task" or "state assignment." Additionally, Veselnitskaya expressed a desire to coordinate her briefings to the Russian Prosecutor General's office with Balber's strategy. She noted that she had previously attempted to do what Balber was doing, but had not had sufficient resources. The text messages between Veselnitskaya and

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[2488] (U) Tropea Tr., p. 98.
[2489] (U) Kevin Cirilli, "Trump, Maher 'birther' feud" *Politico*, January 9, 2013.
[2490] (U) Text message, Beniaminov to Tropea, July 13, 2017 (RB000456).
[2491] (U) Tropea Tr., p. 98.
[2492] (U) Beniaminov Tr., p. 244.
[2493] [redacted] Text messages, Veselnitskaya and Kaveladze, December 2016 to February 2017 (KAVELADZE01148–01170); Kaveladze Tr., p. 114; [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

Kaveladze do not offer additional information regarding the nature of Balber's work or his interactions with Veselnitskaya.[2494]

(U) On January 20, 2017, Rinat Akhmetshin and Veselnitskaya attended an inauguration party in Washington, D.C., hosted by Dana Rohrabacher.[2495] Kaveladze told the Committee that he met with Veselnitskaya, Akhmetshin, and Samochornov, at a dinner in New York for Veselnitskaya's birthday, likely in February of 2017. At the dinner the Magnitsky Act was discussed, and the others updated Kaveladze on their work.[2496]

(U) Samochornov said that he has met Akhmetshin five or six times since the June 9, 2016, meeting.[2497] Samochornov also visited Veselnitskaya in Russia in April 2017, related to their work on the Prevezon case.[2498]

(U) Akhmetshin told the Committee that he met with Kaveladze in Moscow in June 2017, where they discussed the June 9, 2016 meeting, which had not yet been made public, and Akhmetshin unsuccessfully suggested that, "we should tell the story on our terms" and that they should find friendly news outlets through which to tell the story.[2499] Akhmetshin told the Committee that when he suggested publicly acknowledging the June 9, 2016, meeting to Kaveladze, Kaveladze said, "Look, it's not my decision," and that, "I'm just an employee."[2500]

(U) Goldstone spoke with Emin Agalarov, Kaveladze, Trump Organization counsel Alan Garten, and counsel for Trump Jr. Alan Futerfas regarding the June 9, 2016 meeting.[2501] Kaveladze testified that Futerfas reached out to him in June 2017, to "collect information" about the meeting and to "know what [Kaveladze's] recollection was."[2502] Outreach to Goldstone from Garten happened as early as June 2, 2017.[2503] On July 9, 2017, Garten and Futerfas copied

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[2494] [redacted] Text messages, Veselnitskaya and Kaveladze, December 2016 to February 2017 (KAVELADZE01148–01170); [redacted]

[2495] [redacted] Text messages, Veselnitskaya and Kaveladze, January 20, 2017 (KAVELADZE01158); Craig Timberg, et al., "In the crowd at Trump's inauguration, members of Russia's elite anticipated a thaw between Moscow and Washington," *The Washington Post*, January 20, 2018; [redacted]

[2496] (U) Kaveladze Tr., p. 114.

[2497] (U) Samochornov Tr., pp. 84.

[2498] (U) FBI, FD-302, Samochornov 7/13/2017.

[2499] (U) Akhmetshin Tr., p. 113.

[2500] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 113–114

[2501] (U) Email, Goldstone to E. Agalarov and Kaveladze (RG000263); Email, Futerfas to Goldstone, July 10, 2017 (RG000275); Email, Goldstone to Garten, June 2, 2017 (RG000257); Text message, Goldstone to Kaveladze, June 2, 2017 (RG000280).

[2502] (U) Kaveladze Tr., p. 126-127.

[2503] (U) Email, Goldstone to Garten, June 2, 2017 (RG000257).

[redacted]

[redacted]

Kaveladze on emails with Goldstone to coordinate and draft a public statement related to what happened at the June 9, 2016 meeting.[2504]

(U) On July 23, 2017, incoming White House Communications Director Anthony Scaramucci wrote to Goldstone saying that Scaramucci officially started in August but that his door was open, and that "Obviously there is still pressure on all sides, but if we remain consistent and united I don't envisage any issues we can't ride out."[2505]

(U) The Committee did not find specific evidence that the relationships and communications outlined above resulted in inaccurate or incomplete testimony, but the Committee's insight on this topic is limited.

7. (U) Artem Klyushin, Konstantin Rykov, and Associates

(U) During the 2013 trip to Moscow for the Miss Universe Pageant, two Agalarov employees, Artem Klyushin and his then-wife Yulya Klyushina, spent time with Donald Trump. In particular, on Saturday, November 9, 2013, the day of the Miss Universe pageant, publicly available information indicates that Klyushina and Klyushin had some interaction with Trump at several points throughout the day. The Committee has little insight into the nature of these interactions.[2506]

(U) According to Roman Beniaminov, "they [Klyushin and Klyushina] were an outside firm that handled social media for Emin around the time of the contest."[2507] Klyushina used a signature block in some emails that indicated she was the General Manager of an entity called the "Innovation & Development Agency."[2508] Klyushin and Klyushina were included on a number of Emin Agalarov and Rob Goldstone's emails prior to, and following, the Miss Universe pageant. Some of those emails related to Trump.[2509]

[2504] (U) Emails, Futerfas, Alan Garten, Goldstone, and Kaveladze, July 9–10, 2017 (KAVELADZE00121–00123).
[2505] (U) Email, Scaramucci to Goldstone, July 23, 2017 (RG000247). Additionally, the Committee notes the existence of purported Joint Defense Agreements (JDA) between parties to the June 9, 2016 meeting. While JDA arrangements are not inherently inappropriate, they do have the potential, along with other incentives, to influence candor in testimony. For more on the Committee's experience with JDAs, *see infra* Vol. 5, Sec. II.C.3.
[2506] (U) On November 9, 2013, Klyushina posted a photo of herself sitting with Donald Trump and Phil Ruffin, noting that Trump was, "talking…Again and again about Obama." Tweet, @AlferovaYulyaE, November 9, 2013.
[2507] (U) Beniaminov Tr., pp. 175–177; Klyushina later changed her last name to Alferova. Beniaminov was unaware of Klyushin or Klyushina being responsible for anything other than social media. *Ibid.*
[2508] (U) Email, Klyushina to E. Agalarov and Goldstone, November 21, 2013 (RB0000629).
[2509] (U) Email, E. Agalarov to Klyushina, Klyushin, Goldstone et al., June 19, 2013 (RB0000606); Email, E. Agalarov to Goldstone, Klyushin, Klyushina, et al., June 21, 2013 (RB0000021); Email, E. Agalarov to Klyushin, Klyushina, et al., January 29, 2014 (RB0000601).

[redacted]

[redacted]

(U) Klyushin and Klyushina, along with Klyushin's associate Konstantin Rykov, were active regarding the 2016 U.S. presidential campaign.[2510]

(U) In his interview with the Committee, Emin Agalarov sought to distance himself from Klyushin and Klyushina. Agalarov said that he terminated his work with them following the Miss Universe pageant because they were focused on self-promotion and Trump, rather than on the work for which they were originally hired. However, in mid-January 2014 remarks for an award ceremony, Emin Agalarov planned to thank Klyushin and Klyushina, among others, calling them part of his "Moscow 'family.'"[2511] Agalarov told the Committee he has no ongoing relationship with either of them, and that a 2019 photo with Klyushin was just a courtesy.[2512]

i. (U) Artem Klyushin

(U) Apart from his work for the Agalarovs during the 2013 Miss Universe pageant, the Committee has significant concerns regarding Klyushin.

(U) The Committee assesses that Klyushin is a Kremlin-linked bot developer who has supported Russian influence operations on social media. Klyushin has publicly stated that he works for the Russian Presidential Administration and has also been affiliated with the Russian Duma. The Committee assesses that he has provided social media influence expertise to the Kremlin, [redacted]

[redacted] Starting in approximately 2010, Klyushin and Klyushina co-owned the Innovation & Development Agency, also known as the Agency for Development of Innovative Technologies (APRIT). In 2015, Klyushin said that APRIT had received Russian government contracts.[2514] Klyushin's current company states that it is able to produce and amplify social media content through more than 1,000 accounts and millions of subscribers on social media.[2515]

[2510] [redacted] Tweet, @AlferovaYulyaE, January 22, 2014. On January 22, 2014, Klyushina wrote on social media that, "I'm sure @realDonald Trump will be great president! We'll support you from Russia! America needs an[ ] ambitious leader!"; On January 28, 2015, Klyushina announced on Twitter that Trump would be running for President of the United States. Tweet, @AlferovaYulyaE, January 28, 2015. The Committee has no insight into the nature of Klyushina's knowledge of these matters or what prompted these statements. [redacted]

[2511] (U) Email, Wilson to E. Agalarov, Goldstone, et al., January 14, 2014 (RB00000986); Email, E. Agalarov to Wilson, Goldstone, et al., December 6, 2013 (RB00001567).

[2512] (U) E. Agalarov Tr., pp. 34–35; Tweet, @ARTEM_KLYUSHIN, May 3, 2019.

[2513] [redacted]

[2514] (U) *Ibid.*

[2515] (U) *Ibid.*

[redacted]

[redacted]

Klyushin has also publicly stated that he "makes corrections to reality" and "changes emotional and logical perceptions of situations."[2516]

(U) In 2014, less than a year after working to promote Emin Agalarov during the Miss Universe pageant, Klyushin played a central role in Russia's efforts to flood Ukraine's social media platforms with pro-Kremlin propaganda. Klyushin associate and Kremlin-linked "chief troll" Konstantin Rykov was also centrally involved in these efforts.[2517]

[redacted] A May 2014 Department of State cable noted that the Kremlin had "unleashed an unprecedented social media propaganda campaign to shore up domestic support for President Vladimir Putin's policy and to support anti-Kyiv protest activity on the streets of southern and eastern Ukraine." The cable noted that both "official and allegedly unofficial social media accounts have spewed forth an unceasing stream of disinformation and gained more and more online followers."[2518] In particular, the cable noted that accounts including Klyushin (@artem_klyushin) and Konstantin Rykov (@Rykov) tweeted "pro-Kremlin patriotic propaganda about events in Ukraine nearly 24 hours a day to tens of thousands – or in Klyushin's case, 1.4 million – followers." The cable noted that all the messaging is similar: filled with hatred for the Ukrainian government, the United States and its policies, and Western values.[2519]

[redacted]

[2516] **(U)** *Ibid.*

[2517] **(U)** [redacted] European Union Institute for Security Studies, "Hacks, leaks and disruptions: Russian cyber strategies," October 2018, Chaillot Paper 148, p. 78.

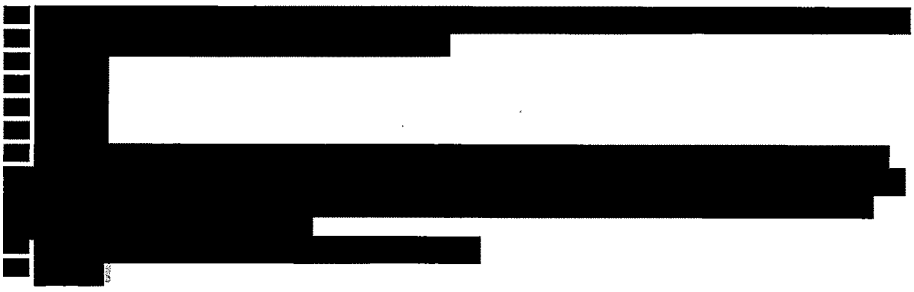
[2518] [redacted]

[2519] [redacted] In June 2014 a U.S. diplomat working on Ukraine and Russia issues emailed a news article detailing Russia's use of social media "trolls" to colleagues within the Department of State. The U.S. diplomat described the article, titled "Documents Show How Russia's Troll Army Hit America," as a "must read" about "how the Kremlin is attempting to use [social media] to manipulate public opinion." The U.S. diplomat observed that Russia, "may be swaying people through sheer volume (or at least discouraging people from engaging)." That message and the accompanying article were then forwarded by a senior State Department official to a smaller, more senior, group close to the Department's leadership. The senior official indicated that the article captured "[w]hat we're up against," and lamented that the mainstream media was not covering the growing social media threat from Russia. [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]



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[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted] Klyushin previously served as an aide to Ilya Kostunov, who currently runs a pro-Kremlin school and training program funded by U.S.-sanctioned and indicted oligarch and influence operative Yevgeniy Prigozhin.[2531] The school, which is in St. Petersburg, focuses on co-opting young Russians. It offers political training as well as media and social media skills training.[2532]

[redacted] Klyushin began using U.S.-related hashtags in early 2016, was active on social media regarding the 2016 U.S. election, and participated in a U.S. election night party in Moscow with other Russian supporters of Donald Trump. On September 28, 2017, Klyushin claimed on social media that the results of the 2016 U.S. presidential election would not have happened "without my interference."[2533] The Committee is not able to corroborate this claim.

[redacted] The Committee assesses that Klyushin is linked to other Kremlin allies with direct ties to the Russian Government who have been involved in foreign influence campaigns through social media. Like Klyushin, several of these individuals claimed involvement in, or were active during, the 2016 U.S. election.

ii. (U) Konstantin Rykov

(U) Klyushin is associated with a number of Kremlin-linked online influencers that are of concern to the Committee. Some of the individuals in this network have been involved in

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[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

Russian foreign influence operations targeting the elections of U.S. allies, have attempted to undermine U.S. allies by inflaming domestic tensions, and have claimed involvement in the 2016 U.S. presidential election.

[redacted] Konstantin Rykov, who has been referred to as the "chief troll," is a known close associate of Klyushin and has engaged with Klyushin in running influence operations on social media.[2534] The Committee assesses that Rykov has played a significant role in the Kremlin's foreign and domestic influence efforts, [redacted]

[redacted] Rykov claims to have knowledge of the involvement of hackers, WikiLeaks, and Cambridge Analytica in the 2016 U.S. election.[2536] He also claims to have been in direct contact over Twitter with Donald Trump in 2012.[2537] The Committee obtained information that calls at least one of these claims into significant doubt, most notably regarding the alleged Twitter contact.[2538] Nevertheless, Rykov's level of access within the Russian government, his connections to online influence operatives, and his historical involvement in Kremlin influence operations, make him a significant concern.

[redacted] Rykov began receiving Russian government support in 2003, primarily to expand the scope of online influence efforts targeting a domestic audience by working with Kremlin-linked organizations to fill the Russian internet with pro-Kremlin content and social media commentary.[2539]

[redacted] However, more recently, Rykov's influence work has taken on a wide range of foreign targets that align with Russian government interests, intelligence activities, and messaging from state media outlets involved in propaganda efforts.[2540] [redacted] Rykov and members of his network have been involved in efforts targeting the [redacted]

[2534] [redacted] European Union Institute for Security Studies, "Hacks, leaks and disruptions: Russian cyber strategies," October 2018, Chaillot Paper 148, p. 78.

[2535] [redacted]

[2536] [redacted]

[2537] (U) *Ibid.*

[2538] (U) Twitter, @rykov, (direct messaging metadata).

[2539] [redacted]

[2540] (U) This transition is consistent with other networks of Kremlin backed influence operatives that developed their tradecraft domestically, refined it in Ukraine and elsewhere in the former Soviet Union, and then eventually expanded its reach to Western Europe, the United States, and now Africa, the Middle East and elsewhere. *See infra* Vol. 2.

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted] United States and elsewhere. These efforts have targeted elections and sought to sow discord by amplifying societal divisions.[2541]

[redacted]

[redacted] The Committee assesses that Rykov is friendly with Russian Presidential Administration official Timur Prokopenko, who managed the Kremlin's media influence activities from 2012-2014 and who requested that a Kremlin-controlled institute finance Rykov's influence operations.[2546]

[redacted] The Committee assesses that, in 2014, Rykov likely collaborated with the Russian Presidential Administration regarding a Russian influence operation targeting France, in

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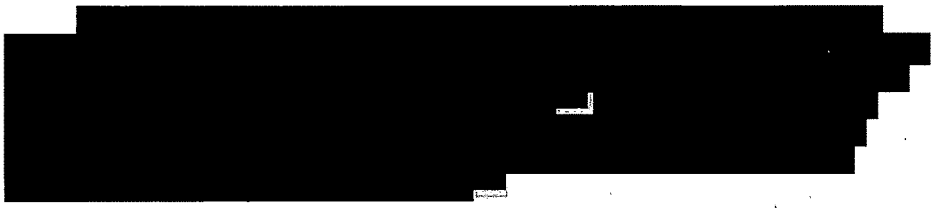
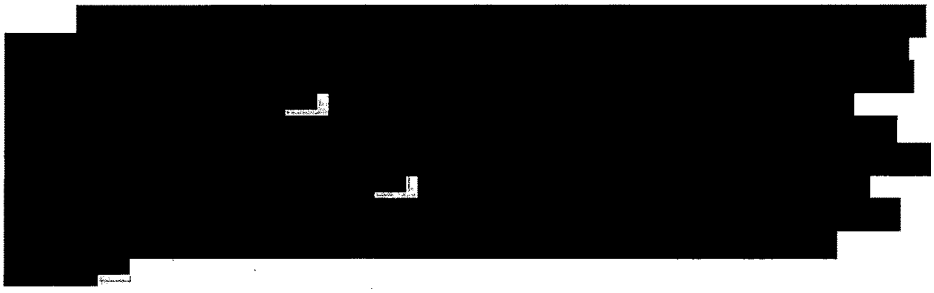
[redacted]

[redacted]

support of the French National Front and Marine Le Pen. Rykov has also claimed involvement in the 2017 French presidential election.[2547]

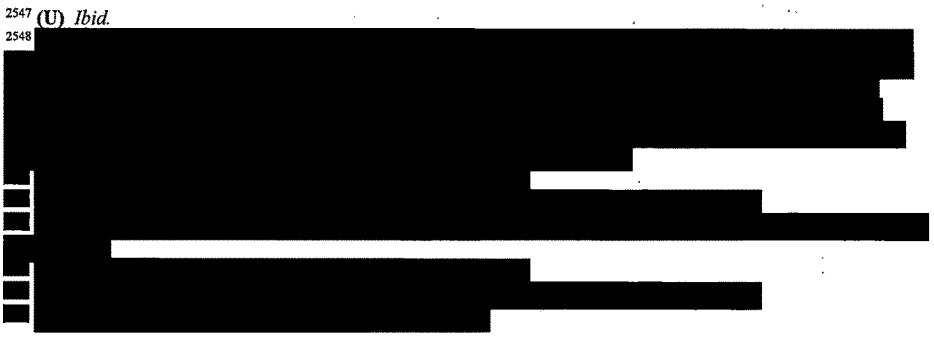


[redacted] The Committee assesses that as of 2014, Rykov has also been significantly involved in Russian influence operations targeting Ukraine, likely at the Kremlin's request.[2550]



[2547] (U) *Ibid.*

[2548] [redacted]



[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted] Rykov has received payments from the Presidential Administration to develop Kremlin internet projects.[2555]

- [redacted]

- [redacted] Aleksey Goreslavskiy, a Rykov associate and former colleague, has political oversight of online media in Russia's Presidential Administration.[2557]

- [redacted] Rykov operates many websites, some of which are funded and controlled by Russia's Presidential Administration.[2558]

[redacted] In addition to Klyushin, Rykov has ties to a number of other individuals outside of the Kremlin who are associated with Russian intelligence services or pro-Kremlin political parties, such as Leonid Reshetnikov, Aleksey Kondratyev, Aleksey Zhuraviev, German Klimenko, Aleksey Chesnakov and Aleksandr Dugin.[2559]

- [redacted]

[redacted]

[2556] (U) *Ibid.*

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

- [redacted] Kondratyev is the Chair of the Security and Defense Committee in the Russian Federation Council.
- [redacted] Klimenko is an adviser to President Putin and pro-Kremlin social media expert.[2562]

[redacted]

(U) Dugin met with Steve Bannon in Rome in 2018. Bannon claimed that the meeting in 2018 was their first interaction, and that the 2016 U.S. election was not discussed.[2565]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[2565] (U) SSCI Bannon Tr., pp. 416–417; Treasury, "Treasury Announces New Designations of Ukrainian Separatists and their Russian Supporters," March 11, 2015.

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

(U) As previously noted, Rykov was also active during the 2016 U.S. election, though the full nature and scope of his activity are difficult to verify or disprove. Rykov began to show interest in, and support for, Donald Trump shortly after Trump's campaign was announced. Vzglyad is a pro-Kremlin news website founded in 2005 by Konstantin Rykov, and is funded and controlled by the Russian government.[2567] On August 18, 2015, a representative from Vzglyad reached out to Hope Hicks requesting an interview with Trump.[2568] No interview took place.[2569] However, two months later, on October 17, a *Washington Examiner* story titled "Putin loves Donald Trump," prominently featured Rykov and his Kremlin ties.[2570] The same day the story was published, Trump tweeted a link to it, writing, "Russia and the world has already started to respect us again!"[2571]

[redacted] In addition to his connection to Klyushin, Rykov maintains contact with a network of anti-U.S. and pro-Kremlin bloggers and trolls, many of whom responded to calls by Rykov to participate in U.S. election-related efforts online in 2016. Following the election, many of those actors took steps to hide their activities.[2572]

[redacted] Rykov, who owns the official domain for Putin's 2018 re-election campaign putin2018.ru, as well as marinelepen.ru, registered a media aggregation website, trump2016.ru, in August 2015.[2573] Rykov distributed polling data and memes, was active on social media, and organized election-related events, at least one of which was attended by Klyushin.

[redacted] Another one of Rykov's election events was attended by Anton Korobkov-Zemlyanskiy, a pro-Kremlin social media operative and bot developer whose activities have targeted foreign countries including the United States. Zemlyanski was involved in Ukraine with Klyushin and Rykov, and was removed from Twitter after he made an online death threat toward a U.S. official in Moscow. Zemlyanski's removal reportedly only provoked more threats from his associates.[2574]

[2567] [redacted]

[2568] (U) Email, Georgi Asatryan to Hope Hicks, August 18, 2015 (DJTFP00005700).

[2569] (U) *SCO Report*, Vol. I, p. 66.

[2570] (U) David M. Drucker, "Putin loves Donald Trump," *Washington Examiner*, October 17, 2015.

[2571] (U) Tweet, @realDonaldTrump, October 17, 2015.

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

(U) In addition to Klyushin and Zemlyanski, Rykov's gatherings in Moscow for the 2016 U.S. election and inauguration were also attended by a range of other individuals such as pro-Kremlin propagandist Maria Katasonova, Duma member Aleksey Zhuravlev, and Jack Hanick, an American media consultant who is associated with U.S.-sanctioned oligarch Konstantin Malofeyev and the pro-Kremlin propaganda media outlet Tsargrad TV.[2575]

[redacted]

[redacted] Following the 2016 U.S. election, Russian political elites congratulated Rykov regarding the results of the U.S. election. Among others, Rykov was congratulated by the Kremlin's Aleksey Zharich.[2577] On social media, Rykov was told that "we are waiting for the victory of Le Pen."[2578]

[redacted] Following Le Pen's 2017 defeat in the French presidential election, Rykov told a journalist that he was disappointed that his support for Le Pen "did not work out the same way that it did with the US President."[2579]

[redacted]

[2578] (U) *Ibid.*
[2579] (U) *Ibid.*

[redacted]

[redacted]

D. (U) Trump Tower Moscow

1. (U) Introduction and Findings

(U) During the 2016 U.S. presidential election cycle, Donald Trump and the Trump Organization pursued a business deal in Russia. Michael Cohen, then an executive vice president at the Trump Organization and personal attorney to Trump, primarily handled and pursued these efforts.

(U) The Trump Organization had repeatedly sought a deal in Russia for decades, but no deal had advanced beyond initial negotiations. In September 2015, approximately three months after Trump declared his candidacy for president, Cohen received two offers from businessmen with connections to Russia to build a "Trump Tower" in Moscow.[2580] One proposal came from Felix Sater, a longtime business associate of Trump who had worked closely with the Trump Organization on and off for over a decade. A second proposal came from Giorgi Rtskhiladze, another previous business partner of the Trump Organization and who had years before worked with Cohen on building a Trump-branded property in Batumi, Georgia.

(U) Both proposals envisioned the construction of a Moscow skyscraper to be known as Trump Tower Moscow, which would pair Russia-based developers and businessmen with the Trump Organization in a licensing deal. This licensing deal would require the Russian developer to finance and build the tower, while the Trump Organization, as the licensee, would receive an assortment of fees and payments for the use of the Trump brand.

(U) In September 2015, Trump authorized Cohen to pursue the Sater-related deal. Cohen, through Sater, began negotiations with a Russia-based developer, Andrey Rozov and Rozov's company, I.C. Expert. By late October 2015, Sater, Cohen, and I.C. Expert had agreed on terms for a detailed Letter of Intent (LOI). The LOI laid out the main terms of a licensing deal that promised to provide the Trump Organization millions of dollars upon the signing of a deal, and hundreds of millions of dollars if the project advanced to completion. By early November 2015, Trump and Rozov co-signed the LOI.

(U) Cohen kept Trump updated on the progress of the deal. While these negotiations were ongoing, Trump made positive public comments about Putin in connection with his presidential campaign. Cohen and Sater sought to leverage Trump's comments, as well as subsequent comments about Trump by Putin, to advance the deal. Both Cohen and Sater at various times understood that both Putin's and Trump's comments could be useful in advancing the deal.

[2580] (U) A third proposal, provided to Eric Trump, also arrived from individuals associated with the Moscow city government through Boris Epshteyn. This proposal is described *infra* Vol. 5, Sec. III.D.3.v.

[redacted]

[redacted]

(U) Sater told Cohen about high-level outreach to Russian businessmen and officials that Sater claimed to have undertaken related to the deal. While Sater almost certainly inflated some of these claims, the Committee found that Sater did, in fact, have significant senior-level ties to a number of Russian businessmen and former government officials, and was in a position, through intermediaries, to reach individuals close to Putin.

(U) Cohen and Sater also made plans for Cohen and Trump to travel to Russia as a predicate to finalizing a deal. Cohen instructed Sater to plan a trip for Cohen first; after Cohen's trip, the plan was for Trump to travel to Russia to meet with Putin in relation to the deal. Cohen also contacted Dmitri Klokov, a Russian individual who had reached out about the deal and the possibility of a meeting between Trump and Putin. While little is known about Klokov, the nature of the outreach and Klokov's ties to the Russian government suggest that his outreach may have been sanctioned by the Russian government. Cohen ultimately declined Klokov's offers.

(U) By the end of 2015, Cohen had become frustrated that the deal with Sater was not progressing fast enough and began reaching out to the Kremlin directly to solicit the Russian government's assistance. Cohen eventually made contact in January 2016 with a Russian Presidential Administration aide to Dmitri Peskov, a senior Kremlin official and key advisor to Putin. Cohen discussed the project in detail and reported to Trump that he had done so. As a result of this direct outreach to the Russian Presidential Administration and Sater's separate efforts to conduct outreach to individuals in Russia, the Committee found that senior Russian government officials including almost certainly President Vladimir Putin were aware of the deal by January 2016.

(U) Cohen and Sater continued negotiations into the spring of 2016. Their effort primarily focused on efforts to travel to Russia to advance the deal, but the Committee found no evidence of other concrete steps they took during this time. By June 2016, Sater, through his contacts in Russia, had helped organize an invitation for Cohen to attend the St. Petersburg International Economic Forum (SPIEF). Cohen initially agreed to travel to Russia and forwarded passport information to Sater. However, on June 14, 2016, Cohen and Sater met in person in Trump Tower, and Cohen likely relayed that he would not be able to travel to Russia at that time. Around that time, attempts to advance the deal stopped.

2. (U) Past Efforts to Conduct a Real Estate Deal in Russia with Felix Sater

(U) Donald Trump and the Trump Organization's pursuit of a real estate deal in Russia extended over several decades and involved a variety of potential partners, including Felix Sater. In the 1990s, Trump pursued developments in Russia with various American businessmen, including Bennett LeBow, Howard Lorber, and others (described *infra* Vol. 5, Sec. III.I.4). From approximately late 2013 to late 2014, the Trump Organization sought a separate licensing

[redacted]

[redacted]

deal in Russia with the Crocus Group, a Russian real estate company owned and managed by the Agalarov family (described *infra* Vol. 5, Sec. III.C.3.v).

(U) However, the most persistent effort involved Sater. Starting in the early 2000s, the Trump Organization and Donald Trump repeatedly sought assistance from Sater to close a real estate deal in Russia. For more than a decade, Sater sought to connect the Trump Organization with Russian developers and investors in pursuit of real estate opportunities in Russia, particularly in Moscow. Sater relied on an expansive network of personal and professional contacts with Russian businessmen, senior Russian government officials (including from the intelligence services), and individuals connected to Eurasian organized crime. Most recently, during the 2016 U.S. presidential election cycle, Sater was involved in efforts to build a real estate development commonly known as Trump Tower Moscow.

i. (U) Felix Sater's Background and Ties to the Russian Government

(U) In 1998, prior to his work with the Trump Organization, Sater came under federal criminal investigation along with several other individuals for money laundering and stock manipulation. At the time, Sater was in Russia working on a business deal to rent a transatlantic cable from AT&T.[2581]

[redacted] Sater was indicted in the Eastern District of New York in April 1998 [redacted] In an interview with the Committee, Sater recalled that he knew he was being surveilled "all the time" in Moscow.[2584]

(U) According to Sater, in an effort to generate goodwill with the FBI in anticipation of a U.S. prosecution, Sater began providing information to [redacted], an individual Sater met in Russia and who told Sater that he worked for the [redacted].[2585]

[2581] (U) Transcript of Sentencing Before the Honorable I. Leo Glasser, *United States v. Felix Sater*, Case No. 98-CR-1101-ILG (E.D.N.Y. October 23, 2009), p. 6; SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Felix Sater, April 4, 2018, p. 58.

[2582] [redacted]

[2583] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 22–23.

[2584] (U) Sater Tr., p. 70. Sater recalled being followed by a car and in coffee shops. *Ibid.*, p. 71.

[2585] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 62–63; Benton Campbell, Letter to the Honorable I. Leo Glasser, Re: *United States v. Felix Sater*, August 27, 2009, p. 3.

[redacted]

[redacted]

(U) Sater recalled that in the course of his routine social interactions, which included dining and consuming alcohol with Russian associates, he met [redacted] Sater recalled [redacted] approaching him during one such social occasion with approximately 20 individuals at a dinner:

> *I go to the bathroom, the guy follows me to the bathroom,* [redacted]*. He says: I'd like your phone number; I'd like to talk to you tomorrow. I said: Sure. The next day, I met him at an Irish pub. That's when he proceeded to tell me that I'm sitting with very serious intelligence guys.*[2586]

[redacted]

(U) Sater began using his existing network, largely in Russia, to establish a network of contacts including intelligence officers, military operatives, and personnel at military research facilities in various countries.[2588] Sater explained that he was in contact with "mostly GRU [Russia's Main Intelligence Directorate] guys."[2589]

(U) One of Sater's primary contacts providing information at this time was Evgeny Shmykov.

[redacted]

[2586] (U) *Ibid.*

[2587] [redacted]

[2588] (U) Sater Tr., p. 9.

[2589] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 61. Sater explained that he knew these GRU-affiliated individuals "because they were in control of the telecommunications" and further explained that they "were all retired or semi-retired. Who the hell knows?"

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]



(U) In November 1998, Sater returned to the United States and surrendered to the FBI. Sater pleaded guilty to participating in a racketeering enterprise and, as part of his plea, began serving as a government cooperator. Over the course of approximately a decade, Sater was a prolific cooperator for the U.S. Government, providing information on "the most elusive and dangerous" individuals of interest to U.S. law enforcement.[2593] Sater also served as a source of "valuable foreign intelligence" in a variety of national security areas.[2594]

(U) Sater's cooperation reveals a number of connections and accesses related to high-level national security information. According to the Department of Justice (DOJ), Sater's

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[2592] [redacted]

[2593] **(U)** Memorandum & Order, *United States v. Felix Sater*, Case No. 98-CR-1101-ILG (E.D.N.Y. July. 22, 2019), p. 1.

[2594] **(U)** *Ibid.*

[redacted]

[redacted]

cooperation was "extraordinary."[2595] Sater's cooperation covered a "depth and breadth rarely seen," and included the provision of information on cyber crime, al-Qa'ida, Russian military and defense matters, and Russian organized crime.[2596] Some of these topics included the U.S. Government's highest priority national security matters. For example, Sater acquired satellite phone numbers associated with Usama Bin Laden and information on Bin Laden's whereabouts following September 11, 2001; the whereabouts of then-Taliban leader Mullah Omar; al-Qa'ida's internal structuring and financial capabilities; and ground reports related to battle damage assessments during Operation Enduring Freedom.[2597] Sater also provided information about a variety of organized crime matters inside the United States, a number of which directly contributed to high-profile prosecutions of organized crime figures.[2598] At Sater's sentencing, a DOJ representative told a federal judge that "[t]here was nothing [Sater] wouldn't do. No task was too big. He . . . was the key to open a hundred different doors that [the FBI] couldn't open prior to that time."[2599]

(U) Sater's accesses came from his continued connections to Russian individuals and criminal groups. Sater used his "connections with several high-ranking Russian military or former military and KGB officers" as the source for the information he provided to the U.S. Government, including much of the information described above.[2600] In addition, Sater provided information about Russian organized crime leaders in Russia, including their identities, roles, and U.S.-based operations.[2601] He also participated in FBI undercover operations in Cyprus and Turkey targeting Russian criminals.[2602] In addition to the Russian government information listed

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[2595] (U) Transcript of Sentencing Before the Honorable I. Leo Glasser, *United States v. Felix Sater*, Case No. 98-CR-1101-ILG (E.D.N.Y. October 23, 2009), p. 4. During the confirmation process for her appointment as Attorney General, Loretta Lynch addressed the issue of Sater's cooperation, particularly as it related to the sealing of certain records in Sater's case pertaining to his cooperation and sentencing. Lynch described the information provided by Sater as a result of his cooperation with the government as "valuable and sensitive" and noted that the court had twice upheld its order to seal much of the record. Letter, Lynch to Grassley and Leahy, February 9, 2015. Nearly all of the record in Sater's case was unsealed by Judge Leo Glasser in 2019. Memorandum & Order, *United States v. Felix Sater*, Case No. 98-CR-1101-ILG (E.D.N.Y. July. 22, 2019).

[2596] (U) Benton Campbell, Letter to the Honorable I. Leo Glasser, Re: *United States v. Felix Sater*, August 27, 2009.

[2597] (U) Leslie R. Caldwell and Kelly A. Moore, Letter to the Honorable I. Leo Glasser, Re: *United States v. Felix Sater*, October 19, 2009; Benton Campbell, Letter to the Honorable I. Leo Glasser, Re: *United States v. Felix Sater*, August 27, 2009.

[2598] (U) Benton Campbell, Letter to the Honorable I. Leo Glasser, Re: *United States v. Felix Sater*, August 27, 2009.

[2599] (U) Transcript of Sentencing Before the Honorable I. Leo Glasser, *United States v. Felix Sater*, Case No. 98-CR-1101-ILG (E.D.N.Y. October 23, 2009), p. 12; SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Felix Sater, April 4, 2018, p. 13.

[2600] (U) Benton Campbell, Letter to the Honorable I. Leo Glasser, Re: *United States v. Felix Sater*, August 27, 2009, p. 8.

[2601] (U) *Ibid.*

[2602] (U) *Ibid.*; Transcript of Sentencing Before the Honorable I. Leo Glasser, *United States v. Felix Sater*, Case No. 98-CR-1101-ILG (E.D.N.Y. October 23, 2009).

[redacted]

[redacted]

above relating to Shmykov, Sater also provided information about a number of Russian oligarchs and their ties to organized crime.[2603]

ii. (U) Sater's Relationship with the Trump Organization

(U) Sater first began working with the Trump Organization in the early 2000s while he was an executive at Bayrock, a New York-based real estate and development company. Sater managed Bayrock; his partner was Tevfik Arif, a former Soviet government trade official.[2604]

(U) Arif has connections to Russia and Turkey, and information obtained by the Committee suggests he was involved in Russian organized crime, money laundering, and human trafficking dating back to at least 2000.

- (U) In 2010, Arif was arrested along with a group of others while aboard a luxury yacht in Turkey as part of prostitution sting.[2605] The charges were eventually dropped.[2606]
- (U) Sater, Arif's longtime business partner, suggested to the Committee that he believed Arif engaged in human trafficking in the United States and elsewhere.[2607] According to Sater, Arif brought "thousands" of women into the United States, primarily from Ukraine.[2608]
- [redacted]

[redacted]

[2603] (U) Benton Campbell, Letter to the Honorable I. Leo Glasser, Re: *United States v. Felix Sater*, August 27, 2009.
[2604] (U) Sater Tr., pp. 81-92; Craig Shaw, *et al.*, "World leaders, mobsters, smog and mirrors," The Black Sea, December 20, 2016.
[2605] (U) Craig Shaw, *et al.*, "World leaders, mobsters, smog and mirrors," The Black Sea, December 20, 2016.
[2606] (U) *Ibid.*
[2607] (U) Sater Tr., p. 258.
[2608] (U) *Ibid.*
[redacted]
[2610] (U) *Ibid.*
[2611] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 37–38.

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- [redacted] Open source reporting indicates that Bayrock is connected to Mashkevich and the Eurasian Group, a company controlled by Chodiev and Ibragimov.[2615]

- [redacted]

(U) In approximately 2000, Bayrock, led by Sater and Arif, leased office space on the 24th floor of Trump Tower in New York, which ultimately led to Sater's introduction to Trump. Trump's offices were on the 26th floor of Trump Tower, above Bayrock.[2617]

(U) Sater and Bayrock's projects with the Trump Organization included a development in Ft. Lauderdale and the Trump SoHo development in New York. Throughout this time, Sater interacted with, and reported to, Donald Trump on deals.[2618]

(U) In 2007, *The New York Times* revealed Sater's 1998 sealed indictment and his cooperation with the U.S. Government.[2619] Sater appeared to cut ties with Bayrock in response.

(U) In late 2009 or early 2010, Sater and another associate, Daniel Ridloff, were provided office space on the 26th floor of Trump Tower in return for their efforts to source international deals.[2620] Several Trump Organization senior officers recalled that Sater had been

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[2612] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 9.
[2613] [redacted]
[2614] (U) *Ibid.*
[2615] (U) Richard Behar, "Trump and the Oligarch 'Trio,'" *Forbes*, October 25, 2016. [redacted]
[2616] (U) [redacted]
[2617] (U) Sater Tr., pp. 26, 39.
[2618] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 83–84.
[2619] (U) Charles V. Bagli, "Real Estate Executive With Hand in Trump Projects Rose From Tangled Past," *The New York Times*, December 17, 2007.
[2620] (U) Sater described his mandate as "the world except Africa." Sater Tr., p. 35.

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successful in two separate deals and had "proven himself" as being able to deliver licensing opportunities of a significant size.[2621] Sater was given the title of "Senior Advisor to Donald Trump."[2622] Sater was not paid a salary, but was promised a share of proceeds from successful business deals he brought in. Sater used business cards with the Trump Organization logo and traveled on behalf of the Trump Organization, meeting developers and other investors.[2623] This arrangement, and Sater's office space on the 26th floor of Trump Tower only several office's away from Trump, gave Sater greater access to Trump, allowing Sater the ability to see Trump frequently and "pitch" business opportunities to him.[2624] During this time, Trump would see Sater every day, generally more than once.[2625] In general, Sater recalled that he had interacted with Trump "hundreds" of times over the course of their relationship.[2626] After less than a year, Sater left his advisory role to the Trump Organization without completing any new deals.[2627]

iii. (U) Sater's History of Trump Development Work in Russia

(U) Sater recalled working on a Trump project in Moscow as early as 2003 or 2004 when he took an "exploratory trip" to Russia to meet with real estate developers about potentially building a Trump Tower.[2628] By 2004 or 2005, Sater had undertaken negotiations related to a former pencil factory in the Moscow area. Sater explained that he had taken three or four trips related to the Moscow project and would provide updates to Trump upon his return.[2629]

(U) Sater continued these efforts in the following years with a variety of different developers and locations, including an opportunity involving a location in Moscow City slated for a high-rise building.[2630] Sater recalled making a licensing deal proposal to Russian oligarch

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[2621] (U) *See, e.g.,* SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Donald J. Trump, Jr., December 13, 2017, p. 267.
[2622] (U) Sater Tr., p. 26.
[2623] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 32, 37–38.
[2624] (U) Cohen Tr. II, p. 174; Sater Tr., p. 26. A number of individuals associated with the Trump Organization sought to distance themselves and the Trump Organization from Sater. For example, Keith Schiller, Trump's longtime chief of security who had an office on the 26th floor in close proximity to Trump's office, claimed that he had interacted with Sater "once, maybe twice." SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Keith Schiller, February 7, 2018, p. 127. Sater told the Committee that he interacted with Schiller "a couple times a day, a couple times a week, a couple times a month, depending if I was there. But yes, I know Keith very well. . . . I've met him more than a hundred times. . . . and he's always around, so I would always bump into him, whether it was outside the elevator, by the waiting room, downstairs getting coffee. Many, many occasions I've met with Keith." Sater Tr., pp. 38–39. Rhona Graff, Trump's longtime assistant who maintained an office immediately adjacent to Trump's on the 26th floor, told the Committee that she recalled meeting Sater a "handful of times." Graff Tr., p. 190.
[2625] (U) Cohen Tr. II, pp. 173–174. At that time, Cohen also worked out of an office on the 26th floor of Trump Tower.
[2626] (U) Sater Tr., p. 260.
[2627] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 28.
[2628] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 88.
[2629] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 88, 91–92.
[2630] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 95–96.

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Sergei Polonsky related to a "Federation Tower Trump." Polonsky was the head of Mirax Group, a large Russian real estate and development company, during that time. Sater recalled Polonsky telling him, "I'm the Trump of Russia; why doesn't he pay me?"[2631] Sater recalled personally introducing "a few of Polonsky's partners or directors" to Trump as part of these discussions.[2632] Sater ultimately became involved in Mirax. Sater also recalled discussing a potential Trump project in Russia from approximately 2005-2008 with Pavel Fuks. Sater stated that he knows Fuks "really well" and that they had "numerous" discussions "in Moscow, then in New York" over several years about a potential Trump deal.[2633] Sater was eventually given a one-year exclusivity deal with the Trump Organization for potential deals in Russia.[2634]

(U) Sater explained that he pursued a large number of international deals which he pitched to Trump and the Trump Organization. As a result, he believed that there was not a "special affinity" to Russia, but that a variety of factors made the prospect of a Russia deal "interesting."[2635]

> *Was there a specific affinity to Russia? No. But [the Russians] were rich, they had money, and it would have been a good opportunity to make money, and thus Russia was very much an interesting city. And because I speak Russian, because I have relationships there, and because we knew developers there, it was quite interesting.*[2636]

(U) Sater's interest in pursuing a deal in Russia, however, did not occur in complete isolation. For example, in 2007, Donald Trump wrote a letter to Putin congratulating him on Putin's being named "Person of the Year" by *Time*.[2637]

[2631] **(U)** *Ibid.*.
[2632] **(U)** *Ibid.*, pp. 96, 98.
[2633] **(U)** *Ibid.*, p. 97.
[2634] **(U)** *Ibid.*, pp. 94–95.
[2635] **(U)** *Ibid.*, p. 36.
[2636] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[2637] **(U)** Letter, Trump to Putin, December 19, 2007 (TRUMPORG_18_000046). The Committee did not obtain a clear explanation as to why this letter was sent, or whether any response was provided.

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THE TRUMP ORGANIZATION

December 19, 2007

President Vladimir Putin
Russian Federation
4, Staraya Square
Moscow, 103132

Dear President Putin:

Congratulations on being named Time magazine's "Man of the Year" — you definitely deserve it. As you probably have heard, I am a big fan of yours! Take care of yourself.

With best wishes,

Sincerely,

Donald J. Trump

(U) While Trump was Sater's primary point of contact in the Trump Organization, Sater also worked with Donald Trump Jr., Ivanka Trump, and Jason Greenblatt at various times during his efforts.[2638] For example, in approximately 2006, Sater recalled traveling to Russia on Trump's request because both Ivanka Trump and Donald Trump Jr. would be traveling there, in part to research potential deals. Sater recalled accompanying both Trump children during this trip:

> *[Trump] said: My kids are going there; I'd feel a lot more comfortable if you were there looking after them. There's still a concern; they're young. Do you think you could go there? I said: No problem. And I flew there from Europe, because I didn't fly there with them, and I met them there. We stayed at the*

[2638] (U) Sater Tr., p. 93.

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National Hotel together, and I did what their dad asked me, keep an eye on them. . . . They were actually talking to other people about potential deals. He just wanted me there to sort of keep an eye on them, literally. I don't know about protection, but—well, yes, I guess he wanted somebody that he knows and trusted there to look after his kids.[2639]

(U) On that trip Sater facilitated a tour of the Kremlin which Sater later referenced in communications with Cohen during the 2016 presidential campaign. Sater told the Committee:

I contacted a very close friend of my partner Tevfik [Arif] and told them -- told him that I needed to impress the Trump kids. And he made the arrangements for a private tour of the Kremlin, where it was just me, [Ivanka Trump], I think it was the curator for the Kremlin, and one security person, I guess somebody the equivalent of their Secret Service, and a translator, I remember. But then afterwards the curator and translator, once we finished going through some of the Newseum-quality rooms, as we're passing, the security guard says: That's the boss's room. And he opens it and he shows an office. [Ivanka Trump] said: Can I sit down behind the chair? I said: Let her. And he's like: You're out of your mind. I said: No, no; let her; just trust me; she's the daughter of a VIP from the U.S.; what's she going to do, steal his pen? You're standing right here." And I convinced him to let her sit in the chair. She sat in the chair, spun around two or three times, said "Wow," walked out, and that was it. Then later we went to dinner.[2640]

[redacted] Sater stated that the "close friend" of Arif was Telman Ismailov. Sater recalled having been previously introduced to Ismailov by Arif and understood that at the time he was "very influential" in Moscow.[2641] [redacted][2642] Sater further explained that years later Ismailov had a "major falling out" with Putin "because he was asked to build a hotel for the Sochi Olympics and he refused and then built a major hotel in Turkey, and that was the beginning of his end."[2643]

3. (U) Trump Tower Moscow Projects During the 2016 Presidential Campaign

(U) During the 2016 election cycle, at least three proposals for a Trump Tower project in Moscow came to senior employees of the Trump Organization.

[2639] **(U)** *Ibid.*, pp. 99–100.
[2640] **(U)** *Ibid.*, pp. 103–104.
[2641] **(U)** *Ibid.*, p. 104.
[2642] [redacted]
[2643] **(U)** Sater Tr., p. 106.

[redacted]

[redacted]

(U) Two of these proposals came to Michael Cohen, then an executive vice president at the Trump Organization and personal attorney to Trump, from individuals with strong connections in Russia who had done business with Trump and the Trump Organization in the past. The first of these proposals involved Felix Sater. The second involved Giorgi Rtskhiladze, another businessman who had previously worked to build a Trump Tower in Batumi, Georgia, and who also has significant ties to Russia. Both were offered to Cohen in September 2015, shortly after Cohen's efforts to setup a meeting between Putin and Trump in New York. While there is no direct evidence linking these proposals to Cohen's Kremlin outreach, the timing of the proposals suggests there may be some link between the two.

(U) In the spring of 2016, Boris Epshteyn, a Trump Campaign surrogate and later employee, brought a third proposal to Eric Trump. The Epshteyn proposal, which came through individuals connected to the Moscow city government, involved construction of a smaller hotel in Russia.

(U) Also during the 2016 elections, an individual named Dmitri Klokov contacted Cohen to set up a potential Trump-Putin meeting, possibly in relation to the Trump Tower Moscow discussions.

i. (U) Attempts to Broker a Meeting Between Trump and Putin during the 2015 United Nations General Assembly.

(U) On September 15, 2015, Cohen appeared on a radio program with conservative media personality Sean Hannity. On the program, Cohen claimed that there is a "better than likely chance" that Trump would meet with Putin during Putin's upcoming trip to the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) in New York.[2644] Cohen initially told the Committee that he was "just throwing it out there in order to have fun." However, Cohen later admitted that prior to the Hannity show, he had engaged in efforts to arrange such a meeting. According to Cohen, before his Hannity interview, he had conducted an internet search for the Kremlin, found a phone number, and called that number.[2645] The woman who answered spoke both English and Russian. Cohen recalled that he asked the woman if there was "[a]ny chance when President Putin is in New York at the General Assembly he'd like to come by and have a burger with Mr. Trump at the [G]rille?"[2646] Cohen claimed the Kremlin representative responded by stating that she didn't think "protocol" would allow it, but that she would "let you know if we can."[2647]

[2644] (U) Andrew Kaczynski, "Trump's Lawyer: 'Better Than Likely Chance Trump May Even Meet With Putin' During U.N.," *BuzzFeed News*, September 17, 2015.
[2645] (U) SSCI Interview of the Transcript with Michael Cohen, October 25, 2017, pp. 29–30.
[2646] (U) *Ibid.* Cohen was referring to Trump Grille, a restaurant in Trump Tower in New York.
[2647] (U) *Ibid.*

[redacted]

[redacted]

Cohen provided the woman his phone number to follow-up. Cohen initially claimed to the Committee that he never told Trump or anyone else in the Trump Organization or Trump Campaign about the outreach or the idea for the meeting.[2648]

(U) Cohen admitted in subsequent testimony with the Committee that much of this original account was false. Cohen had, in fact, discussed the potential Putin meeting with Trump "two or three" times and Cohen's outreach had been supported by Trump.[2649] Cohen recalled Trump seeing press articles which suggested that then-President Obama would not meet with Putin during UNGA.[2650] Cohen recalled Trump rhetorically asking him "[h]ow stupid is our President not to meet with Putin when he's here?"[2651] Cohen recalled telling Trump that it would be "really cool" if "we can get [Putin] to come here and have a burger with you over at the Trump Grille."[2652] Trump directed Cohen to "see if you can make it happen."[2653] Cohen subsequently conducted the initial outreach to the Kremlin.[2654]

(U) On September 10, 2015, after Cohen's initial outreach to the Kremlin but prior to the Hannity appearance, a reporter with *The New York Times* reached out to Hope Hicks about the possibility that Trump would meet with Putin in New York.[2655] Hicks immediately forwarded the inquiry to Cohen and copied Corey Lewandowski, writing only "Michael?" in the body of the email.[2656] Cohen recalled that he informed Hicks and Lewandowski of his efforts to arrange a meeting between Putin and Trump at this time.[2657]

[2648] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 30–31. Cohen later told the SCO that he had discussed this outreach with the then-President Trump's attorney prior to his testimony before the Committee and that the President's attorney discussed keeping Trump out of the narrative. In particular, the President's attorney expressed his belief that the story was not relevant, and that the story should not be included in his statement to the Committee. Cohen further recalled that he understood from this interaction that if he stayed on message and kept the President out of the narrative, the President would have his back. *SCO Report*, Vol. II, p. 142.

[2649] (U) Cohen Tr. II, p. 314.

[2650] (U) *Ibid.*

[2651] (U) *Ibid.*

[2652] (U) *Ibid.*

[2653] (U) *Ibid.*

[2654] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 317.

[2655] (U) Email, Haberman to Hicks, September 10, 2016 (DJTFP00005761).

[2656] (U) Email, Hicks to Cohen and Lewandowski, September 10, 2016 (DJTFP00005761).

[2657] (U) Cohen Tr. II, p. 317. Cohen's admission that he told Hicks and Lewandowski, which is consistent with Hick's email to Cohen, conflicts with what Hicks told the Committee. Hicks claimed that she didn't recall any discussion of a potential meeting between Trump and Putin. Hicks further explained Cohen's public comments on Hannity by claiming Cohen was fabricating the possibility that a Trump-Putin meeting might occur, stating that "Michael says a lot of things publicly that aren't accurate." Hicks Tr., p. 23. Cohen recalled Trump's reaction to media attention to the issue was to simply "[j]ust let them keep writing." Cohen Tr. II, p. 318.

[redacted]

[redacted]

(U) As noted, Cohen recalled speaking to Trump several times about the proposed meeting.[2658] Sometime after the September 15, 2015 Hannity radio interview, Cohen initiated a second call with the representative of the Russian government.[2659] Cohen was told that "protocol" would not allow the meeting to occur.[2660] Cohen was under the impression that Putin was informed of the outreach.[2661] Cohen ultimately informed Trump that the meeting would not happen.[2662]

(U) In late September 2015, Cohen received two seemingly independent offers to build a Trump Tower Moscow. The offers, one from Giorgi Rtskhiladze and one from Felix Sater, arrived within days of each other.[2663] Cohen admitted that he had never before received two separate offers for the same building location at approximately the same time.[2664] Cohen claimed that he did not believe that either offer was in any way connected to his outreach to the Kremlin earlier in the month.[2665] Sater claimed that his outreach was undertaken at his own initiative.[2666] Rtskhiladze claimed that his outreach was undertaken at the behest of a business associate.[2667]

ii. (U) Felix Sater: Michael Cohen's First Trump Tower Moscow Line of Effort During the Campaign

In September 2015, Sater and Cohen began discussing the possibility of building a Trump Tower in Moscow. Efforts to move the deal forward continued until at least June 2016.

[2658] **(U)** Cohen Tr. II, p. 314.
[2659] **(U)** *SCO Report*, Vol. II, p. 141.
[2660] **(U)** Cohen Tr. II, p. 315.
[2661] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[2662] **(U)** *SCO Report*, Vol. II, pp. 141–142.
[2663] **(U)** Sater Tr., p. 93; Rtskhiladze Tr., 97–98
[2664] **(U)** Cohen Tr., p. 118.
[2665] **(U)** Both Rtskhiladze and Sater have contacts connected to the Kremlin, particularly the office of Dmitri Peskov. For example, Sater claimed that one of his close contacts, Emin Iskenderov, had access to Peskov and that he had used Iskenderov to conduct outreach to Peskov. Sater Tr., p. 191; *see also* FBI, FD-302, Sater 12/15/2017; FBI, FD-302, Sater 9/19/2017. Rtskhiladze has privately claimed that Peskov is his "good friend." Email, Rtskhiladze to Cohen, March 12, 2017 (RTSKHILADZE-0000245). Furthermore, a similar contact progression involving Peskov's office likely occurred separately during the course of the Trump Moscow project. In that case, the day after Cohen unilaterally made contact with Peskov's assistant in mid-January 2016, Sater contacted Cohen, stating that it was "about Putin" and that "they called today," suggesting that Cohen's outreach did prompt Kremlin involvement. Text message, Sater to Cohen, January 21, 2016 (FSS00131).
[2666] **(U)** Sater Tr., p. 108. Sater claimed that Trump's campaign created "a lot of good noise" which served as a "PR campaign to get a Trump Tower Moscow built."
[2667] **(U)** Written Responses, Rtskhiladze, August 23, 2019. Rtskhiladze claimed that he reached out to Cohen after his business associate, Simon Nizharadze, asked him to facilitate a deal between Trump and Vladimir Mazur, a Russian businessman. *Ibid.*

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COMMITTEE SENSITIVE – RUSSIA INVESTIGATION ONLY

a. (U) Origins of the Sater Proposal

(U) In late September 2015, Sater called Andrei Rozov, the head of the Russian real estate development firm I.C. Expert, to present Rozov with the concept for a Trump Tower Moscow.[2668]

(U) A body of information suggests Rozov's personal and professional network likely has at least some ties to individuals associated with Russian influence operations. For example, Rozov's associate Stalbek Mishakov has significant ties to Oleg Deripaska, a Russian oligarch who the Committee assesses undertakes a wide variety of Russian government influence operations.

- (U) Sater said that he knew Mishakov and that Sater had met him a "bunch of times."[2669] Sater at first stated that Rozov and Mishakov were "friends," before claiming that they were "business associates" or "acquaintances."[2670] Open source reporting corroborates the connections between Mishakov and Rozov. For example, Mishakov and Rozov have shared board positions at the same company.[2671]
- [redacted] For years, Mishakov has maintained a series of board and senior executive positions with several of Deripaska's companies, including as serving as Advisor to the General Director at RUSAL Global Management BV CJSC.[2673] Sater also recalled that Mishakov had managed at least one project for Deripaska in Moscow.[2674]

[redacted]

[2668] (U) Sater Tr., pp. 107–109. The Committee did not have a record of the call in order to determine the specific timing with certainty. Sater explained to the Committee that he had a longstanding relationship with Rozov. Sater and Rozov were both involved with Mirax Group since approximately 2007 or 2008. Sater stated that he and Rozov developed a very close friendship and had conducted business together in the past. *Ibid.*, p. 118.
[2669] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 121.
[2670] (U) *Ibid.*
[2671] (U) "JSC '1 MPZ IM. V.A. Kazakova,' General Meeting Decision," *Interfax*, September 17, 2007.
[2672] [redacted]
[2673] (U) "People: GMK Noril'skiy Nikel PAO, Stalbek Mishakov," *Reuters*, undated.
[2674] (U) Sater Tr., p. 121.
[2675] [redacted]
[2676] (U) *Ibid.* For information on [redacted] *see infra* Vol. 5, Sec. III.A.8.i and Vol. 5, Sec. III.J.4.

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(U) After contacting Rozov, Sater called Cohen and presented the idea for a Trump Tower Moscow.[2680] According to Cohen, he and Sater were not in close contact prior to the initial Trump Tower Moscow outreach.[2681] Sater and Cohen discussed an initial concept for the project involving a skyscraper, one that would seek to be the tallest tower in Europe.[2682] Sater believed that a deal this large would require approval from the city government of Moscow and further suggested that approval from Putin would be necessary.[2683] Sater recalled that after bringing the proposal to Cohen, Cohen sought and obtained approval from Trump to initiate the negotiations.[2684] Sater recalled:

> *I came to Michael and said: Michael, I have a potential Trump Tower deal in Moscow that we could do; I have a good developer; I want to speak to Mr. T. He said: Sure. He came back to me and said: Let's go.*[2685]

(U) Cohen recalled that in his initial discussion with Trump about Sater's concept for a Trump Tower Moscow, Trump approved moving forward with the project but told Cohen to closely monitor Sater.

> *After the conversation with Mr. Sater, I told Mr. Trump that there's an opportunity to develop the tallest building in the world in Moscow. He asked me who it was with. I told him Felix is bringing the proposal, and he was like: Oy, Felix! And I said to him: But you have to understand, Felix is not the partner in*

[2677] (U) *Ibid.*
[2678] (U) *Ibid.*
[2679] (U) *Ibid.*
[2680] (U) Sater Tr., pp. 118–119.
[2681] (U) Cohen Tr. II, p. 168. Cohen described his contact with Sater in the years prior to this as "very infrequent" contact.
[2682] (U) Email communications at least as late as October show that Cohen and Sater were still focused on building a tower designed to be among the tallest buildings in Europe. Email, Cohen to Sater, October 13, 2015 (TRUMPORG_MC_000164).
[2683] (U) Sater Tr., p. 147.
[2684] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 111.
[2685] (U) *Ibid.*

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this. He's just the licensee's representative. And he's not involved. And Mr. Trump said: Okay, keep him tight. Meaning, keep him on a tight leash.[2686]

(U) After receiving Trump's approval to proceed, Cohen, Sater, and Rozov moved quickly to agree to basic deal parameters. On September 25, 2015, Cohen, Rozov, and Sater participated in a conference call with Sater translating.[2687] Shortly thereafter, Cohen forwarded architectural renderings for the project directly to Rozov.[2688]

(U) Several days later, Rozov's "right hand man", Dmitry Chizhikov, sent Cohen a letter from Rozov, attaching a presentation describing Rozov's company, IC Expert.[2689] In the letter, Rozov wrote that "the tallest building in Europe should be in Moscow, and I am prepared to build it."[2690] Rozov said that he was "optimistic" that the co-venture would become "a shining example of business creating opportunities and significant good will between Russia and the U.S."[2691]

b. (U) Signing of a Letter of Intent

(U) By October 5, 2015, Cohen had drafted a Letter of Intent (LOI) which set forth terms of a license agreement between Trump Acquisition, LLC and I.C. Expert Investment Company, which was wholly-owned by Rozov.[2692] The LOI called for a 120-story residential tower to be built in Moscow and outlined a license fee structure that included a $4 million up-front fee to be paid in various installments, followed by a percentage of fees to be paid to Trump Acquisition,

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[2686] (U) Cohen Tr. II, pp. 182–183.

[2687] (U) While Cohen initially claimed he never spoke to Rozov on the phone, he later admitted speaking to him on the phone once, which largely required Sater to act as a translator. Cohen Tr. II, p. 188. Documentary evidence and Rozov's statements to the SCO suggest that a conference call happened on Friday, September 25, 2015. Email, Chizhikov to Cohen, September 29, 2015 (MDC-S-000601–602) (attaching a letter to Cohen from Rozov); FBI, FD-302, Rozov 1/25/2018. Also later that evening Cohen forwarded to Sater the architectural renderings that Cohen had previously sent to Rtskhiladze. Email, Cohen to Sater, September 25, 2015 (MDC-S-000673–680). For more on Cohen's effort with Rtskhiladze, *see infra* Vol. 5, Sec. III.D.3.iii.

[2688] (U) Email, Cohen to Rozov, September 25, 2015 (MDC-S-000681–688). This email was sent to an email address associated with RAV Investments, which Sater described as the "Swiss family office at the time that [Rozov] used as his sort of investment arm." Sater Tr., p. 116.

[2689] (U) Sater Tr., pp. 115–116; Email, Chizhikov to Cohen, September 29, 2015 (MDC-S-000601–602) (attaching a letter to Cohen from Rozov).

[2690] (U) Email, Chizhikov to Cohen, September 29, 2015 (MDC-S-000601–602) (attaching a letter to Cohen from Rozov). Sater recalled, "Actually, we were debating on trying to figure out maybe the tallest building in the world. But we didn't want to put that in the letter so as not to spook anyone. . . . It would make it ten times harder to build." Sater Tr., p. 123.

[2691] (U) Email, Chizhikov to Cohen, September 29, 2015 (MDC-S-000601–602) (attaching a letter to Cohen from Rozov).

[2692] (U) Email, Cohen to Sater, October 5, 2015 (MDC-S-000641–651).

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inter alia, gross sales fees, rental fees, and revenue fees.[2693] Subsequent revisions to Cohen's initial draft would eliminate the 120-story requirement and change the building to a multi-use facility that included residences, a hotel, office space, and other related amenities.[2694] The revisions also modified some license fees by providing for a reduction of sales fees in a cascading percentage as sales increased; a hotel management provision that would allow Trump International Hotels Management, LLC to operate the hotel for 25 years, collecting a percentage of gross operating revenue, with the option to manage food and other services.[2695]

(U) On October 9, 2015, Sater emailed Cohen to tell Cohen that Sater would be meeting with Russian billionaire Andrey Molchanov in the coming days.[2696] Sater noted that Molchanov's stepfather was in the St. Petersburg city government and that Putin had "worked for him" in the past.[2697] Sater sent a link to LSR Group, one of Russia's largest construction companies and a major real estate developer.[2698] Sater explained that Molchanov plans to "do Trump Tower Moscow on his site."[2699]

- **(U)** Molchanov is affiliated with LSR Group.[2700] Sater later told the Committee that he met Molchanov in approximately 2008 and that while he knew Molchanov "is one of the largest developers in Russia. . . . [h]e's also a friend."[2701]

- [redacted] Sater knew Molchanov had previously served in the Russian government as a state senator and believed that Molchanov was well connected.[2702] Sater further said that

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[2693] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[2694] **(U)** Email, [Office scanner] to Cohen, November 2, 2015 (MDC-S-000618–636) (attaching a scan of a signed LOI).
[2695] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[2696] **(U)** Email, Sater to Cohen, October 9, 2015 (MDC-S-000595).
[2697] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[2698] **(U)** Email, Sater to Cohen, October 9, 2015 (MDC-S-000593).
[2699] **(U)** Email, Sater to Cohen, October 9, 2015 (MDC-S-000595).
[2700] **(U)** Tatiana Voronova and Katya Golubkova, "Main Shareholder in Russian homebuilder LSR to keep control," *Reuters*, May 29, 2019.
[2701] [redacted] Sater Tr., p. 128. Sater recalled that he was introduced to Molchanov through a very close mutual friend, Maxim Temikov, who also served with Sater on the Mirax board. He explained that Temikov's first wife was now married to Molchanov. Sater explained this network as the "St. Petersburg group" who "all know each other. . . . this is a socially close, connected group of people." *Ibid.*, pp. 131–132. [redacted]
[2702] **(U)** Sater Tr., p. 130.

[redacted]

[redacted]

he believed Molchanov was "a phone call away from anybody he needs to be in contact with."[2703] [redacted]

- [redacted] Sater said that while he had not conducted business with Molchanov in the past, they had frequently discussed real estate together.[2705] [redacted] The Committee has no further information about this planned meeting.

[redacted] Sater told the Committee that the Molchanov site Sater had referenced in his October 9, 2015 email to Cohen was the ZiL factory, a defunct automobile and heavy equipment manufacturing facility, which Sater described as the largest development project in Moscow. Sater told the Committee that the meeting with Molchanov referenced in his email to Cohen did, in fact, take place.[2708] Sater explained that he subsequently "spoke to [Molchanov] on a number of occasions" about the Trump deal.[2709] According to Sater, Molchanov reacted positively to the Trump project, but he and Molchanov never arrived at a completed agreement.[2710] [redacted]

(U) On October 12, 2015, Sater emailed Cohen to inform him that Andrey Kostin, whom Sater described as "Putin's top finance guy and CEO of 2nd largest bank in Russia," was "on board and has indicated he would finance Trump Moscow."[2712] Sater attached a Wikipedia entry for Kostin to his email.[2713]

- [redacted] Andrey Kostin is the chairman of Vneshtorgbank (VTB), Russia's state-owned bank and one of the largest banks in Russia. [redacted]

[2703] **(U)** *Ibid.*, p. 131.
[2704] [redacted]
[2705] **(U)** Sater Tr., p. 128.
[2706] [redacted]
[2707] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[2708] **(U)** Sater Tr., p. 129–130.
[2709] **(U)** *Ibid.*, p. 130
[2710] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[2711] [redacted]
[2712] **(U)** Email, Sater to Cohen, October 12, 2015 (MDC-S-000638–640).
[2713] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[2714] [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

- [redacted]

- **(U)** In 2014, the U.S. Government imposed economic sanctions on VTB Bank pursuant to the Ukraine-related sanctions program.[2718]

(U) Sater told the Committee that although he never had direct communication with Kostin, Kostin was indirectly contacted about the project "through people in Moscow."[2719] Sater recalled that a contact in Moscow, whom he identified only as "Danny," "indicated that he [Danny] spoke to people at VTB and that they would be on board."[2720] Sater also told the Committee that he used Evgeny Shmykov, the former Russian intelligence officer, as a conduit to VTB.[2721]

(U) In his email to Cohen, Sater described VTB's support as "major for us" because of Kostin's "position in Russia," where Kostin was "extremely powerful and respected."[2722] Sater also told Cohen that the next step was to get Putin "on board."[2723] To accomplish this, Sater claimed he had set up a tentative meeting with "Putin and [his] top deputy" two days later.[2724] Sater recalled that his contact had told Sater with the identity of the top deputy, but Sater claimed to the Committee that he couldn't remember the deputy's name .[2725] Sater told the Committee that the meeting was initially delayed, and ultimately never took place.[2726]

[redacted]

[2718] **(U)** Treasury, "Announcement of Additional Treasury Sanctions on Russian Financial Institutions and on a Defense Technology Entity," July 29, 2014.
[2719] **(U)** Sater Tr., p. 150–151.
[2720] **(U)** *Ibid.*, pp. 139–140.
[2721] **(U)** Staff notes, SSCI Interview with Felix Sater, April 4, 2018.
[2722] **(U)** Email, Sater to Cohen, October 12, 2015 (MDC-S-000638–640).
[2723] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[2724] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[2725] **(U)** Sater Tr., p. 140.
[2726] **(U)** *Ibid.*, p. 141.

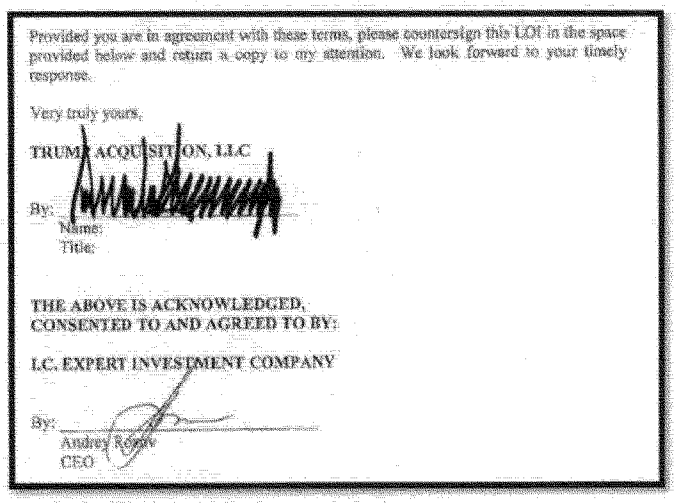
[redacted]

[redacted]

(U) On October 13, 2015, the day after his email to Cohen discussing Kostin and Putin's top deputy, Sater sent Cohen an LOI with Rozov's signature.[2727] In the email, Sater linked the project to relations between the United States and Russia.[2728]

> *Lets [sic] make this happen and build a Trump Moscow. And possibly fix relations between the countries by showing everyone that commerce & business are much better and more practical than politics. That should be Putins [sic] message as well, and we will help him agree on that message. Help world peace and make a lot of money. I would say that's a great lifetime goal for us to go after.*[2729]

(U) Approximately two weeks later, Trump countersigned the LOI. The Committee was unable to determine the exact day the LOI was countersigned by Trump. However, on October 31, 2015, at 1:01 p.m. EDT, Sater emailed Cohen and asked Cohen to email the "signed LOI" because Sater hadn't yet received it. Cohen eventually transmitted a signed LOI to Sater on November 2, 2015.[2730]



Provided you are in agreement with these terms, please countersign this LOI in the space provided below and return a copy to my attention. We look forward to your timely response.

Very truly yours,

TRUMP ACQUISITION, LLC

By: _____
Name:
Title:

THE ABOVE IS ACKNOWLEDGED,
CONSENTED TO AND AGREED TO BY:

I.C. EXPERT INVESTMENT COMPANY

By: _____
Andrey Rozov
CEO

[2727] **(U)** Email, Sater to Cohen, et al., October 13, 2015 (MDC-S-000545).
[2728] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[2729] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[2730] **(U)** Email, Cohen to Rozov, Chizhikov, and Sater, November 2, 2015 (MDC-S-000652–670).

[redacted]

[redacted]

(U) Also on October 31, 2015, at approximately the same time that Sater was emailing Cohen and asking for the signed LOI, Trump conducted a campaign rally in Norfolk, Virginia designed to announce his policy plans for veterans. During the rally, and seemingly unprompted, Trump made positive comments about Putin. Trump stated:

> *You know, I've made a lot of money. Deals are people, deals are people. And you have got to analyze people, and I can look at people. I can tell you, I'll get along with Putin. I was on 60 Minutes with Putin. He was my stablemate three weeks ago. We got the highest ratings in a long time on 60 Minutes. You saw that, right? He was my stablemate. I believe I'll get along with him. It was Trump and Putin, Putin and Trump. I'd even let him go first if it makes us friendly. I'll give up the name. I'll give up that place. But I was on 60 Minutes three weeks ago. I'll get along with him.*[2731]

(U) Shortly thereafter, on November 3, 2015, Trump made similar comments at a press conference.

> *I think our relationship with Russia will be very good. Vladimir Putin was on 60 Minutes with me three weeks ago, right? Putin. And they have one of the highest ratings they had in a long time. So I'm going to give him total credit. But we will have a very good relationship, I think, with Russia. Now maybe we won't, but I believe we will have a very good relationship with Russia. I believe that I will have a very good relationship with Putin.*[2732]

(U) According to Cohen, Sater told Cohen that Putin was aware of the Trump Tower Moscow project and was supportive of it, a claim that Cohen relayed to Trump.[2733] Cohen stated that he told Trump that Putin was "interested" in the project and that if there was a groundbreaking ceremony, Trump and Putin would be expected to be there.[2734]

> *I told [Trump] that obviously Vladimir Putin, President Putin, would need to approve the project, as I was told by Mr. Sater that Putin's people knew of that project. That he supposedly is interested and would approve it.*[2735]

[2731] **(U)** YouTube, Trump Campaign rally, October 31, 2015, available at: www.youtube.com/watch?v=sl8BGvALQgQ (beginning at 1:01:38).
[2732] **(U)** C-SPAN, Presidential Candidate Donald Trump News Conference, November 3, 2015 (beginning at 24:23).
[2733] **(U)** Cohen Tr. II, pp. 34, 212. The Committee does not have direct evidence which reliably determines whether Putin knew of the Trump Tower.
[2734] **(U)** *Ibid.*, p. 34.
[2735] **(U)** *Ibid.*

[redacted]

[redacted]

(U) Cohen further believed that the Trump Moscow project, and particularly the signing of the LOI, affected Trump's thinking and rhetoric toward Russia and Putin on the campaign trail.[2736] Cohen believed that Trump's public comments about Russia could have been influenced by Cohen informing Trump that Putin was aware of, and had approved of, the project.[2737] When asked if Cohen had coordinated Trump's public comments about Putin, Cohen stated that he hadn't, but pointed to the fact that he had conveyed Putin's awareness to Trump and believed it was a factor in Trump's statements.[2738]

> *We had just executed the letter of intent. Mr. Trump goes out the same exact day and he starts talking about what a great relationship that he can have with Russia. What a great relationship I could have with Putin. He had Russia on his mind because we just executed the LOI.*[2739]

(U) Sater said that the connection between the project and the campaign was so obvious that he didn't think the connection needed to be verbalized. He further understood that Cohen was aware of the obvious connection.[2740] Sater told the Committee that what Trump was saying on the campaign trail could "help" the project move forward.[2741] Cohen's communications at the time and subsequent testimony to the Committee reveal that he similarly connected Putin's public comments about Trump to the project.[2742] Cohen recalled linking Trump's comments about Putin on the campaign trail to the Moscow project and he believed that Trump had as well.[2743] Cohen also recalled that the project was designed with the theme of improved relations between the United States and Russia, and included a "Friendship Square" in the design plans.[2744] According to Cohen, Trump called his campaign "the greatest infomercial in the history of politics," which to Cohen suggested that the project's potential profitability was the priority.[2745] Cohen explained that the project would be a financially lucrative deal for everyone involved and would be so for years beyond Trump's political candidacy.[2746] As a result, even though he didn't believe Trump was going to win the election, Cohen wanted to proceed with the deal.[2747]

[2736] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 212.
[2737] (U) *Ibid.*
[2738] (U) *Ibid.* Cohen also recalled that he told Trump about Sater's proposal to offer the penthouse suite to Putin personally in order to "drive up the numbers." According to Cohen, Trump responded, "Yeah, that's Felix, I mean he's crazy." *Ibid.*, p. 213.
[2739] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 212.
[2740] (U) FBI, FD-302, Sater 12/15/2017.
[2741] (U) Sater Tr., p. 153.
[2742] (U) Email, Cohen to Sater, December 17, 2015 (MDC-S-000689); Cohen Tr., p. 150.
[2743] (U) Cohen Tr. II, pp. 259–260.
[2744] (U) FBI, FD-302, Cohen 9/12/2018; Email, Cohen to Sater, October 5, 2015 (MDC-S-000641–651).
[2745] (U) Cohen Tr. II, p. 254.
[2746] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 226.
[2747] (U) *Ibid.*

[redacted]

[redacted]

(U) Approximately 40 minutes after Trump's positive comments about Putin on November 3, 2015, Sater sent Cohen an email asking for a clip of Trump's statements, and linking the Moscow deal and the U.S. presidential election.

> *Loved Putin/Russia reference. I need that part of the press conference cut into a short clip to be played for Putin. Please get it done . . . [Andrey] wants to send it to the Kremlin. . . . I will get Putin on this program and we will get Donald elected . . . our boy can become President of the USA and we can engineer it. I will get all of Putins* [sic] *team to buy in on this. . . . Get me that clip I will get it to Putin and his people quickly and it will help our cause and process.*[2748]

(U) Minutes later, Sater sent a second message to Cohen reiterating this point:

> *GET THAT CliP. Micheal [sic] we can own this story. Donald doesn't stare down, he negotiates and understands the economic issues and Putin only want [sic] to deal with a pragmatic leader, and a successful business man is a good candidate for someone who knows how to negotiate. "Business, politics, whatever it all is the same for someone who knows how to deal" I think I can get Putin to say that at the Trump Moscow press conference. If he says it we own this election. Americas* [sic] *most difficult adversary agreeing that Donald is a good guy to negotiate. ISIS, oil, Middle East, etc etc. we can own this election. . . . Michael lets go. 2 boys from Brooklyn getting a USA president elected. This is good really good.*[2749]

(U) Cohen told the Committee that he couldn't recall sending the clip to Sater.

(U) In addition to linking the project to the election, Sater's November 3, 2015, email suggested that he was seeking to engage individuals close to Putin on the project.

> *[A] very close person & partner to Putins* [sic] *closest friend, partner and advisor who has been with Putin ever since teenage years his friend and partner (on the largest shopping center in Moscow) is flying in to the private island in the Bahamas Andrey [Rozov] rented next week. Everything will be negotiated and discussed not with flunkies but with people who will have dinner with Putin and discuss the issues and get a go ahead.*[2750]

[2748] **(U)** Email, Sater to Cohen, November 3, 2015 (MDC-S-000451).
[2749] **(U)** Email, Sater to Cohen, November 3, 2015 (MDC-S-000692).
[2750] **(U)** Email, Sater to Cohen, November 3, 2015 (MDC-S-000451).

[redacted]

[redacted]

(U) In his follow-on message to Cohen minutes later, Sater added that his "next steps are very sensitive with Putins [sic] very very close people."[2751] Sater told the Committee that this was a reference to the Rotenbergs, a family extremely close to Putin.[2752] Sater further stated that the Rotenbergs' "friend and partner" with whom he was meeting in the Bahamas was Mikhail Zayats (alternately, *Ziats*), who had partnered with the Rotenbergs on the Aviapark mall in Moscow, the largest shopping mall in Europe.[2753]

(U) A body of information supports Sater's assertion that the Rotenbergs maintain an close personal relationship with Putin. This information further indicates the Rotenbergs handle special projects for Putin.

- (U) According to open source information, Arkady Rotenberg has been lifelong friends with Putin. The two reportedly joined the same judo club at a young age and have been friends since childhood.[2754]

- (U) The Rotenbergs have amassed their wealth largely through obtaining lucrative Russian government contracts. According to Department of the Treasury information, Arkady and Boris Rotenberg's personal wealth increased by billions of dollars after Putin awarded them large contracts related to Gazprom and the Sochi Winter Olympics.[2755]

- (U) The Rotenbergs have financed Russian state projects, including projects of special interest to Putin.[2756] Open source information suggests that some of these projects involve covert or obscured funding for Russian state-directed projects. For example, press reporting indicates that in 2013, companies affiliated with Arkady Rotenberg transferred $231 million in loans to an offshore company with no repayment terms and with no clear business purpose.[2757]

- [redacted]

[2751] (U) Email, Sater to Cohen, November 3, 2015 (MDC-S-000692).
[2752] (U) Sater Tr., p. 155. This appears to include brothers Arkady and Boris Rotenberg, as well as Arkady Rotenberg's son, Igor. *Ibid.*, p. 156.
[2753] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 157–158. Open source information confirms that Amma Development, controlled by Zayats, built the over 500-store mall and that the Rotenbergs were the main investor. Anton Filatov, "Owners of Aviapark can sell half of the complex," *Vedomosti*, August 9, 2016 (Russian language).
[2754] (U) Jo Becker and Steven Lee Myers, "Putin's Friend Profits in Purge of Schoolbooks," *The New York Times*, November 1, 2014.
[2755] (U) Treasury, "Treasury Sanctions Russian Officials, Member Of The Russian Leadership's Inner Circle, And An Entity For Involvement In The Situation In Ukraine," March 20, 2014.
[2756] (U) *Ibid.*
[2757] (U) Joshua Yaffa, "Putin's Shadow Cabinet and the Bridge to Crimea," *New Yorker*, May 22, 2017.

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(U) Sater also discussed Zayats as providing a potential pathway to the Rotenbergs, a relationship that Sater called his "ace in the hole."[2763] Sater relayed that his process in approaching Zayats was similar to other tactics he used during the Trump Tower Moscow efforts. Sater recalled:

> *Mikhail Ziats joined us [Sater and Rozov] in the Bahamas. So in answer to many of the questions today, how would I get to anybody or how would I know, Mikhail Ziats' partner was Arkady [Rotenberg] on one of the largest shopping malls in Moscow. He's friend[s] with Andrei [Rozov]. They're flying in, we're hanging out for a week, fishing and diving together, me, Mikhail, and Andrei. Getting to them to push the agenda forward, that would be an example of how I would get that agenda pushed forward. And this email describes who he is and what his relation is to Putin. But Ziats didn't hear about this deal or have any real conversations with me until he came to the Bahamas. When I told him about it, he was like: Yeah, definitely; when you guys get a little closer, I'll push it, I'll speak to them. And he was also enthusiastic because he would have gotten cut in.*[2764]

(U) Sater said that his efforts primarily involved contacting individuals who could put him in touch with people with Kremlin access, which he felt was necessary to advance the project. Sater claimed to have the ability to contact approximately a dozen individuals, who,

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[2759] (U) *Ibid.*

[redacted]

[2763] (U) Sater Tr., p. 196.

[2764] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 157.

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within "one or two degrees of separation," "have Putin's ear."[2765] Sater explained that he used this professional and personal network in Moscow to conduct outreach to those with sufficient Kremlin access to elevate the deal.[2766] He further explained that "because Moscow's a small place literally for people of that caliber. . . . [e]verybody knows somebody who they can call."[2767]

(U) In addition to Shmykov (described above) and Zayats, both of whom represented a pathway to Kremlin insiders, Sater described or partially identified several other potential pathways to the Kremlin. For example, Sater stated that among these contacts he used was Emin Iskenderov, a Russian developer whom Sater said had access to Kremlin insiders like Peskov.[2768] Iskenderov's work in France developing large mixed use towers had previously brought him in contact with Putin.[2769]

(U) Cohen recalled that there was "constant conversation and-or communication between myself and Mr. Sater" during this time, particularly in efforts to locate land in order to move the deal forward.[2770] Cohen also recalled that he spoke with Donald Trump Jr. and Ivanka Trump about the project.

> *I spoke with Don and Ivanka, and Ivanka did not want John Fotiadis Design on the property. Her feeling was with a project of this magnitude and importance, you want what's called a Starchitect. A star architect. And she wanted me to put out an RFP, request for proposal, but the one who she really wanted, thought could do the best job on it, would be Zaha Hadid. The very famous architect. Plus Ivanka was going to be involved in the project because there was going to be a spa inside the hotel that would be named after her.*[2771]

(U) As a result, on November 24, 2015, Ivanka Trump received a response from Zaha Hadid Architects to notify her that the firm intended to submit a "proposal for the new Trump Moscow."[2772] After receiving this via email, she forwarded it to Cohen and Jerry Piro, then-Senior Vice President for Design and Construction at the Trump Organization.[2773]

[2765] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 149–151.
[2766] (U) *Ibid.*
[2767] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 141.
[2768] (U) Sater Tr., pp. 141–142, 191–192.
[2769] (U) *See, e.g.*, Hermitage.fr., "Emin Iskenderov."
[2770] (U) Cohen Tr., p. 146.
[2771] (U) Cohen Tr. II, p. 201.
[2772] (U) Email, Ceccato to I. Trump, et al., November 24, 2015 (MDC-S-000598).
[2773] (U) Email, I. Trump to Cohen and Piro, November 24, 2015 (MDC-S-000598); "Jerry Piro," LinkedIn.com profile.

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(U) Sater continued to push Cohen to travel to Russia. On December 1, 2015, Sater emailed Cohen, asking for a copy of Cohen's passport "for the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs."[2774] Cohen responded to Sater the next day, attaching a scan of the identification page of his passport.[2775]

c. (U) Continued Efforts to Arrange Travel to Russia to Advance the Deal

(U) On December 17, 2015, Putin made positive public comments about Trump. Cohen forwarded news alerts of press articles that relayed that Putin had called Trump "talented" and "very colorful" to Sater. In the body of the email to Sater, Cohen stated: "Now is the time. Call me."[2776]

(U) In response to Cohen's email, Sater again worked to schedule a trip, this time asking for passport scans for both Cohen and Trump.[2777] On December 19, 2015, Sater emailed and sent a text message to Cohen requesting that Cohen call him because he had "Evgeny on the other line."[2778] Sater told the Committee in his interview prior to the release of the *SCO Report* that his references to Evgeny were, to his recollection, Evgeny Shmykov. According to the SCO, however, Sater's reference to "Evgeny" on the December 19 message was a reference to Evgeny Dvoskin, who at the time was associated with a Russian bank operating in Crimea.[2779] Through counsel, Sater later represented to the Committee that he may have used both Shmykov and Dvoskin at varying times.[2780] As a result, while this particular outreach appears to involve Dvoskin, the identity behind Sater's other references to "Evgeny" remains unclear.

(U) Dvoskin is strongly connected to Russian organized crime and the Russian intelligence services, particularly the FSB.[2781]

[2774] (U) Email, Sater to Cohen, December 1, 2015 (MDC-S-000592).
[2775] (U) Email, Cohen to Sater, December 2, 2015 (TRUMPORG_MC_000166–168) (attaching a scan of Cohen's passport). Cohen did not produce this document until after pleading guilty to misleading the Committee. Sater never produced this document to the Committee.
[2776] (U) Email, Cohen to Sater, December 17, 2015 (MDC-S-000689).
[2777] (U) Email, Sater to Cohen, December 19, 2015 (MDC-S-000600).
[2778] (U) *Ibid.*; Text message, Sater to Cohen, December 19, 2015 (FSS00097–98).
[2779] (U) *SCO Report*, Vol. I, p. 76.
[2780] (U) Subsequently, Sater told the Committee through counsel that at some point he applied a "scorched earth" policy in attempting to reach out to anyone possible to assist with the Trump project—potentially also including Dvoskin. Sater suggested through counsel that given the records obtained by the SCO, Sater could have used Dvoskin to obtain an invitation letter from a Russian bank (described below), but believed he used Shmykov for other unspecified outreach.
[2781] (U) For open source reporting on Dvoskin, *see, e.g.*, Evgeny Zhuravlev and Elena Nizovaya, "Controversial Russian Bankers Target Crimea," *Organized Crime and Corruption Reporting Project*, June 3, 2015; Evgenia

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Pismennaya and Irina Reznik, "The Russian Ex-Con With a Thriving Banking Business in Crimea," *Bloomberg*, April 7, 2016.

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2784 (U) *Ibid.*, p. 4.
2785 (U) *Ibid.*
2786 (U) *Ibid.*
2787 (U) *Ibid.*, p. 7.
2788 (U) *Ibid.*, p. 13.
2789 (U) *Ibid.*
2790 (U) *Ibid.*, p. 14.
2791 (U) *Ibid.*
2792 (U) *Ibid.*
2793 (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 13–14.

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- **(U)** In 2015, the Department of the Treasury's Office of Foreign Asset Control added GenBank to the Specially Designated Nationals (SDN) list for as part of its Ukraine-related sanctions program.[2796]

(U) In his December 19, 2015 messages to Cohen, Sater explained that the meetings in Moscow he was working to setup related to the Trump project should not appear overtly political, but the meetings would be with Putin and other Kremlin insiders.

> *Invitations & Visas will be issued this week by VTB Bank to discuss financing for Trump Tower Moscow. Politically neither Putins [sic] office nor Ministry of Foreign Affairs cannot issue [the] invite, so they are inviting commercially/business. VTB is Russia's 2nd biggest bank and VTB Bank CEO Andrey Kostin, will be at all meetings with Putin so that it is a business meeting not political. We will be invited to Russian consulate this week to receive invite & have visa issued.*[2797]

(U) Later that day, Cohen sent Sater images of every page of his passport.[2798] Once Cohen sent the photos of his passport, Sater recalled that he sent the images on to "Evgeny" along with a copy of his own passport in order to apply for a visa to Russia.[2799] Soon thereafter, Sater told Cohen that "[t]hey" needed a copy of Trump's passport.[2800] Cohen responded by telling Sater that sending Trump's passport was "premature" and that he would do so only after his own successful trip to Moscow and the setting of a specific date for the meeting between Trump and Putin.[2801]

[2794] **(U)** *Ibid.*, p. 14.

[2795] [redacted] Similarly, according to open source reporting, Dvoskin was a key player in the money laundering market and had close ties to the FSB. "The Rise and Fall of an FSB-Run Money Laundering Empire," *The Moscow Times*, August 3, 2019. Dvoskin's GenBank opened its first branch in Crimea two weeks after Russia's 2014 invasion and rapidly expanded to 175 branch locations to become one of the largest banks in the region. Evgenia Pismennaya and Irina Reznik, "The Russian Ex-Con With a Thriving Banking Business in Crimea," *Bloomberg*, April 7, 2016.

[2796] **(U)** Treasury, "Russia/Ukraine-related Sanctions and Identifications," December 22, 2015.

[2797] **(U)** Email, Sater to Cohen, December 19, 2015 (MDC-S-000600).

[2798] **(U)** Text message, Cohen to Sater, December 19, 2015 (FSS00099–110).

[2799] **(U)** Sater Tr., pp. 173–174.

[2800] **(U)** Text message, Sater to Cohen, December 21, 2015 (FSS00110).

[2801] **(U)** Text message, Cohen to Sater, December 21, 2015 (FSS00111).

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(U) On December 29, 2015, Cohen sent a message to Sater asking if there was any response "from Russia."[2802] Sater responded that "they" would be sending invitations, which Sater anticipated would arrive after the New Year's holiday.[2803] When the invitations didn't immediately arrive, Cohen became agitated with Sater. The following day, December 30, Cohen told Sater that he had lost the deal, and that Cohen would be contacting his "alternate," presumably a reference to Rtskhiladze.[2804] Cohen expressed his frustrations over the pace of the deal and his disappointment that Sater couldn't deliver on his promise on an "invitation from a banker."[2805]

(U) Cohen's messages to Sater reveal one potential cause for Cohen's sense of urgency—Cohen's efforts to please Trump. Cohen told Sater that he was going to terminate the LOI and cease working with Sater, telling Sater that "[n]ot you or anyone you know will embarrass me in front of Mr. T when he asks me what is happening."[2806] Sater, for his part claimed that he had kept his "mouth shut for you and your team" despite negative press articles written about him personally.[2807] Further, Sater told Cohen that he had "played my hand with people I make money with and you telling me scrap it. Really upsetting, really."[2808]

(U) Sater told the Committee that he called Shmykov to find a solution. Sater recalled telling Shmykov that Cohen was "freaking out" and that as a result, Sater "need[ed] an invitation."[2809] By the morning of December 31, Sater had produced a letter on GenBank letterhead purporting to be an invitation for Cohen to come to Russia.[2810] According to Sater, these efforts with Shmykov resulted in the GenBank letter being generated quickly, even though it was the holiday period.[2811] Shmykov told Sater that the letter was a "placeholder."[2812] At the time, Sater told Cohen that the letter had been sent "3 days ago but went to my spam," even though, in reality, the letter had just been produced.[2813]

[2802] (U) Text message, Cohen to Sater, December 30, 2015 (FSS00112).
[2803] (U) Text message, Sater to Cohen, December 30, 2015 (FSS00112).
[2804] (U) Text message, Cohen to Sater, December 30, 2015 (FSS00113).
[2805] (U) Text message, Cohen to Sater, December 30, 2015 (FSS00116–117).
[2806] (U) Text message, Cohen to Sater, December 30, 2015 (FSS00119–120).
[2807] (U) Text message, Sater to Cohen, December 30, 2015 (FSS00118).
[2808] (U) Text message, Sater to Cohen, December 30, 2015 (FSS00116).
[2809] (U) Sater Tr., pp. 188–189, 191.
[2810] (U) Text message, Sater to Cohen, December 31, 2015 (FSS00123).
[2811] (U) Sater Tr., p. 189.
[2812] (U) *Ibid.*
[2813] (U) Text message, Sater to Cohen, December 31, 2015 (FSS00123).

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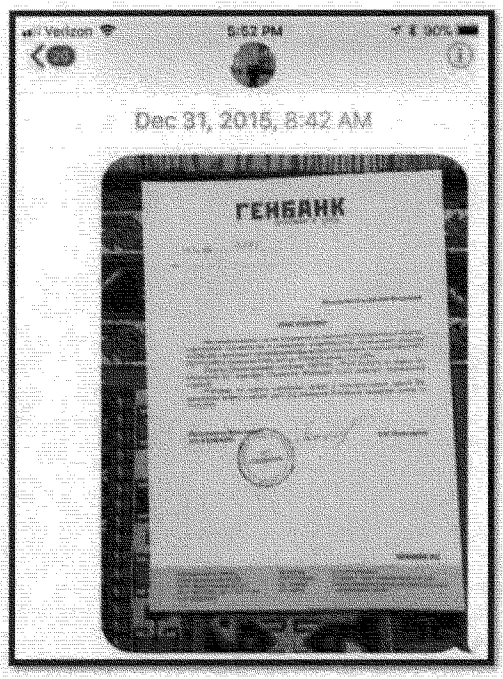

(U) Sater's recollection of Shmykov's involvement in this letter may not be accurate. As described *infra*, Sater repeatedly recalled in his interview with the Committee that Evgeny Shmykov was involved in his outreach on the Trump Moscow project. Sater later admitted to the Committee that he may have also contacted Evgeny Dvoskin, and the SCO determined on the basis of call records that Dvoskin was, in fact, the individual involved in the outreach at that time. Dvoskin himself is an owner and executive at GenBank, which suggests he was involved in the production of this letter.[2814]

(U) At the same time that he sent the GenBank letter to Cohen, Sater told Cohen that the planned meetings would be held with senior Russian government officials. Sater claimed that the invitation was "thru Putins [sic] administration, and nothing gets done there without approval

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[2814] **(U)** Evgenia Pismennaya and Irina Reznik, "The Russian Ex-Con With a Thriving Banking Business in Crimea," *Bloomberg*, April 7, 2016.

[redacted]

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from the top."[2815] Sater further said that the planned meetings in Moscow with Cohen would be to discuss "goals, meeting agenda and meeting time between Putin & Trump" with "Ministers – in US that's cabinet level and with Putins [sic] top administration people," which "most likely will include" Dmitry Peskov.[2816] Sater later explained to the Committee that Emin Iskenderov, a Russian developer known for his efforts to develop a multi-billion dollar project in Paris, "had access" to Peskov.[2817] As a result, Sater believed he had the ability to arrange a meeting between Peskov and Cohen.[2818]

(U) Cohen questioned Sater as to why the letter had come from GenBank and not from VTB Bank, telling Sater that he thought Sater was "speaking to VTB."[2819] Sater explained that GenBank was "owned 50% by Government and is run as a junior for VTB."[2820] Sater further explained that the VTB Bank Chairman was away until January 11, and this letter was sent in an effort to obtain a letter before his return.[2821] Cohen again became agitated with Sater, complaining that the invite didn't come from VTB Bank directly and was written by "some no name clerk at a 3rd tier bank."[2822] Cohen explained to the Committee, "Each conversation I had with [Sater], he keeps touting VTB Bank. VTB Bank. VTB Bank. And then all of a sudden you get this bank."[2823] Cohen told Sater to stop working on the project, stating that Cohen would "handle this myself."[2824]

d. (U) Cohen's Outreach to the Kremlin to Advance the Project

(U) On January 11, 2016, Cohen emailed Peskov's office at pr_peskova@prpress.gof.ru, a typographic error that apparently caused the email to not be delivered.[2825] It is unclear how Cohen acquired this email address. In the request, Cohen asked to speak with Sergei Ivanov, Putin's chief of staff.[2826] The following day, a media contact of Cohen's emailed him a phone

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[2815] (U) Text message, Sater to Cohen, December 31, 2015 (FSS00124).
[2816] (U) Text message, Sater to Cohen, December 31, 2015 (FSS00124–125).
[2817] (U) Sater Tr., p. 191.
[2818] (U) *Ibid.*
[2819] (U) Text message, Cohen to Sater, December 31, 2015 (FSS00125).
[2820] (U) Text message, Sater to Cohen, December 31, 2015 (FSS00125).
[2821] (U) Text message, Sater to Cohen, December 31, 2015 (FSS00125–126).
[2822] (U) Text message, Cohen to Sater, December 31, 2015 (FSS00129).
[2823] (U) Cohen Tr. II, p. 231. As noted *infra*, both VTB Bank and GenBank were sanctioned by the U.S. Government under its Ukraine-related sanctions program targeting Russian government-connected entities. Cohen was unaware of these sanctions targeting either bank, and stated that, in addition, it "didn't matter to me" whether the banks were sanctioned. Cohen explained that he believed the Russian developer, not the Trump Organization, would be responsible for financing the deal, and thus Cohen did not think that any sanctions "would have been a problem." *Ibid.*, pp. 233–234.
[2824] (U) Text message, Cohen to Sater, December 31, 2015 (FSS00130).
[2825] (U) *SCO Report*, Vol. I, p. 74.
[2826] (U) *Ibid.*

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number for Peskov's office.[2827] Cohen told the Committee that he conducted an internet search for Peskov's office and obtained the email address info@prpress.gov.ru.[2828] Cohen emailed the below request addressed to Peskov:

> *Dear Mr. Peskov,*
>
> *Over the past few months, I have been working with a company based in Russia regarding the development of a Trump Tower-Moscow project in Moscow City. Without getting into lengthy specifics, the communication between our two sides has stalled. As this project is too important, I am hereby requesting your assistance.*
>
> *I respectfully request someone, preferably you; contact me so that I might discuss the specifics as well as arranging meetings with the appropriate individuals. I thank you in advance for your assistance and look forward to hearing from you soon.*[2829]

(U) Peskov is a high-level Kremlin insider and a key advisor to Putin.

- [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

(U) Two days later, on January 16, 2016, Cohen also emailed the corrected email address from his initial request, Pr_peskova@prpress.gov.ru, with a request to speak with Ivanov.[2833]

[2827] (U) Email, Santucci to Cohen, January 12, 2016 (MDC-S-000450).
[2828] (U) Cohen Tr., p. 204; Email, Cohen to info@prpress.gov.ru, January 14, 2016 (MDC-S-000690).
[2829] (U) Email, Cohen to info@prpress.gov.ru, January 14, 2016 (MDC-S-000690).
[2830] [redacted]
[2831] (U) *Ibid.*
[2832] (U) *Ibid.*
[2833] (U) *SCO Report*, Vol. I, p. 74; Email, Cohen to Pr_peskova@prpress.gov.ru, January 16, 2016 (COHEN_MICHAEL-ORG-00249332).

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(U) Cohen did not initially produce either email to the Pr_peskova email account to the Committee, nor did he acknowledge their existence.[2834] Cohen also initially testified, falsely, that there was no reply to his email to the info@prpress.gov.ru account.[2835]

(U) However, Cohen would later admit that several days after his initial email, on January 20, 2016, he received a response from Elena Poliakova, Peskov's Chief of Staff.[2836] In the email, which was written from her personal account, Poliakova said that she had been trying to get in touch with Cohen and requested that Cohen contact her at a phone number which she provided.[2837]

(U) Poliakova, in her role as Peskov's Chief of Staff, has exceptional access within the Kremlin.

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[redacted]

[2834] (U) After his guilty plea, Cohen eventually produced the second email to Pr_peskova@prpress.gov.ru. *See* Email, Cohen to Pr_peskova@prpress.gov.ru, January 16, 2016 (COHEN_MICHAEL-ORG-00249332).
[2835] (U) Cohen Tr., p. 74.
[2836] (U) Cohen Tr. II, pp. 287-288.
[2837] (U) *Ibid.*
[2838] [redacted]
[2840] (U) *Ibid.*
[2841] (U) *Ibid.*
[2842] [redacted]

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(U) After receiving the email from Poliakova, Cohen recalled dialing the number Poliakova provided him and speaking with Poliakova for approximately 20 minutes.[2843] During the call, Cohen recalled discussing the Trump Moscow project with Poliakova.[2844] Cohen described Poliakova as "extremely professional" and "very detailed in her questions regarding the project."[2845] Specifically, Cohen recalled Poliakova asking about the property, including the area, size, and square footage.[2846] Cohen did not have a specific memory of speaking with Poliakova about other details of the project, such as a proposed Friendship Square, but presumed he did so.[2847] Cohen stated that Poliakova had "really done her homework," and while Cohen was not certain, his recollection was that, at the time of the call, Poliakova already "knew about I.C. Expert [Rozov's development company] and she knew about the deal."[2848] Cohen recalled that Poliakova stated she would assemble notes on the information Cohen relayed and "pass them along," which Cohen understood to mean pass the notes on to Peskov or someone else in the Russian government who would handle the project.[2849] Poliakova told Cohen that they would be in touch with Cohen or with I.C. Expert.[2850]

(U) On January 21, 2016, the day after the phone call with Peskov's assistant Poliakova, Sater contacted Cohen via telephone call and text message.[2851] Sater told Cohen that he needed to speak with him about an "important" matter, stating: "It's about Putin they called today."[2852] Sater later recalled that this reference to Putin was not a specific reference to any outreach directly from Putin's inner circle. Sater left open the possibility that his comments were prompted by some other event or indirect outreach, stating that he did not "really remember what triggered it, whether it was a call from Emin [Iskenderov], Evgeny [Shmykov or Dvoskin], Andrei [Rozov], whoever."[2853] Cohen, however, linked Sater's renewed outreach to the call with Peskov's aide. Cohen recalled that at the time, Sater gave him the impression that a Russian

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[2843] (U) Cohen Tr. II, pp. 287–288.
[2844] (U) *Ibid.*
[2845] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 289.
[2846] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 290.
[2847] (U) FBI, FD-302, Cohen 9/12/2018.
[2848] (U) Cohen Tr. II, pp. 290, 293.
[2849] (U) FBI, FD-302, Cohen 9/12/2018.
[2850] (U) *Ibid.*
[2851] (U) The Committee has no record of communications between the two from the previous disagreement on December 31, 2015, when Cohen told Sater he should stop working on the project, until these communications on January 21, 2016.
[2852] (U) Text messages, Sater to Cohen, January 21, 2016 (FSS00131).
[2853] (U) Sater Tr., p. 194. Sater claimed to the Committee that his comment was "bullshit"—which he defined as exaggeration or puffery and which in his view was acceptable as part of business efforts. Sater said however, that his comment was not a "lie." Sater repeatedly claimed that he would never "intentionally lie" to Cohen. Sater suggested his comments could have been in reaction to a call from Evgeny or any other event. Given Evgeny's connections, including his reported ties to Peskov, it is possible outreach from Peskov through an intermediary occurred. *Ibid.*, p. 195.

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government person reached out to Sater.[2854] Cohen thought the phone call with Poliakova had an effect.[2855]

(U) Later that day, Sater and Cohen exchanged a number of calls and texts. They discussed a draft invitation for Cohen to come to Moscow. Sater asked Cohen to review the draft invitation letter and "make whatever changes you want. . . . . [t]ry to take a look tonight I want to get it to them so they have it for the morning."[2856] Later that evening, Cohen and Sater exchanged drafts of the invitation letter, which included the following draft text:

> *In furtherance of our previous conversations regarding the development of the Trump Tower Moscow project, we would like to respectfully invite you to Moscow for a working visit. During this historic meeting, we wish to discuss further the needs to create this five star, one of a kind and world class project. Your visit will help to acquaint you with Moscow through "round table discussions" devoted to analysis, and the prospects of development and the construction business in Russia. While in Moscow, we intend to visit and discuss with you the various land plots available suited for construction of this enormous Tower as well as to give you the opportunity to co-ordinate a follow up visit to Moscow by Mr. Donald Trump.*[2857]

(U) Several days later, on January 25, 2016, Sater sent a signed letter from an individual named Andrey Ryabinskiy on letterhead from a Russian company called MHJ.[2858] Sater claimed that this was "another group from Evgeny." Sater stated that Evgeny was "excited about it and he was speaking to various other people."[2859] The text of the letter was identical to that of the last draft of the request edited by Cohen several days earlier. Minutes after Sater sent the letter to Cohen, Sater sent a follow-up email to Cohen asking for travel dates for Cohen and Trump because Sater had received "another call this morning asking for it."[2860] Cohen responded, "will do."[2861]

(U) At some point shortly after Cohen's call with Peskov's assistant, Cohen told Trump about the call. Cohen recalled telling Trump that he had spoken with "someone from the

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[2854] (U) FBI, FD-302, Cohen 9/12/2018.
[2855] (U) *Ibid.*
[2856] (U) Text messages, Sater to Cohen, January 21, 2016 (FSS00134).
[2857] (U) *See* Emails, Cohen and Sater, January 22, 2016 (MDC-S-000691).
[2858] (U) Email, Sater to Cohen, January 25, 2016 (MDC-S-000541–542) (attaching a signed letter to Cohen from Ryabinskiy).
[2859] (U) Sater Tr., p. 197.
[2860] (U) Email, Sater to Cohen, January 25, 2016 (MDC-S-000540); Text message, Sater to Cohen, January 25, 2016 (FSS00135).
[2861] (U) Text message, Cohen to Sater, January 25, 2016 (FSS00135).

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Kremlin" about the Trump Tower Moscow project.[2862] Cohen also recalled making a comment to Trump about the assistant's professionalism, adding that he wished some of the Trump Organization's assistants "would be this prepared."[2863] Cohen recalled that at some point in this approximate time period he also discussed the possibility of traveling to Russia with Trump.[2864] Cohen recalled that Trump did not express concerns about traveling to Russia while a presidential candidate if it would aid the deal.[2865] According to Cohen, Trump instructed Cohen to speak with then-campaign manager Corey Lewandowski about dates for potential travel to Russia.[2866] Cohen recalled speaking with Lewandowski shortly thereafter.[2867] Cohen also requested a copy of Trump's passport from Trump's primary assistant, Rhona Graff.[2868] Cohen recalled Graff bringing him Trump's passport, but no records or testimony obtained by the Committee indicate that Trump's passport was ever transmitted to Sater.[2869]

(U) After speaking with Lewandowski, Cohen recalled receiving proposed dates for the trip to Russia.[2870] As noted below, text messages between Sater and Cohen on January 26, 2016, suggest that Cohen had already provided Trump proposed travel dates by that time.[2871]

(U) On January 26, 2016, Sater asked Cohen if he would speak directly on the phone "with the guy coordinating to arrange all the calls so you can speak first person to everyone."[2872] Cohen replied, "Now," to which Sater responded, "Ok 2 minutes."[2873] It is unknown if a call took place, although later that day Sater sent a text to Cohen about the Russia travel plans:

> *I think you should make it a bit more flexible for yourself 1st week of Feb is this Monday. Since you gave DT dates, you can do anytime that's good for you in February or March. Completely your call, either way it's set they are waiting*

[2862] **(U)** *SCO Report*, Vol. II, p. 136.
[2863] **(U)** Cohen Tr. II, p. 289.
[2864] **(U)** *Ibid.*, pp. 269-270.
[2865] **(U)** *Ibid.*; *SCO Report*, Vol. I, p. 78.
[2866] **(U)** Cohen Tr. II, p. 269.
[2867] **(U)** *Ibid.*, p. 268.
[2868] **(U)** *SCO Report*, Vol. I, p. 76.
[2869] **(U)** *Ibid.*, pp. 76–77.
[2870] **(U)** Cohen Tr. II, p. 273. Lewandowski claimed that "there was never a discussion that I'm aware of, that I was privy to, inside the campaign of ever going to Russia in any way, shape, or form." Lewandowski Tr., p. 52. Other documentary records about separate proposed trips suggest Lewandowski's recollection of this topic was not accurate.
[2871] **(U)** Text messages, Cohen and Sater, January 26, 2016 (FSS00137–138). According to the messages, Cohen appears to have suggested dates occurring after March 2016.
[2872] **(U)** Text message, Sater to Cohen, January 26, 2016 (FSS00136).
[2873] **(U)** Text message, Cohen to Sater, January 26, 2016 (FSS00137).

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and will walk you into every office you need to make sure you are comfortable for DT trip.[2874]

(U) Cohen recalled that he and Sater continued to have "many" conversations and that he had pressed Sater to identify a property for the project.[2875] Sater recalled that there was a "lull" in the project, with less activity, but Sater was unable to explain why this occurred.[2876]

e. (U) Revitalized Efforts in 2016

(U) Later that spring, however, Cohen and Sater resumed their activity around the project and the possibility of traveling to Russia. On April 20, 2016, Sater texted Cohen that "[t]he People wanted to know when we are coming?"[2877] Cohen responded, "I need to talk to you." Several days later, Sater sent a text to Cohen describing an additional conversation "with Moscow":

I had a chat with Moscow. ASSUMING the trip does happen the question is before or after the convention. I said I believe, but don't know for sure, that[] it's probably after the convention. Obviously the pre-meeting trip (you only) can happen anytime you want but the 2 big guys where [sic] the question. I said I would confirm and revert. I explained that ONLY you will be negotiating all the details. I want to make sure no one tries to go around us, that's why I said that. Michael it's completely in your hands, probably a quick trip by you would be the perfect move, that locks it in and no one else can elbow in at that point. Let me know about If I was right by saying I believe after Cleveland and also when you want to speak to them and possibly fly over.[2878]

(U) Cohen responded to Sater, stating: "My trip before Cleveland. Trump once he becomes the nominee after the convention."[2879] Sater responded that he was "on it."[2880] Sater told the Committee that he "absolutely" understood that the Moscow project was still active at this time.[2881] According to Sater, he and Cohen had agreed that Cohen would travel with Sater to Russia first, and that "right on the heels" of their trip, Trump would travel to Russia.[2882]

[2874] **(U)** Text message, Sater to Cohen, January 26, 2016 (FSS00137–138).
[2875] **(U)** FBI, FD-302, Cohen 9/12/2018.
[2876] **(U)** Sater Tr., pp. 203–204.
[2877] **(U)** Text message, Sater to Cohen, April 20, 2016 (FSS00140); *SCO Report*, Vol. I, p. 77.
[2878] **(U)** Text message, Sater to Cohen, May 4, 2016 (FSS00141–143).
[2879] **(U)** Text message, Cohen to Sater, May 4, 2016 (FSS00143).
[2880] **(U)** Text message, Sater to Cohen, May 4, 2016 (FSS00143).
[2881] **(U)** Sater Tr., pp. 206–207.
[2882] **(U)** *Ibid.*, p. 171.

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(U) The following day, May 5, 2016, Sater again messaged Cohen. In his message, Sater indicated that Peskov wanted to invite Cohen to attend a high-profile economic forum in Russia called the St. Petersburg International Economic Forum (SPIEF).[2883]

> *Peskov would like to invite you as his guest to the St. Petersburg Forum which is Russia's Davos it's June 16-19. He wants to meet there with you and possibly introduce you to either Putin or Medvedev, as they are not sure if 1 or both will be there. This is perfect. The entire business class of Russia will be there as well. He said anything you want to discuss including dates and subjects are on the table to discuss.*[2884]

Sater recalled that at some point, he and "Evgeny" had discussed the matter and decided that it was best to make the visit more about business and appear less political.[2885] As a result, Sater and Evgeny worked to arrange an invitation for Cohen to SPIEF.[2886] SPIEF, according to its website, has been held since 2006 "under the auspices of the President of the Russian Federation, who has also attended each event."[2887]

(U) Cohen responded to Sater the following day, stating, "[w]orks for me."[2888] Sater later explained to the Committee that he believed Peskov was the "perfect" fit with whom to work on the project because Sater wanted to have a large media event and ribbon cutting, and that Peskov, as press secretary, would be the best Kremlin insider to work with.[2889] Sater claimed that he had had discussions with "Evgeny" to this effect.[2890] Sater recalled "Evgeny" telling him that "[o]f course we'll get Dimitri [Peskov]."[2891]

(U) Sater responded to Cohen, describing his rationale for why Cohen should attend SPIEF:

[2883] (U) Text message, Sater to Cohen, May 5, 2016 (FSS00143-145). In late 2015 and again in March 2016, Trump was separately invited to SPIEF by then-Deputy Prime Minister Prikhodko. *SCO Report*, Vol. I, pp. 78–79. A draft response to Prikhodko declining the offer was prepared for Trump's signature by Graff in late March 2016. The letter stated that Trump had existing commitments related to his Campaign, and that "[o]therwise, I would have gladly given every consideration to attending such an important event." Email, Graff to Macchia, March 31, 2016 (TRUMPORG_16_000133–134) (attaching an unsigned letter from Trump to Prikhodko).
[2884] (U) Text messages, Sater to Cohen, May 5, 2016 (FSS00143–145).
[2885] (U) Sater Tr., p. 174. Sater told the FBI that Shmykov said Peskov wanted to invite Cohen to SPIEF. FBI, FD-302, Sater 12/15/2017.
[2886] (U) Sater Tr., pp. 143–144.
[2887] (U) Forumspv.com, "About the Forum."
[2888] (U) Text message, Cohen to Sater, May 5, 2016 (FSS00145).
[2889] (U) Sater Tr., p. 208.
[2890] (U) *Ibid.*
[2891] (U) *Ibid.*

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Not only will you probably sit with #1 or #2 but the whole biz community is there I'll be running around setting nice $100 mill deals [smiling emoji] And you will come back and the whole campaign team can kiss your ass. Keep this very very close to the vest, otherwise half a dozen idiots will try to jump on your coat tails. If it goes great you are a hero, if it doesn't all you did was go to an economic forum to check out the business. Bro this is why you got me working in the shadows. I will make sure you are clean as a whistle either way. For you 0 downside. But I know this is going to turn into 1. A major win for Trump, makes you the hero who bagged the elephant and 2. Sets up a stream of business opportunities that will be mind blowing. All from 1 short trip. I couldn't have dreamed of a better situation with no downside.[2892]

(U) In early June 2016, Cohen and Sater continued discussing plans for attending SPIEF. In a June 9, 2016 text message, Sater relayed to Cohen that he was filling out paperwork for their "badges" for the conference and that Cohen should receive an email invite soon.[2893] Sater told Cohen that "Putin is there on the 17th very strong chance you will meet him as well."[2894] Sater later explained to the Committee that his offers to Cohen related to high-level meetings, including potentially with Putin, were real and attainable.[2895] Sater believed he could, in fact, obtain a very high level meeting for Cohen or Trump if either traveled to Russia.[2896]

(U) On June 13, 2016, Sater forwarded Cohen a formal electronic invitation to SPIEF addressed to Cohen, along with login instructions to access information about the conference.[2897] Sater also forwarded a blank Russian visa application form to Cohen.[2898] Sater had separately reached out to a SPIEF official in charge of "official delegations" to request assistance to expedite his and Cohen's visas.[2899] In response, Sater was sent letters asking that he and Cohen be provided visas to attend SPIEF; Sater was told that obtaining the visas should only take one day.[2900]

[2892] **(U)** Text message, Sater to Cohen (FSS00146–148). The exact date of this message is unknown, but it occurred after May 5, 2016, and before June 9, 2016.
[2893] **(U)** Text message, Sater to Cohen, June 9, 2016 (FSS00149).
[2894] **(U)** Text message, Sater to Cohen, June 9, 2016 (FSS00149).
[2895] **(U)** Sater Tr., p. 213.
[2896] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[2897] **(U)** Email, Sater to Cohen, June 13, 2016 (FSS00081–84).
[2898] **(U)** Email, Sater to Cohen, June 13, 2016 (FSS00086–94).
[2899] **(U)** Email, Sater to Lemondzhava, June 14, 2016 (FSS00091).
[2900] **(U)** Email, Lemondzhava to Sater, June 14, 2016 (FSS00091–94).

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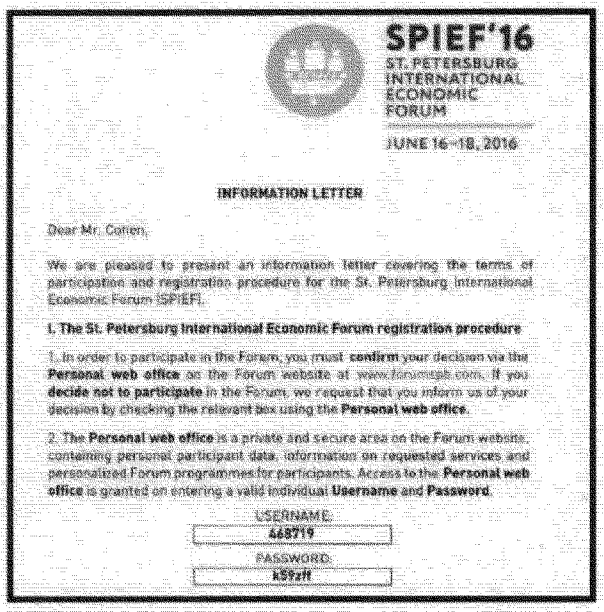

SPIEF'16
ST. PETERSBURG INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC FORUM
JUNE 16–18, 2016

INFORMATION LETTER

Dear Mr. Cohen,

We are pleased to present an information letter covering the terms of participation and registration procedure for the St. Petersburg International Economic Forum (SPIEF).

I. The St. Petersburg International Economic Forum registration procedure

1. In order to participate in the Forum, you must **confirm** your decision via the **Personal web office** on the Forum website at www.forumspb.com. If you **decide not to participate** in the Forum, we request that you inform us of your decision by checking the relevant box using the **Personal web office**.

2. The **Personal web office** is a private and secure area on the Forum website, containing personal participant data, information on requested services and personalized Forum programmes for participants. Access to the **Personal web office** is granted on entering a valid individual **Username** and **Password**.

USERNAME:
468719
PASSWORD:
k59zff

f. (U) Deal Efforts Cease

(U) Text messages from Sater to Cohen suggested that, as of the morning of June 14, 2016, Sater continued to believe that Cohen would be traveling to Russia with him and continued to ask Cohen to respond to him regarding visas.[2901] Messages and testimony from both Sater and Cohen indicate that on the afternoon of June 14, 2016, Cohen and Sater met in the atrium of Trump Tower in New York.[2902]

(U) Neither Cohen nor Sater claimed to have a specific memory of the June 14, 2016, meeting in the Trump Tower atrium. Sater claimed that he and Cohen possibly discussed the Trump Tower Moscow deal and what the next steps would be, but didn't have a clear recollection.[2903] Sater recalled that Cohen backed out of the trip after he received his invite to SPIEF and after the passport photos were filed with "Evgeny," but could not recall with certainty

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[2901] **(U)** Text messages, Sater to Cohen, June 13–14, 2016 (FSS00151).
[2902] **(U)** Text messages, Sater and Cohen, June 14, 2016 (FSS00153); Sater Tr., pp. 221–222.
[2903] **(U)** Sater Tr., p. 222.

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when this occurred.[2904] Sater recalled: "[Cohen] turned around and said: I can't go. At the last minute he said: I can't go; let's wait until after Cleveland."[2905] Cohen also did not recall the specifics of the June 14, 2016 meeting, but similarly recalled that he decided not to go to Russia at the last minute. Cohen recalled deciding not to go because he felt the invitation did not come from the highest level in Moscow:

> *[A]ccording to Felix, I was supposed to be receiving the invite from again, I forget who, but it was somebody of tremendous significance in this. Again, it was plane tickets and the hotel and meetings and everything. And next thing, I receive from Mr. Sater is a hyperlink to the application. To log on, put in your credit card, in order to go to the Saint Petersburg International Economic Forum.*[2906]

(U) Through at least June 2016, Cohen said that Trump viewed the Moscow project the same way Cohen did, as an "opportunity that was active."[2907] Cohen came to this understanding because Trump would, on a "regular basis," ask Cohen about the status of the Russia project.[2908] Cohen recalled:

> *In other words, Mr. Trump is out there on the rally, in the public, stating there's no Russian collusion, there's no involvement, there's no deals, there's no connection. And yet, the following day, as we're walking to his car, he's asking me, "How's things going with Russia?"*[2909]

(U) Cohen understood that Trump was "interested in the project" and recalled that he had spoken to Trump "ten to twelve" times during the course of the negotiations, which lasted from September 2015 to at least until June 2016.[2910]

[2904] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 177.
[2905] (U) *Ibid.*
[2906] (U) Cohen Tr. II, p. 308. For image, *see* FSS00238.
[2907] (U) Cohen Tr. II, p. 71.
[2908] (U) *Ibid.*
[2909] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 41.
[2910] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 207, 266. Cohen initially told the Committee that he spoke to Trump about the project only three times, and that the last of these conversations occurred just before the Iowa caucus. Cohen later admitted that this was an intentionally false statement. As with other instances where he previously misled the Committee, Cohen claimed that he did so "[b]ecause I was staying on message, which was, again: There's no Russian involvement. Minimal/no business dealings. No collusion. No contacts. That was the messaging. I was staying on it." Cohen stated that although he was never explicitly ordered to lie, Cohen understood that by making these statements to him, Trump wanted Cohen to stick to Trump's own message relating to Russia. Cohen said: "I knew exactly what he [Trump] was saying. And he knew exactly what he was saying." *Ibid.*, pp. 34, 36.

[redacted]

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(U) After the Republican National Convention in July 2016, Sater stated that it became obvious that there was "just no way that a presidential candidate could build a tower in a foreign country."[2911] As a result, efforts on the project ceased.[2912]

iii. (U) Giorgi Rtskhiladze: Michael Cohen's Second Trump Tower Moscow Line of Effort During the Campaign

(U) In addition to Cohen's attempts at a Trump Tower Moscow project with Felix Sater, Cohen also communicated with Giorgi Rtskhiladze, a businessman with whom he had previously worked, about a similar project proposal in Moscow. Rtskhiladze had previously worked with the Trump Organization, and Cohen in particular, on at least two other business projects.[2913]

(U) The first of those past projects involved a licensing deal between the Trump Organization and Silk Road Group, a company headquartered in Tbilisi, Georgia. The project involved a potential real estate development in Batumi, Georgia. As part of the project, Cohen traveled to Georgia several times in 2012, including one trip with Trump. While the Batumi project was never completed, the Trump Organization received approximately $1 million from George Ramishvili of the Silk Road Group in connection with the project.[2914] Cohen said that he had heard that the Silk Road Group was "very well connected" to the Georgian government, and that he had witnessed this personally, including Ramishvili's interactions with then-Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili.[2915] Cohen noted that despite the foreign nature of the company and its foreign government ties, Cohen conducted only "very minimal" due diligence on the company, which amounted to "Google searches, just to see whether or not there was anything that popped out at us that would make the deal not palatable."[2916]

(U) The second project with Rtskhiladze involved a possible development in Kazakhstan in approximately 2011. Cohen and Rtskhiladze traveled to Kazakhstan as part of initial efforts on the project.[2917] Cohen and Rtskhiladze contacted John Fotiadis, a U.S.-based architect, and had Fotiadis create architectural renderings for a skyscraper. This project failed to materialize, but the Fotiadis building design would ultimately be revisited by Cohen in September 2015 as part of a potential Trump Tower Moscow project.[2918]

[2911] (U) Sater Tr., p. 202.
[2912] (U) *Ibid.*
[2913] (U) Cohen Tr., p. 103.
[2914] (U) Cohen Tr. II, pp. 143–144.
[2915] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 144–150.
[2916] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 145.
[2917] (U) Cohen Tr., pp. 108–109.
[2918] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 111.

[redacted]

[redacted]

(U) Over the course of their relationship, Cohen recalled introducing Rtskhiladze to Trump on multiple occasions, both in Trump's office in New York and in Georgia during Trump's trip there in connection with the Batumi deal.[2919] Cohen stated that he and Rtskhiladze were friends and that he spoke to, and spent time with, Rtskhiladze on a "regular basis."[2920]

(U) In approximately late September 2015, Cohen received a call from Rtskhiladze, who called to offer Cohen a potential business deal in Russia for the Trump Organization.[2921] According to Cohen, on the call, Rtskhiladze said he "had a group that he wanted to talk to about doing a Trump Tower Moscow."[2922] According to Rtskhiladze, Simon Nizharadze, a business associate of Rtskhiladze's, had requested he contact Cohen to facilitate a potential licensing deal between Vladimir Mazur and the Trump Organization.[2923]

(U) After receiving the offer from Rtskhiladze, Cohen recalled that he reached out to Fotiadis and requested the previous renderings done for the skyscraper planned for Kazakhstan.[2924] On September 22, 2015, Cohen received updated architectural renderings from Fotiadis.[2925] The plans were updated with a new site location of "Moscow City Site 20."[2926] Later that day, Fotiadis sent updated site renderings using "Site 22," and further updated the renderings the following day with what Fotiadis envisioned as the iconic feature at the top of the building that could house "[t]he Tallest Restaurant in Moscow."[2927] Cohen forwarded these renderings to Rtskhiladze.[2928]

[redacted] On September 24, 2015, Rtskhiladze emailed Cohen a draft document in Russian. Rtskhiladze wrote that it was a letter to the mayor of Moscow, who at the time was Sergey Sobyanin.[2929] Rtskhiladze described Sobyanin as the "second guy in Russia."[2930] [redacted]

[2919] (U) Cohen Tr. II, p. 141.
[2920] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 158.
[2921] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 160.
[2922] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 160–161.
[2923] (U) Written Responses, Rtskhiladze, September 16, 2019.
[2924] (U) Cohen Tr. II, pp. 160–161.
[2925] (U) Email, Fotiadis to Cohen, September 22, 2015 (MDC-S-000452-455).
[2926] (U) *Ibid.*
[2927] (U) Email, Fotiadis to Cohen, et al., September 22, 2015 (MDC-S-000472); Email, Fotiadis to Cohen, et al., September 23, 2015 (MDC-S-000463).
[2928] (U) Email, Cohen to Rtskhiladze, September 22, 2015 (MDC-S-000493-498); Email, Cohen to Rtskhiladze, September 22, 2015 (MDC-S-000499-506).
[2929] (U) Email, Rtskhiladze to Cohen, September 24, 2015 (MDC-S-000507).
[2930] (U) *Ibid.*
[2931] [redacted]

[redacted]

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[redacted]

(U) Rtskhiladze told Cohen that Sobyanin was "aware of the potential project and will pledge his support."[2934] Rtskhiladze explained that with Sobyanin's support, the only spot remaining in Moscow City will be "dedicated to Trump tower and financed."[2935] At Cohen's request, Rtskhiladze provided a translation of the draft letter.[2936] According to Rtskhiladze's translation, the letter noted that the Trump Organization had been "approached by the Global Prospect LLC a Moscow based real estate development company co-founded by one of legendary Russian architects, developer and statesman Mr. Michael Posokhin."[2937] The translation of the letter also claimed the project would be of "monumental proportions" and would be "housed in the heart of the Moscow City development."[2938] The project would "act as a symbol of stronger economic, business and cultural relationships between New York and Moscow and therefore the United States and the Russian Federation."[2939] In an effort to pursue a "close dialogue with you and your administration," the letter invited Sobyanin to New York. Rtskhiladze noted that he and Cohen should discuss the letter later that day.[2940]

(U) On September 27, 2015, Rtskhiladze emailed Cohen to relay information about the proposed development. In the email, Rtskhiladze told Cohen that Mikhail Posokhin and Simon Nizharadze would be the two primary individuals involved in the venture.[2941] Mikhail Posokhin is a widely-known Russian architect and developer who has completed a large number of Russian government projects, including renovations of many Kremlin offices and residences, as well as the residence of the Russian President (Kremlin Building Number 1), according to Posokhin's personal website.[2942] Posokhin has also designed the tallest building in Russia and worked on projects for the Moscow city-level government in Russia.[2943]

(U) In his email to Cohen, Rtskhiladze also described the project's design, which would have two parts—a Trump residential building and Trump World Tower—both located at the

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[2932] [redacted]
[2933] [redacted]
[2934] (U) Email, Rtskhiladze to Cohen, September 24, 2015 (MDC-S-000507).
[2935] (U) *Ibid.*
[2936] (U) Email, Rtskhiladze to Cohen, September 24, 2015 (MDC-S-000567–568).
[2937] (U) *Ibid.*
[2938] (U) *Ibid.*
[2939] (U) *Ibid.*
[2940] (U) *Ibid.*
[2941] (U) Email, Rtskhiladze to Cohen, September 27, 2015 (MDC-S-000471).
[2942] (U) Posokhin.ru, "Mikhail M. Posokhin."
[2943] (U) *Ibid.*

[redacted]

[redacted]

Moscow City site.[2944] Rtskhiladze further informed Cohen that a "project presentation" for the Trump residential building will be ready in several days and that the Trump World Tower project concept "is being shared with the presidents [sic] cabinet and Moscow mayor."[2945] Cohen told the Committee that he recalled that Rtskhiladze was planning to provide a briefing to officials in Moscow, but that Cohen was not involved in that briefing.[2946]

(U) Cohen ultimately decided to not pursue a Moscow project with Rtskhiladze and instead pursued the project with Sater.[2947]

iv. (U) Dmitry Klokov

(U) In addition to communicating with both Sater and Rtskhiladze in the fall of 2015, Cohen also had contact with another Russian national, Dmitry Klokov, in the same timeframe. Cohen believed that Dmitry Klokov was a weightlifter who had previously represented Russia at the Olympics.[2948] According to information obtained by the SCO, the individual who contacted Cohen was not the Olympic weightlifter, but was the director of external communications for a large Russian energy company. In addition, Klokov previously served as the press secretary to Russia's Minister of Energy.[2949]

(U) On November 16, 2015, Ivanka Trump received an email from Klokov's wife.[2950] According to Cohen, Ivanka Trump called Cohen and told him that she had received an email about the Trump Tower Moscow project.[2951] Ivanka instructed Cohen to contact Klokov, and to "[b]e nice," and report back to her on the outcome of the outreach.[2952] According to Cohen, Ivanka Trump also forwarded the initial outreach from Klokov's wife.[2953] When asked if Ivanka Trump's instruction to Cohen was about the Trump Tower Moscow project or about a potential meeting between Putin and Trump, Cohen said that it was a "combination of the two."[2954]

[2944] (U) Email, Rtskhiladze to Cohen, September 27, 2015 (MDC-S-000471).
[2945] (U) *Ibid.*
[2946] (U) Cohen Tr., p. 121.
[2947] (U) Cohen Tr. II, p. 161.
[2948] (U) Cohen Tr., p. 169.
[2949] (U) *SCO Report*, Vol. I, pp. 72–73; "Russia & CIS: Business and Financial Daily," Vol. XX, Issue 241, *Interfax*, December 27, 2011 (stating that Dmitry Klokov is an advisor to Sergei Shmatko); "Russian Energy Minister Elected Chief of CIS Electric Power Council," *Interfax*, May 25, 2012 (stating that Dmitry Klokov was the press officer to Alexander Novak).
[2950] (U) Cohen Tr. II, p. 242; *SCO Report*, Vol. I, p. 72.
[2951] (U) Cohen Tr. II, pp. 242, 251.
[2952] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 251.
[2953] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 242.
[2954] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 251–252.

[redacted]

[redacted]

(U) Shortly thereafter, Cohen spoke to Klokov on the phone. Cohen stated that Klokov already knew about the project in Moscow.[2955] While Cohen didn't have specifics on how Klokov knew of the Trump Moscow project, Cohen suggested that Klokov could have known about the project because "people were talking about it in Moscow."[2956] Cohen told the Committee that Klokov claimed he had "relationships with the government," that he could "help with this Trump Moscow proposal, and it would be great if all parties were able to meet and to develop this property in Moscow."[2957] Cohen claimed that Klokov was "adamant about me coming to Moscow and to bring Mr. Trump to Moscow for the two to meet."[2958]

(U) The following day, November 18, 2015, Klokov emailed Cohen to emphasize a "few important aspects" of the phone conversation between Klokov and Cohen.[2959] In the email, Klokov claimed that he was not affiliated with any business, but was instead a "trusted person" focused on "political synergy."[2960] Klokov stated that "our person of interest" is "ready to meet your candidate."[2961] Cohen understood that our person of interest referred to Putin.[2962] To facilitate the meeting between Putin and Trump, Klokov told Cohen that he would introduce Cohen to "the close person" during Cohen's trip to Moscow, which Klokov would facilitate.[2963] Klokov claimed that the "close person" had spoken to Putin about the potential meeting with Trump.[2964] Klokov said that "we" would facilitate all aspects of the Putin-Trump meeting, including the security, transportation, and accommodation, but that the meeting "has to be informal."[2965] Further, Klokov told Cohen that Cohen's business development efforts should be separated from the proposed "informal" meeting between Putin and Trump.[2966] Klokov emphasized that although these would be bifurcated, ultimately the meeting would yield even larger business opportunities which would have "the most important support."[2967]

(U) Cohen quickly responded to Klokov's email, copying Ivanka Trump. In his response, Cohen reemphasized that the Trump Organization had signed an LOI with a local developer and that it was his intention to travel to Russia related to that project.[2968] Cohen told

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[2955] (U) Cohen Tr., p. 167.
[2956] (U) Cohen Tr. II, pp. 245; Cohen Tr., 167.
[2957] (U) Cohen Tr., pp. 165–166.
[2958] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 169–170.
[2959] (U) Email, Klokov to Cohen, November 18, 2015 (MDC-S-000597).
[2960] (U) *Ibid.*
[2961] (U) *Ibid.*
[2962] (U) Cohen Tr., p. 174.
[2963] (U) Email, Klokov to Cohen, November 18, 2015 (MDC-S-000597).
[2964] (U) *Ibid.*
[2965] (U) *Ibid.*
[2966] (U) *Ibid.*
[2967] (U) *Ibid.*
[2968] (U) Email, Cohen to Klokov and I. Trump, November 18, 2015 (MDC-S-000492).

[redacted]

[redacted]

Klokov that he would "gladly meet with you and your contact" during this trip.[2969] Cohen, however, advised Klokov that he would advise Trump to not travel to Russia except in the context of an "official visit."[2970] Cohen said that he was scheduled to speak with the local developer later that day and would contact Klokov thereafter.[2971]

(U) Klokov responded to Cohen the following day, November 16, 2015, and reemphasized that his focus was not on the immediate business project, but rather arranging an informal meeting between Putin and Trump.[2972] Klokov again stated that the meeting "has already been discussed" with Putin, who Klokov claimed was "knowledgeable about it and would gladly meet your client."[2973] Klokov focused again on his goal of creating "synergy on a government level," but made clear that the Putin meeting would have lucrative business outcomes:[2974]

> Now, your client is a candidate and hardly any other political move could be compared to a tete-a-tete meeting between them. If publicized correctly the impact of it could be phenomenal, of course not only in political but in a business dimension as well. I don't have to tell you that there is no bigger warranty in any project than consent of the person of interest.

(U) Cohen again responded to Klokov in an email in which he continued to focus on the business project with I.C. Expert. Cohen further recalled in his testimony that it was "always" about the project, and that political considerations were not the driving force.[2975] In particular, Cohen told Klokov that "our LOI developer" was "in talks" with Putin's "Chief of Staff" to arrange the formal invite for Putin and Trump to meet.[2976] Cohen stated that he had been invited to Moscow by the developer prior to Trump's travel to "view 3 potential sites and to meet with the Chief of Staff."[2977] Cohen said that he would be "honored" to meet with Klokov while in Moscow "to discuss any thoughts you might have that could enhance the project."[2978]

[2969] (U) *Ibid.*
[2970] (U) *Ibid.*
[2971] (U) *Ibid.*
[2972] (U) Email, Klokov to Cohen and I. Trump, November 19, 2015 (MDC-S-000671).
[2973] (U) *Ibid.*
[2974] (U) *Ibid.*
[2975] (U) Cohen Tr., p. 191.
[2976] (U) Email, Cohen to Klokov and I. Trump, November 19, 2015 (MDC-S-000671). At that time, the Chief of Staff of the Russian Presidential Executive Office was Sergei Ivanov. Cohen later sought to contact Ivanov directly in January 2016.
[2977] (U) *Ibid.*
[2978] (U) *Ibid.*

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(U) The Committee did not obtain any further communications between Cohen and Klokov. Cohen recalled that he relayed the "the sum and substance of my conversation" with Klokov to Ivanka Trump, as she had requested.[2979] Cohen further stated that he "may have" told Trump about the outreach, but did not recall whether he had such a conversation.[2980] Cohen said he did not recall whether he informed anyone else in the Trump Organization of the outreach during this time period.[2981]

v. (U) Moscow City Government: Boris Epshteyn's Trump Tower Moscow Attempt

(U) In addition to Cohen's efforts with Sater and Rtskhiladze, a third version of a business deal for a hotel in Russia was brought to the Trump Organization during the campaign through Boris Epshteyn, a Trump Campaign surrogate and later employee. In the spring of 2016, Epshteyn received the proposal from contacts he had in the Moscow city government, and shared it with Eric Trump, with whom Epshteyn had long been friends. The Committee has no indication that the Trump Organization took any action related to the proposal.

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[2979] (U) Cohen Tr. II, p. 252.
[2980] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 253.
[2981] (U) *Ibid.*
[2982] (U) Epshteyn Tr., p. 14.
[2983] [redacted]

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Tarazov and Standik were later declared *persona non grata* in 2018 by the United States.[2988] [redacted]

[redacted]

- [redacted]

[2984] [redacted]
[2985] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 42.
[2986] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 48.
[2987] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 49.
[2988] (U) "Russian Trade Representative among diplomats expelled from the United States," *Tass*, March 29, 2018; [redacted]
[2989] [redacted]
[2990] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 49–50; rs.gov.ru, "About Rossotrudnichestvo."
[2991] [redacted]

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(U) The panel Epshteyn participated in included representatives of the Moscow city government, including Sergey Cheremin, a minister in the Moscow city government in charge of external relations and investment.

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(U) In early 2016, these same individuals affiliated with the Moscow city government reengaged Epshteyn about a potential Trump deal in Russia, ultimately sending him blueprints for a hotel.[2998] According to the email chain produced by Epshteyn, the blueprints originated with a secretary for Cheremin in April 2016. Cheremin's secretary forwarded the plans to an email address that included the name Shutenko, likely affiliated with Oleg Shutenko, Cheremin's deputy in the Moscow city government.[2999]

(U) Epshteyn recalled sharing these blueprints with Eric Trump and discussing the offer with him.[3000] According to Epshteyn, Eric Trump said that he would "take a look" and that the

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2992 [redacted]
2993 (U) *Ibid.*, p. 48.
2994 [redacted]
2995 (U) *Ibid.*
2996 (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 17–18.
2997 (U) *Ibid.*, p. 18.
2998 (U) Epshteyn Tr., pp. 18–19.
2999 (U) Emails, Shutenko and Klementieva, April 22, 2016 (BF.Epshteyn.SSCI.Prod.113018.000002–3).
3000 (U) Epshteyn Tr., p. 36.

[redacted]

opportunity "[c]ould be interesting," but that his overall reaction was "extremely tepid."[3001] Epshteyn claimed that nothing ever came of the offer.[3002]

(U) The Committee did not seek to interview Eric Trump. The Committee does not have further information related to what action, if any, was taken by the Trump Organization on the proposal.

4. (U) Efforts to Mislead the Public and Congress about Trump Tower Moscow

(U) A number of individuals, particularly Michael Cohen, engaged in efforts to mislead, minimize, or otherwise hide the details and scope of efforts to build a Trump Tower Moscow during the 2016 presidential campaign.

(U) As described by Cohen in his testimony to the Committee and elsewhere, Cohen believed that there was a discrepancy between then-candidate Trump's public statements on the campaign trail stating that he had no business deals related to Russia, and the approximately nine-month effort to build Trump Tower Moscow in 2015 and 2016. During the campaign, Cohen also undertook efforts to maintain the secrecy of the negotiations.[3003]

(U) After the election, Cohen was part of an alleged joint defense agreement (JDA) with an unknown number of other Trump-affiliated individuals, including Trump himself, the Trump Organization, Jared Kushner, Ivanka Trump, Felix Sater, and others. A number of issues arose as the Committee sought testimony and documents from Cohen that likely related to the functioning of this alleged JDA, including the withholding of documents and intentionally false statements made by Cohen to the Committee and released publicly.[3004]

(U) One such issue involved outreach related to Dmitry Klokov. Cohen initially told the Committee that a communication came into the Trump Organization requesting that Cohen speak with Klokov.[3005] Cohen's then-attorney, Stephen Ryan, told the Committee that the communications were privileged and therefore not produced. Ryan stated:

> *Let me make a representation on the record about it. There's a communication from Lana Alexander,[3006] who wrote to the Trump Organization and she*

[3001] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 25, 36.
[3002] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 27.
[3003] (U) Email, Cohen to Rozov, Chizhikov, and Sater, November 2, 2015 (MDC-S-000652–670) ("It is extremely important that the nature and content of the attached LOI not be disclosed until such time as the parties have either concluded the definitive agreement documents or have agreed to a mutual statement.").
[3004] (U) *See also infra* Vol. 5, Sec. II.C.3.
[3005] (U) Cohen Tr., p. 164.
[3006] (U) A/k/a Lana Erchova.

[redacted]

[redacted]

represented that she is Mr. Klokov's wife, and it's in a trail of documents about two or three pages long that there's privileged communication in and so it's not been produced to you yet.[3007]

(U) Cohen later told the Committee that Ryan claimed that the communication was privileged at the request of Abbe Lowell, who at the time served as attorney to Ivanka Trump and Jared Kushner.[3008] Cohen also told the Committee that the communication was not, in fact, privileged and testified about its contents in his second interview with the Committee. It is unclear why Ryan ever considered the communication privileged.

(U) On other matters, multiple emails between Michael Cohen and Russian government officials—which were responsive to the Committee's document request—were never produced to the Committee. The withheld emails included outreach to the Kremlin's press office seeking to speak with Putin's chief of staff, Sergei Ivanov, as well as a response from Dmitri Peskov's assistant seeking to discuss the Trump Moscow project. During Cohen's initial interview, Cohen's then-counsel Stephen Ryan told the Committee that Cohen was not involved in the production of documents to the Committee.[3009] Ryan stated that Cohen's emails from his Trump Organization account were produced to Cohen and his counsel by the Trump Organization "off the Trump [Organization] server."[3010] During that same interview, Cohen made false statements to the Committee about these communications with Russian government officials.[3011] Cohen also transmitted his false statements about his outreach to the Kremlin on the project to the press and to the public generally, giving the false impression that Cohen had not communicated in a substantive way with the Russian government regarding the project.[3012]

(U) Cohen eventually pleaded guilty to making intentionally false statements to this Committee and to the HPSCI related to the Trump Tower project.[3013] Cohen eventually admitted to receiving an email response from a Russian government employee; ultimately, he admitted contacting her and conducting a substantive conversation about the Trump Moscow project in January 2016.[3014] Cohen told the Committee that the email response, which he never produced to the Committee, was never provided to him by the Trump Organization, another member of the alleged JDA.[3015] The Committee was unable to determine the accuracy of this claim. However,

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[3007] **(U)** Cohen Tr., p. 164.
[3008] **(U)** Cohen Tr. II, pp. 244–245.
[3009] **(U)** Cohen Tr., p. 128.
[3010] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[3011] **(U)** Criminal Information, *United States v. Michael Cohen*, Case No: 18-CRIM-850 (S.D.N.Y. November 29, 2018).
[3012] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[3013] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[3014] **(U)** Cohen Tr. II, pp. 287–288.
[3015] **(U)** *Ibid.*

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if true, this lends support to the conclusion that Cohen's initial false statements to the Committee were aided by other members of the alleged JDA, namely the Trump Organization.

(U) Furthermore, drafts of Cohen's prepared statement that included this and other false or misleading statements was "circulated through all of the various individuals" who read it and, according to Cohen, these individuals "knew the information was false."[3016] Cohen "suspect[ed]" that Trump had seen the statement.[3017] He further said that he believed Trump knew that the statement was false because "my conversations with him took place for several months after the January date that's referenced in this statement."[3018] Cohen also said that, after he was indicted in the Southern District of New York, he discussed a potential pardon for himself with Jay Sekulow "more than a half dozen times."[3019] Cohen further stated that he understood that the pardon discussions had come from Trump through Sekulow.[3020]

[3016] **(U)** *Ibid.*, p. 21.
[3017] **(U)** *Ibid.*, pp. 22–23.
[3018] **(U)** *Ibid.*, p. 22.
[3019] **(U)** *Ibid.*, p. 55.
[3020] **(U)** *Ibid.*, p. 378.

[redacted]

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E. (U) George Papadopoulos

1. (U) Introduction and Findings

(U) In early March 2016, following a short stint working for the Ben Carson campaign, George Papadopoulos asked Trump Campaign advisor Sam Clovis about joining the Trump foreign policy team. On March 21, 2016, Trump publicly announced his foreign policy team, which included Papadopoulos and four others.[3021] Throughout the campaign and following the election, Papadopoulos proffered himself as a conduit between the Trump team and foreign governments, including Russia, Egypt, and Greece.

(U) During his initial conversations with Clovis in early March, Papadopoulos learned that "a principal foreign policy focus of the Campaign was an improved U.S. relationship with Russia."[3022] Papadopoulos, on his own initiative, met and communicated repeatedly with individuals throughout 2016 to advance the Campaign's relationship with Russia, including London-based Professor Joseph Mifsud and Mifsud associates Olga Polonskaya and Ivan Timofeev. Papadopoulos believed Mifsud, Polonskaya, and Timofeev were connected to the Russian government, and worked with them on ways for the Campaign to engage with the Russian government.

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[3021] (U) Philip Rucker and Robert Costa, "Politics: Trump questions need for NATO, outlines noninterventionist foreign policy," *The Washington Post*, March 21, 2016.

[3022] (U) FBI, FD-302, Papadopoulos 9/19/2017; Statement of the Offense ¶4, *United States v. George Papadopoulos*, Case No. 1:17-cr-00182-RDM (D.D.C. October 5, 2017).

[3023] [redacted]

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(U) The Committee found that the Trump Campaign's rush to name and assemble the foreign policy team—without thorough vetting—resulted in their recruitment of inexperienced advisors, over whom they exerted little control. Ultimately, the foreign policy team exposed the Trump Campaign to significant counterintelligence vulnerabilities.

(U) Papadopoulos used multiple avenues to pursue a face-to-face meeting between Trump and President Putin. Papadopoulos believed that he was operating with the approval—or at least not the explicit disapproval—of senior Campaign leadership, who he kept apprised of his efforts. Papadopoulos never successfully scheduled a meeting between Putin and Trump.

(U) Most Campaign staff ignored Papadopoulos's engagements with foreign governments, although some encouraged his efforts. The Committee did not find any evidence that the Campaign ever asked Papadopoulos to cease these engagements. However, on several occasions, the Campaign asked him to stop his interactions with the foreign press on its behalf, and in October 2016, several senior Campaign staffers discussed ending Papadopoulos's role with the Campaign, but never did so. Papadopoulos continued to work with the Campaign through the presidential Transition, during which time he assisted several foreign governments—though not Moscow—in establishing contact with campaign officials.

[redacted] Papadopoulos's contacts with Mifsud and Sergei Millian, the President of the Russia-American Chamber of Commerce (RACC), are highly suspicious. [redacted] Millian is a Belarusian-born American citizen, and as of 2018 was the president of the Russian-American Chamber of Commerce and a real estate broker in New York City. Furthermore, Millian has had a working relationship with Trump since 2007. [redacted] Both Mifsud and Millian exhibited behavior consistent with intelligence tradecraft, and both have significant ties to Russian government and business circles. Papadopoulos did not seem to consider himself a target for foreign intelligence services, despite being associated with a presidential campaign and his ongoing interactions with foreign government officials.

- (U) Mifsud's use of Polonskaya as a proxy to further induce contact with Papadopoulos is consistent with intelligence tradecraft.

- (U) Millian's connections to the virtually non-existent RACC, combined with the odd nature of his request that Papadopoulos pursue a job with the Trump administration, are also consistent with intelligence tradecraft.

3024 [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

(U) The Committee found Mifsud was aware of an aspect of Russia's active measures campaign in the 2016 election and that Mifsud told Papadopoulos what he knew. The timing of Mifsud's visit to Moscow and his subsequent conversation with Papadopoulos are consistent with the timeline of the GRU's cyber penetration of the DNC and DCCC, several weeks before any information about that activity was public. Furthermore, the information Mifsud conveyed to Papadopoulos was consistent with the GRU's information disclosure operations intended to damage the candidacy of Hillary Clinton.[3025]

[redacted] For further information on the FBI's counterintelligence investigation, *see infra* Vol. 5, Sec. IV.

[redacted]

(U) Papadopoulos held a purely advisory role on the Campaign—he was never formal Campaign staff nor was he part of Trump's inner circle—and most Campaign staff and other advisors he interacted with were dismissive of his efforts. Some senior members of the Campaign viewed Papadopoulos as a liability, particularly in his interactions with foreign governments and press outlets.

[3025] (U) *See infra* Vol. 5, Sec. III.B.

[redacted]

[redacted]

(U) The Committee notes that Papadopoulos engaged with more than just the Russian government. He also communicated with government officials from Egypt,[3026] Israel,[3027] Japan,[3028] and the United Kingdom.[3029] However, Papadopoulos's interactions to engage Russia occurred through non-government interlocutors.

(U) Papadopoulos never sought to conceal his efforts to make contact with Russian officials; on the contrary, he sought opportunities to demonstrate his networking to high-ranking Campaign officials, like Corey Lewandowski and Steve Bannon. Papadopoulos wanted to maintain his own identity as a conduit; he never put Mifsud or Timofeev directly in contact with the Campaign, or vice-versa.

(U) Although the Committee's insights are substantially limited by incomplete document production and witness testimony, the Committee assesses that Papadopoulos was not a witting cooptee of the Russian intelligence services, but nonetheless presented as a prime intelligence target and potential vector for malign Russian influence.

2. (U) Limitations on the Committee's Investigation

(U) The FBI first interviewed Papadopoulos on January 27, 2017, in connection with its counterintelligence investigation. On July 27, 2017, FBI agents arrested him for making false statements during this January 2017 interview. Papadopoulos pleaded guilty to making these false statements on October 5, 2017.[3030] The FBI made some relevant records available to the

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[3026] (U) Email, Papadopoulos to Elshemy, September 15, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 000617); *see also* Emails, Papadopoulos and Bannon, September 16–18, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 000621– 627). Between September 16, 2016, and September 18, 2016, Papadopoulos and Bannon exchanged dozens of messages relating to a potential engagement between President El-Sisi of Egypt and Trump, ultimately confirming a dinner meeting at 9:00 p.m. on Monday, September 19, 2016. During this email exchange, Bannon asked Papadopoulos to email a briefing in advance of the meeting with President El-Sisi, which Papadopoulos sent noting that "while in Athens over dinner with Greek defense minister last May, he personally introduced me to the Egyptian defense minister and the rest became monthly consultations with the Egyptians in DC." There are an additional two email messages related to this conversation that were redacted when produced to the Committee. Bannon told the Committee that he mistook Papadopoulos for a separate Campaign staffer and never meant to engage with Papadopoulos on this issue. Bannon Tr., pp. 95–98.

[3027] (U) Email, Leibovich to Papadopoulos, June 27, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 000703).

[3028] (U) Email, Papadopoulos to Bannon, September 15, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 000615).

[3029] (U) Email, Goshko to Papadopoulos, November 9, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 000643).

[3030] (U) Plea Agreement, *United States v. George Papadopoulos*, Case 1:17-cr-00182-RDM (D.D.C. October 5, 2017). During the course of its investigation, the FBI discovered that Papadopoulos also possessed a valid Greek passport. *See* FBI, FD-302, Papadopoulos 9/19/2017 [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

Committee, including: notes from its interviews with Papadopoulos,[3031] as well as a detailed timeline of Papadopoulos's activities from March 2016 through August 2017.[3032]

(U) The Committee tried several times to interview Papadopoulos. In discussing a potential appearance before the Committee, Papadopoulos insisted certain topics be outside the scope of the interview, a condition which the Committee rejected. Ultimately, the Committee received two separate document productions from Papadopoulos. The first tranche of documents, produced on June 19, 2017, was incomplete. That production also appeared to be curated and annotated by Papadopoulos, and painted a misleading representation of the facts related to his activities. Papadopoulos included with the documents a written statement that included numerous false or misleading statements similar to those he originally made to the FBI.[3033] The second tranche of documents, produced on June 6, 2019, was more comprehensive, but still omitted non-email communications, including text messages and social media messages, that the Committee believes Papadopoulos may still possess.[3034] The Committee also reviewed public transcripts of Papadopoulos's testimony to other congressional committees.

(U) The Committee tried several times to contact and interview Mifsud, to no avail. These efforts included a letter sent to Mifsud on March 22, 2018, inviting him to appear for an interview with the Committee. While the letter resulted in several exchanges with Mifsud's alleged legal counsel, those attempts ultimately ended in November 2018, when his attorneys claimed to have lost contact with their client.

3. (U) Joseph Mifsud and Other Central Figures

(U) Mifsud played a central role in Papadopoulos's attempts to engage the Russian government on behalf of the Trump Campaign. The Committee's awareness of Mifsud's activities is limited to document production and testimony from other witnesses, information from the Executive Branch, and open source research, in the absence of Mifsud's documents and testimony.

[redacted]

[3031] (U) These documents included some redactions.

[3032] (U) FBI, FD-302, Papadopoulos 9/19/2017 [redacted] The timeline was used during September 2017 FBI interviews of Papadopoulos.

[3033] (U) Schedule A Response, Papadopoulos (GP-000038–GP-000040).

[3034] (U) The Committee makes this assessment based on other document productions, testimony from other witnesses, and other information available to the Committee. For example, Papadopoulos testified to the U.S. House of Representatives about his communications with Mifsud using Facebook, but did not produce any communications transmitted via Facebook to the Committee. *See* House Judiciary Committee Transcript of the Interview with George Papadopoulos, pp. 159–160.

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

(U) Mifsud introduced Papadopoulos to Olga Polonskaya and Ivan Timofeev. Polonskaya is a Russian citizen who Mifsud used as a proxy for his activities.[3038] Polonskaya communicated with Papadopoulos up until, and after, the 2016 election.[3039] Papadopoulos also mistakenly thought Polonskaya was Putin's niece.[3040] Timofeev is another member of the Valdai Discussion Club with whom Papadopoulos communicated through at least July 2016.[3041] Papadopoulos engaged both Polonskaya and Timofeev, along with Mifsud, as part of his outreach to Russia.

[redacted]

[redacted] According to FBI records and documents produced to the Committee, Papadopoulos and Polonskaya remained in contact through the election.[3045] On a single day in October 2016, Papadopoulos and Polonskaya exchanged nearly seventy messages.[3046] During

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[3035] [redacted]
[3036] (U) *Ibid.*
[3037] [redacted]
[3038] (U) House Judiciary Committee Transcript of the Interview with George Papadopoulos, p. 17; Email, Mifsud to Papadopoulos and Timofeev, April 18, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 000863.
[3039] (U) FBI, FD-302, Papadopoulos 9/19/2017 [redacted]
[3040] (U) House Judiciary Committee Transcript of the Interview with George Papadopoulos, p. 17.
[3041] (U) *See, e.g.*, Email, Papadopoulos to Timofeev, June 12, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 001002).
[3042] [redacted]
[3043] (U) *Ibid.*
[3044] (U) *Ibid.*
[3045] (U) Email, Papadopoulos to Polonskaya, November 9, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 000980); FBI, FD-302, Papadopoulos 9/19/2017 [redacted]
[3046] (U) FBI, FD-302, Papadopoulos 9/19/2017 [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

this conversation, Polonskaya demonstrated an awareness of Papadopoulos's intent to run for public office.[3047]

(U) Simona Mangiante, an Italian attorney who worked for the European Parliament until 2016, first interacted with Papadopoulos in approximately September 2016, when he sent her a LinkedIn message, noting that he had previously worked for the organization that Mangiante had just joined, the London Center of International Law Practice (LCILP).[3048] Mangiante and Papadopoulos initially communicated via Skype or WhatsApp, until Papadopoulos met Mangiante in person at the airport in New York in the spring of 2017.[3049] Mangiante married Papadopoulos on March 2, 2018.[3050] Mangiante has an independent, separate connection to Mifsud.

(U) According to Mangiante, she was introduced to Mifsud at some point between 2009 and 2016 through Gianni Pittella, the former head of a political group within the European Union.[3051] Mangiante described Pittella as "someone I am very close to," and further stated that Pittella was "someone who is very close to Mifsud."[3052] Mangiante characterized Mifsud as being affiliated with a number of universities in Europe, including the Link Campus University in Rome, Italy; the University of East Anglia; and the University of Stirling in the United Kingdom; as well as serving as the Director of the London Academy of Diplomacy.[3053] During Mangiante's three month employment at the LCILP, which ended in late October 2016, Mifsud also became a director at the LCILP.[3054]

4. (U) Papadopoulos Engages with Foreign Governments, Inflating Campaign Role

(U) The Committee used limited document production and interviews to evaluate interactions Papadopoulos had throughout 2016 with foreign officials, Mifsud, and members of the Trump Campaign, and the corresponding counterintelligence threats those activities represented.[3055]

[3047] (U) *Ibid.* According to the Federal Election Commission (FEC) filing, Papadopoulos filed a Statement of Candidacy (FEC Form 2) to run for the 25th District in the State of California on October 29, 2019.
[3048] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Simona Mangiante, March 11, 2019, p. 82.
[3049] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 81–82.
[3050] (U) Kim Janssen, "Mueller witness George Papadopoulos weds Italian sweetheart at Chicago's City Hall," *Chicago Tribune*, March 6, 2018.
[3051] (U) Mangiante Tr., pp. 15–16.
[3052] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 25.
[3053] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 17, 20–21.
[3054] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 25–26; Email, Mangiante to Mifsud, Idris, et al., October 22, 2016 (SSCI-SMP-0010–11).
[3055] (U) This does not purport to be an exhaustive list of Papadopoulos's activities, many of which remain unknown to the Committee.

[redacted]

[redacted]

i. (U) Papadopoulos Seeks a Role on a Campaign

(U) Papadopoulos first reached out to the Trump Campaign in the summer of 2015, and was referred to Michael Glassner, the National Political Director for the Trump Campaign, by Corey Lewandowski, the Trump Campaign manager at the time.[3056] Papadopoulos expressed that he was seeking "an advisory role to Mr. Trump on matters of energy security and U.S. policy in the Eastern Mediterranean."[3057] In September 2015, Glassner told Papadopoulos that the Trump Campaign was not hiring policy advisors.[3058]

(U) From late 2015 until February 2016, Papadopoulos held a paid position with the Ben Carson campaign.[3059] After leaving, Papadopoulos reached out to a contact at the LCILP to ask if LCILP was hiring, noting that he had finished his role with the Carson campaign.[3060] By early February 2016, he agreed to join LCILP and began working in London.[3061]

(U) Around the same time, Papadopoulos sent messages to Lewandowski and Glassner, again expressing interest in joining the Trump Campaign.[3062] On March 2, 2016, Papadopoulos sent Glassner another email message, reiterating his interest.[3063] The same day, a representative from the Trump Campaign responded to Papadopoulos with the subject line, "follow up from Michael Glassner," to confirm that Papadopoulos would like to be introduced to Sam Clovis, who was the National Co-Chair and Chief Policy Adviser for the Trump Campaign and was at that time charged with forming a foreign policy team for the Trump Campaign. Papadopoulos said yes.[3064]

(U) Clovis told the Committee that the goal for creation of the foreign policy team was to alleviate pressure the Trump Campaign was receiving regarding the candidate's foreign policy and national security experience. In Clovis's words:

> *[W]e were desperate to try to get the press off our backs . . . these were people who had approached the campaign at one time or another and had enough rank or enough street cred or I should say at least had credentials that looked like we could possibly put them together on this national advisory team. . . . My job was*

[3056] (U) Emails, Papadopoulos and Glassner, August 4, 2015 (B&P GP File 2018 000695).
[3057] (U) *Ibid.*
[3058] (U) *SCO Report*, Vol. I, p. 81.
[3059] (U) *Ibid.*
[3060] (U) *Ibid.*, Vol. I, pp. 81–82.
[3061] (U) *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 82.
[3062] (U) *Ibid.* Papadopoulos did not produce these communications to the Committee.
[3063] (U) *Ibid.* Papadopoulos did not produce this communication to the Committee.
[3064] (U) Emails, Lutes and Papadopoulos, March 2–3, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 000701–702).

[redacted]

[redacted]

to put that list together, put it together, get a press release that let Hope, Hope Hicks, put a press release out on it, those kinds of things. Essentially, that was it. Once we had done that, the press backed off and I moved on to other things, and I never worried about cultivating that group ever again.[3065]

(U) Hicks also said that in March 2016, then-candidate Trump was "repeatedly asked about who [was] advising him on foreign policy. So we were as a campaign feeling pressure to put something together."[3066]

(U) Clovis and Papadopoulos spoke on March 6, 2016, about Papadopoulos joining the foreign policy team, and they may have discussed Russia. According to an August 2017 interview with the FBI:

Papadopoulos recalled having a telephone interview with Sam Clovis . . . on or about March 6, 2016, during which the topic of Russia came up. Clovis noted the importance of Russia to the foreign policy team. Papadopoulos remembered telling Clovis he did not have any Russian contacts during that call.[3067]

(U) This is in contrast to what Clovis stated in his interview with the Committee, during which he stated, "I think my advice to George [Papadopoulos] has always been: No to Russia."[3068]

(U) On March 6, 2016, Clovis wrote an email update to senior Campaign members, including Jared Kushner, Ivanka Trump, Corey Lewandowski, Michael Glassner, and Stephen Miller, explaining that he had "made contact with everyone in the matrix . . . I have already had lengthy discussions with Walid [Ph]ares and George Papadopoulos. Both are on board."[3069] According to a "Policy Team Matrix" document attached to the email, Papadopoulos was to support foreign policy issues and was the sole individual assigned to support energy issues.[3070]

(U) Clovis sent another email, entitled "National Security Advisory Committee," to Ivanka Trump, Kushner, and Glassner on March 16, 2016: "As you asked for today, find

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[3065] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Sam Clovis, September 28, 2017, pp. 14–16.
[3066] (U) Hicks Tr., pp. 9–10.
[3067] (U) FBI, FD-302, Papadopoulos 8/11/2017.
[3068] (U) Clovis Tr., pp. 78–79.
[3069] (U) Email, Clovis to Kushner, I. Trump, Lewandowski, Glassner, and S. Miller, March 6, 2016 (DJTFP00009899–9900). The Committee understands "on board" to indicate that the individuals had expressed their desire, and perhaps commitment, to joining the national security/foreign policy advisory team the Campaign was seeking to establish.
[3070] (U) "Policy Team Matrix," March 6, 2016 (DJTFP00009911).

[redacted]

[redacted]

attached the list of those from whom I have commitments to the team."[3071] Papadopoulos is listed in the attachment as "Oil and Energy Consultant; Hudson Institute; Expert on Mediterranean, Caspian, and Middle Eastern energy and Israel; degrees from University College London, DePaul University and Universite Catholique de Louvain."[3072]

(U) On March 21, 2016, Trump announced some of the foreign policy team during a meeting with the editorial board of the *The Washington Post*. During this meeting, Trump characterized Papadopoulos as, "an energy and oil consultant, excellent guy."[3073]

ii. (U) Papadopoulos Meets Joseph Mifsud and Olga Polonskaya

(U) On March 14, 2016, around the same time that he joined the Trump Campaign, Papadopoulos first met London-based professor Joseph Mifsud (also known as Joseph di Gabriele) while traveling in Rome, Italy. According to statements to the FBI, Papadopoulos said that he had traveled to Rome from approximately March 12 to March 17, 2016, with several other members of LCILP, in order to meet with individuals at the Link Campus University.[3074] The LCILP had arranged the trip and invited Papadopoulos, who accepted because he "just wanted to go to Rome."[3075] An individual named Nagi Idris, another director at LCILP, facilitated the introduction between Papadopoulos and Mifsud while they were in Rome.[3076] Although Mifsud worked for LCILP, Papadopoulos had not previously met him.[3077]

(U) Mifsud's interest in Papadopoulos appeared entirely reliant on Papadopoulos's association with the Trump Campaign. According to the statement of offense for Papadopoulos's guilty plea:

> *Initially, [Mifsud] seemed uninterested in defendant Papadopoulos. However, after defendant Papadopoulos informed [Mifsud] about his joining the [Trump] Campaign, the Professor appeared to take great interest in defendant Papadopoulos. Defendant Papadopoulos was interested in [Mifsud] because, among other reasons, [Mifsud] claimed to have substantial connections with*

[3071] (U) Email, Clovis to I. Trump, Kushner, Lewandowski, and Glassner, March 16, 2016 (DJTFP00009953–9956).
[3072] (U) *Ibid.*
[3073] (U) Post Opinions Staff, "A transcript of Donald Trump's meeting with *The Washington Post* editorial board," March 21, 2016.
[3074] (U) FBI, FD-302, Papadopoulos 8/10/2017.
[3075] (U) *Ibid.*
[3076] (U) *Ibid.*
[3077] (U) *Ibid.*

[redacted]

[redacted]

Russian government officials, which defendant Papadopoulos thought could increase his importance as a policy advisor to the Campaign.[3078]

(U) Papadopoulos similarly told the FBI:

Papadopoulos'[s] first impression was that Mifsud was arrogant. His negative attitude towards Papadopoulos continued until Mifsud found out Papadopoulos was part of the Trump campaign. Mifsud then began to turn on the charm with Papadopoulos and tried to impress him. Mifsud told Papadopoulos he was a former diplomat with access to European leaders. Mifsud offered to help introduce Papadopoulos to the right people through his contacts.[3079]

(U) FBI technical analysis of Papadopoulos's cell phone indicates that Mifsud sent Papadopoulos a text message on March 22, 2016, writing: "My number: joseph."[3080]

(U) Papadopoulos told the House Judiciary Committee that Mifsud subsequently sent him an email stating that "it's very important for us to meet in London. I have to introduce you to somebody very important."[3081] According to Papadopoulos's statement of offense, Mifsud introduced Polonskaya to Papadopoulos as a relative of Vladimir Putin and as someone who had connections to senior Russian government officials.[3082] Papadopoulos testified to the House of Representatives: "[M]y understanding was I was talking to a very senior level diplomat's family member from Russia."[3083] He also testified that Idris reiterated Mifsud's claim, stating "[t]his is Putin's niece or the Russian President's niece."[3084] On March 24, 2016, Papadopoulos met with Mifsud and Olga Polonskaya,[3085] a Russian-national, at the Holborn Hotel.[3086]

(U) Papadopoulos recalled that they discussed U.S.-Russia trade issues during the meeting, and noted that Polonskaya was escorted by an unknown male who did not join them.[3087]

[3078] (U) Statement of the Offense ¶5, *United States v. George Papadopoulos*, Case No. 1:17-cr-00182-RDM (D.D.C. October 5, 2017).
[3079] (U) FBI, FD-302, Papadopoulos 8/10/2017.
[3080] (U) FBI, FD-1057, "George Papadopoulos," August 14, 2018. Papadopoulos provided the mobile phone he had used in the United Kingdom to the FBI for technical analysis.
[3081] (U) House Judiciary Committee Transcript of the Interview with George Papadopoulos, p. 17.
[3082] (U) Statement of the Offense ¶7, *United States v. George Papadopoulos*, Case No. 1:17-cr-00182-RDM (D.D.C. October 5, 2017).
[3083] (U) House Judiciary Committee Transcript of the Interview with George Papadopoulos, p. 17. Papadopoulos did not produce this email to the Committee.
[3084] (U) *Ibid.* Papadopoulos did not produce the referenced email to this Committee.
[3085] (U) Documents produced to the Committee show Polonskaya also used the name "Olga Vinogradova," which the Committee believes is Polonskaya's maiden name. Olga Polonskaya may also be spelled "Polonskaia."
[3086] (U) House Judiciary Committee Transcript of the Interview with George Papadopoulos, p. 17.
[3087] (U) FBI, FD-302, Papadopoulos 9/19/2017.

[redacted]

[redacted]

Papadopoulos's wife, Mangiante, told the Committee that Papadopoulos thought Polonskaya was President Putin's niece because of the way Mifsud introduced her to Papadopoulos.[3088]

(U) Papadopoulos later explained that Polonskaya, who could barely speak English during their in-person meeting, then began communicating with him via electronic means in more fluent English. Papadopoulos characterized a transition in their relationship, shifting from "seemingly obscure girl . . . to now the interlocutor with Mifsud to the Russian Government for me."[3089]

[redacted] On the same day, March 24, 2016, almost certainly after his meeting with Mifsud and Polonskaya, Papadopoulos performed internet searches for the following terms:[3090]

- "russian president"
- "russian president niece"
- "russian president niece olga"
- "russian president brother and sister"
- "joseph mifsud"
- "next Vietnam prime minister"
- "russian ambassador uk"
- "putin's niece"
- "putin's niece, olga"
- "medvedev's niece, olga"
- "olga putin"
- "vladimir putin's brother and sister"
- "Olga Medvedev"

(U) This is the first example of a pattern the Committee observed in Papadopoulos's behavior, where after a meeting he spent time conducting internet research on individuals he met, or, presumably, the topics discussed at the meeting. While several of Papadopoulos's searches are focused on finding additional information on Polonskaya, Papadopoulos later noted in documents produced to the Committee that "[a] quick google search will demonstrate that Putin has no siblings."[3091]

[3088] (U) Mangiante Tr., pp. 109–110. The March 24, 2016, meeting between Papadopoulos, Mifsud, and Polonskaya occurred prior to Mangiante's first encounter with Papadopoulos.
[3089] (U) House Judiciary Committee Transcript of the Interview with George Papadopoulos, pp. 17–19.
[3090] (U) FBI, FD-302, Papadopoulos 9/19/2017 [redacted]
[3091] (U) Schedule A Response, Papadopoulos (GP-000038–GP-000039).

[redacted]

[redacted]

(U) On the same day, March 24, 2016, following his meeting with Mifsud and Polonskaya, Papadopoulos sent an email to members of the Trump foreign policy team with the subject "Meeting with Russian leadership—including Putin," stating:

> *I just finished a very productive lunch with a good friend of mine, Joseph Mifsud, the director of the London Academy of Diplomacy -- who introduced me to both Putin's niece and the Russian Ambassador in London -- who also acts as the Deputy Foreign Minister.*
>
> *The topic of the lunch was to arrange a meeting between us and the Russian leadership to discuss U.S.-Russia ties under President Trump. They are keen to host us in a "neutral" city, or directly in Moscow. They said the leadership, including Putin, is ready to meet with us and Mr. Trump should there be interest. Waiting for everyone's thoughts on moving forward with this very important issue.*
>
> *Furthermore, Mifsud is good friends with the soon to be next prime minister of Vietnam. He asked for me to join him on a trip there to meet with the next leader--perhaps this is of interest to the rest of the campaign team as well?*[3092]

(U) Papadopoulos testified to the House Judiciary Committee that he lied to the Trump Campaign about being introduced to the Russian Ambassador in London, clarifying that he "never met the Russian ambassador, just to make that completely clear."[3093]

(U) Minutes after Papadopoulos's email to other Campaign advisers and staff, Clovis replied to the entire group, stating:

> *George,*
>
> *This is most informative. Let me work it through the campaign. No commitments until we see how this plays out. My thought is that we should not go forward with any meetings with the Russians until we have had occasion to sit with our NATO allies, especially France, Germany, and Great Britain. We need to reassure our allies that we are not going to advance anything with Russia until we have everyone on the same page.*
>
> *More thoughts later today. Great work.*

[3092] **(U)** Email, Papadopoulos to Page, Clovis, Harrell, Kellogg, Misazawa, Kubic, Schmitz, Phares, and Glassner, March 24, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 000649).
[3093] **(U)** House Judiciary Committee Transcript of the Interview with George Papadopoulos, p. 19.

[redacted]

[redacted]

Sam[3094]

[redacted] FBI records indicate that on March 26, 2016, Papadopoulos performed internet searches for "Andrei Klimov" and "Ivan Timofeev."[3095] This search occurred more than three weeks prior to Papadopoulos's April 18, 2016, introduction to Timofeev through Mifsud, suggesting that Mifsud may have raised Klimov or Timofeev, or both, during his engagement with Papadopoulos.

[redacted]

iii. (U) The Foreign Policy Team Meets

(U) Clovis sent an email to the newly-established Trump Campaign's foreign policy advisory team on March 28, 2016, stating: "I just got off the phone with Senator Jeff Sessions of Alabama. He passed along that a meeting is being scheduled for 10 am eastern on Thursday, the 31st. Location to follow. Please let me know if you are going to be able to attend."[3098] Papadopoulos wrote back to the group thirty minutes later, "Sam, I will be there too. Flying in on the 30th."[3099]

(U) Papadopoulos stated that at the March 31, 2016, national security meeting of then-candidate Trump's foreign policy advisors held at the Trump International Hotel in Washington, D.C., he proposed the idea of arranging a meeting between Putin and Trump.[3100]

(U) Papadopoulos recalled telling the group in attendance that "Putin wants to meet" and that the response to his suggestion from Trump was something to the effect of "I like the

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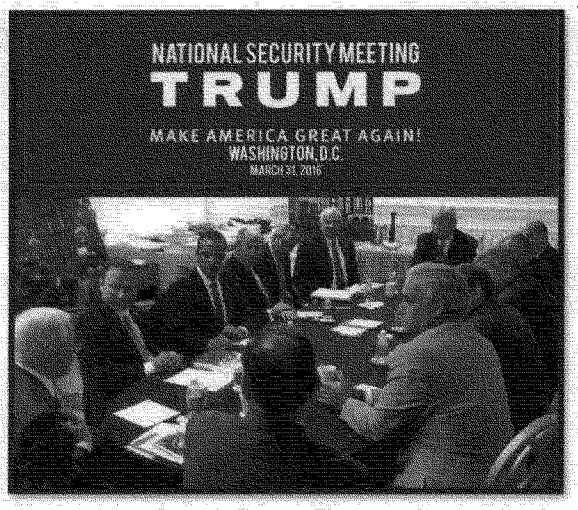
[3094] (U) Email, Clovis to Papadopoulos, Page, Harrell, Kellogg, Misazawa, Kubic, Schmitz, Phares, and Glassner, March 24, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 000649).
[3095] (U) FBI, FD-302, Papadopoulos 9/19/2017 [redacted]
[3096] (U) Valdaiclub.com, "Andrey Klimov."
[3097] [redacted]
[3098] (U) Email, Clovis to Papadopoulos, Page, Glassner, et al., March 28, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 000475).
[3099] (U) Email, Papadopoulos to Clovis, Page, Lewandowski, S. Miller, Glassner, et al., March 28, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 000475).
[3100] (U) FBI, FD-302, Papadopoulos 9/19/2017.

[redacted]

idea"[3101] who subsequently asked Sessions for his opinion of the proposal.[3102] Papadopoulos believed that Trump and Sessions were somewhere between tacitly supportive of his idea and very supportive of his idea, and he left the meeting with the impression that "these guys wanted this." Papadopoulos also told the FBI that he did not recall anyone at the meeting objecting to the proposal and that he rather felt he had received a "thumbs up."[3103]

(U) A picture of the meeting published on Trump's Instagram account showed that Sessions and members of the foreign policy advisory team, including J.D. Gordon, Papadopoulos, and Joseph Schmitz attended the meeting.[3104]



(U) Clovis told the Committee that his first in-person encounter with Papadopoulos was at the March 31, 2016, meeting:

> *That's where I really got the sense, at that meeting, that he was there for himself and not for the campaign, and I felt like it was a mistake that we had included him. . . . I just thought he was very self-serving, very much on the make. I just*

[3101] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[3102] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[3103] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[3104] **(U)** Instagram, @realDonaldTrump, March 31, 2016 ("Meeting with my national security team in #WashingtonDC. #Trump2016").

[redacted]

never—I never trusted him after that. . . . Everything he did, he did on his own, and we always had to go back and correct him afterwards. It got to the point, really, it got bad quickly, so we essentially cut him loose quickly in my view. I never trusted him with anything.[3105]

(U) Gordon told the Committee that he did not recall Papadopoulos proposing any outreach to the Russian government or Russian individuals, but did confirm that Papadopoulos was fully on board with Trump's desire to have a better relationship with Russia.[3106]

(U) Papadopoulos referenced his proposal again with two of the other foreign policy advisors. On April 5, 2016, Phares sent an email message to Papadopoulos, in which he wrote "Let's think about how to engage your Arab and Mideast contacts either in London or in DC."[3107] Papadopoulos replied from Tel Aviv, Israel, "And of course the Russians, as I mentioned during our meeting."[3108] On April 10, 2016, Papadopoulos also sent an email message to Carter Page, another foreign policy advisor to the Trump Campaign, in which he asked if Page was available for a phone call "to discuss the outreach to Russia and the Caucasus," noting that they "both have experience dealing in that part of the world, so also wanted to look into any synergies."[3109] Page responded with an attempt to schedule a Skype conversation.[3110]

(U) Papadopoulos recalled having a Skype call with Page, and in particular recalled Page telling him to "stop showing off."[3111] Although Papadopoulos did not remember exactly why Page had told him that, he surmised that "it was likely a result of Papadopoulos' efforts to coordinate with the Russians in late March 2016."[3112] When Page testified to the Committee, he recalled speaking with Papadopoulos "once on the phone."[3113]

iv. (U) Papadopoulos' Contact with Polonskaya and Mifsud Accelerates

(U) As an apparent follow-up to the March meeting with Mifsud, Papadopoulos e-mailed Polonskaya on April 10, 2016, stating:

[3105] (U) Clovis Tr., pp. 70–71.
[3106] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with J.D. Gordon, July 14, 2017, p. 69.
[3107] (U) FBI, FD-302, Papadopoulos 9/19/2017 [redacted]
[3108] (U) *Ibid.*
[3109] (U) Email, Papadopoulos to Page, April 10, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 001057).
[3110] (U) Email, Page to Papadopoulos, April 10, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 001057).
[3111] (U) FBI, FD-302, Papadopoulos 11/7/2017.
[3112] (U) *Ibid.*
[3113] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Carter Page, August 21, 2017, pp. 146–147.

[redacted]

[redacted]

This is George Papadopoulos, Donald Trump's advisor. We met with Joseph in London. The reason for my message is because he sent an email that you tried contacting me. I never received your sms. I was in Israel for business and now I am back in London. Are you still in London? If you are it would be a pleasure to meet again. If not, we should have a call and discuss some things.[3114]

Polonskaya responded the next day, April 11, 2016, copying Mifsud on the email and stating "I am now back in St. Petersburg. I thank you for our meeting. I would be very pleased to support your initiatives between our two countries and of course I would be very pleased to meet you again."[3115]

(U) Papadopoulos responded back to Polonskaya on the same day, April 11, 2016, stating, "I think a good step would be for me to meet with the Russian Ambassador in London sometime this month. . . . I would like to discuss with him, or anyone else you recommend, about a potential foreign policy trip to Russia."[3116] Papadopoulos included a link in the email to a *Jerusalem Post* opinion article that he characterized as "beneficial to send around."[3117] The opinion article summarized Papadopoulos's remarks at an April 2016 luncheon with research associates at an Israeli think tank which included:

- (U) "Unlike President Barack Obama, who weakly attempted to 'reset' relations with Russia and then spent the latter part of his tenure isolating and sanctioning Russia, Donald Trump would 'overtly seek' serious engagement with Russia on a range of common concerns."
- (U) "Trump . . . sees Russian President Vladimir Putin as a responsible actor and potential partner."
- (U) "The US and Russia must work to counter Chinese expansionism in Asia and the Middle East. . . . Therefore, a policy of isolating Russia is 'not sustainable.'"[3118]

(U) In response to Papadopoulos's email, Mifsud wrote back to Papadopoulos on the same day, April 11, 2016, that "[t]his is already been agreed. I am flying to Moscow on the 18th

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[3114] (U) Emails, Papadopoulos to Polonskaya, April 10, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 000975). The Mifsud email referenced by Papadopoulos was not produced to the Committee.
[3115] (U) Email, Polonskaya to Papadopoulos and Mifsud, April 11, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 000967).
[3116] (U) Email, Papadopoulos to Polonskaya and Mifsud, April 11, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 000967).
[3117] (U) *Ibid.*
[3118] (U) David M. Weinberg, "Know Comment: The Donald's Foreign Policy," *Jerusalem Post,* April 7, 2016.

[redacted]

[redacted]

for a Valdai meeting, plus other meetings at the Duma. We will talk tomorrow."[3119] The Committee does not know what, specifically, Mifsud meant by "[t]his is already been agreed." Papadopoulos wrote back to Mifsud and Polonskaya eight minutes later, "Excellent. See you tomorrow."[3120]

(U) On April 12, 2016, Papadopoulos appears to have had breakfast with Mifsud, based on his last April 11, 2016, email and information made available from the FBI's timeline.

- (U) Papadopoulos's schedule had a calendar entry for April 12, 2016, at 9:30 a.m. for one hour, for "Andaz hotel breakfast Liverpool St (9:30)."[3121]

- (U) The same day, at 9:44 a.m., Mifsud emailed Papadopoulos and Nawaf Obaid regarding "Libya CONFIDENTIAL."[3122] Papadopoulos also had another calendar entry for April 13, 2016, for one hour, for "1 pm Lunch at Four Seasons," with Nawaf Obaid.[3123]

(U) Polonskaya added to Mifsud's response the following day, April 12, 2016, that she:

> *already alerted my personal links to our conversation and your request. The Embassy in London is very much aware of this. As mentioned we are all very excited by the possibility of a good relationship with Mr. Trump. The Russian Federation would love to welcome him once his candidature [sic] would be officially announced.*[3124]

The Committee does not have any insight into Polonskaya's connection to the Russian Embassy in London.

v. (U) Mifsud Introduces Papadopoulos to Ivan Timofeev

(U) On April 18, 2016, the same day that Mifsud had told Papadopoulos he was flying to Moscow, Mifsud introduced Ivan Timofeev, Director of Programs at the Russian International Affairs Council (RIAC),[3125] to Papadopoulos via email. Timofeev has led the "Euro-Atlantic

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[3119] (U) Email, Mifsud to Polonskaya and Papadopoulos, April 11, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 000967–968).
[3120] (U) Email, Papadopoulos to Mifsud and Polonskaya, April 11, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 000968).
[3121] (U) FBI, FD-302, Papadopoulos 9/19/2017 [redacted]
[3122] (U) *Ibid.*
[3123] (U) *Ibid.*
[3124] (U) Email, Polonskaya to Mifsud and Papadopoulos, April 12, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 000971).
[3125] (U) According to the Kremlin's website, the RIAC was established by a Russian presidential decree on February 3, 2010, as a non-profit partnership by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russia and the Ministry of Education and Science of Russia to "organise interaction between Russian scientific organisations and foreign think

[redacted]

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Security" program at the Valdai Discussion Club since 2015 and has served as a professor at the Academy for Military Science in Russia since 2013, according to open source information.[3126] In the initial introductory message, Mifsud wrote:

> *Dear George, Ivan,*
>
> *As promised I had a long conversation today in Moscow with my dear friend Ivan from RIAC about a possible meeting between the two of you. Ivan is ready to meet with you in London (or USA or Moscow). I am putting the two of you in touch to discuss when and where this potential meeting can actually take place.*
>
> *Best wishes for your endeavours...*
>
> *Kind regards,*
>
> *Joseph*[3127]

(U) According to the Valdai Discussion Club's website, Mifsud appeared as part of a panel discussion in Moscow in April 2016, alongside Stephan Roh.[3128] Timofeev moderated the discussion, which focused on the geopolitical and oil market implications after a recent gathering of oil-producing nations.[3129]

(U) Papadopoulos responded the same day, April 18, 2016, suggesting that he and Timofeev meet in London later in the month.[3130] In a series of email messages, Timofeev and Papadopoulos scheduled a Skype call for Friday, April 22, 2016.[3131]

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tanks on matters of international relations." The RIAC is founded by and receives funding from the Russian government. Kremlin.ru, "Dmitry Medvedev signed an order to create a non-profit partnership, the Russian Council for International Affairs," February 4, 2010 (Russian-language version dated February 3, 2010).

[3126] (U) Russiancouncil.ru, "Ivan Timofeev."

[3127] (U) Email, Mifsud to Papadopoulos and Timofeev, April 18, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 000863).

[3128] (U) Valdaiclub.com, "Valdai Club Discusses Main Trends and Scenarios of Global Energy Development," April 19, 2016. Mifsud later introduced Papadopoulos to Roh, in August 2016, as described *infra*.

[3129] (U) *Ibid.* The recent gathering of oil producing nations referred to a summit held in Doha, Qatar, which failed to produce an agreement on oil output and pricing among the leaders of the world's largest oil producers. Javier David, "Oil producers send crude reeling after output deal fails in Doha," *CNBC*, April 18, 2016.

[3130] (U) Email, Papadopoulos to Mifsud and Timofeev, April 18, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 000863).

[3131] (U) Emails, Timofeev and Papadopoulos, April 18–21, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 000863–866).

[redacted]

[redacted]

(U) On April 21, 2016, Papadopoulos sent an email message to Mifsud with the subject "Meeting tomorrow," in which he asked if the professor was "[f]ree to meet tomorrow for a follow up?"[3132]

(U) During an interview with the FBI, Papadopoulos recalled:

> *[H]aving a Skype call with Timofeev on April 22, 2016 which he believed was the first of two Skype calls he had with Timofeev in total. Papadopoulos could not remember any details about what was discussed during the call; however he surmised the two likely discussed relations between Russia, Israel, Cyprus, and China. The two may also have discussed setting up a potential meeting between Timofeev and Papadopoulos; however, Papadopoulos could not recall that with any certainty. Papadopoulos then reiterated he had been pushing hard for a meeting with the Russians after his initial conversation with Clovis on March 6, 2016.*[3133]

(U) Following the Skype call, Timofeev wrote, "George, thank you for an extensive talk! I propose to meet in London or in Moscow. What do you think?"[3134] Papadopoulos responded:

> *Regarding a meeting - how about we set one up here in London with the Ambassador as well to discuss a process moving forward? Can you come next week? It's my objective to set the groundwork for a potential trip and to understand the U.S.-Russia relationship before I submit to my team.*[3135]

(U) Timofeev responded to Papadopoulos on April 24, 2016, stating, "Next week is totally impossible, for I have to renew my visa. I shall also need to consult with Minister Ivanov."[3136] The next day, April 25, 2016, Timofeev wrote to Papadopoulos:

> *Dear George,*
>
> *I have just talked to Igor Ivanov—the President of RIAC and former Foreign Minister of Russia. His advise* [sic] *is to start preparation of the Moscow visit via*

[3132] **(U)** Email, Papadopoulos to Mifsud, April 21, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 000867).
[3133] **(U)** FBI, FD-302, Papadopoulos 9/19/2017. In an earlier email, Timofeev noted that "we" are online waiting to connect via Skype, suggesting another individual may have been on the call with Papadopoulos and Timofeev. Email, Timofeev to Papadopoulos April 22, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 000959).
[3134] **(U)** Email, Timofeev to Papadopoulos, April 22, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 000960).
[3135] **(U)** Email, Papadopoulos to Timofeev, April 22, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 000960).
[3136] **(U)** Email, Timofeev to Papadopoulos, April 24, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 000960).

[redacted]

[redacted]

the Russian Embassy in Washington, for the issue is of political kind. Would you be available for a quick talk today?

Keep in touch,

Ivan.[3137]

(U) According to FBI records, Papadopoulos searched LinkedIn for "alisher usmanov" on April 24, 2016.[3138] The Committee has no indication as to why Papadopoulos would conduct this search, but based on Papadopoulos's previous behavior, it would be logical to assume that Timofeev may have raised Usmanov in conversation. According to Forbes, Usmanov is an Russian business magnate, who was estimated to have a net worth of $12.6 billion in March 2020.[3139]

[redacted]

(U) Between April 25, 2016, and April 27, 2016, Papadopoulos and Timofeev exchanged emails to coordinate another Skype call to discuss Timofeev's email from April 25, 2016, regarding Igor Ivanov's advice to plan the Moscow visit via the Russian Embassy in Washington. The email exchange concluded with a message from Papadopoulos, noting, "I have a couple of minutes to talk now before Mr. Trump's speech, I am on [S]kype."[3143]

[3137] **(U)** Email, Timofeev to Papadopoulos, April 25, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 000961).
[3138] **(U)** FBI, FD-302, Papadopoulos 9/19/2017 [redacted]
[3139] **(U)** Forbes profile, "#106 Alisher Usmanov."
[3140] [redacted]
[3141] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[3142] [redacted]
[3143] **(U)** Email, Papadopoulos to Timofeev, April 27, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 000964).

[redacted]

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(U) Papadopoulos recalled speaking with Timofeev via Skype on April 27, 2016.[3144] Papadopoulos characterized the interaction as "strange," as he remembered Timofeev being overly formal during the call.[3145] Papadopoulos also described hearing static noises on the call, which Papadopoulos thought suggested that someone was recording the call.[3146]

vi. (U) Other Relevant Papadopoulos Meetings in April

(U) On April 19, 2016, Papadopoulos met an individual named Oleg Lebedev. In an email sent the same day, Papadopoulos wrote, "Was very nice meeting you tonight. I am sending you my recent piece and linkedin profile. See you tomorrow."[3147] In response, Lebedev wrote back to Papadopoulos, "Great meeting you, and look forward to seeing you tomorrow. Lets [sic] make Byzantium great again. Good to connect on LinkedIn, could not find you on Facebook."[3148] According to FBI interviews, Papadopoulos met Lebedev at the Byzantium Café in London, through Lebedev's wife, Maria Alexopoulou.[3149] Papadopoulos recalled that Lebedev was a big Trump supporter in Russia and had told Papadopoulos that Russia is a friend of Trump.[3150] Lebedev claimed to have contacts in the Russian government.[3151] Papadopoulos thought Lebedev was in the oil business in Moscow but had a house in London with his wife.[3152]

vii. (U) Papadopoulos Meets with Mifsud in London, Discusses "Dirt" on Clinton

(U) Papadopoulos met with Mifsud on the morning of April 26, 2016, at the Andaz Hotel in London, for breakfast. During the breakfast, Mifsud, who had just returned from a trip to Moscow where he had met with high-level Russian government officials, stated that the Russians had dirt—in the form of emails—on Hillary Clinton.[3153] Papadopoulos described Mifsud as

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[3144] (U) FBI, FD-302, Papadopoulos 9/19/2017.
[3145] (U) *Ibid.*
[3146] (U) *Ibid.*
[3147] (U) *Ibid.*
[3148] (U) *Ibid.*
[3149] (U) FBI, FD-302, Papadopoulos 8/11/2017.
[3150] (U) FBI, FD-302, Papadopoulos 9/19/2017.
[3151] (U) *Ibid.*
[3152] (U) *Ibid.*
[3153] (U) Statement of the Offense ¶14, *United States v. George Papadopoulos*, Case No. 1:17-cr-00182-RDM (D.D.C. October 5, 2017). By April 26, 2016, the GRU had already penetrated and collected information from the DNC and DCCC networks, as well as John Podesta's email account. For a discussion of the GRU's hack-and-leak campaign, *see infra* Vol. 5, Sec. III.B.

[redacted]

[redacted]

"giddy . . . like he had something he wanted to get off his chest" prior to his conveying the information about the Clinton emails.[3154]

(U) When asked by the FBI to explain what Mifsud told him about the Russians having dirt on Clinton, Papadopoulos told the FBI the following:

> *Mifsud had just returned from a trip to Moscow where he met with the Duma [Russian Parliament], attended a forum, and had meetings related to academics. When referring to the dirt, Mifsud told Papadopoulos "they have her emails" and specifically mentioned they had "thousands" of them. Papadopoulos could not recall if Mifsud mentioned the names of the individuals he met with in Russia. . . .*
>
> *When asked what Papadopoulos thought when he heard the information from Mifsud, Papadopoulos recalled it being "a strange thing to hear." Papadopoulos inquired of Mifsud how he could know such information, to which Mifsud stated, "they told me." When Papadopoulos referred to Mifsud's statement of "they told me," Papadopoulos extended both of his hands and pointed at himself with both index fingers.*[3155]

[redacted] Following the breakfast meeting, around noon on April 26, 2016, Mifsud emailed Papadopoulos an article titled, "US-Russian relations; the middle cannot hold."[3156] The article, published by the International Institute for Strategic Studies on April 14, 2016, criticized President Obama's approach to geopolitical relations between the United States and Russia following the invasion of Crimea, noting the Obama's administration approach was the "middle way."[3157] In response to Mifsud's email, approximately four hours later, Papadopoulos replied, "Thank you for this, Joseph. Very informative."[3158]

[redacted]

[3154] **(U)** House Judiciary Committee Transcript of the Interview with George Papadopoulos, p. 21.
[3155] **(U)** FBI, FD-302, Papadopoulos 9/19/2017.
[3156] **(U)** Email, Mifsud to Papadopoulos, April 26, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 000933–935).
[3157] **(U)** Email, Mifsud to Papadopoulos, April 26, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 000933–935).
[3158] **(U)** FBI, FD-302, Papadopoulos 9/19/2017 [redacted] Papadopoulos did not produce this email to the Committee.
[3159] **(U)** FBI, FD-302, Papadopoulos 8/11/2017 ("Papadopoulos stated to the best of his recollection he remembers Clovis being upset after Papadopoulos said, 'Sam, I think they have her emails.' Papadopoulos then reiterated he was not certain if that event actually happened or if he was wrongfully remembering an event which did not occur.").

[redacted]

viii. (U) Papadopoulos Meets Australian Diplomats

(U) On April 19, 2016, Christian Cantor, a Political Counsellor at the Embassy of Israel to the United Kingdom in London, introduced Papadopoulos to Erika Thompson, a Political Counsellor at the Australian High Commission in London.[3160] The introduction occurred via email, in which Cantor stated "George is a current Tr[u]mp advisor … I'm sure you'll find very interesting things to talk about."[3161] Papadopoulos testified to the House Judiciary Committee that he had been introduced to Cantor via one of his friends who was an economic counselor at the Embassy of Israel to the United States, and that he understood Thompson to be Cantor's girlfriend.[3162]

(U) On April 20, 2016, Thompson replied to Cantor's email, suggesting that she and Papadopoulos meet following President Obama's visit to the United Kingdom.[3163] Papadopoulos replied to Thompson the next day, suggesting that the two meet on Tuesday, April 26, 2016.[3164] The Committee assesses that Papadopoulos and Thompson met on April 26, 2016, as previously coordinated, sometime following Papadopoulos's breakfast engagement with Mifsud.

(U) On May 9, 2016, Thompson wrote Papadopoulos, thanking him for "meeting on Friday" and checking to see if Papadopoulos would be "still be up for a meeting with [her] boss, Alexander Downer."[3165] She suggested grabbing "a drink with him tomorrow? Maybe around 6?"[3166] Thompson proposed the Kensington Wine Rooms, located in the Kensington Borough in London, for the engagement, as her boss, Sir Alexander Downer, Australia's High Commissioner to the United Kingdom, lived nearby.[3167] Papadopoulos agreed.[3168]

- (U) Documents publicly released by the Government of Australia show a calendar appointment on Downer's calendar for May 10th titled, "6.00 pm - Meeting with George Papadopolous [sic], Adivsor [sic], Donald J Trump for President," which included a link to Papadopoulos's LinkedIn profile as well as a heavily redacted

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[3160] (U) Email, Cantor to Papadopoulos and Thompson, April 19, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 000428).
[3161] (U) *Ibid.* (Ellipses in original). Cantor also sent a similar introductory email to an individual at the Embassy of Poland to the United Kingdom on April 20, 2016. Email, Cantor to Papadopoulos, et al., April 20, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 000431).
[3162] (U) House Judiciary Committee Transcript of the Interview with George Papadopoulos, pp. 31–32.
[3163] (U) Email, Thompson to Papadopoulos and Cantor, April 20, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 000427).
[3164] (U) Email, Papadopoulos to Cantor and Thompson, April 21, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 000428).
[3165] (U) Email, Thompson to Papadopoulos, May 9, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 000435).
[3166] (U) *Ibid.*
[3167] (U) *Ibid.*
[3168] (U) Email, Papadopoulos to Thompson, May 9, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 000436).

[redacted]

diplomatic cable prepared by Downer on May 11, 2016, to Canberra titled, "UK: US: Donald Trump - Views from Trump's Adviser."[3169]

(U) Although the email between Thompson and Papadopoulos indicates they met on Friday, May 6, 2016, the Committee does not have any indications as to where they met or what was discussed.

[redacted] Just after midnight on the morning of May 10, 2016, Papadopoulos searched for the following terms on the internet: "australian high comm. london," "current australian government," prime minister of australia," "malcolm turnbull conservative," "kensington wine rooms," "erika thompson," and "erika thompson australia."[3170] Papadopoulos also visited the LinkedIn site for an individual named Erika Thompson.[3171]

[redacted] In the late-afternoon on May 10, 2016, and prior to the meeting with Downer, Papadopoulos again searched the internet for "Kensington Wine Rooms," "australian high comm. london," and "alexander downer."[3172] Later that evening, at approximately eleven o'clock, Papadopoulos performed an internet search for "The Waterway."[3173]

(U) On May 10, 2016, Thompson and Downer met with Papadopoulos. After the engagement, Papadopoulos sent Thompson an email stating, "[g]reat time tonight. Thanks for the introduction. See you soon."[3174]

(U) There are some inconsistencies in the stories surrounding the evening of May 10, 2016.[3175] Papadopoulos told the FBI that he recalled the encounter occurring at the Waterway Pub rather than the Kensington Wine Rooms.[3176] One possibility is that the FBI and Papadopoulos may have conflated the reference to the May 10, 2016, meeting at the Kensington Wine Rooms with the April 26 or May 6 meetings the Committee surmises occurred between Papadopoulos and Thompson. An alternative hypothesis is that Papadopoulos and Thompson departed the Kensington Wine Rooms on May 10, 2016, and met up later at the Waterway Pub, which would be consistent with Papadopoulos's internet search for the Waterway at 11:07 p.m.

[3169] (U) Mark Di Stefano, "Australia Says It's 'Ready To Confirm' A Key Meeting That Led to the Investigation Into Trump's Russia Links," *BuzzFeed News*, April 18, 2019.
[3170] (U) FBI, FD-302, Papadopoulos 9/19/2017 [redacted]
[3171] (U) *Ibid.*
[3172] (U) *Ibid.*
[3173] (U) *Ibid.*
[3174] (U) Email, Thompson to Papadopoulos, May 10, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 000425).
[3175] (U) The serial ambiguities and inconsistencies attached to Papadopoulos's activities on May 10, 2016, might have been mitigated or even explained away, had the Committee benefitted from the testimony of either Downer or Papadopoulos—both of whom declined the Committee's invitation to be interviewed.
[3176] (U) FBI, FD-302, Papadopoulos 9/19/2017.

[redacted]

[redacted]

Papadopoulos told the FBI that he recalled having several drinks with the Australians,specifically "three drinks, made with gin."[3177] Papadopoulos also recalled being intoxicated after those three drinks.[3178] When specifically asked, Papadopoulos stated he did not recall telling the Australians about the Clinton-related emails.[3179]

- **(U)** The Kensington Wine Rooms describes itself as having "a reputation as one of London's best wine bars" and offers numerous wine tastings, either through self-serve dispensers or by the glass.[3180] The drinks menu for the Waterway notably includes a section labeled "Gin & Things."[3181]

- **(U)** Papadopoulos testified to Congress that he and Downer "had one drink" and was "certainly not drunk" during the May 10, 2016, meeting, which seems to contradict the three gin drinks described above.[3182]

- **(U)** Downer stated during a televised interview that he, along with another individual, met Papadopoulos at the "Kensington Wine Bar" at 6:00 P.M., for about an hour.[3183]

[redacted]

[3177] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[3178] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[3179] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[3180] **(U)** Winerooms.london, "Kensington Wine Rooms."
[3181] **(U)** Thewaterway.co.uk, "The Waterway Drinks Menu."
[3182] **(U)** House Judiciary Committee Transcript of the Interview with George Papadopoulos, pp. 41–42.
[3183] **(U)** *Sky News Australia*, Interview with Alexander Downer, May 9, 2019, available at youtube.com/watch?v=ygckFL8m2Ws (beginning at 4:50).
[3184] **(U)** FBI, FD-1057, "Dissemination of Investigation Opening," July 31, 2016.
[3185] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[3186] **(U)** *Ibid.*

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ix. (U) Papadopoulos Edits Trump's Mayflower Speech

(U) While Papadopoulos was engaged with Timofeev and Mifsud in London, he also consulted on preparations for an upcoming Trump foreign policy speech. On April 23, 2016, Stephen Miller, senior policy advisor for the Trump Campaign, sent an email only to Papadopoulos with the subject "confidential—close hold," which attached the "outline of remarks for wed."[3190] Six minutes later, Papadopoulos wrote back to Miller, "Looks solid. If needed, I have some input/bullet points I can add this weekend."[3191] Miller replied one minute later stating, "Thanks. Whatever works for you."[3192]

[3187] (U) *Ibid.* The *SCO Report* states that Papadopoulos suggested that the Russian government may assist the Trump Campaign to a representative of a foreign government on May 6, 2016. The Committee cannot determine why the SCO believed this occurred on May 6, 2016. A DOJ Office of the Inspector General report also indicates that the interaction between Papadopoulos and a friendly foreign government occurred in May 2016. DOJ, Office of the Inspector General, "*Review of Four FISA Applications and Other Aspects of the FBI's Crossfire Hurricane Investigation*," December 2019 (TS/SCI version) (hereinafter *DOJ OIG FISA Report*, December 2019), p. 52.

[3188] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with [redacted], July 30, 2018, p. 41.

[3189] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 41–42.

[3190] (U) Email, S. Miller to Papadopoulos, April 23, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 000503).

[3191] (U) Email, Papadopoulos to S. Miller, April 23, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 000503).

[3192] (U) Email, S. Miller to Papadopoulos, April 23, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 000503).

[redacted]

[redacted]

(U) After a series of back and forths, Papadopoulos sent Miller his edited version of the outline on April 25, 2016, stating, "Please find my edits attached. Look forward to your thoughts. I'll stay up. Should I send to anyone else on the team? I.e. Sam or Paul."[3193] Miller and Papadopoulos then exchanged a series of emails in short succession regarding Papadopoulos's availability for surrogacy opportunities, during which Papadopoulos stated:

> *I was recently hosted by the Israeli government after I delivered a talk at an energy and security conference there. They are ready to host Mr. Trump when the time is right for him (and have also invited him to a big conference the largest newspaper there is hosting in July that Netanyahu will also be speaking at). The Russian government has an open invitation by Putin for Mr. Trump to meet him when he is ready as well. The advantage of being in London is that these governments tend to speak a bit more openly in "neutral" cities.*[3194]

(U) Miller told the Committee that he did not recall this email exchange until the SCO showed it to him. He further stated that "it's possible that I didn't even reply to it—or that I gave sort of a flip reply. But I certainly didn't engage on it substantively."[3195]

(U) On the same day, April 25, 2016, Papadopoulos also sent Clovis his edits for the foreign policy speech.[3196] Clovis testified to the Committee that he (Clovis) did not have any role with the foreign policy speech delivered at the Mayflower Hotel, nor did he have any role in consolidating or relaying comments received on the speech.[3197]

(U) A comparison of Papadopoulos's edits to the outline that Miller sent to Lewandowski on April 25, 2016, show that Papadopoulos's suggested edits to the speech outline were largely rejected.[3198]

(U) On April 27, 2016, after Trump delivered the foreign policy speech at the Mayflower Hotel,[3199] Papadopoulos sent the following message via email to Miller, "Great speech today from Mr. Trump. If you have a chance for a [S]kype session tomorrow or Friday, let me know.

[3193] (U) Emails, S. Miller and Papadopoulos, April 23 and 25, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 000503–508).
[3194] (U) Email, Papadopoulos to S. Miller, April 25, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 000506).
[3195] (U) Miller Tr., pp. 56–57.
[3196] (U) Email, Papadopoulos to Clovis, April 25, 2016 (DJTFP00011104–11109) (attaching one document).
[3197] (U) Clovis Tr., pp. 74–75. Lewandowski testified to the Committee that "if somebody wanted to have input on a foreign or domestic policy speech, that person would be routed directly to Stephen Miller." Lewandowski Tr., p. 47.
[3198] (U) Email, S. Miller to Lewandowski, April 25, 2016 (DJTFP00011110–11114) (attaching two documents).
[3199] (U) For additional information regarding candidate Trump's foreign policy speech at the Mayflower Hotel, *see infra* Vol. 5, Sec. III.G.

[redacted]

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Have some interesting messages coming in from Moscow about a trip when the time is right."[3200] Papadopoulos told the FBI that the "interesting messages" did not pertain to what Mifsud had told him one day prior.[3201] The subsequent seven messages exchanged relating to this email conversation were redacted by Papadopoulos when produced to the Committee.[3202]

(U) Also on April 27, 2016, Papadopoulos wrote Lewandowski an email message with the subject "Messages from Russia" in which he wrote:

> *Great speech today by Mr. Trump. Glad I could assist. The reason for my message is because I wanted to ask if you are free for a call tomorrow or Friday to discuss Russia's interest in hosting Mr. Trump. Have been receiving a lot of calls over the last month about Putin wanting to host him and the team when the time is right.*[3203]

(U) Lewandowski and Papadopoulos exchanged three messages in an attempt to schedule a call, though the Committee does not believe the two discussed the matter at that time. Papadopoulos resurrected this particular email thread again on June 1, 2016, which is described below.[3204]

x. (U) Papadopoulos Uses the Speech to Encourage a Meeting with Russian Leaders

(U) Following the April 27, 2016, foreign policy speech, Papadopoulos re-initiated contact with Mifsud and Polonskaya in an apparent effort to coordinate a meeting between the Trump Campaign and officials with the Russian Federation. The day after the speech, Papadopoulos asked them separately if they had heard Trump's Mayflower speech.[3205] Polonskaya replied on April 29, 2016, that she had seen Trump's speech and told Papadopoulos, "I agree with many things. . . . And I like the fact that his (your) position towards Russia is much softer than many of the Republicans and Democrats."[3206] Papadopoulos responded later on April 29, "I am now in the process of seeing if we will come to Russia. Do you recommend I get in touch with a minister or embassy person in Washington or London to begin organizing the

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[3200] (U) Email, Papadopoulos to S. Miller, April 27, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 000507).
[3201] (U) FBI, FD-302, Papadopoulos 9/19/2017.
[3202] (U) *See* B&P GP File 2018 000507–508.
[3203] (U) Email, Papadopoulos to Lewandowski, April 27, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 001036).
[3204] (U) Emails, Papadopoulos and Lewandowski, April 27–28, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 001036–1037).
[3205] (U) Email, Papadopoulos to Polonskaya, April 28, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 000985); Email, Papadopoulos to Mifsud, April 27, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 000877).
[3206] (U) Email, Polonskaya to Papadopoulos, April 29, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 000985).

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trip?"[3207] Polonskaya replied later that day, stating, "I think it would be better to discuss this question with Josef [Mifsud]."[3208]

(U) Possibly in response to Polonskaya's suggestion, Papadopoulos wrote to Mifsud on April 29, 2016: "I haven't heard from the Russian embassy or anyone about sending an invitation. I need an answer by next weds for my campaign."[3209] Mifsud replied two minutes later, asking if he should call Papadopoulos.[3210] The Committee cannot confirm whether Papadopoulos and Mifsud spoke and, if they did, exactly what was discussed. However, on April 29, 2016, three hours after Polonskaya suggested that Papadopoulos speak with Mifsud, Papadopoulos wrote to her indicating that he had called Mifsud.[3211]

(U) Papadopoulos also got back in touch with Timofeev. Between April 27, 2016 and April 30, 2016, Papadopoulos and Timofeev exchanged five email messages to "Follow up" and discuss specifics. Timofeev, minutes after Papadopoulos's likely call with Mifsud, wrote to Papadopoulos: "Please, do send me a draft letter to the Ambassador. I will look through it and propose my followup [sic]."[3212] Papadopoulos replied six minutes later, stating:

> *The draft letter I send cannot be better than Mr. Trump's precise speech on his intentions to repair U.S.-Russia ties. I assume the speech was widely covered. We have already been invited by four countries to visit in the summer and our schedule is moving at a very fast pace. For this reason, I have until Weds to give my team an update on the potential trip to meet Mr. Putin. I am supposed to be in Greece on Monday to meet with officials there, but can come back to London next week to arrange a meeting with people here in a "neutral" city. The message should be, we are keen to meet and discuss U.S.-Russia ties and where they can be improved.*[3213]

(U) Possibly as a follow-up to their conversation on April 29, Mifsud wrote Papadopoulos an e-mail on April 30, 2016, with the subject line "RUSSIAN REPLY" in which he stated:

> *I have discussed this opportunity with Min. Ivanov. He proposed to start with the Russian Ambassador in Moscow. George (you will need to draft a letter (Ivan is*

[3207] (U) Email, Papadopoulos to Polonskaya, April 29, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 000989).
[3208] (U) Email, Polonskaya to Papadopoulos, April 29, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 000989).
[3209] (U) Email, Papadopoulos to Mifsud, April 29, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 000878).
[3210] (U) Email, Mifsud to Papadopoulos, April 29, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 000878).
[3211] (U) Email, Papadopoulos to Polonskaya, April 29, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 00991).
[3212] (U) Emails, Papadopoulos and Timofeev, April 27–30, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 00965–966).
[3213] (U) Email, Papadopoulos to Timofeev, April 29, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 00965–966).

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ready to help you...please contact him urgently) and he will provide his follow up to you. As for the contacts, Ivan (and others – through Olga) will make an enquiry in Moscow how to proceed.[3214]

(U) The "RUSSIAN REPLY" email from Mifsud started a discussion as to whether the Trump Campaign needed to ask for an invitation to Moscow. Papadopoulos noted for Mifsud that "Mr. Trump's speech should have been the signal to meet" and that "My campaign won't be interested in asking to visit Moscow. Guests are either invited or they are not."[3215] Mifsud agreed and told Papadopoulos that he had "just spoken to them" and that "[t]hey will let you know who to meet to organise it with an invite."[3216] Papadopoulos responded, "Excellent, thank you for your critical help on this, [J]oseph. It's history making if it happens."[3217]

(U) Timofeev wrote to Papadopoulos and Mifsud four days later on May 4, 2016, stating he had spoken with his colleagues at the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) and that they are "open for cooperation."[3218]

(U) Papadopoulos forwarded Timofeev's May 4, 2016, email to Lewandowski on the same day, with the subject "Fwd: (Russian outreach)" and asked, "What do you think? Is this something we want to move forward with?"[3219] Lewandowski forwarded the message from Papadopoulos to Clovis five minutes later.[3220] Clovis responded back to Lewandowski less than one hour later: "I think there are some legal issues we will have to mitigate, meeting with foreign officials as a private citizen. Let me check and I will get back to you today."[3221] Papadopoulos forwarded the same May 4, 2016, email from Timofeev to Clovis on May 5, 2016, with the text, "Russia updates."[3222]

(U) The Committee did not obtain any communications in which Clovis or other Campaign leadership telling Papadopoulos to cease his interactions with Timofeev or Mifsud regarding Russia.

(U) On May 7, 2016, Papadopoulos replied to Timofeev's May 4 email, stating that the delay in responding was due to "shuffling that has occurred since Mr. Trump clinched the

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[3214] (U) Email, Mifsud to Papadopoulos, April 30, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 00915) (ellipses in original).
[3215] (U) Email, Papadopoulos to Mifsud, April 30, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 00916).
[3216] (U) Email, Mifsud to Papadopoulos, April 30, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 00916).
[3217] (U) Email, Papadopoulos to Mifsud, April 30, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 00917).
[3218] (U) Email, Timofeev to Papadopoulos, May 4, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 00997).
[3219] (U) Email, Papadopoulos to Lewandowski, May 4, 2016 (DJTFP00011398).
[3220] (U) Email, Lewandowski to Clovis, May 4, 2016 (DJTFP00011399–11400).
[3221] (U) Email, Clovis to Lewandowski, May 4, 2016 (DJTFP00011401)
[3222] (U) Email, Papadopoulos to Clovis, May 5, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 000997).

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nomination. I will get back to you and Joseph soon on this. Glad the MFA is interested."[3223] In response to Papadopoulos's May 7, 2016, email, Mifsud replied five minutes later, asking Papadopoulos to call him.[3224] Papadopoulos and Mifsud exchanged several emails to coordinate a phone call via Skype.[3225] Although the Committee cannot confirm whether Papadopoulos and Mifsud spoke, the Committee believes they did based on the emails exchanged.[3226]

(U) On May 13, 2016, Mifsud wrote a long proposal to Papadopoulos for the way ahead, including his first offer of serving as a surrogate for the Campaign and a liaison of sorts to Europe:

> *Further to our recent conversations, I am pleased to give you an update of what we discussed.*
>
> 1. *We will continue to liaise through you with the Russian counterparts in terms of what is needed for a high level meeting of Mr. Trump with the Russian Federation.*
>
> 2. *I will set up interviews for you with IL Giornale and Corriere della Sera in Italy focusing on Mr. Trump's foreign policy perspectives.*
>
> 3. *If provided with key speaking/highlighted points I will use them in the next European Council on Foreign Relations meeting to be held in June in The Hague.*
>
> 4. *I will liaise with the European Parliament about the possibility of an invitation to Brussels for Mr. Trump.*
>
> 5. *Once updated, I can use specific points during the campaign to be turned into articles in the European media – I can also be a central point if you wish to sustain key agreed foreign policy and diplomatic points for the campaign in Europe and the Middle East (I am often asked to chair important debates e.g. the Doha Forum and other fora in Morocco/Bahrain etc.)*
>
> 6. *I am extremely keen to support Mr. Trump's campaign in foreign policy issues with Europe, the Middle East and North Africa – and wish to do so from*

[3223] (U) Email, Papadopoulos to Timofeev and Mifsud, May 7, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 000997).
[3224] (U) Email, Mifsud to Papadopoulos, May 7, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 000997–998).
[3225] (U) Emails, Mifsud and Papadopoulos, May 7, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 000998).
[3226] (U) Emails, Papadopoulos and Mifsud, May 7–13, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 000891–893, 997–1004).

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Europe and also with my links inside the USA (e.g. the Washington Diplomatic community and publications).

7. *If needed, I can also prepare and sign op-eds sustaining Mr. Trump's campaign.*

8. *Once the campaign gets started – I would be keen to be on any shows as a 'neutral' opinion maker and expert in support of Mr. Trump vis-à-vis global issues.*

9. *I am also extremely interested in following Mr. Trump throughout some of his campaign trail and reporting back to European media as an 'independent' opinion maker.*

10. *I am open to any suggested action plans which the team might wish to make now and the future and to contribute with my knowledge to the campaign – from the inside or the outside.*

I will be getting back to you by telephone or for a meeting next week when I am in London.[3227]

(U) The Committee has no indication that Papadopoulos pursued Mifsud's proposal to act as a Campaign surrogate or liaison.

(U) Separately, Papadopoulos wrote an email message to Lewandowski on May 14, 2016, providing updates on European security and energy topics. In his email, Papadopoulos also stated that "[t]he Greek and Cypru governments, the EU Parliament and Russian governments have also relayed to me that they are interested in hosting Mr. Trump."[3228] The next day, on May 15, 2016, Lewandowski forwarded the message to Clovis.[3229] Later that day, Clovis wrote an email message with the subject, "Update, Part II" to Lewandowski, copying Glassner and Hicks, in which he included as the third bullet of the message: "-Still working on the ins and outs of going to Russia as a candidate."[3230] When asked whether the bullet point within Clovis's update related to Papadopoulos's effort, Clovis stated:

No, no. It was a discussion that we had had in the campaign about a foreign trip. . . . The trip—Russia was going to be an add-on because we were going to go to

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[3227] **(U)** Email, Mifsud to Papadopoulos, May 13, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 000891).
[3228] **(U)** Email, Papadopoulos to Lewandowski, May 14, 2016 (DJTFP00011535).
[3229] **(U)** Email, Lewandowski to Clovis, May 15, 2016 (DJTFP00011536).
[3230] **(U)** Email, Clovis to Lewandowski, et al., May 15, 2016 (DJTFP00011537–11538).

[redacted]

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> *the U.K., Germany. We'd have done a European swing and maybe an Israel swing as a foreign trip, and Russia would have been only after we had considered whether it was legal and all the other aspects of it.*[3231]

When Lewandowski was asked about the same point, he told the Committee:

> *To the best of my recollection we knew from day one we weren't doing any overseas travel. . . . there was never a discussion that I'm aware of, that I was privy to, inside the campaign of ever going to Russia in any way, shape, or form.*[3232]

(U) The Committee notes the discrepancy between the contemporaneous email communication written by Clovis and the later testimony of Clovis and Lewandowski. The Committee gives greater credibility to the written records, which suggest that the Campaign was at least open to the idea of a foreign trip.

xi. (U) Papadopoulos Conducts High-Level Meetings in Greece

(U) Papadopoulos used a trip to Greece to burnish his credentials on the campaign, but he also took the opportunity to repeat Mifsud's information about Clinton's emails. Papadopoulos informed the Campaign that he was travelling to Greece. On May 18, 2016, Papadopoulos sent an email message to Lewandowski relaying that he had been "invited to meet with the Greek foreign minister later this week in Athens (he is an old acquaintance of mine)" and asked Lewandowski if there was "[a]ny message you want me to send Greece from the campaign? (they are hoping Mr. Trump wins and are planning to extend an invite to Mr. Trump when I see the foreign minister)."[3233] The Committee has no record of a Lewandowski response.

(U) The next day, May 19, 2016, Papadopoulos sent a similar message to Clovis, once again asking, "is there any message from the campaign you would like for me to send Greece? I was told they are going to extend an invitation to Mr. Trump when I see the foreign minister."[3234] Clovis responded, "No, just keep your counsel and report back."[3235]

(U) Papadopoulos then wrote Paul Manafort, then the Trump Campaign's convention coordinator, on May 21, 2016, stating that he was in Athens, Greece to meet with the Greek Foreign Minister and the Defense Minister, and that the Greek government would be sending an

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[3231] **(U)** Clovis Tr., pp. 76.
[3232] **(U)** Lewandowski Tr., p. 52.
[3233] **(U)** Email, Papadopoulos to Lewandowski, May 18, 2016 (DJTFP00021405).
[3234] **(U)** Email, Papadopoulos to Clovis, May 19, 2016 (DJTFP00021409).
[3235] **(U)** Email, Clovis to Papadopoulos, May 19, 2016 (DJTFP00021409).

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"official invitation for Mr. Trump to visit Greece sometime should his schedule allow."[3236] Papadopoulos also stated that "[r]egarding the below message, Russia has been eager to meet Mr. Trump for quite sometime and have [sic] been reaching out to me to discuss. I thought it would be prudent to send to you. . . . I am free to discuss if you are free."[3237] The message included the May 4, 2016, email from Timofeev to Papadopoulos.[3238]

(U) Manafort sought to quell Papadopoulos's efforts. He forwarded the May 21, 2016, message to Rick Gates the same day and added, "Lets [sic] discuss. We need someone to communicate that DT is not doing these trips. It should be someone low level in the campaign so as not to send any signal."[3239] Gates responded to Manafort on May 21, 2016, and suggested having the Campaign's correspondence coordinator handle the communication, noting "This is the person responding to all mail of non-importance. It would be a general letter."[3240] The Committee is not aware of any further actions by Manafort or Gates on this issue. For more on Paul Manafort, *see infra* Vol. 5, Sec. III.A.

(U) Three days later, on May 24, 2016, Papadopoulos wrote Timofeev and asked if the Trump Campaign had communicated with him.[3241] When Timofeev stated that he had not received any communication, Papadopoulos began to coordinate a phone call with him.[3242] Between May 29, 2016, and June 2, 2016, six email messages were exchanged between the two individuals, though the Committee cannot confirm if the two spoke.[3243]

(U) Papadopoulos told the FBI that during his May 2016 trip to Athens, he told Greek Foreign Minister Nikos Kotsias (also spelled Kotzias) what Mifsud had told him on April 26, 2016, regarding the Russians having emails related to Secretary Clinton.[3244] Papadopoulos recalled Kotsias's reaction:

> *Kotsias told him in Greek, "don't tell this to anyone," as if Kotsias had already known that information. Papadopoulos assessed Kotsias' response was too swift and Kotsias was not shocked when Papadopoulos told him that information. Papadopoulos never discussed that topic with the Greeks again. . . . When asked*

[3236] (U) Email, Papadopoulos to Manafort, May 21, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 001013). Papadopoulos appeared to be resending a nearly identical email he had attempted to send minutes earlier. *See* Email, Papadopoulos to Manafort, May 21, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 000999).
[3237] (U) *Ibid.*
[3238] (U) *Ibid.*
[3239] (U) Email, Manafort to Gates, May 21, 2016 (DJTFP00011621–DJTFP00011622).
[3240] (U) Email, Gates to Manafort, May 21, 2016 (DJTFP00011621–DJTFP00011622).
[3241] (U) Email, Papadopoulos to Timofeev, May 24, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 000999).
[3242] (U) Emails, Papadopoulos and Timofeev, May 26–29, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 000999–1000).
[3243] (U) Emails, Papadopoulos and Timofeev, May 29–June 2, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 001000–1001).
[3244] (U) FBI, FD-302, Papadopoulos 9/19/2017.

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why Papadopoulos told Kotsias about the Russians having Clinton's emails, Papadopoulos [said he] had a nervous reaction and blurted the information out to Kotsias.[3245]

(U) As noted previously, the Committee has no reliable indication that Papadopoulos shared this same information with anyone on the Campaign. Furthermore, the Committee has no additional information as to why Papadopoulos would share the information with the Greek Foreign Minister.

(U) Papadopoulos was in Greece from at least May 17, 2016, through May 27, 2016, according to press reporting analyzing Papadopoulos's social media accounts.[3246] During his visit, Papadopoulos met with Kotsias, and with the Greek Minister of Defense, Panagiotis "Panos" Kammenos.[3247] Vladimir Putin traveled to Greece on May 27, 2016; Kammenos greeted Putin upon his arrival in Athens, on what appears to be the same day Kammenos met with Papadopoulos.[3248]

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[3245] **(U)** *Ibid.*

[3246] **(U)** Mitch Prothero and Vera Bergengruen, "Key Trump Officials Met with a Putin Ally During Inauguration Weekend," *BuzzFeed News,* March 26, 2018.

[3247] **(U)** *Ibid.*

[3248] **(U)** *Ibid.*; Griff Witte, "For Trump adviser at center of Russia probe, a rapid rise and dramatic fall in his ancestral land," *The Washington Post,* December 10, 2017.

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(U) On May 29, 2016, Papadopoulos wrote to Clovis that Kammenos was "willing to make a private trip to NY to meet Mr. Trump (or in Athens)" and that Kotsias "wants to invite Mr. Trump to Athens for an official trip."[3253] On May 31, 2016, Papadopoulos sent an email to Hicks with the subject, "Messages from Athens for Mr. Trump," in which he wrote:

> *Wanted to send you some messages I received from ministers/president of Greece. I just met with the Greek president. They are all very excited for Mr. Trump, hope he wins and if he passes through Athens anytime, all doors here are open for him.*[3254]

(U) Months later, on the evening prior to the inauguration, Kammenos was photographed with Papadopoulos at the St. Regis Hotel in Washington, DC.[3255] Separately, Kammenos was also photographed with Reince Preibus at the St. Regis Hotel on January 19, 2017 and with both Bannon and Preibus at the Hay Adams Hotel on January 21, 2017.[3256]

(U) On June 7, 2016, Papadopoulos wrote to Hope Hicks, offering to brief Trump on his recent travel and interactions with Israeli, Egyptian, Greek, and Cypriot officials.[3257] Hicks suggested Papadopoulos engage with Miller, who suggested that he and Papadopoulos speak by telephone the following weekend, June 10–12, 2016.[3258] On June 10, 2016, Papadopoulos wrote to Miller: "Tried calling, couldn't get through, I'll be free for the next hour or I'll try tomorrow same time."[3259] The Committee does not know whether Miller and Papadopoulos ultimately spoke by telephone.[3260]

xii. (U) Papadopoulos Plans a Campaign Staff Visit to Moscow

(U) In June, Papadopoulos reinitiated his push for Campaign interactions with Moscow, reaching out to senior Campaign officials and to Mifsud and his contacts. Papadopoulos started this renewed effort by resuming the April 27, 2016, email conversation between himself and Lewandowski, in which Papadopoulos suggested the Campaign follow the Mayflower speech

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[3253] (U) Email, Papadopoulos to Clovis, May 29, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 000741). In the same email, Papadopoulos wrote that he was "invited to Cairo to meet with the Foreign Minister and Defense Minister (after a call was put in by the Greek defense minister)."
[3254] (U) Email, Papadopoulos to Hicks, May 31, 2016 (DJTFP00022220).
[3255] (U) Mitch Prothero and Vera Bergengruen, "Key Trump Officials Met with a Putin Ally During Inauguration Weekend," *BuzzFeed News*, March 26, 2018.
[3256] (U) *Ibid.*
[3257] (U) Email, Papadopoulos to Hicks, June 7, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 000509).
[3258] (U) Emails, Hicks, Papadopoulos, and S. Miller, June 7, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 000509–510).
[3259] (U) Email, Papadopoulos to S. Miller, June 10, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 000510).
[3260] (U) *See* B&P GP File 2018 000510–511. The Committee notes that three messages component to the email conversation were redacted when produced to the Committee.

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with a meeting between Trump and Putin. On June 1, 2016, Papadopoulos wrote to Lewandowski: "Do you want to have a call about this topic with Russia or is it off the table for the time being? Wasn't sure if we were following up with it."[3261] Responding that day, Lewandowski wrote: "Can you connect with Sam Clovis? He is running point."[3262] Papadopoulos subsequently wrote Clovis an email on June 1, with the subject line "Messages from Russia" in which he stated: "I have the Russian MFA asking me if Mr. Trump is interested in visiting Russia at some point. Wanted to pass this info along to you for you to decide what's best to do with it and what message I should send (or to ignore)."[3263]

(U) When Clovis was specifically asked about Papadopoulos's June 1, 2016, email during an interview with the Committee and Papadopoulos's outreach related to outreach to Russia in this time period, Clovis could not recall Papadopoulos reaching out to him about the Russia topic.[3264] He further suggested Lewandowski told Papadopoulos that he (Clovis) was "running point" because: "Corey [Lewandowski] didn't want to deal with anybody. So anybody that he didn't want to deal with, I dealt with."[3265]

(U) When asked about Papadopoulos's efforts to arrange a meeting between Trump and Putin, Clovis told the Committee that he told Papadopoulos "it was a bad idea . . . I think it's a really bad idea, George."[3266] The Committee did not identify any written communications in which Clovis expressed this view to Papadopoulos.

(U) Shortly thereafter, Papadopoulos turned back to his conversations with the Russians, reiterating his own interest in a visit in a series of emails. He wrote Timofeev on June 11, 2016: "Dear Ivan, I am free to come visit Russia if there is interest."[3267] Timofeev replied back to Papadopoulos the following day, stating: "Just landed from Beijing, Visit to Moscow is an excellent idea. Will be at [S]kype on Tuesday [June 14, 2016]."[3268] Papadopoulos replied back two minutes later, writing: "I am going on holiday tomorrow until morning of June 21, [2016,] but will do my best to get online. In the meantime, if you see who is interested in meeting in Moscow I can begin preparations to come visit Moscow by the end of the month directly from Thessaloniki."[3269] Four minutes later, Papadopoulos sent an additional email to Timofeev in which he wrote: "I am open to meeting everyone even at the highest level. I think it would be

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[3261] (U) Email, Papadopoulos to Lewandowski, June 1, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 001036).
[3262] (U) Email, Lewandowski to Papadopoulos, June 1, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 001036).
[3263] (U) Email, Papadopoulos to Clovis, June 1, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 001023).
[3264] (U) Clovis Tr., p. 78–79.
[3265] (U) *Ibid.*
[3266] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 72–73.
[3267] (U) Email, Papadopoulos to Timofeev, June 11, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 001001).
[3268] (U) Email, Timofeev to Papadopoulos, June 12, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 001001).
[3269] (U) Email, Papadopoulos to Timofeev, June 12, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 001002).

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most productive especially before the debates begin."[3270] Papadopoulos also separately noted: "I need to let my boss know who wants to meet with me in Moscow to confirm that's why I ask."[3271] Timofeev responded: "I have got a good reaction from the US desk at the MFA as I told you. . . . But to get higher level the best option would be to have a letter from Mr. Trump about your visit, asking for such meetings."[3272]

(U) A few days later, Papadopoulos returned to pitching Lewandowski on a trip. On June 19, 2016, Papadopoulos wrote an email message to Lewandowski with the subject line "New message from Russia" in which he wrote:

> *The Russian ministry of foreign affairs messaged and said that if Mr. Trump is unable to make it to Russia, if a campaign rep (me or someone else) can make it for meetings? I am willing to make the trip off the record if it's in the interest of Mr. Trump and the campaign to meet specific people. I'm currently in Greece so not far. Or if someone else wants to go, just wanted to pass this along so I know who to forward the message to.*[3273]

Lewandowski wrote back six minutes later: "I am almost certain that he [Trump] won't be able to make it."[3274]

(U) Meanwhile, Carter Page, another member of the foreign policy team encouraging Trump to visit Russia, was about to depart for his own trip to Moscow. According to FBI records, on July 5, 2016, Oleg Lebedev sent Facebook messages to Papadopoulos, informing him that Page would be in Moscow and might have unofficial meetings with the Russian MFA.[3275] The Committee does not know how Lebedev was aware of Page's impending presence or activities in Moscow, or how Papadopoulos responded. Page spent July 4 to 9, 2016, in Moscow, speaking at the New Economic School and engaging in limited government meetings.[3276]

[3270] (U) Email, Papadopoulos to Timofeev, June 12, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 001002).
[3271] (U) Email, Papadopoulos to Timofeev, June 12, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 001002).
[3272] (U) Email, Timofeev to Papadopoulos, June 12, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 001002).
[3273] (U) Email, Papadopoulos to Lewandowski, June 19, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 001035).
[3274] (U) Email, Lewandowski to Papadopoulos, June 19, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 001035). Lewandowski was fired from the Campaign the next day.
[3275] (U) FBI, FD-302, Papadopoulos 9/19/2017. The Committee understands this to be the same Lebedev that Papadopoulos met on April 19, 2016, in London.
[3276] (U) For more information on Page's trip to Moscow, *see infra* Vol. 5, Sec. III.F.4.iii.

[redacted]

[redacted]

(U) On July 15, 2016, Papadopoulos sent an email message to Timofeev proposing a Trump Campaign staff trip to London to meet with President Putin's office and the Russian MFA.[3277] The FBI discussed this email with Papadopoulos:

> *Papadopoulos was advised he had sent Timofeev an email, stating "Because of the time difference I will email you what I have in mind. A meeting for August or September in the UK (London) with me and my national chairman, and maybe one other foreign policy advisor and you, members of president putin's office and the mfa to hold a day of consultations and to meet one another. It has been approved from our side. Kindly let me know what else you need and dates that work for everyone." Papadopoulos confirmed he was referring to Clovis and Phares when he referenced the national chairman and the other foreign policy advisor in his email.*[3278]

(U) Papadopoulos did not produce the email to Timofeev to the Committee. However, Papadopoulos sent a very similarly worded email to Mifsud on July 14, 2016, suggesting a meeting in "[A]ugust or September between you, me, Ivan, my two colleagues, members of president putin's office and the mfa to meet and greet and hold a day of consultations."[3279]

(U) In 2018, Timofeev spoke with journalists about his interactions with Papadopoulos, stating: "We did not close the door to the guy, but we did not take it seriously. . . . He was very enthusiastic. He was very interested in Russia and improving relations, but he seemed to be so unprofessional and so unprepared for a serious conversation."[3280] Timofeev further stated that Papadopoulos never sent a formal request for a visit to Russia, outlining particulars such as who would attend or what topics would be discussed.[3281]

(U) Throughout this timeframe, Papadopoulos continued frequent contact with Mifsud on a variety of issues, from press inquiries to a potential role for Mifsud on the Campaign.

- (U) Mifsud sent Papadopoulos an email on June 16, 2016, with the subject line "urgent contact."[3282] Mifsud wrote that he would like to "touch base and have a catch up" with Papadopoulos, particularly pertaining to answering some queries from Italian

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[3277] (U) FBI, FD-302, Papadopoulos 9/19/2017.
[3278] (U) *Ibid.*
[3279] (U) Email, Papadopoulos to Mifsud, July 14, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 000814).
[3280] (U) Marshall Cohen, "'Unprofessional' Papadopoulos couldn't deliver on promises, his Russian contact says," *CNN*, June 7, 2018. The Committee did not attempt to interview Timofeev.
[3281] (U) *Ibid.*
[3282] (U) Email, Mifsud to Papadopoulos, June 16, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 000873).

[redacted]

[redacted]

newspapers, one of which Mifsud included in the message.[3283] Mifsud also wrote, "On the 27/28 I am at the Hague for the high level internal annual meeting of the ECFR and on the topic is [sic] the US presidential elections. I would like to have a briefing from you on Mr. Trump's foreign policy to be able to argue 'your' corner."[3284]

- (U) Between July 5, 2016, and July 17, 2016, Papadopoulos and Mifsud exchanged over a dozen email messages to coordinate a phone call.[3285] The Committee does not know whether a conversation ultimately took place.

- (U) Between July 25, 2016, and July 27, 2016, Papadopoulos and Mifsud exchanged nine email messages to coordinate a phone call.[3286] The Committee cannot confirm whether a conversation took place, but surmises one did based on a subsequent July 27, 2016, email.[3287]

- (U) On August 22, 2016, Papadopoulos offered Rick Dearborn, a Campaign official, "other information" on Russia and Libya.[3288] When Dearborn replied that he would like to see it, Papadopoulos stated he would "talk to some contacts of mine in the ministry of foreign affairs of Italy . . . and Russia to get you some primary sources and information."[3289] Papadopoulos then sent an email message to Mifsud on the same day, August 22, 2016, in which he asked, "Dear Joseph, Do you have any updates on Libya you can send my way?"[3290] Mifsud sent Papadopoulos a file titled "The current situation and the main priorities for Libya.docx."[3291] The Committee does not have any evidence that Papadopoulos sent the document or any derivative information regarding Libya to the Campaign.[3292]

(U) On July 27, 2016, Papadopoulos told Clovis and Walid Phares, via email, that Mifsud was willing to host "us with the UK officials and other governments for consultations—

[3283] (U) *Ibid.*
[3284] (U) *Ibid.*
[3285] (U) Emails, Mifsud and Papadopoulos, July 5–17, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 000813–817).
[3286] (U) Emails, Mifsud and Papadopoulos, July 25–27, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 000819–821).
[3287] (U) Email, Papadopoulos to Mifsud, July 27, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 001168).
[3288] (U) Email, Papadopoulos to Dearborn, August 22, 2016 (DJTFP00031906).
[3289] (U) Emails, Papadopoulos and Dearborn, August 22, 2016 (DJTFP00031906).
[3290] (U) Email, Papadopoulos to Mifsud, August 22, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 000831).
[3291] (U) Email, Mifsud to Papadopoulos, August 23, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 000831).
[3292] (U) Papadopoulos sent at least four follow-up emails to Dearborn between August 22 and August 31, 2016, which addressed a range of topics including natural gas issues in Russia, Greece, and the United States and geopolitical issues in the Baltics, but the topic of Libya was conspicuously absent. Email, Papadopoulos to Dearborn, August 23, 2016 (DJTFP00031908); Email, Papadopoulos to Dearborn, August 24, 2016 (DJTFP00031910); Email, Papadopoulos to Dearborn, August 24, 2016 (DJTFP00032025); Email, Papadopoulos to Dearborn, August 31, 2016 (DJTFP00033641).

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[redacted]

in Europe and Russia." He called Mifsud his "colleague" and said Mifsud's organization, the London Academy of Diplomacy, works closely with Boris Johnson's office.[3293] The Committee has no indication that is true. Papadopoulos then wrote to Mifsud:

> *Excellent call. We are looking forward to the letter detailing that the London Academy of Diplomacy would like to host the trump team, and officials from the UK and Russia (separately). Confirmed participants from our side include: Walid Phares, foreign policy advisor, Sam Clovis, head of policy and George Papadopoulos, foreign policy advisor.*[3294]

(U) On July 31, 2016, Mifsud wrote to Papadopoulos, again suggesting that Mifsud be given a formal role with the Campaign, including organizing meetings on behalf of Trump's Campaign (emphasis in original):

> *As mentioned, I wish to be officially accredited and invited to follow Mr. Trump's campaign (with an on the ground – US trail – for a period to be defined with the aim of presenting the European (the extended EU – UK, Balkans, etc.), Russian and Mediterranean media, think tanks, institutions, and public opinion (blogs, etc.) with an [sic] realistic view of your campaign, with particular reference to Foreign Policy (and all the other pertinent issues. I would also need to be briefed periodically on all foreign affairs issues pertinent to this role. This would justify my academic and professional interest.* ***An agreement on this must precede all other actions.***
>
> *I will organize in London and in other European capitals meetings with individuals, think tanks, media and foreign policy advisors from countries in Europe (wider Europe), UK, the Mediterranean, the Balkans, and the Russian Federation (the meeting that we have discussed would be under this umbrella— the focus to these meetings would be the clear and specific Foreign Policy issues being put forward by Mr. Trump during his campaign.*[3295]

(U) The Committee has no indication that Papadopoulos passed on Mifsud's request to the Campaign, or that Mifsud ever procured greater access to Campaign officials.

(U) On August 8, 2016, Papadopoulos wrote an email message to Dearborn stating that he "was invited to Russia's largest energy conference of the year to talk about global energy market dynamics. . . . If Mr. Trump believes it's in the US interest to cooperate with Russia,

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[3293] **(U)** Email, Papadopoulos to Clovis and Phares, July 27, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018-000726).
[3294] **(U)** Email, Papadopoulos to Mifsud, July 27, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 001168).
[3295] **(U)** Email, Mifsud to Papadopoulos, July 31, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 000829).

[redacted]

[redacted]

something I wholeheartedly believe as well, I'm happy to represent the campaign's ideas as well."[3296] Dearborn replied the next day: "George, I can't authorize you to go on behalf of the campaign."[3297]

(U) Mifsud sent an email on August 10, 2016, introducing Papadopoulos to Stephan Roh, whom Mifsud described as "a Swiss Lawyer with offices in Germany, Switzerland, Russia, the Gulf and China, with whom I have been collaborating for some time on major international projects including Link Campus that you have visited this year."[3298] It is unclear why Mifsud sought to make this introduction. As part of the nine-message exchange, Roh wrote to Papadopoulos on August 15, 2016, "Joseph reminded me that you might want to speak about a trip to Moscow . . . it would be my pleasure to give some advice."[3299] The Committee does not know if the two ever connected for a conversation on the phone or in person.

(U) Papadopoulos wrote an email to Clovis on August 15, 2016, with the subject, "Trip abroad (you and I)" in which he stated:

> *Have had requests from UK, Greek, Italian and even Russian government for closed door workshops/consultations abroad. . . . I wanted to know if there is still interest for the two or three of us to go on that trip? If not I'll let them know and we can potentially hold a private [S]kype call. All meetings can potentially be done in London at the London Academy of Diplomacy.*[3300]

The same day, Clovis responded to Papadopoulos: "I just don't see any way for me to travel before the election. I have too much to do that requires me to be in the states. I would encourage you and Walid to make the trips, if it is feasible."[3301]

(U) On August 15, 2016, Papadopoulos responded to Mifsud's July 31, 2016, email stating "[u]nfortunately, our national co-chairman, Sam Clovis, informed me today he cannot travel abroad at this stage of the election. However, will now see if Walid [Phares] can make it and he is supposed to tell me today."[3302] Phares engaged with Papadopoulos on the potential travel, noting to Clovis that he would "reach out to George to discuss possibilities for us," and told Papadopoulos that he was open to engagements at the British Embassy in Washington, D.C.,

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[3296] (U) Email, Papadopoulos to Dearborn, August 8, 2016 (DJTFP00030553).
[3297] (U) Email, Dearborn to Papadopoulos, August 9, 2016 (DJTFP00030553).
[3298] (U) Email, Mifsud to Papadopoulos and Roh, August 10, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 000833).
[3299] (U) Emails, Papadopoulos, Mifsud, and Roh, August 10–15, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 000833–835).
[3300] (U) Email, Papadopoulos to Clovis, August 15, 2016 (DJTFP00014224).
[3301] (U) Email, Clovis to Papadopoulos and Phares, August 15, 2016 (DJTFP00014224). This document, among others, evidence Clovis's at least tacit support for Campaign engagements with foreign governments, including Russia's. This stands in contrast to representations Clovis made during his testimony to the Committee.
[3302] (U) Email, Papadopoulos to Mifsud, August 15, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 000830).

[redacted]

prior to the potential trip.[3303] Phares did not mention the potential trip to London with Papadopoulos during his interview with the Committee, though he indicated some familiarity with Papadopoulos's other travel to Israel and Greece during the Campaign.[3304]

xiii. (U) Papadopoulos's Interactions with Sergei Millian

(U) Sergei Millian, the President of the RACC, initially reached out to Papadopoulos via LindedIn on July 15, 2016. His message to Papadopoulos stated that he had "insider knowledge and direct access to the top hierarchy in Russian politics (president circle, ministers, governors level)."[3305] Because both Sergei Millian and Papadopoulos refused to participate in an interview with the Committee, there is scant information on how the two men connected or the scope of their interactions. However, by August 5, 2016, Papadopoulos had sent an email to Anthony Livanios, the CEO of U.S. Energy Stream, and copied Millian, proposing to Livanios that they have a Skype call with Papadopoulos's "friend," Sergei Millian.[3306] The Committee does not know whether the call took place.

(U) On August 8, 2016, Millian sent Papadopoulos an agenda and details of an energy-sector conference in Moscow. In the message he wrote, "I would need your bio as the conference organizers requested it."[3307] Less than one hour later, Papadopoulos wrote, "Thanks my friend. Let me talk to the campaign and get back to you tomorrow."[3308]

(U) After the presumed Skype call with Millian and Livanios, Millian sent an email message to Papadopoulos on August 9, 2016, in which he stated:

> *It will be my pleasure and honor to arrange energy meetings, extensive briefings from top energy experts in Russia and Europe (including top executives and government decision makers), scheduling your speaking arrangements and anything else that is within my scope of connections and business experience. Nevertheless, handling NATO documentation is outside of my expertise and interests. If your Boss held the office, it would be a reasonable request if authorized by [the White House].*

[3303] (U) Email, Phares to Papadopoulos and Clovis, August 15, 2016 (DJTFP00014282).
[3304] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Walid Phares, August 16, 2017, p. 88.
[3305] (U) LinkedIn message, Millian to Papadopoulos, July 15, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 001175).
[3306] (U) Email, Papadopoulos to Livanios and Millian, August 5, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 001102).
[3307] (U) Emails, Millian to Papadopoulos, August 8, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 001100).
[3308] (U) Email, Papadopoulos to Millian, August 8, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 001100).

[redacted]

I am willing and confident that I can be of great assistance to you in your private or public goals in Russia. Hope you understand me and my concerns.[3309]

(U) The Committee does not have any additional context regarding Millian's reference to "handling NATO documentation," though it assumes the topic was discussed during the Skype call.

(U) Millian wrote Papadopoulos an email with the subject line "US Russia relations" on August 22, 2016, in which he provided Papadopoulos a link to a U.S. Department of State website, commenting that "this is a good link to start reviewing regarding the topics of political, security, and energy relationship."[3310] The link is to the 2013 Joint Report of the U.S.-Russia Bilateral Presidential Commission.

(U) On September 12, 2016, Millian was scheduled to pick Papadopoulos up at New York's LaGuardia airport for a meeting.[3311] Although the Committee does not know what the two discussed, on September 13, 2016, Millian wrote an email to Trump attorney Michael Cohen: "I'm friends with Greek American George Papadopoulos, who says he is now your official compaign [sic] advisor on foreign policy from Ben Carson group. He asks questions about you. Do you know George?"[3312] The Committee has no record of a response from Cohen.

(U) On November 5, 2016, Millian forwarded Papadopoulos an email message that he had originally sent to Hicks on November 2, 2016, rebutting the purported falsehoods contained within an October 31, 2016, *Financial Times* article written about Millian, titled, "The shadowy Russian émigré touting Trump."[3313] Millian included the following note to Papadopoulos:

I just wanted you to know that I wrote this for Mr. Trump. I have no doubt that forces that invested so much into H will try to steal the elections. Otherwise, all the money they paid will go to waste.

Please be very cautious these last few days. Even to the point of not leaving your food and drinks out of eye sight. I saw you in my dream with two men in black with angry faces hiding behind your back.[3314]

[3309] **(U)** Email, Millian to Papadopoulos, August 9, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 001102).
[3310] **(U)** Email, Millian to Papadopoulos, August 22, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 001104).
[3311] **(U)** Email, Papadopoulos to Epshteyn, September 12, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 000603–608).
[3312] **(U)** Email, Millian to Cohen, September 13, 2016 (DJTFP00018152–DJTFP00018155).
[3313] **(U)** Email, Millian to Papadopoulos, November 5, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 001088).
[3314] **(U)** *Ibid.*

[redacted]

[redacted]

In the original note to Hicks—which itself was a message Millian said he had sent to Michael Cohen—Millian offered to hold a press conference to correct the record regarding this relationship with Trump, but noted he would not do so unless the Campaign approved.[3315] Millian had no official title or role with the Campaign. The Committee does not know why Millian forwarded the note or why Millian included the warning to Papadopoulos.

(U) Millian and Papadopoulos stayed in touch past the election and as late as August 2017. According to an interview with the FBI, Papadopoulos met with Millian in November 2016.[3316] Papadopoulos stated that he thought the meeting was strange because Millian was throwing out "crazy numbers" for a potential business deal with Papadopoulos, who was not paid by the Trump campaign nor paid by the Trump Transition Team.[3317] According to the FBI interview with him, Papadopoulos further recalled:

> *While the two spoke of potential business ideas, Millian encouraged Papadopoulos to concurrently pursue attempts to obtain employment in the administration. When Papadopoulos told Millian he was not interested in a job in the administration, "the meeting kind of stopped." Papadopoulos felt as if Millian's composure was different after that moment and Millian went from cordial to a completely different person.*[3318]

(U) Simona Mangiante, Papadopoulos' wife, told the Committee that Millian offered Papadopoulos a salary of $30,000 per month as part of the business proposal.[3319]

(U) On August 10, 2017, Millian forwarded an email message to Papadopoulos from a *Washington Post* reporter who had asked Millian about his interactions with Papadopoulos.[3320] Millian forwarded the message with the comment, "FYI: I will not comment. These folks are hatchet job writers and are sponsored by Amazon owner."[3321] This is the last record of contact the Committee has between Millian and Papadopoulos. For additional information on Millian, *see infra* Vol. 5, Sec. IV.B.

xiv. (U) Papadopoulos Meets [redacted]

[3315] (U) Email, Millian to Hicks, November 5, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 001088–1089).
[3316] (U) FBI, FD-302, Papadopoulos 9/19/2017.
[3317] (U) *Ibid.*
[3318] (U) *Ibid.*
[3319] (U) Mangiante Tr., pp. 133–134.
[3320] (U) Email, Millian to Papadopoulos, August 10, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 001074).
[3321] (U) *Ibid.*

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

(U) According to Papadopoulos's testimony to the U.S. House of Representatives, he received an unsolicited email from [redacted] in early September 2016.[3323] According to Papadopoulos, [redacted] offered to fly Papadopoulos to London, and pay him $3,000 to write a paper for him.[3324]

[redacted]

(U) On September 20, 2016, Papadopoulos wrote Clovis an email message with the subject line "[redacted]" in which he wrote:

> *Had a very productive meeting with [redacted] in [L]ondon. We talked strategy among other things. He liked what I had to say about US policy in the Middle East/eastern Mediterranean and wants to help on China briefs. He said you two met as well and talked about similar issues.*[3326]

(U) According to an August 2017 interview with the FBI:

> *Papadopoulos authored a paper for [REDACTED] in London and traveled to London in September of 2016 to meet with [REDACTED] [REDACTED]. During that meeting, [REDACTED] asked Papadopoulos about the hacking of the DNC, which Papadopoulos found to be odd. Papadopoulos relayed to [REDACTED] that he did not know anything about the topic and was taken aback by his questioning. Papadopoulos felt as if [REDACTED] may have been trying to set him up. That meeting was also [REDACTED] a bit of an antagonistic meeting.*

[3322] [redacted]
[3323] (U) House Judiciary Committee Transcript of the Interview with George Papadopoulos, pp. 101, 108.
[3324] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 101.
[3325] [redacted]
[3326] (U) Email, Papadopoulos to Clovis, September 20, 2016 (DJTFP00023908).

[redacted]

[redacted]

[REDACTED] financed the writing of that paper and paid for Papadopoulos' flight and his hotel.[3327]

[redacted]

(U) The Committee received written responses from [redacted] on February 28, 2020.[3329]

xv. (U) Campaign Officials Attempt to Restrain Papadopoulos

(U) As mentioned above, Clovis claimed to the Committee that, as early as March, he was concerned that including Papadopoulos on the foreign policy advisory team had been a mistake.[3330] The first explicit negative feedback from senior Campaign staff to Papadopoulos seems to have come in May, after Papadopoulos gave an interview in the British press. On May 4, 2016, *The Times of London* published comments from Papadopoulos, identifying him as "a foreign policy adviser to the Republican frontrunner," in which he called upon the United Kingdom's Prime Minister, David Cameron, to apologize to Trump and noted that an invitation for Trump to visit the United Kingdom had not yet been extended.[3331] On May 5, 2016, Clovis sent an email to Papadopoulos with the subject "Call Me ASAP," in which he wrote:

> *You are in real hot water with the campaign over your comments to the British press. You need to call me asap. No more discussion with any press until you hear otherwise or have spoken to me about your current situation. Nothing goes out without approval of New York. Period.*[3332]

(U) While the content of Papadopoulos's remarks seems to have surprised the Campaign, the Committee notes that Papadopoulos was keeping the Campaign's communication director generally informed of his interactions with the press:

[3327] (U) FBI, FD-302, Papadopoulos 8/10/2017 (redactions in original as produced by DOJ). The Committee assesses the redacted name in this text to be [redacted].

[3328] [redacted]

[3329] (U) Letter, SSCI to [redacted] April 3, 2019; Letter, SSCI to [redacted] July 30, 2019; Written Responses, [redacted], February 28, 2020.

[3330] (U) Clovis Tr., pp. 70–71.

[3331] (U) Francis Elliott, "Say Sorry to Trump or risk special relationship, Cameron told," *The Times (London)*, May 4, 2016.

[3332] (U) Email, Clovis to Papadopoulos, May 5, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 000750).

[redacted]

[redacted]

- **(U)** On April 29, 2016, Papadopoulos sought permission from Hope Hicks, the Campaign's communications director, to accept an interview with a different media outlet, the *BBC*.[3333] Hicks replied in the affirmative three minutes afterwards.[3334]

- **(U)** On May 7, 2016, Papadopoulos wrote two emails to Hicks asking if he could participate in an interview with *Bloomberg* and explaining the context surrounding the interview with *The Times of London*.[3335] Papadopoulos noted that "the [U.K. Prime Minister]'s office wants to host me next week for them to let me know when they hope to expect Mr. Trump to visit the UK."[3336] Hicks responded to Papadopoulos, "All good!"[3337]

(U) Papadopoulos continued to pursue public speaking opportunities on behalf of the Campaign, and senior staff continued to show their concern. On July 7, 2016, Papadopoulos forwarded an email message to Dearborn from the American Jewish Committee asking him to participate as a panelist at a July 20, 2016, event in Cleveland, Ohio.[3338] Dearborn subsequently forwarded the message to Mashburn and Gordon and noted: "I don't know that I trust him to speak for the campaign -- thoughts?"[3339]

(U) On August 2, 2016, in an email conversation about press engagements and Carter Page, Dearborn wrote, "Carter Page and George Papadopoulos are problematic with the press. I've been clear with George he can't jump without asking. I don't know Carter."[3340]

(U) On August 16, 2016, Hicks, Stephen Miller, and other Campaign staff exchanged emails in response to a negative press inquiry about a separate national security advisory team member, in which Hicks stated, "Do we need to do some cleaning up of our original advisers? This, carter page, Papadopoulos?"[3341] Miller responded, "Yes. Several of the clovis names should be removed."[3342] When Hicks responded by asking how "we go about this swiftly and quietly" and adding then-Campaign chairman Paul Manafort, Miller responded, "The best solution is to constitute a new fp team with the names we want."[3343]

[3333] **(U)** Email, Papadopoulos to Hicks, April 29, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 000748).
[3334] **(U)** Email, Hicks to Papadopoulos, April 29, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 000748).
[3335] **(U)** Emails, Papadopoulos to Hicks, May 7, 2016 (DJTFP00021356).
[3336] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[3337] **(U)** Email, Hicks to Papadopoulos, May 7, 2016 (DJTFP00021356).
[3338] **(U)** Email, Papadopoulos to Dearborn, July 7, 2016 (DJTFP00030089–30092).
[3339] **(U)** Email, Dearborn to Mashburn and Gordon, July 7, 2016 (DJTFP00030089–30092).
[3340] **(U)** Email, Dearborn to Hicks, S. Miller, and J. Miller, August 2, 2016 (DJTFP00013777).
[3341] **(U)** Email, Hicks to S. Miller, et al., August 16, 2016 (DJTFP00014394).
[3342] **(U)** Email, S. Miller to Hicks, et al., August 16, 2016 (DJTFP00014394).
[3343] **(U)** Email, Hicks to S. Miller, Manafort, et al., August 16, 2016 (DJTFP00014394); Email, S. Miller to Hicks, Manafort, et al., August 16, 2016 (DJTFP00014394).

[redacted]

[redacted]

(U) Hicks told the Committee that by August 2016, her position on the contributions of Page and Papadopoulos was fairly clear:

> *My general feeling on them [Page and Papadopoulos] was that it was not worth keeping up appearances of some foreign policy committee. We had enough problems and I didn't need any more with people that we had no control over, no knowledge of their activities and, frankly, their positions on things. They weren't making contributions, so I didn't see the point in trying to field these media inquiries that had nothing to do with us. It wasn't as if we were benefiting from their participation or lack thereof. I felt strongly about ending their involvement, which there wasn't any.*[3344]

(U) Although Campaign staff told the Committee, with the benefit of hindsight, that they had ongoing concerns about Papadopoulos, they were inconsistent in their contemporaneous written evaluations. On July 25, 2016, Clovis sent an email message to Paul Manafort, copying Dearborn, Kushner, Trump supporter Elliott Broidy, and Donald Trump Jr., in which he included a policy document.[3345] Under the "Energy" section of the document, Clovis wrote, "I have made contact with a number of energy folks, but we already have two energy experts on tether. Carter Page and George Papadoupolos [sic] are great assets."[3346] When asked whether Clovis agreed with his July 25, 2016 assessment that Page and Papadopoulos were great assets to the Campaign, Clovis told the Committee, "No, not at all. . . . I don't know how I ever would have said that, but I guess I did."[3347]

(U) Papadopoulos also attempted to involve himself as a more formal surrogate for the Campaign, probably in an attempt to have some travel expenses compensated. On August 20, 2016, Papadopoulos sent an email to Trump Campaign official Bo Denysyk, asking to have travel expenses covered for campaign-related events with Greek-American donors.[3348] Denysyk noted that "[t]he campaign does not normally cover expenses for someone who is not formally on the surrogate list of speakers," but offered to see if Papadopoulos could be vetted as a formal surrogate.[3349] When Denysyk subsequently checked with others on the Trump Campaign, Clovis responded: "George is an advisor but is not officially with the campaign. This has been the case from the beginning."[3350] Papadopoulos also asked Bryan Lanza, deputy communications

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[3344] (U) Hicks Tr., pp. 17–18.
[3345] (U) Email, Clovis to Manafort, Dearborn, Kushner, Broidy, and Trump Jr., June 25, 2016 (DJTFP00012689–DJTFP00012695) (attaching one document). Broidy was using the address [redacted]
[3346] (U) *Ibid.*
[3347] (U) Clovis Tr., pp. 80–81.
[3348] (U) Email, Papadopoulos to Denysyk, August 20, 2016 (DJTFP00023546).
[3349] (U) Email, Denysyk to Papadopoulos, August 20, 2016 (DJTFP00023545).
[3350] (U) Email, Clovis to Denysyk and Cobb, August 22, 2016 (DJTFP00023544).

[redacted]

[redacted]

director for the Trump Campaign, on August 22, 2016, whether the Campaign had a "weekly call for the surrogates to keep everyone updated on the issues."[3351] Lanza then told an associate: "Please add Mr. Papadopoulos to the daily call and talking points."[3352]

(U) Lanza also endorsed Papadopoulos speaking to the press, long after Hicks expressed her opinion that he should stop. On September 9, 2016, Papadopoulos asked Lanza what he thought about "a request from interfax Russian news agency with ksenia baygarova on US-Russia ties under a president trump. . . . If the campaign wants me to do it, can answer similar to the answers I gave in April while in Israel."[3353] The next day, Lanza told Papadopoulos: "You should do it. The Russia/US Syria agreement is a good example of why we want a partnership with Russia."[3354]

(U) Steve Bannon, who starting in mid-August served as the CEO of the Trump Campaign, also told the Committee he saw Papadopoulos as a non-factor on the Campaign, but his assertions in his interview often did not match the documentary record. For example, Bannon engaged in a lengthy email exchange with Papadopoulos related to scheduling a meeting between Trump and Egyptian president Abdel Fattah el-Sisi.[3355] Bannon, however, told the Committee that he did not remember obtaining Papadopoulos's email address and that he did not mean to email Papadopoulos.[3356] Instead, he explained that during the entire exchange with Papadopoulos, he thought he was emailing George Gigicos, the Campaign's head of advance.[3357] Bannon also briefly communicated with Papadopoulos regarding the Japanese government in September 2016 and regarding the Greek government in January 2017.[3358]

xvi. (U) Attempts to Separate Papadopoulos from the Campaign

(U) Papadopoulos's second big misstep in the press led to the clearest direction to stop associating himself publicly with the Campaign from Campaign senior leadership. On September 30, 2016, *Interfax* published an interview with Papadopoulos—likely the one Lanza

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[3351] (U) Email, Papadopoulos to Lanza, August 22, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 000472).
[3352] (U) Email, Lanza to Papadopoulos and Spoleti, August 22, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 000472).
[3353] (U) Email, Papadopoulos to Lanza, September 9, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 000469–470).
[3354] (U) Email, Lanza to Papadopoulos, September 10, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 000469–470).
[3355] (U) *See, e.g.*, Emails, Bannon and Papadopoulos, September 16–18, 2016 (SKB_SSCI_0000605–608).
[3356] (U) Bannon Tr., pp. 89, 96.
[3357] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 95–98. Bannon's explanation for the mistake was that his email must have autopopulated Papadopoulos's email, despite the fact that Bannon said he could not remember ever emailing Papadopoulos before. Although it is impossible for an email application to autopopulate an address that is not in the contacts and has never been emailed before, Bannon had no theory as to how he could have emailed Papadopoulos, and agreed that, in light of how autopopulate works, he understood how the Committee might find his explanation unbelievable. *Ibid.*
[3358] (U) Emails, Papadopoulos and Bannon, September 15, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 000615); Emails, Papadopoulos, Bannon, and Flynn, January 4–6, 2017 (B&P GP File 2018 000635).

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had authorized.[3359] In an October 3, 2016 email conversation, several members of the Trump Campaign, including Clovis, Alan Cobb, Dearborn, Denysyk, and John Mashburn discussed how to respond to the interview.[3360] As part of the discussion, Denysyk stated, "[u]nless you have approved George giving these types of interviews on behalf of the campaign, I suggest that Sam or I call him and tell him to cease and desist speaking on behalf of the campaign unless specifically approved by Mash and Sam."[3361] Dearborn replied the same day and stated, "Shut him down."[3362]

(U) Denysyk emailed Papadopoulos on October 3, 2016, component to a discussion with Papadopoulos about a Greek-American coalition, and wrote:

> *Also, please remove your title as Foreign Policy Advisor to the campaign. Rick and Sam confirmed that you have been an informal resource and not an Adviser.*
>
> *More broadly, Rick has asked me to thank you for the policy activities you have been involved with but you cannot any longer speak on behalf of the campaign or publicly comment on what the campaign position is on any issue. You can refer people to the campaign website.*
>
> *We have had numerous complaints about your Interfax interview. I hope you understand.*
>
> *For reference, Alan and Sam agree with this decision.*[3363]

Papadopoulos initially replied "[n]ot an issue, Bo," but said as a result he would not be able to "further assist on this or any other coalition."[3364] The following day, Papadopoulos also wrote that the development would affect his support for a Greek-Americans for Trump coalition:

> *I have been predominantly working with the leadership in NY over the past months on numerous initiatives. As far as they told me, they did not give or were aware of an order to effectively sideline me from the campaign for the interview I gave. Will wait for their instructions on me continuing as a surrogate/advisor before I decide on the [Greek-Americans for Trump] coalition.*[3365]

[3359] (U) "George Papadopoulos: Sanctions have done little more than to turn Russia towards China," *Interfax*, September 30, 2016.
[3360] (U) Emails, Clovis, et al., October 3, 2016 (DJTFP00018382).
[3361] (U) Email, Denysyk to Clovis, et al., October 3, 2016 (DJTFP00018382).
[3362] (U) Email, Dearborn to Denysyk, et al., October 3, 2016 (DJTFP00018382).
[3363] (U) Email, Denysyk to Papadopoulos, October 3, 2016 (DJTFP00035676–35677).
[3364] (U) Email, Papadopoulos to Denysyk, October 3, 2016 (DJTFP00035676–35677).
[3365] (U) Email, Papadopoulos to Denysyk, October 4, 2016 (DJTFP00035676).

[redacted]

[redacted]

Denysyk replied to Papadopoulos, "Up to you and will pass this along to Rick and Sam," to which Papadopoulos replied:

> *Please do, Bo. I was informed by top people in the campaign that the buck stops with Steve Bannon on this issue. Steve and I coordinated Mr. Trump's high level meetings during UN week. If he tells me he wants me off the team, of course, I will immediately step down. In the interest of the team, however, I will refrain from any other interviews or appearances until there is a final verdict.*[3366]

(U) Papadopoulos sent an email to Boris Epshteyn, a Trump Campaign surrogate and employee, on October 4, 2016, stating that he had been "told by a couple folks in the campaign, Rick Dearborn, Sam Clovis, (both via [B]o Denysyk)" that he was "effectively now off the campaign" because of his recent interview and asked Epshteyn for clarification on whether that statement was accurate.[3367] Papadopoulos sent a similar note to Glassner twenty minutes later, who responded: "News to me – I suggest you follow up directly with Steve Bannon or Jason Miller."[3368]

(U) Papadopoulos had already emailed Bannon on October 3, 2016:

> *I'm effectively off the campaign for giving an interview on US policy in the Middle East/Russia after I was approved to do it and spoke on my behalf (not the campaigns [sic]). Can you confirm/deny the validity of this please? You are the CEO so I wanted to make sure I asked you before moving back to London to take up my work placement again.*[3369]

Bannon initially forwarded the note to Jason Miller early on October 4, and asked him, "What's up with this???"[3370] Miller responded to Bannon almost immediately, and stated: "I've never even heard of this person."[3371] Bannon subsequently also replied to Papadopoulos on October 4: "Who told u that[?]"[3372] Papadopoulos stated that the decision had come from "Rick Dearborn and Sam Clovis (via Bo Denysyk)."[3373] The Committee is not aware of any further action that Bannon took regarding Papadopoulos's inquiry.

[3366] **(U)** Email, Denysyk to Papadopoulos, October 4, 2016 (DJTFP00035676); Email, Papadopoulos to Denysyk, Clovis, and Dearborn, October 4, 2016 (DJTFP00035676).
[3367] **(U)** Email, Papadopoulos to Epshteyn, October 4, 2016 (DJTFP00018498).
[3368] **(U)** Email, Glassner to Papadopoulos, October 4, 2016 (DJTFP00018500).
[3369] **(U)** Email, Papadopoulos to Bannon, October 3, 2016 (SKB_SSCI-0001768).
[3370] **(U)** Email, Bannon to J. Miller, October 4, 2016 (SKB_SSCI-0002093).
[3371] **(U)** Email, J. Miller to Bannon, October 4, 2016 (SKB_SSCI-0001771).
[3372] **(U)** Email, Bannon to Papadopoulos, October 4, 2016 (SKB_SSCI-0002092).
[3373] **(U)** Email, Papadopoulos to Bannon, October 4, 2016 (SKB_SSCI-0001769).

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(U) On October 5, 2016, in response to a query from Epshteyn about whether "George [was] still part of [the] campaign," Cobb wrote: "George got way off the reservation on an issue, but I don't think he is 'off the campaign.'"[3374] Upon further inquiry by Cobb, he subsequently wrote back to Epshteyn: "Dearborn is telling me that George has been told to cease and desist several times."[3375] In response, Epshteyn suggested that "Dearborn send him a formal letter to end his 'confusion.'"[3376]

(U) On October 5, 2016, Clovis sent Papadopoulos the following email message:

> *Not sure what all is going on with you right now, but I wanted to ask that you not represent yourself as a spokesperson or surrogate for the campaign. I am not sure I fully understand why this has come up, but for the sake of the campaign and everyone involved, we need to keep distractions to a minimum right now. I know you understand. Thanks. Please acknowledge receipt of this email.*[3377]

(U) Despite Denysyk's and Clovis's emails, the Committee notes Papadopoulos remained active and engaged with the Campaign, to include engagements with media associated with Greek and Russian interests.

(U) On October 9, 2016, Papadopoulos sent an email message to Epshteyn with the subject "Russia strategy," in which he wrote:

> *It's obvious Mr. Trump has expressed that it's important to cooperate with Russia in Syria. . . . I support this completely. I'm free to discuss this week with you about how to articulate it even more with your help if it's in the interest of the principal.*[3378]

(U) On October 19, 2016, Mifsud sent an email to Papadopoulos inviting him to speak to a session of the European Council on Foreign Relations on "any issue or topic related on the

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[3374] (U) Emails, Cobb and Epshteyn, October 4–5, 2016 (DJTFP00018820).
[3375] (U) Email, Cobb to Epshteyn, October 5, 2016 (DJTFP00018835).
[3376] (U) Email, Epshteyn to Cobb, October 5, 2016 (DJTFP00018835).
[3377] (U) Email, Clovis to Papadopoulos, Cobb, and Dearborn, October 5, 2016 (DJTFP00035692). Papadopoulos responded that he did not want to be a distraction, but also said "as long as it's understood that the Greek/Jewish/Armenian fund raisers and coalition groups I was on the verge of putting all together will likely not come to fruition if they know I'm not representing the campaign anymore." Email, Papadopoulos to Clovis, et al., October 5, 2016 (DJTFP00035694). Denysyk told the Committee in his interview that Papadopoulos also was asked to stay out of this type of coalition building. Denysyk Tr., p. 30; *see also* Email, Clovis to Dearborn, Cobb, and Denysyk, October 5, 2016 (DJTFP00035689) ("He's been told several times to steer clear of representing the campaign. If need be, I can communicate with him these issues.").
[3378] (U) Email, Papadopoulos to Epshteyn, October 9, 2016 (DJTFP00019321).

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Trump campaign, putting your views forward."[3379] He further stated in the email that "the attendance to this meeting is strictly by invitation and normally has top politicians, journalists, diplomats in London and will be curtailed by number."[3380] Papadopoulos responded several hours later stating that he was not sure he could make a trip to London as he "decided to go back on the campaign until the end."[3381]

(U) On October 26, 2016, Papadopoulos sent Lanza an email regarding media requests from "Greek American newspapers and CNN Greece"[3382] Lanza replied shortly after Papadopoulos sent the initial email, copying an associate to help assist Papadopoulos in booking the engagement.[3383]

(U) Less than one hour after sending the initial email to Lanza on October 26, 2016, Papadopoulos then forwarded a request from a U.S. correspondent for *Antenna TV Greece* to Lanza and Lanza's associate on the previous email.[3384] Papadopoulos sent the e-mail to Bannon and Lanza's associate just prior to sending the email to Lanza.[3385]

(U) Also on October 26, 2016, Papadopoulos received an email from a producer claiming to be from "the U.S. State Department's TV Rain Russia Media CoOp program" who stated she had received his contact information from Richard Weitz.[3386] The producer requested that Papadopoulos participate in an interview with two Russian journalists who were going to be in Washington, D.C. after the election.[3387] Papadopoulos agreed to do an interview on November 14, 2016.[3388]

xvii. (U) Mifsud Reacts to the Election

[3379] (U) Email, Mifsud to Papadopoulos, October 19, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 000837).
[3380] (U) *Ibid.*
[3381] (U) Emails, Papadopoulos and Mifsud, October 19, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 000837).
[3382] (U) Email, Papadopoulos to Lanza, October 26, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 000437).
[3383] (U) Email, Lanza to Papadopoulos and Henning, October 26, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 000437).
[3384] (U) Email, Papadopoulos to Lanza and Henning, October 26, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 000439).
[3385] (U) Email, Papadopoulos to Bannon and Henning, October 26, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 000439). In a separate email to Bannon, Papadopoulos clarified that he mistakenly forwarded the message to Bannon, and should have sent it to Bryan Lanza instead. However, Papadopoulos did not produce this communication to the Committee. *See* Email, Papadopoulos to Bannon, October 26, 2016 (SKB_SSCI-0001373).
[3386] (U) Email, Schmidt to Papadopoulos, et al., October 26, 2016 (HUD00000198). According to the *Defense One* website, Weitz is a Senior Fellow and Director of the Center for Political-Military Analysis at the Hudson Institute and an "Expert" with the WikiStrat consultancy. DefenseOne.com, "Author archive: Richard Weitz." For additional information on WikiStrat and its founder Joel Zamel, *see infra* Vol. 5, Sec. III.J.3.
[3387] (U) *Ibid.*
[3388] (U) Email, Papadopoulos to Schmidt, et al., October 26, 2016 (HUD00000198).

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(U) On November 1, 2016, Mifsud sent an email to Papadopoulos with the subject "How are you?" in which he wrote, "[L]et us start thinking of the post-US elections – anything you can/wish to share? I hope it goes well for you."[3389]

[redacted]

(U) On November 10, 2016, Mifsud sent an email to Papadopoulos, congratulating him on Trump's victory and asking: "I wondered if you and I can touch base and prepare your presentation in London and also to see if we can work together."[3392] Papadopoulos responded to Mifsud's note, stating that he "[w]ould be happy to work together. What do you have in mind?"[3393] Mifsud responded the next day:

> *As there are much [sic] requests from Europe, Russia and Middle East on Mr. Trump's foreign policy focus liaising with institutions and think tanks will be on top of the agenda. We can offer a service to these via you. I would be happy to fly to meet with you in the USA in the first week of December and have a meeting with you (and with others that you might wish to identify).*
>
> *I will fly to where you will be and meet face to face there. If I can be of any support here please do let me know.*[3394]

[3389] **(U)** Email, Mifsud to Papadopoulos, November 1, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 000839).
[3390] [redacted] *See, e.g.* [redacted] Lee Smith, "The Maltese Phantom of Russiagate," *RealClearInvestigations*, May 30, 2018.
[3391] [redacted]
[3392] **(U)** Email, Mifsud to Papadopoulos, November 10, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 000841).
[3393] **(U)** Email, Papadopoulos to Mifsud, November 10, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 000842).
[3394] **(U)** Email, Mifsud to Papadopoulos, November 11, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 000842–843).

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(U) Mifsud sent another email to Papadopoulos on November 11, 2016, regarding a phone call Mifsud had with the European Council on Foreign Relations (ECFR) about general foreign policy topics, including the U.S. posture towards Russia, Iran, Israel, and Saudi Arabia as well as offering to "brief you or your team on the view from the Europeans."[3395]

(U) Mifsud reached out again on November 16, 2016, stating that he was "very interested in meeting with you during my visit to the USA which will start on the 3rd December until the 9th. I can meet you at any time or any place that you wish – Washington or New York."[3396] On November 18, 2016, Mifsud again asked Papadopoulos: "[w]here and at when can we meet? I would be willing to travel to where is more convenient for you. There are a number of issues that I would like to discuss with you."[3397] Mifsud sent another email message to Papadopoulos on December 2, 2016, again stating "[a]s mentioned I will be in the US from tomorrow. Can you kindly let me know where and how we can meet? I would be willing to come to Chicago for the meeting."[3398] On December 6, 2016, Mifsud again reached out to Papadopoulos, stating, "Dear George, I hope you are well. I am in US. Is a meeting still possible?"[3399]

(U) Despite the multiple emails from Mifsud, the Committee has seen no indication that Papadopoulos responded, and the Committee does not know if Papadopoulos and Mifsud met subsequent to the election.

xviii. (U) Papadopoulos Coordinates Multiple Foreign Engagements for the Transition

(U) After the election, foreign governments sought points of contact who could secure a phone call with the President-Elect's Transition Team. Representatives from the UK, Cyprus, Egypt, Taiwan, and Greece all leveraged Papadopoulos as an interlocutor. The Committee has no evidence suggesting that the Russian government used Papadopoulos as a conduit.[3400]

(U) On November 9, 2016, the Head of the Political Team for the British Embassy to the United States sent Papadopoulos an email with the subject "Request for a call between the British Prime Minister and President-elect" which stated: "[T]he Prime Minister is keen to secure an early call with President-elect Trump. We have already registered this request with the transition team but have now belatedly realised that perhaps the campaign would have been the

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[3395] (U) Email, Mifsud to Papadopoulos, November 11, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 000845).
[3396] (U) Email, Mifsud to Papadopoulos, November 16, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 000847).
[3397] (U) Email, Mifsud to Papadopoulos, November 18, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 000849).
[3398] (U) Email, Mifsud to Papadopoulos, December 2, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 000851).
[3399] (U) Email, Mifsud to Papadopoulos, December 6, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 000853).
[3400] (U) For more on Russia's approach to the Trump Transition team, *see infra* Vol. 5, Sec. III.K.

[redacted]

right approach."[3401] The message also included a letter of congratulations from United Kingdom Prime Minister Theresa May which the Embassy was "keen to ensure reaches the candidate as soon as possible."[3402] Papadopoulos separately forwarded the letter to Bannon, Hicks, and Glassner within an hour of receiving the email from the British Embassy.[3403]

(U) On November 9, 2016, Leonidas Pantelides, the Ambassador of Cyprus to the United States, sent Papadopoulos via email a letter from the President of Cyprus to President-Elect Trump.[3404] Papadopoulos forwarded the communication to Bannon and Glassner.[3405]

(U) On November 10, 2016, Yasser Elshemy, a Counselor at the Egyptian Embassy in Washington, sent Papadopoulos an e-mail with the subject line "letter from Foreign Minister to VP 'Pence'," stating that the Egyptian Ambassador to the United States "is looking forward to meeting Vice President 'Pence' to deliver the congratulation letter addressed to him from [Egypt's] Foreign Minister Sameh Shoukry."[3406] Papadopoulos passed the message on to Glassner.[3407] On November 18, 2016, Elshemy sent an email to Papadopoulos with the subject "meeting- urgent" asking Papadopoulos to "grab a lunch together, we need to follow up many things we discussed before the elections results."[3408] In a subsequent note, Elshemy clarified that he needs "help to set a meeting between Amb. Reda and Mr. Bannon in DC on the earlier convenience. [W]e also need an access point to Mr. Pence office."[3409] One minute later, Papadopoulos wrote back, "Ok will call and ask him what he can do."[3410]

(U) On November 10, 2016, Papadopoulos received an email message from Seth Cropsey of the Hudson Institute, recommending that President-Elect Trump call Tsai Ing-Wen, the President of Taiwan to "assure her of Trump administration solidarity in defense of Taiwan. . . . a call would also tell Xi Jinping that Trump takes security in the region seriously, especially

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[3401] (U) Email, Goshko to Papadopoulos, November 9, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 000643).
[3402] (U) *Ibid.*
[3403] (U) Email, Papadopoulos to Bannon, November 9, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 000644); Email, Papadopoulos to Glassner, November 9, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 000644); Email, Papadopoulos to Hicks, November 9, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 000644).
[3404] (U) Emails, Pantelides to Papadopoulos, November 9, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 000671).
[3405] (U) Email, Papadopoulos to Bannon, November 9, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 000671); Email, Papadopoulos to Glassner, November 9, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 000671).
[3406] (U) Email, Elshemy to Papadopoulos, November 10, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 000669).
[3407] (U) Email Papadopoulos to Glassner, November 10, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 000669).
[3408] (U) Email, Elshemy to Papadopoulos, November 18, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 000619).
[3409] (U) Email, Elshemy to Papadopoulos, November 18, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 000619).
[3410] (U) Emails, Papadopoulos and Elshemy, November 18, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 000619). The Committee notes that two additional emails follow Elshemy's acknowledgement of Papadopoulos's note, but those emails were redacted when produced to the Committee. *See* B&P GP File 2018 000619–620.

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the South China Sea."[3411] Cropsey resent the email to Papadopoulos on November 11, 2016.[3412] On November 11, 2016, Papadopoulos wrote to Cropsey, "I set up [Trump's] calls with prime minister May and president sisi. If the leader of Taiwan wants a call, may you have her send a formal letter I can then forward from my email? That's how it worked for sisi and may."[3413] In a separate email message on the same day, but as part of the same conversation thread, Papadopoulos wrote "Regarding Australia ditto. I had a couple nice conversations over gin in London with their former foreign minister and current high commissioner to the U.K., Alexander Downer where we discussed the relationship."[3414]

(U) Papadopoulos, however, was about to travel to Greece, and was keeping senior members of the Trump Transition Team apprised of his engagements. On December 9, 2016, Papadopoulos passed on a purported request from the Prime Minister of Greece to meet with President-Elect Trump in early January 2017 to Bannon.[3415] In an email the following day, December 10, 2016, Papadopoulos further stated that he "[s]poke with the Greek defense minister.[3416] They want to sign a government to government agreement with the USA for all rights to all energy fields offshore. Strategic foothold in the Mediterranean and Balkans."[3417] Bannon replied to the note, adding Michael Flynn and Kathleen Troia (K.T.) McFarland to the communication, both of who were senior national security officials on the Transition Team.[3418] Papadopoulos then wrote to the group on December 10, 2016, that the Greek defense minister had "earmarked the island of [K]arpathos for a potential listening post and air base for the US" and further stated "A base on [K]arpathos is key to controlling sea lines of communication in the Aegean/plan b should Incirlik once again become unusable."[3419] The following day, December 11, 2016, Papadopoulos wrote to Flynn's Transition Team email address, passing along the phone number for Kammenos, the Greek Defense Minister, noting that the "[l]ine is not secure, however. He can pass along a secure number when you both find the time to discuss."[3420]

[3411] (U) Email, Cropsey to Papadopoulos, November 11, 2016 (HUD00000191).
[3412] (U) Email, Cropsey to Papadopoulos, November 11, 2016 (HUD00000191).
[3413] (U) Emails, Papadopoulos to Cropsey, November 11, 2016 (HUD00000172).
[3414] (U) Email, Papadopoulos to Cropsey November 11, 2016 (HUD00000191–192).
[3415] (U) Email, Papadopoulos to Bannon, December 9, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 000609).
[3416] (U) According to Greek press reporting, Papadopoulos and Kammenos had lunch in Piraeus on Saturday, December 10, 2016, where Papadopoulos described himself as a "representative of Trump." Kourdistoportocali.com, "World Exclusive: George Papadopoulos and Panos Kammenos in 'Dourabei,'" December 10, 2016.
[3417] (U) Email, Papadopoulos to Bannon, December 10, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 000609).
[3418] (U) Email, Bannon to Papadopoulos, Flynn, McFarland, December 10, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 000609).
[3419] (U) Email, Papadopoulos to Flynn, Bannon, McFarland, and Kellogg, December 10, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 000610).
[3420] (U) Email, Papadopoulos to Flynn, December 11, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 000610).

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(U) Papadopoulos again reached out to Bannon on January 4, 2017, relaying a request from the Greek Foreign Minister for a phone call with Trump.[3421] Bannon responded, adding Flynn, which Papadopoulos used to also request a meeting with the Egyptian ambassador.[3422]

xix. (U) Papadopoulos Angles for an Administration Position

(U) Despite what Papadopoulos purportedly told Millian, he used the Transition period and into January to point out what he saw as his contributions to the Campaign, almost certainly in the hopes of gaining an administration position. On November 11, 2016, Papadopoulos wrote to Clovis:

> *I made the introduction between Mr. Trump and president Sisi based primarily on the trust the region has on my work etc. Have met with the highest levels of the aforementioned countries and established robust and positive ties. The paper I wrote for* [redacted] *was well received as well and provided insight.*[3423]

(U) On December 22, 2016, Papadopoulos wrote to Lanza asking him for guidance regarding interviews with media outlets, as he was "getting some interview requests from Russian media."[3424] Lanza provided some guidance back to Papadopoulos, indicating that "[w]e are telling everyone pursuing Admin[istration] jobs to pass on all interviews."[3425] Papadopoulos wrote back to Lanza minutes later, "Thank you for letting me know. In that case [I] am passing on the interviews."[3426]

(U) Papadopoulos sent Bill Grous, Managing Director for the financial services company Alex. Brown, an email on January 5, 2017, thanking him for meeting that day and included a short bio and resume "for consideration by the Trump administration."[3427] The next day, Grous forwarded the message to Dearborn, copying Michael Karloutsos[3428] stating, "[s]pecifically he is

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[3421] (U) Email, Papadopoulos to Bannon, January 4, 2017 (B&P GP File 2018 000635).
[3422] (U) Email, Bannon to Papadopoulos and Flynn, January 4, 2017 (B&P GP File 2018 000635); Email, Papadopoulos to Flynn and Bannon, January 6, 2017 (B&P GP File 2018 000635).
[3423] (U) Email, Papadopoulos to Clovis, November 11, 2016 (DJTFP00024754).
[3424] (U) Email, Papadopoulos to Lanza, December 22, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 000451).
[3425] (U) Email, Lanza to Papadopoulos, December 22, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 000451).
[3426] (U) Email, Papadopoulos to Lanza, December 22, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 000463).
[3427] (U) Email, Papadopoulos to Grous, January 5, 2017 (B&P GP File 2018 000465–467).
[3428] (U) Michael Karloutsos became the U.S. Department of State Deputy Chief of Protocol, and is the son of Father Alexander Karloutsos. *See* Rob Tornoe, "How a Philly restaurant owner landed a top State Department job," *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, August 11, 2017; "Michael Karloutsos: Serving as Layperson," *The National Herald*, August 17, 2015. Alexander Kaloutsos, according to the FBI, is connected to Preibus and Kotsias. FBI, FD-302, Papadopoulos 9/19/2017. According to press reporting, Papadopoulos reached out to Alexander Karloutsos shortly after being named to the Trump Campaign; Karloutsos helped Papadopoulos make contacts with Greek business and

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looking to fill the role held by Amos Hochstein, the special envoy and coordinator for international energy affairs and leads the bureau of energy resources at the state department, if a position on the national security council is not available."[3429]

(U) Papadopoulos followed up with Dearborn on January 9 and January 17, 2017, noting in the latter email that he had "[b]een in talks with Steve Bannon and Mike Flynn about various things and have been assisting on key issues already."[3430]

(U) Papadopoulos, in an email communication with Lanza on January 17, 2017, also mentioned that he had "[b]een aiming for either a post on the NSC, or specifically, the special envoy and coordinator for international energy affairs (currently held by Amos [H]ochstein)."[3431]

[redacted] On March 4, 2017, Papadopoulos sent a message to Michael Cohen in which he wrote, "Michael, Hope all is well. Are you free for a meeting next week? Wanted to talk about my value added to the administration among other things. Definitely want to come onboard. [B]est, George."[3432] The Committee has no record of a response from Cohen.

(U) The Committee has no indication as to whether the Transition Team considered Papadopoulos for a position in the administration.

5. (U) Counterintelligence Concerns about Papadopoulos's Interactions

[redacted]

government officials. Griff Witte, "For Trump adviser at center of Russia probe, a rapid rise and dramatic fall in his ancestral land," *The Washington Post*, December 10, 2017.

[3429] **(U)** Email, Grous to Dearborn, Karloutsos, and Papadopoulos, January 6, 2017 (B&P GP File 2018 000465–467).

[3430] **(U)** Emails, Papadopoulos to Dearborn, January 9 and 17, 2017 (B&P GP File 2018 000466–467).

[3431] **(U)** Email, Papadopoulos to Lanza, January 17, 2017 (B&P GP File 2018 000674).

[3432] **(U)** FBI, FD-302, Papadopoulos 9/19/2017[redacted]

[3433] **(U)** SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Andrew McCabe, February 14, 2018, pp. 30–31.

[3434] **(U)** *Ibid.*

[3435] **(U)** *Ibid.*, p. 33.

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[redacted]

(U) Papadopoulos was first interviewed by the FBI on January 27, 2017.[3438] According to DOJ's sentencing memorandum, Papadopoulos's "lies to the FBI in January 2017 impeded the FBI's investigation . . . [and] substantially hindered investigators' ability to effectively question the Professor [Mifsud] when the FBI located him in Washington, D.C. approximately two weeks after the defendant's January 27, 2017 interview."[3439] Specifically, Papadopoulos misrepresented specific sequencing concerning his affiliation with the Trump Campaign and his interactions with Joseph Mifsud.[3440] Papadopoulos falsely claimed to have received the information on the Russian's possessing "dirt" on Clinton from Mifsud prior to Papadopoulos's affiliation with the Trump Campaign and attempted to minimize the extent and importance of his communications with Mifsud.[3441]

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[3436] (U) L. Page Tr., p. 40.
[3437] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 39–42.
[3438] (U) Government's Sentencing Memorandum, *United States v. George Papadopoulos*, Case No. 1:17-cr-00182-RDM (D.D.C. August 17, 2018).
[3439] (U) *Ibid.*
[3440] (U) *Ibid.*
[3441] (U) *Ibid.*

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COMMITTEE SENSITIVE – RUSSIA INVESTIGATION ONLY

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[redacted] Mifsud departed the United States on February 11, 2017, and has not returned.[3443] [redacted]

[redacted]

[3442] [redacted]

[3443] (U) Government's Sentencing Memorandum, *United States v. George Papadopoulos*, Case No. 1:17-cr-00182-RDM (D.D.C. August 17, 2018).

[3444] [redacted]

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COMMITTEE SENSITIVE – RUSSIA INVESTIGATION ONLY

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F. (U) Carter Page

1. (U) Introduction and Findings

(U) Carter Page was the only member of the Trump Campaign's foreign policy advisers publicly identified as a Russia "expert." Page had previously lived in Russia and worked on Russia policy and energy issues. For these reasons, Page was a subject of interest to Russian officials, including Russian intelligence, which had in previous years interacted with Page. As such, the Committee sought to understand Page's role on the Trump Campaign, his connection to the Russian intelligence services, and any connection between him and Russian interference in the 2016 presidential election.

(U) Prior to joining the Trump Campaign, Page communicated with, met, and provided private business information to Russian SVR officers in New York, whom the FBI believed were acting in a manner consistent with attempts to recruit Page. Page later was referred to as "Male-1" in the complaint filed against three SVR officers in January 2015 in federal court in the Southern District of New York. Page later publicly identified himself as "Male-1" on several occasions, including to Russian officials in New York at the United Nations General Assembly.

[redacted]

(U) Trump named Page as one of his foreign policy advisers as part of an effort to bolster the public perception that Trump had substantive foreign policy advisers in early 2016. Trump met once with a group of these and other foreign policy and national security advisers on March 31, 2016. Page was not in attendance and never subsequently met with Trump. The Committee found no evidence to suggest that Page made significant contributions to speeches or policy initiatives for the Trump Campaign.

(U) In July 2016, Page was invited to make two addresses in Russia, including an address during the commencement ceremonies at Moscow's New Economic School (NES), an invitation extended because of his perceived role in the Trump Campaign. At the commencement ceremony, Page had a brief exchange with then-Deputy Prime Minister Arkady

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3445 [redacted]

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Dvorkovich, about whom the Committee has counterintelligence concerns. In December 2016, following his separation from the Campaign the previous September, Page traveled to Moscow again, where he had a longer meeting over dinner with Dvorkovich.

(U) The Committee found no indication that Page had useful Campaign information for the Russian intelligence services to extract, nor meaningful influence for them to exploit. Despite Page having little influence on the Campaign, interested Russians may have perceived him as more closely connected than he was. Page was receptive to Russian outreach, and the sponsors of the NES speech in 2016 made clear that they invited Page because of his perceived role in the Trump Campaign.

(U) The Trump Campaign directed Page's separation from the Campaign in September 2016 because of the unwanted media attention he was generating.

(U) Many media reports about Page's activities in Russia in 2016, as well as almost all assertions in the "Steele dossier," remain unverified. In addition, Page's claims to the Campaign regarding his activities in Moscow remain unsubstantiated.

2. (U) Background on Page and Limitations on the Committee's Investigation

(U) Between 2003 or 2004 and 2007, Carter Page lived and worked in Moscow.[3446] Page worked for Merrill Lynch at the time, and told the Committee that his primary client was the Russian state-owned energy firm Gazprom.[3447]

(U) Page, along with other individuals formally associated with the Trump Campaign, was a target of interest for foreign governments seeking to gather information on the Campaign. Page also advocated for better relations with Russia, a position in concert with Moscow's official perspective and consistent with candidate Trump's minimalist posture that sought better relations with Moscow.[3448]

[redacted] The Committee had some limited insight into the Russian government and [redacted] interest in Page:

[3446] (U) C. Page Tr., p. 30 (stating 2004 to 2007); *SCO Report*, Vol. I, p. 6 (stating 2003 to 2007).

[3447] [redacted] Page Tr., pp. 29–30; [redacted] According to Page, he was introduced to Gazprom by the Russia-based American investor Allen Vine. Page's primary point of contact at Gazprom was an executive named Sergei Yatsenko, who Page described as "a pretty well-connected guy." Yatsenko later served on the board of Page's company, Global Energy Capital. C. Page Tr., pp. 30, 33–34, 94.

[3448] (U) *See, e.g.*, C. Page Tr., pp. 154.

[redacted]

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(U) The *SCO Report* cited an email from Russian Press Secretary Dmitry Peskov responding to an inquiry about whether Peskov wished to facilitate introductions for Page to Russian officials during Page's July 2016 visit, to which Peskov responded, "I have read about [Page]. Specialists say that he is far from being the main one. So I better not initiate a meeting in the Kremlin."[3450]

(U) The Committee interviewed Page and members of the Trump Campaign who interacted with Page. The Committee also reviewed communications and other documents related to Page. The interviews and materials did not provide a thorough understanding of all of his activities while in Russia during his two visits in 2016.

(U) The Committee had significant challenges in its attempt to understand Page's activities, including his role as a foreign policy adviser to the Trump Campaign. After weeks of negotiation and an eventual Committee subpoena, Page produced some electronic documents, some of which included his own annotations and alterations to the original document form, and

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[3449] [redacted]

[3450] **(U)** *SCO Report*, Vol. I, p. 100.

[redacted]

[redacted]

sat for an interview that lasted six and a half hours. Page's responses to basic questions were meandering, avoidant, and involved several long diversions. Despite the meticulous records Page kept on his personal hard drive detailing his daily routines, he was unable to recall any details of his trips to Moscow, or the names of senior Russian officials with whom he met, despite using his engagements with them to build his credentials within the Campaign.

3. (U) Page and U.S. and Russian Intelligence Services

(U) Prior to 2016, Page had encounters with both U.S. and Russian intelligence.

i. (U) Page and U.S. Intelligence Prior to 2016

(U) Page voluntarily met with U.S. intelligence officials and law enforcement, from CIA and FBI, on several occasions from roughly 2008 through 2013.[3451] He told the Committee that "the CIA guys would invite me out to lunch from time to time in New York."[3452] In a letter to then-Director Comey of the FBI, he acknowledged, "Having interacted with members of the U.S. intelligence community including the FBI and CIA for many decades."[3453]

[redacted]

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[3451] [redacted] C. Page Tr., pp. 227, 231.
[3452] (U) C. Page Tr., pp. 227, 231.
[3453] (U) Letter, Page to Comey, September 25, 2016 (DJTFP00018015).
[3454] [redacted]

[redacted]

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ii. (U) Page and Russian Intelligence

(U) Page told the Committee that he knew of no instance where he was approached by Russian intelligence officers related to the 2016 U.S. election.[3457] However, the Russian intelligence services had previously approached Page years prior to his involvement with the Trump Campaign in an effort to explore an intelligence collection relationship with him. After the FBI publicly exposed those Russian intelligence officers, Page told the FBI that he was "on the books" with the Russian intelligence services.[3458]

(U) Beginning in New York City in 2008, Page was approached by, and met with, Russians he was later informed were intelligence officers. According to the *SCO Report*, Page met with Alexander Bulatov, a Russian official assigned to the New York Consulate, and "later learned that Bulatov was a Russian intelligence officer."[3459] In 2013, another Russian

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[redacted]

[3457] (U) C. Page Tr., pp. 284–285.
[3458] (U) FBI, FD-302, Page 3/31/2017.
[3459] [redacted] *SCO Report*, Vol. I, p. 96. [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

intelligence officer, Victor Podobnyy, similarly formed a relationship with Page and met with him numerous times.[3460]

(U) In 2015, Buryakov, Podobnyy, and a third Russian intelligence officer, Igor Sporyshev, were indicted for conspiring to act as unregistered agents of a foreign government.[3461] In the complaint, FBI recordings of the Russians in April 2013 reveal them speaking disparagingly of "Male-1" and of their attempted use of Male-1 as an intelligence source for Russia.[3462]

(U) According to the complaint, FBI agents interviewed Page in June 2013, where he described meeting Podobnyy at a conference in New York City as well as subsequent emails and encounters, where he shared reports about energy matters.[3463]

(U) Page deduced he was Male-1 when he read the 2015 complaint.[3464] He has since then openly referred to himself as Male-1, including in his interview with the Committee.[3465] In March 2017, Page suggested to the FBI that he had referred to himself as Male-1 in a meeting with a Russian official at the United Nations (UN).[3466] When the FBI later asked him about this in a subsequent interview, Page stated that everyone in Russia knew he was Male-1, and that his encounter with the Russians at the UN did not portray Page correctly and that Page wanted nothing to do with espionage.[3467]

(U) In his interviews with the FBI, Page described his relationship with Russian intelligence as being "on the books," a colloquial term for being an intelligence source. During a March 30, 2017, interview, FBI agents attempted to explain how the Russian intelligence services worked, and suggested that the Russian intelligence services had been tracking Page since his years living in Russia.[3468] The agents further, and specifically, stated that the [redacted] might consider Page either an unwitting or witting "on the record" source for intelligence gathering.[3469] Page questioned the assessment, yet said "I'm sure I'm on the books," and "they know who I am."[3470] The following day, the FBI again asked Page

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[3460] (U) *SCO Report*, Vol. I, p. 96.
[3461] (U) Complaint, *United States v. Evgeny Buryakov, et al.*, (S.D.N.Y. January 23, 2015).
[3462] (U) *Ibid.*, ¶¶ 32–34.
[3463] (U) *Ibid.*
[3464] (U) *SCO Report*, Vol. I, p. 97 (describing Page introducing himself as "Male-1" to Russian officials in New York).
[3465] (U) C. Page Tr., p. 53.
[3466] (U) FBI, FD-302, Page 3/16/2017.
[3467] (U) FBI, FD-302, Page 3/30/2017.
[3468] (U) *Ibid.*
[3469] (U) *Ibid.*
[3470] (U) *Ibid.*

[redacted]

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if he knew what it meant to be "on the books."[3471] Page reiterated that he considered himself to be "on the books," but objected to any characterization that he was "working with" the Russian intelligence services.[3472]

4. (U) Page and the Trump Campaign

(U) Ed Cox, chairman of the New York Republican Party, first met Page around 2008, when they both worked on the McCain presidential campaign.[3473] Cox recalled also encountering Page at Council on Foreign Relations events in New York, where both were members.[3474] On December 31, 2015, Page emailed Cox, stating that he was "cautiously optimistic that the next Administration might finally offer a change of direction in U.S.-Russia relations," and that "recent statements by Trump give me renewed hope."[3475] He asked if Cox had any recommendations "as to how one might be able to support [Trump], including by becoming one of his delegates."[3476] Attached to the email was a draft opinion piece by Page that he wrote for *Global Policy*, titled "Trump, Putin and the Possible End of the Second Cold War," that concluded, "Trump's stance toward Russia reflects optimism for a fresh approach, and this could serve as an important legacy of his candidacy."[3477] The next day, Cox forwarded the email along with the attachment to Corey Lewandowski, introducing him to Page.[3478] On January 2, 2016, Lewandowski responded, "happy to meet anytime," and the two arranged to meet at Trump Tower on January 12, 2016.[3479]

(U) Lewandowski told the Committee he did not recall the meeting, but said it was possible that it was among the many meetings he held at the time.[3480] Sam Clovis, the national co-chair of the Trump Campaign who served as the policy director for the Campaign, recalled the meeting, which included Michael Glassner, another Campaign official at the time.[3481] Clovis told the Committee: "I showed up in New York one morning early and I walked up into the fifth floor area [at Trump Tower]. . . . Corey [Lewandowski] and Michael [Glassner] are there, and there's a guy with them, and Corey says: This is Carter Page; get to know him; he wants to

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[3471] (U) FBI, FD-302, Page 3/31/2017.
[3472] (U) *Ibid.*
[3473] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Ed Cox, March 19, 2018, p. 16.
[3474] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 17.
[3475] (U) Email, Page to Cox, et al., December 31, 2015 (DJTFP00009580–9581).
[3476] (U) *Ibid.*
[3477] (U) *Ibid.* It does not appear that this article was ever published. *Global Policy* is a journal based at Durham University. Page had previously published articles there.
[3478] (U) Email, Cox to Lewandowski, et al., January 1, 2016 (DJTFP00009595).
[3479] (U) Email, Page to Lewandowski and Cox, January 2, 2016 (DJTFP00009595); Emails, Page, Lewandowski, et al., (DJTFP00009611–9612).
[3480] (U) Lewandowski Tr., pp. 20, 29.
[3481] (U) Clovis Tr., pp. 48–49; *see also* SSCI Transcript of Interview with Michael Glassner, August 10, 2018, p. 31 (recalling briefly meeting Page while Page was meeting with Lewandowski in Lewandowski's office).

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help."[3482] Clovis and Page discussed Page's background and desire to help the Campaign.[3483] Later that day, Page sent an email thanking Clovis and Glassner for the meeting, and forwarding them the draft opinion piece.[3484]

(U) On February 17, 2016, Page emailed Clovis, Glassner, and Lewandowski to say that Page had heard that Trump was in the process of assembling a foreign policy advisory team.[3485] Page wrote that he wished to "express my interest in contributing as a member of that team. Although I have little to gain from this personally, I'm committed to supporting Mr. Trump's efforts to make America great again."[3486] He included a bio highlighting his academic and professional experience on energy and foreign policy issues, including Russia.[3487] Clovis responded the following day, suggesting that Page call him for additional information.[3488]

i. (U) The Trump Campaign's National Security Advisory Committee is Formed

(U) On March 21, 2016, Trump released five names of his foreign policy advisers, including Page, during a meeting with *The Washington Post* editorial board.[3489] The Committee interviewed several members of the Trump Campaign to understand how this group was formed, and how Page came to be one of the original members.

(U) Ten days later, Trump held his first—and only—meeting of the Campaign with his "national security team," which included several of the previously announced foreign policy advisers, at the Trump International Hotel in Washington.[3490] Page was traveling and did not attend.[3491]

(U) As described elsewhere in this Report, the formation of a foreign policy and national security team was undertaken in large part to respond to public scrutiny over the lack of expertise on the Campaign.[3492] Clovis recalled in particular that Jared Kushner and Ivanka Trump asked him in mid-March to start assembling this team, which would be formed around then-Senator

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[3482] (U) Clovis Tr., pp. 48–49.
[3483] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 49
[3484] (U) Email, Page to Glassner and Clovis, January 12, 2016 (DJTFP00009643).
[3485] (U) Email, Page to Clovis, et al., February 17, 2016 (DJTFP00009815–9816).
[3486] (U) *Ibid.*
[3487] (U) Email, Page to Clovis, Lewandowski, and Glassner, February 17, 2016 (DJTFP00009815).
[3488] (U) Email, Clovis to Page, February 18, 2016 (DJTFP00009817).
[3489] (U) Opinions Staff, "A transcript of Donald Trump's meeting with The Washington Post editorial board," March 21, 2016.
[3490] (U) Instagram, @realDonaldTrump, March 31, 2016.
[3491] (U) Clovis Tr., p. 15; Gordon Tr., p. 51.
[3492] (U) *See infra* Vol. 5, Sec. III.E.

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Jeff Sessions.[3493] Clovis recalled that the Campaign was "desperate to get the press off our backs."[3494]

(U) In early March 2016, Clovis started assembling names for all of the planned policy teams, including foreign policy and national security and conveyed a policy team "matrix" via email to Kushner, Ivanka Trump, Lewandowski, Glassner and Stephen Miller on March 6, which included Page under "Foreign Policy."[3495] On March 16, Clovis emailed Kushner, Ivanka Trump, Lewandowski, and Glassner, "As you asked for today, find attached the list of those from whom I have commitments to the team."[3496] Clovis included short bios, about which he added, "The abbreviated versions hardly capture the accomplishments of these individuals."[3497] This appears to be the first time this group is referred to as the "National Security Advisory Committee," chaired by Sessions. The list includes Page's academic credentials, his current role as "Founder and Managing Partner" of Global Capital Energy, LLC, and his previous position as "Deputy Branch Manager, Merrill Lynch, Moscow."[3498] Two days later, Kushner responded to Clovis, asking, "How would you rate this team? Will people think its [sic] impressive?"[3499] To which Clovis responded:

> *I like the team well enough. . . . I don't think we can play "match the list" right now. I have interviewed, vetted and have paperwork on all the folks on our list and am very comfortable working with them. Some of them are already sending inputs that are most helpful.*[3500]

(U) On March 21, Clovis submitted an updated list of eight individuals for potential "National Security/Foreign Policy Team Recruiting," where he stated that he had "secured NDAs [non-disclosure agreements] from the following individuals."[3501] The list again included Page.[3502] Clovis told the Committee that all eight original members of the Campaign's National Security Advisory Committee were people who had previously reached out to the Campaign, to either him or Lewandowski, Glassner, or members of the Trump family.[3503] Clovis vetted the advisers by conducting Google searches on them "to make sure we didn't have any immediate

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[3493] **(U)** Clovis Tr., p. 13.
[3494] **(U)** *Ibid.*, p. 14.
[3495] **(U)** Email, Clovis to Kushner, et al., March 6, 2016 (DJTFP00009899–9912).
[3496] **(U)** Email, Clovis to Kushner, I. Trump, Lewandowski, and Glassner, March 16, 2016 (DJTFP00009953–9954).
[3497] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[3498] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[3499] **(U)** Email, Kushner to Clovis, et al., March 18, 2016 (SSCI 2017-4105-0002).
[3500] **(U)** Email, Clovis to Kushner, et al., March 18, 2016 (SSCI 2017-4105-0002–3).
[3501] **(U)** Email, Clovis to Lewandowski, Glassner, Hicks, and S. Miller, March 20, 2016 (DJTFP00010078–10082).
[3502] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[3503] **(U)** Clovis Tr., pp. 16–17.

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land mines out there. . . but there was an urgency because we were just getting pounded in the press. I think that the urgency of that overcame a more deliberate approach."[3504] Clovis added, "Those eight people were the eight that I could find in that short a notice that I could put on there."[3505]

(U) Trump Campaign staff interviewed by the Committee downplayed the significance of the National Security Advisory Committee as well as Page's role. J.D. Gordon, a former director of the Trump Campaign's National Security Advisory Committee told the Committee that it was "just an advisory committee. They didn't even set foot in our [Campaign] office, didn't have a badge, didn't have a DonaldTrump.com email account."[3506] Hope Hicks, the Campaign's press secretary, told the Committee, "I think there was an understanding that this group was put together when nobody wanted to be associated with our campaign or our candidate."[3507] Of Page, she said:

> *I think describing him as an "adviser" is inaccurate. I don't know who he was advising, but he was not advising the candidate or the policy team. . . . He was just a person whose name got slapped on a list for a committee because we didn't have anybody else.*[3508]

(U) Nevertheless, in some instances, Page may have been given reason to believe his access extended further than it did. On March 22, 2016, Clovis emailed Page and other members of the foreign policy and national security advisory team.[3509] Clovis wrote:

> *Gentlemen, Expect a call from Mr. Trump today at some point. I was asked for your numbers this morning. Given the events of the day, expect to be asked some questions about what we need to be doing about the unfolding events.*[3510]

Subsequent communications indicate that Page prepared and waited for the call, which did not take place.[3511] As noted above, Page never met or spoke with Trump.

ii. (U) Page On The Campaign

[3504] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 45–46.
[3505] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 50.
[3506] (U) Gordon Tr., p. 42.
[3507] (U) Hicks Tr., pp. 20–21.
[3508] (U) Hicks Tr., p. 20.
[3509] (U) Email, Clovis to Page, Papadopoulos, Schmitz, et al., March 22, 2016 (Page Production).
[3510] (U) *Ibid.* Clovis was likely referencing a series of terrorist attacks that had occurred earlier that day in Brussels.
[3511] (U) Email, Page to Clovis, March 23, 2016 (DJTFP00010094); Email, Page to Clovis, March 22, 2016 (DJTFP00010092).

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(U) Almost immediately after the March 21, 2016, announcement of the advisory committee, the media began to focus on Page's Russia-related interests. On March 23, 2016, Page sent an email to Clovis about media outreach regarding Page's role as a Campaign adviser and his Russia background.[3512]

(U) J.D. Gordon told the Committee that Page attended several informal gatherings of the foreign policy and national security advisory team. In the first week of June 2016, Page attended a dinner with other Campaign advisers, and in late June or early July 2016, Page attended an advisory committee meeting at the Capitol Hill Club in Washington.[3513] Sessions attended the event and spoke with Page briefly.[3514] In August 2016, Page attended a dinner hosted by Keith Kellogg, another Campaign adviser, at Kellogg's home that was also attended by the other foreign policy advisers.[3515]

(U) Page frequently emailed members of the Trump Campaign on Russia policy matters. For example, on January 30, 2016, before being announced as a foreign policy adviser, Page emailed Glassner and Clovis, and copied Lewandowski. He wrote:

> *Following up on our discussions about Russia earlier this month and Fox's obnoxious failed comments regarding the Putin-Trump relationship this week, I wanted to share with you a few thoughts and suggestions about some massive additional potential upside for the campaign. I spent the past week in Europe and have been in discussions with some individuals with close ties to the Kremlin. The possible game-changing effect which Mr. Trump could have in bringing the end of the new Cold War that Obama and George W. Bush managed to create in recent years has literally brought a new exceptionally high level of optimism in Moscow and across the country. Given the essential strategic position that Russia has in the world as a permanent member of the UN Security Council, etc., the effect of Mr. Trump could be nothing short of monumental. Through my discussions with these high level contacts, it is their belief that a direct meeting in Moscow between Mr Trump and President Putin could be arranged.*[3516]

(U) In his interview with the Committee, Page claimed that he could not remember which well-connected individuals to whom he was referring in this email. [3517]

[3512] (U) Email, Page to Clovis, March 23, 2016 (DJTFP00010094).
[3513] (U) Gordon Tr., p. 64.
[3514] (U) *Ibid*; Page Tr., 148–149, 256.
[3515] (U) Gordon Tr., p. 65.
[3516] (U) Email, Page to Glassner, Clovis, and Lewandowski, January 30, 2016 (DJTFP00009674).
[3517] (U) C. Page Tr., p. 94. Page suggested he may have been referring to Sergei Yatsenko, but Page was not clear about this point.

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(U) In the same email, Page also sent a notice of his upcoming attendance at a one-day J.P. Morgan Securities "Gazprom Investor Day" in New York.[3518] In the email Page wrote:

> *the U.S. Government's failed sanctions policy has severely hindered the development of Gazprom in recent years with potential catastrophic consequences for the people of Russia. They too are eagerly awaiting the massive changes which Mr. Trump has readily positioned himself to soon bring.*[3519]

Clovis replied later that day, thanked Page, and said that he would be in touch the following week.[3520]

(U) On February 7, 2016, Page again emailed Clovis, Glassner and Lewandowski, noting that Forbes had ranked Putin as the most powerful world leader, and that, in Russia, relationships are very important.[3521] Page continued: "As I have alluded to before, there is no question that a Trump visit to Moscow and related meetings with Putin would prove to be the most important campaign event in the history of U.S. politics."[3522]

(U) On February 17, 2016, Page wrote an email to the same three Campaign officials regarding the February 2014 release of the phone conversation between the former Assistant Secretary of State for European and Eurasian Affairs Victoria Nuland and U.S. Ambassador to Ukraine Geoffrey Pyatt, a story he would repeatedly cite as an example of Clinton's mismanagement of foreign policy.[3523] During this 2014 call, Nuland is recorded discussing the composition of the Ukraine opposition as well as criticizing the European Union support for Ukraine.[3524] The link to the released phone conversation was first posted on Twitter by an aide to then-Russian Deputy Prime Minister Dmitry Rogozin.[3525]

(U) On March 16, 2016, the Trump Campaign released a brief ten-second video on Instagram featuring Hillary Clinton barking followed by a clip of Putin laughing that concluded: "We don't need to be a punch line! Make America Great Again!"[3526] Kremlin spokesperson

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[3518] (U) Email, Page to Glassner, Clovis, and Lewandowski, January 30, 2016 (DJTFP00009674).
[3519] (U) *Ibid.*
[3520] (U) Email, Clovis to Page, Glassner, and Lewandowski, January 30, 2016 (DJTFP00009676).
[3521] (U) Email, Page to Glassner, Clovis, and Lewandowski, February 7, 2016 (DJTFP00009721–00009722).
[3522] (U) *Ibid.*
[3523] (U) Email, Page to Glassner, Clovis, and Lewandowski, February 17, 2016 (DJTFP00009814).
[3524] (U) "Leaked Audio Reveals Embarrassing U.S. Exchange on Ukraine, EU," *Reuters,* February 6, 2014.
[3525] (U) The leaked phone conversation was widely reported at the time. *See, e.g., ibid.* For more information on this topic, *see infra* Vol. 5, Sec. III.A.
[3526] (U) Instagram, @realDonaldTrump, March 16, 2016. The clip showed video of Putin and an ISIS fighter in succession and suggested that these were America's "toughest opponents."

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Dmitry Peskov responded publicly the next day: "It's an open secret for us that demonizating Russia and whatever is linked to Russia is unfortunately a mandatory hallmark of America's election campaign."[3527] Peskov's comment was widely covered in the U.S. press.[3528] Page sent an email on March 17, 2016, to Clovis linking to a *Reuters* article writing:

> *I know people who work closely with the [spokesman] from the Kremlin. . . . Perhaps the more relevant responses to yesterday's Instagram video were many of the amazing comments written in Russian. Clearly there's an extraordinary level of excitement from the people of that country regarding the new potential for relations between our 2 global powerhouses. Make the World Great Again.*[3529]

(U) Also on March 17, 2016, Page sent Clovis one of several documents that Page created for the Campaign, seemingly at his own initiative, which he referred to as both the "President's Daily Brief" and the "Candidate's Daily Briefing."[3530] These documents presented Page's analysis in a bulleted briefing slide format, and covered a range of topics, but often focused on Russia.[3531] The briefing slides and accompanying emails from Page portrayed Putin as a victor in Syria, complimented Russian forces' stabilizing role in Syria, and criticized the U.S. military's lack of effectiveness in Syria as well as U.S. "meddling."[3532] The documents, which also covered Ukraine, were critical of NATO, particularly regarding its strategy of deterring Russia, and advocated for a strong personal relationship between the top leadership in Washington and Moscow.[3533] The Committee found no evidence indicating that these documents were used by the Campaign.

(U) On May 9, 2016, Page emailed Gordon a list of more than ten examples of media requests he had received in which he confirmed his role as an adviser to the Campaign but otherwise offered "no comment."[3534] In the same email, Page stated he had received offers for "speaking engagements in Russia and the Middle East," including from a "close advisor of President Putin," Sergey Karaganov, and asked for a copy of the approval form for Campaign

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[3527] **(U)** Andrew Osborn and Dmitry Solovyov, "Kremlin says Donald Trump pre-election clip demonizes Russia," *Reuters*, March 17, 2016.
[3528] **(U)** *See, e.g.*, Michael Birnbaum and Andrew Roth, "The bromance between Trump and Putin is over," *The Washington Post*, March 17, 2016.
[3529] **(U)** Email, Page to Clovis, March 17, 2016 (DJTFP00009958).
[3530] **(U)** Email, Page to Clovis, March 17, 2016 (DJTFP00009962–9963); Email Page to Clovis, March 19, 2016 (DJTFP00010056–10057); Email, Page to Clovis, March 22, 2016 (DJTFP00010090–10091); Email, Page to Clovis, March 23, 2016 (DJTFP00010094–10095).
[3531] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[3532] **(U)** Email, Page to Clovis, March 17, 2016 (DJTFP00009962–9963).
[3533] **(U)** Email, Page to Clovis, March 22, 2016 (DJTFP00010090–10091); Email, Page to Clovis, March 23, 2016 (DJTFP00010094–10095).
[3534] **(U)** Email, Page to Gordon, May 9, 2016 (DJTFP00000097–98).

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advisers to seek approval for such events.[3535] Page told the Committee that he met Karaganov in the late 1990s and again when Page lived in Moscow from 2004 to 2007, but he provided no clear explanation for the invitation he was referring to in the May 9 email, but suggested that it may have come as a result of Karaganov's involvement with a Russian university.[3536] In the late April 2016 email exchange that led to Page's invitation to speak at the New Economic School (NES) in Moscow (described below), Andrej Krickovic, an academic acquaintance of Page at the Moscow Higher School of Economics (HSE), offered to connect Page to Karaganov.[3537]

(U) Karaganov has been a dean at the HSE since 2003 and has served as chairman of a Russian state-funded think tank, the Valdai Discussion Club since 2004.[3538] Karaganov has also served as an adviser to the Kremlin and to President Putin, including as a foreign policy adviser to the Russian Presidential Administration from 2001 to 2013 and Chairman of the Russian Presidium on Foreign and Defense Policy.[3539] Karaganov is known for advising the Kremlin on Russian opportunities for expansionism, at U.S. expense, around the world.[3540]

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(U) Gordon responded to Page's May 9 email later the same day and provided the speech and media forms requested.[3546] Gordon expressed his gratitude, writing, "If we had 10 Carter Pages… imagine what we could do!"[3547] Gordon, however, also advised Page that all members of the advisory committee were "keeping a very low profile right now" due to a George

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[3535] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[3536] **(U)** C. Page Tr., pp. 219–221.
[3537] **(U)** Email, Krickovic to Page, April 25, 2016 (Page Production).
[3538] **(U)** HSE.ru, "Sergey A. Karaganov."
[3539] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[3540] **(U)** In 1994, Karaganov gave a speech that suggested that Russia had to be committed to defending the interests of Russians who lived in Russia's "near abroad," which was then dubbed the "Karaganov Doctrine." There are numerous references in open source information since 1994, of the "Karaganov Doctrine." *See, e.g.*, Andrew Stuttaford, "Meet Sergey Karaganov," *National Review*, April 10, 2014.
[3541] [redacted]
[3542] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[3543] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[3544] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[3545] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[3546] **(U)** Email, Gordon to Page, May 9, 2016 (DJTFP00000099).
[3547] **(U)** *Ibid.*

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Papadopoulos interview that went poorly, as well as the transition of focus from the primary to general election.[3548]

(U) Nevertheless, Page continued to draw media attention about his role in the Campaign and specifically his views on Russia. On June 11, 2016, Gordon emailed Campaign officials Rick Dearborn and John Mashburn with the subject line "Carter Page, Gazprom & Media Engagement."[3549] Gordon discussed Page's history of speaking with the press and suggested that while Page was generally helpful, he was "difficult to manage," especially as it related to the press. In the email, Gordon noted that he "wanted to draw your attention to National Review piece on Carter," which referred to Page as an "out-and-out Putinite," who is "tight with the Kremlin's foreign-policy apparatus and has served as a vehement propagandist for it."[3550] Gordon also alluded to a recent inquiry to Page by *The Washington Post*'s Tom Hamburger and suggested that any resulting piece would be damaging to the Campaign.[3551]

(U) The same day, Page initiated an email thread by writing to Hope Hicks including draft responses to questions posed to Page by *The Washington Post*.[3552] Most of the questions focused on Page's role in the Campaign and his views on Russia policy.[3553] Hicks forwarded the email to Stephen Miller and Lewandowski, asking, "Can you please advise? I don't know Carter well or the extent of his involvement."[3554] Shortly thereafter, on June 14, 2016, *The Washington Post* published the first article on the DNC hack.[3555] Although the article was neither written by Hamburger nor about Page, Page emailed Hicks and Gordon with a link to the article, writing, "Looks like Tom & Co concocted another fairytale instead of the original inaccurate attack job against DJT, me and my firm… at least so far."[3556]

iii. (U) Page Travels to Russia, July 2016

(U) Page sought and received approval from then-Trump Campaign manager Corey Lewandowski to travel to Russia in July 2016, in order to make two addresses at the NES in Moscow. Lewandowski explicitly told Page this would be speaking in his own capacity and not related to the Campaign.

[3548] (U) *Ibid.*
[3549] (U) Email, Gordon to Dearborn and Mashburn, June 11, 2016 (DJTFP00002990–2991).
[3550] (U) *Ibid.*; Robert Zubrin, "Trump: The Kremlin's Candidate," *National Review*, April 4, 2016.
[3551] (U) *Ibid.*
[3552] (U) Email, Page to Hicks, June 11, 2016 (DJTFP00002888–2892).
[3553] (U) *Ibid.*
[3554] (U) Email, Hicks to S. Miller, June 11, 2016 (DJTFP00002887–2892).
[3555] (U) Ellen Nakashima, "Russian government hackers penetrated DNC, stole opposition research on Trump," *The Washington Post*, June 14, 2016.
[3556] (U) Email, Page to Hicks and Gordon, June 14, 2016 (DJTFP00003226).

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(U) Page's invitation from the NES was based solely on their perception of Page as an adviser to the Trump Campaign. Page's invitation to Russia was proffered by the rector of the NES, Shlomo Weber.[3557] Weber told the Committee that he had first heard of Page through two individuals at the HSE. The first of these individuals was his son, Yuval Weber, an American academic who was on the faculty of the HSE.[3558] The second was another academic whom Weber did not know as well, Andrej Krickovic, who was also at the HSE and had first met Page when Krickovic was an intern at the U.S. Embassy in Moscow and Page was working at Merrill Lynch in Moscow.[3559]

(U) On April 25, 2016, Krickovic emailed Page with the subject line "Introducing Shlomo Weber," opening his email with: "It's been a while since we last talked. I've been following the news and did not have chance [sic] to congratulate you on your new appointment. Great news!"[3560] Krickovic further stated:

> *The reason I'm writing you is to introduce Professor Shlomo Weber. . . . He is interested in engaging with the Trump campaign on Russia issues. I don't know Shlomo personally, but I am very good friends with Yuval Weber, his son. . . Yuval reached out to me to make the introduction to you. Do you still have the time to come to Russia these days? We'd love for you to give a talk on US Russia relations, and your thoughts about how they could change under a Trump presidency.*[3561]

(U) Page responded the same day, but was noncommittal and concerned about speaking on Trump's foreign policy before the policy was formed.[3562]

(U) Page made reference to Trump's upcoming foreign policy speech at the Mayflower Hotel, saying that it would "not give extensive details of the kind that you've envisioned for such a talk."[3563] He also referred to the negative press he was already receiving and said: "So suffice to say, I need to be careful."[3564] Krickovic responded, expressing his understanding of Page's

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[3557] (U) Weber was a native of the Soviet Union who left in the 1970s to immigrate to Israel, losing his Soviet citizenship. In the early 1990s, he immigrated to the United States and had a career as an academic for over two decades. Upon his retirement from his academic position in the United States in the 2010s, he became a guest lecturer at Moscow's NES, and eventually became the rector of the school, a position he held until 2018. SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Shlomo Weber, December 3, 2018, p. 5.

[3558] (U) Weber Tr., pp. 8–9.

[3559] (U) *Ibid.*; FBI, FD-302, Krickovic 8/15/2017.

[3560] (U) Email, Krickovic to Page and Y. Weber, April 25, 2016 (Page Production).

[3561] (U) *Ibid.*

[3562] (U) Email, Page to Krickovic, April 25, 2016 (Page Production).

[3563] (U) *Ibid.*

[3564] (U) *Ibid.*

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"reluctance to speak publicly. . . . Perhaps after Mr. Trump wins and you are head of the Russia desk at State you can come and give a talk to our faculty."[3565] He concluded by asking that Page let him know when next he's in Moscow: "Perhaps we can even arrange a private meeting with our dean, Sergei Karaganov. As you know he has quite some influence in high places here. It would be really good to get a dialogue going."[3566]

(U) On April 26, Shlomo Weber emailed Page: "Thank you for your interest and the willingness to meet with me. I look forward to getting together in Moscow next time you are there or otherwise connecting over the phone or video."[3567] Weber then stated:

> *Allow me to add that I am a Russian-born US citizen and staunch Republican. . . . I would be very happy to contribute my expertise on foreign and economic affairs . . . to a successful Republican presidential candidate.*[3568]

Page responded that he had not yet finalized his plans to travel to Moscow, but that he would be in touch once he had.[3569]

(U) On May 3, Shlomo Weber emailed Page again: "I understand that those are early days and I realize that you have multiple connections in Moscow. I just would like to let you know that NES would be happy to host you."[3570] Page responded, asking for clarification if NES would be willing to pay for the travel for him to give a lecture.[3571] Page again noted that he was under media scrutiny and that he needed to be careful to "make sure I don't create any perceived conflicts of interest in my firm's dealings."[3572] Weber responded on May 12, 2016:

> *I talked with several people here and we would like to invite you to NES. You can give a talk here and, possibly, in some other places. We will cover your travel and accommodation expenses. One of the options could be our graduation ceremony on July 8.*[3573]

[3565] (U) Email, Krickovic to Page, April 25, 2016 (Page Production).
[3566] (U) *Ibid.*
[3567] (U) Email, S. Weber to Page, April 26, 2016 (Weber Production).
[3568] (U) *Ibid.*
[3569] (U) Email, Page to S. Weber, April 26, 2016 (Weber Production).
[3570] (U) Email, S. Weber to Page, May 3, 2016 (Weber Production).
[3571] (U) Email, Page to S. Weber, May 5, 2016 (Weber Production).
[3572] (U) *Ibid.*
[3573] (U) Email, S. Weber to Page, May 12, 2016 (Page Production). Instead of responding directly to Page, Shlomo Weber forwarded to Page an email from his son, Yuval Weber, that included what appeared to be a response to Page purporting to be from Shlomo Weber. While it is unclear why this occurred, this was at least the second such instance of a message from Shlomo Weber to Page coming from an originally forwarded message. It is possible that some of Shlomo Weber's correspondence with Page was written or approved by Yuval Weber.

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Page replied to Weber's offer the same day and conditionally accepted the offer: "That sounds great Shlomo. . . . Please note that we have some internal procedures for the campaign so I will need to get approval."[3574]

(U) Shlomo Weber told the Committee that:

> *There was some interest to see, to learn a little bit more about [Trump] and his potential policy towards Russia was tremendous, so that's what we thought, if somebody is working on his campaign, it could be of interest to Russia, for students, for [the] general public. . . . I thought that at this time that the campaign of then-candidate Trump was really lacking in expertise about foreign policy, and particularly about Russia. And I just thought that maybe we informing the campaign about the Russian issues will be a good thing to do.*[3575]

(U) Weber also told the Committee, "Because of [Page's] role in this campaign we thought it would be good," and said, "the hope was we would hear something from a potentially important person."[3576]

(U) Page raised the invitation to speak at NES with J.D. Gordon and asked for the Campaign speech request forms, which Gordon provided him on May 14.[3577] On May 16, Page emailed Gordon, Phares, and Clovis with a link to the speech President Obama gave at the NES commencement in 2009. Noting Obama's NES speech, Page proposed that Candidate Trump take Page's place at the upcoming event.[3578] Two days later, Page submitted the speech request form to Gordon.[3579]

(U) A little over one month later, on June 19, 2016, Page emailed Gordon, Lewandowski and Hicks, copying Clovis, and stated:

> *I'm resending this Campaign Advisor Speech Request Form which I submitted over a month ago. . . . I'm literally saying nothing about the campaign so I don't think this administrative procedure is relevant in this case. But please let me know as soon as possible in case anyone might have any reservations.*[3580]

[3574] (U) Email, Page to S. Weber, May 12, 2016 (Weber Production).
[3575] (U) Weber Tr., pp. 10–11.
[3576] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 19, 21.
[3577] (U) Email, Gordon to Page, May 14, 2016 (DJTFP00000140–141).
[3578] (U) Email Page to Gordon, Phares, and Clovis, May 16, 2016 (DJTFP00000182).
[3579] (U) Email, Page to Gordon, May 18, 2016 (DJTFP00000208–209).
[3580] (U) Email, Page to Gordon, Lewandowski, Hicks, and Clovis, June 19, 2016 (DJTFP00003431).

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(U) Page also renewed his suggestion that Trump attend, stating "[a]s I had also previously suggested, I'm sure they would love to have Mr. Trump speak at this annual celebration."[3581] Page added: "Russia's Deputy Prime Minister Arkady Dvorkovich is a board member and a graduate who will likely be in attendance."[3582]

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(U) Regarding Page's repeated requests, Gordon told the Committee:

> *[Page] sent me the request. I did not pass it on. But he started to ask me more about it, and I would still tell him it's a bad idea. So eventually he went to the campaign leadership in New York and he got permission to go.*[3585]

(U) On June 19, 2016, Lewandowski wrote to Page: "Carter-- If you want to do this, it would be out side [sic] of your role with the DJT for President campaign. I am certain Mr. Trump will not be able to attend."[3586]

(U) Lewandowski told the Committee that he recalled the email on that day, because it was the day before he got "fired from the campaign." He said:

> *I was trying to be kind: I'm certain Mr. Trump will not be able to attend. You have no formal role in the campaign, so you asking me permission I don't understand, because you don't work for us. You've never signed a nondisclosure agreement. You don't get paid by the campaign. You have no role in the campaign. So if you want to do this, it would be outside of your role with the DJT for President campaign, is what I was very clear.*[3587]

[3581] (U) *Ibid.*
[3582] (U) *Ibid.*
[3583] [redacted]
[3584] [redacted]
[3585] (U) Gordon Tr., p. 55.
[3586] (U) Email, Lewandowski to Page, Gordon, Hicks, and Clovis, June 19, 2016 (DJTFP00003437).
[3587] (U) Lewandowski Tr., p. 32.

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(U) Despite meeting Page briefly in January of that year, Lewandowski added:

> *[A]n individual who I don't think I had ever met before is asking for permission to go to a place to give a speech on something I know nothing about, and is not part of the team I'm running, didn't raise a red flag to me because I didn't have any authority to agree or not agree to let him do something.*[3588]

(U) As noted previously, the week before his departure for Moscow, Page attended a dinner meeting of the Campaign's foreign policy and national security advisers at the Capitol Hill Club in Washington. As the meeting was ending, Page had a brief encounter with Sessions, whom Page informed about his upcoming travel to Moscow to give a speech.[3589] According to Page, there was no meaningful response from Sessions.[3590]

(U) Page was in Moscow from July 4, 2016, through July 9, 2016. Near the start of his time in Moscow, Page had dinner with Shlomo Weber, Krickovic, and several others, some of whom were affiliated with NES and HSE.[3591] This was the first time Weber met with Page. Weber arrived over two hours late and could not recall to the Committee the specific substance of the discussions that night, but recalled that it generally dealt with U.S.-Russia relations and how the relationship might evolve.[3592] Weber recalled that while Page was in Moscow Page made several references to Igor Sechin, but that he had no knowledge of any meeting between Page and Sechin in Moscow.[3593]

[redacted] Sechin is the CEO of Rosneft, Russia's largest oil company. [redacted] He is widely referred to in open source reporting as being one of the most powerful figures inside Putin's inner circle.[3595] The

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[3588] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 33–34.
[3589] (U) C. Page Tr., pp. 148–149.
[3590] (U) *Ibid.* ("[I]t was like in one ear and out the other for him.") Asked about this encounter by HPSCI, Page said Sessions "had no reaction whatsoever." HPSCI Transcript of Interview with Carter Page, November 2, 2017, pp. 68–69.
[3591] (U) Weber Tr., pp. 84–86.
[3592] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 87.
[3593] (U) FBI, FD-302, Weber 7/28/2017 ("Weber recalled that Page kept going on and on about 'Igor Ivanovich, Igor Ivanovich, Igor Ivanovich' which is how Page referred to Igor Sechin. . . . Weber made it clear that Page never discussed meeting Sechin, but he did talk about Sechin a lot."); Weber Tr., p. 121 ("[Page] was making allusions to Igor Sechin, but not about a meeting.").
[3594] [redacted]
[3595] (U) *See, e.g.*, Henry Foy, "'We need to talk about Igor': the rise of Russia's most powerful oligarch," *FT Magazine*, March 1, 2018.

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information from the "Steele Dossier," discussed *infra* Vol. 5, Sec. IV.B, asserted that Page had a meeting with Sechin during this July 2016 visit.

[redacted] The Committee has no further information or details about this reference.

(U) Page told the Committee he met with Andrey Baranov, who he had known since his days living in Moscow and who, in 2016, was the head of investor relations for Rosneft, the company run by Sechin.[3597] During the July visit, Page and Baranov met one evening at a Morgan Stanley social event to watch the European Cup.[3598] Page said no deals were discussed during this meeting,[3599] although he told the FBI that the subject of Sechin came up, but in an immaterial way.[3600]

(U) On July 5, 2016, Page sent an email to Shlomo Weber and his assistant to ask them to remove reference to Page's role as a Trump adviser on the school's website announcing his role in the commencement.[3601] However, Weber told the Committee that throughout this process Page gave the impression that he was an adviser to the Trump Campaign and that "[n]obody ever doubted" he was a Campaign adviser.[3602] Weber said that in the preparations for the speech, it was not clear whether he wanted to be mentioned as an adviser of the Campaign publicly and that the public interest in the election was "quite substantial at this juncture."[3603]

[redacted] There are indications that news of Page's visit reached senior levels of the Kremlin. Denis Klimentov became the press secretary of the NES in the fall of 2016.[3604] Page had repeated direct contact with Klimentov starting as early as his July 2016 trip to Moscow, most of which dealt with outreach to Russian press and journalists seeking to cover Page's speech.[3605] [redacted]

[3596] **(U)** *DOJ OIG FISA Report*, p. 225.
[3597] **(U)** C. Page Tr., pp. 156–157.
[3598] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[3599] **(U)** *Ibid.*, p. 157.
[3600] **(U)** FBI, FD-302, Page 3/30/2017.
[3601] **(U)** Email, Page to S. Weber and Ovchinnikova, July 5, 2016 (Weber Production).
[3602] **(U)** Weber Tr., p. 67.
[3603] **(U)** *Ibid.*, pp. 66, 70.
[3604] **(U)** FBI, FD-302, Denis Klimentov 6/9/2017. Klimentov told the FBI that he was not employed at NES at the time of Page's July 2016 speech at NES but attended at the request of Weber. However, at least as early as July 8, 2016, Klimentov was communicating with Page about the speech and media outreach.
[3605] **(U)** *See* Emails, Page, Klimentov, et al., July 8, 2016–June 4, 2017 (Page Production).

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[redacted] Klimentov's brother and business partner, Dmitriy Klimentov, is a U.S.-based public relations consultant who is a former acting New York bureau chief for the Russian news agency RIA Novosti.[3609] Dmitriy Klimentov maintains regular contact with Dmitry Peskov, who is the Press Secretary for the President Putin.[3610] Dmitriy Klimentov told the FBI that he contacted Peskov about Page's July visit, in the event Peskov wanted to facilitate any meetings.[3611] According to Klimentov, there was no interest in meeting Page and Peskov responded that Page was not high-level enough to meet.[3612]

(U) Page gave two speeches in Moscow. On July 7, he gave a speech to the NES that he titled, "The Evolution of the World Economy: Trends and Potential." The speech was amplified online by Russian nationalist influencers, some of whom have significant ties to the Russian government and Russian intelligence services, and one of whom attended the event and asked Page a question regarding Trump and sanctions.[3613] The next day, at the commencement ceremonies, Page gave a short talk that he titled "Maximizing personal potential in uncertain times: past and future."[3614] Page made no mention of the U.S. 2016 presidential campaign in either set of prepared remarks.

(U) At the second event, the commencement ceremonies on July 8, Page had a brief encounter with Dvorkovich. According to Weber, who observed the encounter but was not close enough to hear what was said, the two shook hands and "talked for a couple of minutes."[3615] Page told the Committee his encounter with Dvorkovich lasted a "maximum [of] 10 seconds,"

[3606] **(U)** [redacted]
[3607] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[3608] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[3609] **(U)** *Ibid.*, p. 29.
[3610] **(U)** FBI, FD-302, Dmitri Klimentov, 11/27/2018.
[3611] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[3612] **(U)** *Ibid.* The SCO obtained an email from Peskov where Peskov stated "I have read about [Page]. Specialists say that his is far from being the main one. So I better not initiate a meeting in the Kremlin." *SCO Report*, Vol. I, p. 100.
[3613] **(U)** *See* Twitter, @A_G_Dugin, July 7, 2016; Twitter, @KatasonovaMaria; Facebook post, Konstantin Rykov, July 7, 2016. Katasonova appears to have attended the event and asked Page a question related to Trump and U.S.-Russia relations. *See* YouTube, youtu.be/adJscX0j4CY, July 7, 2016.
[3614] **(U)** Document, "Maximizing personal potential in uncertain times: past and future" (Page Production).
[3615] **(U)** Weber Tr., p. 59.

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which he described as a "sort of a brief, in-passing moment," where Dvorkovich gave "warm pleasantries."[3616]

(U) While in Moscow, Page emailed Trump Campaign staff member Tera Dahl, copying J.D. Gordon, to inform them that he was overseas and could not attend a meeting with a European delegation sponsored by the Transatlantic Parliamentary Group on Terrorism that hoped to meet with the Clinton and Trump Campaigns.[3617] Page wrote:

> *On a related front, I'll send you guys a readout soon regarding some incredible insights and outreach I've received from a few Russian legislators and senior members of the Presidential Administration here. Suffice to say that after watching their national economy and relationships with Europe get derailed by Washington mismanagement with disastrous consequences over recent years, Russians from the highest levels of government to the average man on the street have a new optimism and hope for the future based on Mr. Trump's common sense statements about his foreign policy approaches over the past year.*[3618]

(U) Later the same day, Page emailed Gordon, Dahl and Walid Phares with the subject line: "Feedback from Russia – Executive Summary," to which he attached a document with the same title.[3619] The document began with the statement: "On Thursday and Friday (July 7 & 8, 2016), campaign advisor Carter Page presented before gatherings at the New Economic School (NES) in Moscow including their 2016 Commencement Ceremony."[3620] The first bullet stated:

> *Russian Deputy Prime Minister and NES Board Member Arkady Dvorkovich also spoke before the event. In a private conversation, Dvorkovich expressed strong support for Mr. Trump and a desire to work together toward devising better solutions in response to the vast range of current international problems. Based on feedback from a diverse array of sources close to the Russian Presidential Administration, it was readily apparent that this sentiment is widely held at all levels of the government.*[3621]

(U) The Committee asked Page about the source of his "incredible insights," the private conversation with Dvorkovich, and the "diverse array of sources close to the Russian Presidential Administration" that he wrote about in this email. As was the case with his January 30, 2016

[3616] **(U)** *Ibid.*, p. 175.
[3617] **(U)** Email, Page to Dahl and Gordon, July 8, 2016 (DJTFP00004021).
[3618] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[3619] **(U)** Email, Page to Dahl, Gordon, and Phares, July 8, 2016 (DJTFP00004022–4023).
[3620] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[3621] **(U)** *Ibid.*

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email to Glassner, Clovis, and Lewandowski, Page had difficulty recalling his allegedly high-level engagements. He told the Committee that he was referring to: the exchange with academics over dinner on July 5; one encounter he had with a staff member who worked for a Duma (Russian parliament) member and whose name he could not recall; and, the handshake with Dvorkovich at the commencement ceremony on July 8.[3622] Page told the Committee that the unnamed Duma staffer and Dvorkovich were the only two people that he directly interacted with in the Russian government during the trip.[3623] Page allowed that his written comments from the email relating to outreach from Russian legislators "may have been an exaggeration."[3624]

(U) Page's visit to Moscow in July drew international media attention. While still in Moscow, Page emailed Gordon and Hicks, copying Clovis:

> *I wanted to give you a quick heads up about a few developments during my Moscow trip. . . . I have been doing everything possible to keep a low profile...and to the extent people do learn I'm here, ensuring they all understand that my visit is outside of my role with the campaign. But given the vast outpouring of support for Mr. Trump and the strong social network in Russia, a few journalists caught wind of my presence in Russia and have been following my every move closely. As always, I have been avoiding any media interview until otherwise instructed.*[3625]

(U) Gordon forwarded the email to Mashburn and Dahl, with the comment: "FYI. We probably ought to print this out for our files."[3626]

(U) Page's July speeches in Moscow were monitored by American businessman Paul Erickson, Russian national Maria Butina and Russian government official Alexander Torshin. A July 18, 2016 exchange between Butina and Torshin revealed Butina's interest in Page:

> ***Butina**: Right now I would rather meet with Carter Page. He's Trump's advisor for the RF and heads the pro-Russian group. He was in Moscow at a meeting with Putin last year. Can you find out how we feel about him?*
>
> ***Torshin**: I'll try, but tomorrow. Not long ago one of his advisors was in Moscow. I don't remember the last name.*

[3622] **(U)** C. Page Tr., pp. 176–177.
[3623] **(U)** *Ibid.*, pp. 181–182. Katasonova, described above, introduced herself as an assistant to a Duma official when asking Page a question during his NES speech. *See* YouTube, youtu.be/adJscX0j4CY, July 7, 2016.
[3624] **(U)** *Ibid.*, p. 181.
[3625] **(U)** Email, Page to Gordon, Hicks, and Clovis, July 7, 2016 (DJTFP00003920) (second ellipsis in original).
[3626] **(U)** Email, Gordon to Mashburn, et al., July 7, 2016 (DJTFP00003920).

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> ***Butina:*** *. . . Thank you very much for the information. Carter Page is his name. This is very important. I have not yet agreed to a meeting with him. It depends on your opinion.*[3627]

For more information on Torshin and Butina, *see infra* Vol. 5, Sec. III.H.

(U) Page attended the GOP convention held in Cleveland from July 18 through July 21, 2016. At one of the receptions, Page and Gordon had a brief encounter with Sergei Kislyak, Russia's Ambassador to the United States. Page told the Committee it was the first time he had met Kislyak, and that Page offered the Ambassador his business card, but that the Ambassador did not offer Page his card in return.[3628]

(U) The media attention from Page's July 2016 visit to Moscow followed Page until after he was dismissed from the Campaign in September 2016.

(U) The media attention regarding Page's travel to Moscow also drew political attention. On August 27, 2016, Senator Harry Reid, Senate Minority leader, wrote and publicly released a letter to FBI Director James Comey.[3629] The letter expressed Reid's concern about Russian interference in the 2016 elections and quoted former Acting Director of CIA Michael Morrell, declaring candidate Trump an "unwitting agent" of Russia and the Kremlin. While naming no Trump Campaign officials, the letter does state:

> *For example, questions have been raised about whether a Trump advisor who has been highly critical of U.S. and European economic sanctions on Russia, and who has conflicts of interest due to investments in Russian energy conglomerate Gazprom, met with high-ranking sanctioned individuals while in Moscow in July of 2016, well after Trump became the presumptive nominee. (The same individual recently broke precedent by giving a speech critical of U.S. policy while in Moscow.) Any such meetings should be investigated and made a part of the public record.*[3630]

(U) Following his return from Moscow in July, Page continued to email his opinions on media reports regarding Russia to Campaign staff and other Campaign advisory committee

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[3627] **(U)** Twitter direct messages, Torshin and Butina, July 18, 2016.
[3628] **(U)** C. Page Tr., pp. 253–262; *see also* Gordon Tr., pp. 37–42.
[3629] **(U)** Letter, Reid to Comey, August 27, 2016. Reid's letter to Comey was sent after Reid's briefing as a "Gang of Eight" member with CIA Director Brennan. [redacted]
[3630] **(U)** *Ibid.*

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members. His emails, which covered topics ranging from the hack of the DNC to the U.S. role in Ukraine, were often conspiratorial and generally reflective of Russian policy positions.[3631]

(U) On July 28, 2016, Page emailed Hicks and copied Clovis and Gordon about being contacted by a "barrage of reporters over recent days."[3632] Page wrote that he would "continue avoiding all interview requests" but continued to offer the Campaign his "help in the media department."[3633] Hicks forwarded the email to Stephen Miller, and asked, "Who can weigh in here?"[3634] Miller responded: "[N]one of our FP guys should be doing any interviews on [R]ussia right now."[3635] To which Hicks responded: "Agreed!!!!"[3636]

(U) On September 13, 2016, shortly before he was separated from the Campaign, Page sent an email to the other Campaign foreign policy and national security advisers and several Campaign staff.[3637] In the email, Page commented on an upcoming event which he planned to attend at the Council on Foreign Relations that would feature then-Vice President Joe Biden.[3638] Page proposed asking Biden a question regarding his son's work in Ukraine.[3639] Another Campaign adviser, Bert Mizusawa responded the next day: "Mentioning Biden's children could backfire."[3640] To which Kubic added: "I agree with Bert – not sure you should use his son to bait him."[3641]

iv. (U) Page Leaves the Trump Campaign

(U) Page's profile in the U.S. media increased following his July 2016 visit and speeches in Moscow. It was not until September 2016, however, that the Campaign moved to dismiss him because he had become a media distraction.

(U) On August 2, 2016, in response to yet another media query about Page which Page appears to have accepted without permission, Hicks reached out to Stephen Miller, Dearborn,

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[3631] (U) *See, e.g.*, Email, Page to Clovis, et al., July 24, 2016 (DJTFP00004447).
[3632] (U) Email, Page to Hicks, et al., July 28, 2016 (DJTFP00004499).
[3633] (U) *Ibid.*
[3634] (U) Email, Hicks to S. Miller, July 28, 2016 (DJTFP00004499).
[3635] (U) Email, S. Miller to Hicks, July 28, 2016 (DJTFP00004499).
[3636] (U) Email, Hicks to S. Miller, July 28, 2016 (DJTFP00004499).
[3637] (U) Email, Page to Mizusawa, Kubic, Papadopoulos, Clovis, Phares, et al., September 13, 2016 (DJTFP00017287).
[3638] (U) *Ibid.*
[3639] (U) *Ibid.*
[3640] (U) Email, Mizusawa to Page, Kubic, Papadopoulos, Clovis, Phares, et al., September 14, 2016 (DJTFP00017286–17287).
[3641] (U) Email, Kubic to Page, Mizusawa, Papadopoulos, Clovis, Phares, et al., September 14, 2016 (DJTFP00017286).

[redacted]

[redacted]

and Jason Miller in order to find someone who could speak with Page about the interview.[3642] Stephen Miller responded, writing: "We need to stop this," to which Hicks responded: "I do not know Carter. He's sent me a few emails, but I think someone with authority should remind him he does not speak for the campaign, or Mr. Trump and we strongly advise against this (all via phone)."[3643]

(U) Late on September 22, 2016, Michael Isikoff emailed Jason Miller with questions about Page, prior to publishing a story about alleged U.S. intelligence focus on Page and his role in the Trump Campaign.[3644] Miller sent an email to Hicks and other Campaign staff, stating: "I'm pretty sure we've answered re: Carter Page 100x previously, but I forgot the answer."[3645] Hicks responded to Miller: "He has no role. We are not aware of any of his activities, past or present."[3646]

(U) On September 23, Isikoff published the article, which generated additional media queries about Page to the Campaign. In an email regarding the article Stephen Miller wrote: "We should say he's not an advisor, he's never advised Mr. Trump, and has made no contribution to the campaign. Speaking for myself, I've never spoken to him, and wouldn't recognize him if he were sitting next to me."[3647] Hicks emailed Dearborn, Stephen Miller, Clovis, and Jason Miller: "For the final time, we need to cut ties with Carter. . . . Please advise as to how we do this logistically and Jason and I will strategize on not looking reactionary!"[3648] Dearborn responded: "Sam, you know him best yes? I've never met or talked with him."[3649]

(U) On the same day, September 23, 2016, Page reached out to Hicks, Jason Miller, and others with a proposal for a long press statement, formatted under the official Trump Campaign logo, that addressed the press queries about him.[3650] Fifteen minutes later, Jason Miller responded to Page's email, "Carter – let's talk in the morning. I had a different direction in mind."[3651]

[3642] (U) Email, Hicks to S. Miller, Dearborn, and J. Miller, August 2, 2016 (DJTFP00023340);
[3643] (U) Email, S. Miller to Hicks, Dearborn, and J. Miller, August 2, 2016 (DJTFP00023340); Email, Hicks to S. Miller, Dearborn, and J. Miller, August 2, 2016 (DJTFP00023339–23340).
[3644] (U) Email, Isikoff to J. Miller, September 22, 2016 (DJTFP00017694); *see* Michael Isikoff, "U.S. Intel officials probe ties between Trump advisor and Kremlin," *Yahoo News,* September 23, 2016.
[3645] (U) Email, J. Miller to Hicks, S. Miller, et al., September 22, 2016 (DJTFP00017694).
[3646] (U) Email, Hicks to J. Miller, S. Miller, et al., September 23, 2016 (DJTFP00017694).
[3647] (U) Email, S. Miller to Hicks, et al., September 23, 2016 (DJTFP00017740).
[3648] (U) Email, Hicks to Dearborn, et al., September 23, 2016 (DJTFP00017705).
[3649] (U) Email, Dearborn to Hicks, et al., September 23, 2016 (DJTFP00017711).
[3650] (U) Email, Page to J. Miller, et al., September 23, 2016 (DJTFP00017783–17784).
[3651] (U) Email, J. Miller to Page, et al., September 23, 2016 (DJTFP00017783).

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(U) On September 25, 2016, Kellyanne Conway, then-Campaign manager, publicly stated that Page was "certainly not part of the campaign I'm running."[3652] In a forwarded email to Hicks, Conway wrote, "Mr. Trump saw this segment and called me to say he has no idea who Carter Page is and wants to be sure he has never met him. May be best to check that he did not actually meet with him at any point and be sure Clovis, et. al [sic] remove Page's name from materials, website."[3653] Hicks responded, incorrectly: "He did meet with him one time in March at the old post office with a group of about 12 other people. They have never interacted or spoken since."[3654] As noted previously, Page did not attend the publicized meeting of the other national security and foreign policy advisers with Trump on March 31, 2016.

(U) The Campaign made no formal statement severing its relationship with Page. According to Clovis, Jason Miller communicated Page's termination to him. Clovis testified to the Committee: "The last I left it with the campaign was Jason Miller was going to take care of that. My job was to tell Carter to knock it off, as a person who knew him. As far as I know, Jason was the one that laid down the law to him."[3655]

(U) Very early on September 26, 2016, Page sent an email to Eric Trump and copying numerous other Campaign staff and advisers telling him that: "I wanted you to know that I have decided to take a leave of absence from my work on the campaign."[3656] He attached a letter, dated the day before, that he said he intended to send to FBI Director James Comey.[3657] Eric Trump forwarded this email to Hicks with the message: "I know nothing of this guy. Do you?"[3658] Hicks responded:

> *Know of him. He was listed on an initial foreign policy adviser board Sam Clovis put together in the spring. He has never met or spoken to DJT or anyone on the campaign except Sam for that matter. It has now come to light he has ties to the Russian government so of course people are pushing it out as if he is the person whispering in DJT's ear. Nonsense. Regardless, we requested he resign. I have no idea why he is directing that to you.*[3659]

As noted, aspects of Hicks's statement are incorrect – although Page never met the candidate, he did meet occasionally and often communicated with various members of the Campaign staff.

[3652] **(U)** David Cohen, "Conway denies Trump campaign ties to Russia figure," *Politico*, September 25, 2016.
[3653] **(U)** Email, Conway to Hicks, September 25, 2016 (DJTFP00017849).
[3654] **(U)** Email, Hicks to Conway, September 25, 2016 (DJTFP00017849).
[3655] **(U)** Clovis Tr., p. 67. The Committee did not interview Jason Miller.
[3656] **(U)** Email, Page to E. Trump, et al., September 26, 2016 (DJTFP00018044–18045).
[3657] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[3658] **(U)** Email, E. Trump to Hicks, September 26, 2016 (DJTFP00018044).
[3659] **(U)** Email, Hicks to E. Trump, September 26, 2016 (DJTFP00018046).

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(U) The letter Page addressed to FBI Director Comey, dated September 25, 2016 stated, in part: "I am writing to request the FBI's prompt end of the reported inquiry regarding my personal trip to Russia in July 2016 – an investigation which has been widely mentioned in the media."[3660] Among other things, Page noted: "I have not met this year with any sanctioned official in Russia despite the fact that there are no restrictions on U.S. persons speaking with such individuals."[3661] He also stated in the letter that he had "interacted with members of the U.S. intelligence community, including the FBI and CIA for many decades."[3662]

(U) The first FISA order on Page was approved October 21, 2016.[3663]

(U) Media attention on Page, and Page's continuing engagement with the media, continued to distract the Campaign into the presidential Transition. On the day that Page announced his "leave of absence" to Eric Trump, he gave a long interview to *The Washington Post*.[3664] Also on that same day, Page emailed a link to the article to Clovis, Hicks, Miller, Bert Mizusawa and Joseph Schmitz, and stated: "now that I've finally begun to defend myself, we're starting to quickly set the record straight for everyone."[3665] Page also asked Clovis to send him a copy of the non-disclosure agreement (NDA) he recalled signing when he joined the Campaign as an adviser.[3666] Hicks forwarded the email back to Clovis with the request: "Please make sure his NDA was in fact counter signed. Send him a copy and please ask him to stop talking. He is not being helpful. He has never spoken to or met Mr. Trump."[3667]

5. (U) Page Returns to Russia, December 2016

(U) Following the election and his separation from the Campaign, Page returned to Moscow in mid-December 2016. Page told the Committee that he paid his own way to Moscow in December.[3668] Shlomo Weber, who saw Page while he was in Moscow, told the Committee he did not know why Page visited.[3669]

[3660] (U) Letter, Page to Comey, September 25, 2016 (DJTFP00018045).
[3661] (U) *Ibid.*
[3662] (U) *Ibid.*
[3663] (U) The Carter Page FISA order and renewals are examined in detail in the *DOJ OIG FISA Report*. While there were several problems with the FBI's FISA renewals for Page, the Committee assesses that Page's previous ties to Russian intelligence officers, coupled with his Russian travel, justified the FBI's initial concerns about Page.
[3664] (U) Josh Rogin, "Trump's Russia adviser speaks out, calls accusations 'complete garbage,'" *The Washington Post*, September 26, 2016.
[3665] (U) Email, Page to Clovis, et al., September 26, 2016 (DJTFP00018048–18049).
[3666] (U) *Ibid.*
[3667] (U) Email, Hicks to Clovis, et. al, September 26, 2016 (DJTFP00018052).
[3668] (U) C. Page Tr., p. 287.
[3669] (U) Weber Tr., pp. 135–137.

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(U) On December 12, 2016, Page made a live televised presentation from the auditorium of the Rossiya Segodnya International Information Agency, which is a news organization of the Russian government.[3670] Denis Klimentov, who in December was the press secretary for the NES, told the FBI that Page contacted the news agency on his own, and the agency enthusiastically accepted, based on Page's notoriety by that time.[3671]

(U) While Weber insisted that the NES had nothing to do with Page's December visit,[3672] he did accept Page's request to introduce him at the public speech, which was sparsely attended, mostly by Russian and international journalists. Video of the event shows that, among the logos of Russia state media that appear behind Page on the electronic screen, the NES logo also appears.[3673]

(U) Page's speech included criticisms of Bill and Hillary Clinton, as well as a reference to "conspiracy theories about Wikileaks used to distract from disastrous information revealed on her illegal mail server."[3674] Page praised Rex Tillerson, who had been nominated to be Secretary of State, and inserted a reference to Igor Sechin, who Page stated he "didn't meet…but it would have been a great honor."[3675] Page stated that there was "nothing there" on reports of Russia's intervention in the U.S. presidential election.[3676] Page also said, when asked about whether he's met with Trump, "I've certainly been in a number of meetings with him."[3677]

(U) Weber convened a small dinner for Page during this visit, which included Klimentov and a Vice Rector of NES.[3678] Weber said that once Page arrived in Russia, Page asked that Weber invite Deputy Prime Minister Dvorkovich to meet with him, which Weber did, not expecting Dvorkovich to accept.[3679] According to Weber, Page made the request because "it would be good to discuss the future relationship under the new president." Dvorkovich was the only request Page made.[3680]

[3670] (U) *See* YouTube, "LIVE: Former Trump adviser Carter Page holds presentation in Moscow," December 12, 2016.
[3671] (U) FBI, FD-302, Denis Klimentov 6/9/2017.
[3672] (U) Weber Tr., pp. 135–137.
[3673] (U) *See* YouTube, "LIVE: Former Trump adviser Carter Page holds presentation in Moscow," December 12, 2016.
[3674] (U) *Ibid.*, starting at 14:14, 23:57, and 25:45 (related to the Clintons); at 22:54 and 24:25 (related to WikiLeaks)
[3675] (U) *Ibid.*, starting at 15:30 (related to Tillerson); at 12:43, 16:23, and 22:42 (related to Sechin).
[3676] (U) *Ibid.*, starting at 42:08.
[3677] (U) *Ibid.*, starting at 29:54. While the Committee is aware that Page attended events in which Trump spoke, the Committee is not aware of any instance in which Trump and Page attended the same "meeting."
[3678] (U) Weber Tr., p. 160.
[3679] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 156–157, 164.
[3680] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 157.

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(U) Weber said he was "shocked" that Dvorkovich showed up.[3681] He did not stay for the full dinner, but only for about 30 to 35 minutes.[3682] Weber recalled that Page did not speak much, but that Dvorkovich spoke of "[f]uture relationships" and the "[e]conomic relationship" between Russia and the United States.[3683] Weber told the Committee that although the "economic relationship" and "difficulties of the relationship" were discussed, sanctions were not explicitly mentioned.[3684] Dvorkovich also "explained that the Russia would like to be a friend of the United States."[3685]

(U) Page told the Committee he once again met with Andrey Baranov of Rosneft during his December 2016 trip.[3686]

(U) The information produced by Page for the Committee does not include many details of his time in Moscow, in either July or December, nor was Page able to account for much of his time on the ground in Moscow in his interview with the Committee. The Committee has no further insight into Page's other meetings or activities there.

6. (U) Page During the Transition

(U) Page told the Committee that he "sent a note" and "talked with a few people in the transition, that if I could help in any way, you know, I would be open to that."[3687] According to the *SCO Report*:

> *On November 14, 2016, [Page] submitted an application to the Transition Team that inflated his credentials and experiences, stating that in his capacity as a Trump Campaign foreign policy advisor he had met with "top world leaders" and "effectively responded to diplomatic outreach efforts from senior government officials in Asia, Europe, the Middle East, Africa, [and] the Americas." Page received no response from the Transition Team.*[3688]

[3681] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 164. Despite attending the dinner with Page and Dvorkovich in Moscow, in interview with the FBI, Klimentov denied knowing about any meeting between Page and Dvorkovich. FBI, FD-302, Denis Klimentov 6/9/2017. Separately, Klimentov may have met with Page in the United States shortly before Page's December 2016 trip. According to Page's personal schedule he maintained on his computer, on November 26, 2016, Page and Klimentov were scheduled to meet for lunch in New York. "travel and work records.xlsx" (Page Production).
[3682] (U) Weber Tr., pp. 170–171.
[3683] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 167–168.
[3684] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 168–169.
[3685] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 168.
[3686] (U) C. Page Tr., p. 287.
[3687] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 295.
[3688] (U) *SCO Report*, Vol. I, pp. 102–103 (internal citations omitted).

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(U) Twice during the Transition Page was explicitly asked in writing by Donald McGahn, who at the time remained counsel to the Trump Campaign, to stop making misrepresentations of his association with the Trump Campaign in the media. On December 22, McGahn sent Page a letter instructing Page to stop associating himself with the Campaign.[3689] On December 25, 2016, Page sent a lengthy email to Hicks, copying McGahn, K.T. McFarland, and Keith Kellogg.[3690] While the email reprises and expands on Page's objections to the way he perceived himself to having been treated, it includes in one section:

> *A long list of top U.S. foreign policy leaders have contacted me to offer their support to the Trump Administration's agenda. The same holds for even more senior Russian leaders, but I won't mention them in writing out of risk of some new bogus media controversy or federal investigation.*[3691]

(U) On January 16, 2017, McGahn again wrote to Page, citing the previous letter from December 22, 2016. He wrote:

> *Given that you have no role with Donald J. Trump for President, Inc., or the President-Elect's Transition Team, or with any other entity associated with Mr. Trump, we ask that you immediately cease suggesting to anyone that you are anything other than a former member of an advisory committee who never actually met with the President-Elect.*[3692]

7. (U) Page in the "Steele Dossier"

(U) Page is featured prominently in what is referred to as the Steele dossier, materials prepared in 2016 by former [redacted] officer Christopher Steele.[3693] Of the 17 reports that comprise the 35-page publicly available Steele dossier, first released in its entirety by *BuzzFeed* on January 10, 2017, Page is named in eight of them.

(U) Regarding assertions in the Steele dossier about Page, the Committee heard testimony from Michael Cohen that he never met Page.[3694] Page told the Committee he never met Paul Manafort, but included him only once on a group email, for which he was chastised by

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[3689] **(U)** *See* Letter, McGahn to Page, January 16, 2017 (DJTFP00027831) (referring to a prior December 22, 2016 letter to Page). The Committee asked for all Donald Trump for President, Inc., materials in its document production request, but did not obtain a copy of the December 22, 2016 letter.
[3690] **(U)** Email, Page to Hicks, McGahn, McFarland, and Kellogg, December 25, 2016 (DJTFP00025723).
[3691] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[3692] **(U)** Letter, McGahn to Page, January 16, 2017 (DJTFP00027831).
[3693] **(U)** Ken Bensinger, et al., "These Reports Allege Trump Has Deep Ties to Russia," *BuzzFeed News*, January 10, 2017.
[3694] **(U)** Cohen Tr., p. 245.

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others on the Campaign.[3695] He told the Committee he never met, nor "heard of," Igor Diveykin.[3696] Page has publicly and repeatedly denied meeting with Igor Sechin.[3697] Other than the dossier's assertions that Page traveled to Moscow in July 2016 and served as a foreign policy adviser to Trump—facts which were readily available in news reports at the time of their inclusion in the dossier—the Committee did not find any information that corroborates the allegations related to Page in the dossier. For more information on the dossier, *see infra* Vol. 5, Sec. IV.B.

[3695] **(U)** C. Page Tr., pp. 196–197, 214.
[3696] **(U)** *Ibid.*, pp. 165–166.
[3697] **(U)** *See, e.g.*, HPSCI Transcript of the Interview with Carter Page, November 2, 2017, p. 101.

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G. (U) Trump's Foreign Policy Speech at the Mayflower Hotel

1. (U) Introduction and Findings

(U) On April 27, 2016, Trump gave a high-profile speech at the Mayflower Hotel in Washington, D.C., the first formal campaign presentation of his approach to foreign policy.[3698] Immediately before the speech, some members of the Campaign, including Trump, Kushner, and possibly Sessions, briefly met the Russian ambassador, Sergei Kislyak, along with other select "VIPs" in a corner of the room where the speech was given. The Committee examined whether anything related to this event raised counterintelligence questions.

(U) The Committee found no evidence that foreign interference occurred during or as a result of the April 27, 2016, Trump campaign speech held at the Mayflower Hotel. The Committee found that language in the speech about Russia was drafted by the Campaign's senior speech writer, Stephen Miller, and was consistent with the candidate's views.

(U) The Mayflower speech was organized by the Washington-based Center for the National Interest (CNI), a nonpartisan think tank, at the request of the Trump Campaign. Dmitri Simes, the president of CNI, worked with the Campaign to organize the event.[3699]

(U) Russian ambassador Sergei Kislyak, along with other members of the Washington diplomatic corps, was invited to the speech by Simes, with the Campaign's knowledge. Trump met Kislyak for the first time in a small VIP receiving line arranged briefly before the speech. Kislyak also spoke to Kushner and expressed to him Russia's interest in Trump's position on improved bilateral relations if Trump were elected.

(U) The Committee could not reliably determine whether then-Senator Jeff Sessions, the chairman of the Campaign's National Security Advisory Committee, met and spoke with Kislyak at the event. Sessions did not recall meeting the ambassador at this event, but allowed that it was possible and asserted that if he had spoken with Kislyak, "[I]t would've been . . . nothing improper."[3700]

[3698] (U) On March 21, 2016, Trump gave a speech on U.S.-Israeli relations before the American Israel Public Affairs Committee in Washington, D.C.

[3699] (U) Simes is a Russian scholar who emigrated from the Soviet Union in the 1970s, and who has written about Russia since. In the early 1990s, Simes served as senior advisor to former President Richard Nixon, and accompanied Nixon on his last private trips to the Russia in the early 1990s. In his years at CNI, Simes had also had interactions with Alexander Torshin and Maria Butina. *See infra* Vol. 5, Sec. III.H.

[3700] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Open Hearing with Attorney General Jeff Sessions, June 13, 2017.

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2. (U) The Mayflower Speech

i. (U) Organizing the Event

(U) Simes and Jared Kushner first discussed the concept of the speech after they met in New York City in March 2016, at a luncheon hosted by a member of CNI's board where Henry Kissinger, at the time an honorary chairman of the CNI board, spoke. Kushner requested a meeting with Simes for later in the month, but then reached out to Simes by phone and raised the possibility of CNI hosting Trump's first foreign policy speech, a request Simes and CNI accepted.[3702] Simes stated that he and the Center wanted to provide a platform for a serious, foreign policy pronouncement, not a campaign event, and offered that CNI, in addition to hosting and organizing the logistics of the event, would avail the Campaign of the substantive national security advice of CNI's members. While the Campaign agreed to CNI organizing and hosting the event, no one in the Campaign relied on CNI's expertise. Simes also told the Committee that "[w]e never had substantive interactions with Mr. Trump."[3703]

(U) The Trump Campaign chose the Mayflower hotel as the venue after Trump rejected the National Press Club because he deemed it too small and unable to accommodate "35-45 cameras."[3704] The Campaign focused on the optics of the event, and CNI issued invitations to what they viewed as a typical list of Washington experts, media, government figures, and ambassadors, many of whom had previously attended CNI events.[3705]

(U) At the end of the Monday prior to the speech, April 25, Simes emailed Kushner with the most recent "acceptance list," which listed 64 individuals, including four ambassadors: the ambassadors from the Philippines, Italy, and Singapore, and Russian Ambassador Sergei Kislyak.[3706] Later that evening, Simes sent another email to Kushner proposing attendees who should be invited to the event's "VIP reception." There were 13 individuals Simes suggested, including the ambassadors of the Philippines and Italy, but not the ambassadors of Singapore or

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[3701] [redacted]

[3702] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Dmitri Simes, March 30, 2018, pp. 25–27.

[3703] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 31–32.

[3704] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 46–48. The candidate had also proposed his Virginia golf club as a venue, which CNI rejected.

[3705] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 53. A Committee staff member attended the event. That staff member was not part of the Russia investigation team.

[3706] (U) Email, Simes to Kushner, April 25, 2016 (NSSCI00000001–5). Not all confirmed attendees attended.

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Russia.[3707] The list also included Celeste Wallander, at the time Senior Director for Russian Affairs at the National Security Council, who ultimately did not attend the event.[3708]

(U) According to Simes, the Campaign made "no request about bringing any foreigners to the meeting and most certainly no particular requests about bringing any Russians to the meeting."[3709]

ii. (U) Drafting the Speech

(U) Stephen Miller, at the time the senior policy adviser to the Campaign, was the "predominant writer" of the speech.[3710] While Simes offered to assist in drafting the speech,[3711] Miller told the Committee that "the speech itself was written from a zero-based draft on a blank sheet,"[3712] and that "everything in the speech is informed by the candidate's own publicly-stated views on all these issues."[3713]

(U) The Committee reviewed drafts of the speech as it was shared for comments and edits among senior Campaign staff, to include Manafort, Gates, Lewandowski, Miller, and others, and as it evolved into the final version delivered by Trump. These drafts included comments and suggested edits by several members of the national security advisory committee.[3714]

(U) The Committee assesses that the drafts of the speech it reviewed showed consistent language regarding Russia through the five days of drafting. For example, an April 22 draft

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[3707] (U) Email, Simes to Kushner, April 25, 2016 (NSSCI00000007–8).
[3708] (U) *Ibid.*
[3709] (U) Simes Tr., p. 52.
[3710] (U) Miller interview, p. 131.
[3711] (U) Simes Tr., pp. 36–37.
[3712] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 123.
[3713] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 132.
[3714] (U) Email, Manafort to Gates, April 24, 2016 (DJTFP0011000–11012) (attaching draft speech); Email, Gates to Manafort, April 22, 2016 (DJTFP00010810–10823) (attaching draft speech); Email, Christie to Lewandowski and Manafort (DJTFP00010834–10845) (attaching draft speech); Email, Manafort to [mfreedman@globalimpact.com], April 22, 2016 (DJTFP00010861–10871) (attaching draft speech); Email, Kubic to Lewandowski, April 23, 2016 (DJTFP00010873–10897) (attaching draft speech); Email, Lewandowski to Manafort, Christie, Kushner, and S. Miller, April 23, 2016 (DJTFP00010898–10928) (attaching multiple draft speech documents); Email, Chang to Lewandowski, S. Miller, and Manafort, April 24, 2016 (DJTFP00010957–10969) (attaching draft speech); Email, S. Miller to Lewandowski, April 23, 2016 (DJTFP00010935–10945) (attaching multiple draft speech documents); Email, S. Miller to Chang, Lutes, and Gates, April 24, 2016 (DJTFP00010946–10956) (attaching draft speech); Email, Kubic to Lewandowski, April 24, 2016 (DJTFP00010970–10978) (attaching draft speech); Email, Kubic to Lewandowski, April 24, 2016 (DJTFP00010979–10999) (attaching draft speech); Email, Gates to Manafort, April 27, 2016 (DTFP00011265–11290) (attaching draft speech).

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includes the language: "My negotiating skills tell me an easing of tensions and improved relations with Russia is possible. Some say the Russians won't be reasonable. I intend to find out."[3715] When Trump delivered the speech, he said: "Some say the Russians won't be reasonable. I intend to find out."[3716]

(U) As drafts were circulated, stronger language on Russia was proposed by New Jersey Governor Chris Christie and national security advisory committee member Admiral Chuck Kubic. Christie's suggested additions to the draft speech included a bullet that stated:

> *We need to stand up to Russian aggression together, and make clear that our commitment to our NATO allies in Eastern Europe is absolute. And if Putin's Russia wants to rejoin the community of civilized nations, then they're going to have to behave like one.*[3717]

(U) Kubic's suggested add on Russia stated:

> *How we deal with Russia in the years ahead will be a test for how we will stand with all our allies everywhere. We should remain focused on achieving peace through economic and military strength, recognize areas where we have "common cause" with the Russian people, and make it clearly known that once again American is playing to win and won't back down.*[3718]

(U) Neither of these suggested additions was accepted. The final language delivered by Trump on April 27 was consistent with the drafts the Committee reviewed. The only references to Russia in the speech are one sentence that states, "The Russians and Chinese have rapidly expanded their military capability, but look what's happened to us," and the following passage:

> *We desire to live peacefully and in friendship with Russia and China. We have serious differences with these two nations, and must regard them with open eyes, but we are not bound to be adversaries. We should seek common ground based on shared interests.*
>
> *Russia, for instance, has also seen the horror of Islamic terrorism. I believe an easing of tensions, and improved relations with Russia from a position of strength*

[3715] (U) Email, Gates to Manafort, April 22, 2016 (DJTFP00010810-10823) (attaching draft speech).
[3716] (U) "Transcript: Donald Trump's Foreign Policy Speech," *The New York Times*, April 27, 2016 (transcribed by the Federal News Service).
[3717] (U) Email, Christie to Lewandowski and Manafort, April 22, 2016 (DJTFP00010834, 10842).
[3718] (U) Email, Kubic to Lewandowski, April 23, 2016 (DJTFP00010873, 10882).

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only is possible, absolutely possible. Common sense says this cycle, this horrible cycle of hostility must end and ideally will end soon. Good for both countries.

Some say the Russians won't be reasonable. I intend to find out. If we can't make a deal under my administration, a deal that's great – not good, great – for America, but also good for Russia, then we will quickly walk from the table. It's as simple as that. We're going to find out.[3719]

(U) While the speech touched on many other topics, the only other topic of tangential relation to Russia was Trump's criticism regarding unfair burden-sharing among NATO allies, a theme Trump was already voicing in public.[3720]

iii. (U) The VIP Reception

(U) CNI organized a reception before the speech for "VIP" attendees in a space cordoned off by a curtain in the same room used for the speech. The reception included approximately 20-25 attendees, mostly members of Congress and ambassadors. Trump arrived approximately 15 minutes before the speech and a reception line in the designated VIP area was assembled to meet him. This was where Trump met Kislyak.[3721] Simes introduced them and observed only an exchange of pleasantries between the two. Simes told the Committee that he believed this was the first time the two met, and that "they were not familiar with each other."[3722] Jared Kushner, who accompanied Trump for this event, told the Committee that he also shook Kislyak's hand and that the ambassador told him: "I really like what he's saying; America and Russia should have a good relationship; we don't have one now with the current administration; and I hope if President Trump wins that will change."[3723]

(U) In addition to Simes, Kushner, and Miller, the Committee interviewed the following Trump Campaign staffers who attended the speech: Cory Lewandowski, Hope Hicks, John Mashburn, J.D. Gordon, and Rick Dearborn. The Committee also interviewed Sandy Luff, who during 2016 had served as Legislative Director for Session's Senate office. None of them knew at the time who the Russian ambassador was, nor what he looked like, but most of them were attending to various duties and were not in the reception area. The Committee notes that, by election night, 2016, neither Kushner nor Hicks could recall the name of the Russian ambassador

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[3719] (U) "Transcript: Donald Trump's Foreign Policy Speech," *The New York Times,* April 27, 2016 (transcribed by the Federal News Service).
[3720] (U) For example, Trump raised this issue in on-the-record interviews with *The Washington Post* on March 25, 2016 (published March 26) and *The New York Times* on March 21, 2016.
[3721] (U) Simes Tr., pp. 53–58.
[3722] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 67. Simes told the Committee he had lunch with Kislyak the week prior and that Kislyak "indicated to me he did not know Mr. Trump."
[3723] (U) Kushner Tr., p. 26

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when they were contacted by the Embassy to pass on congratulations to Trump for winning the election.[3724]

(U) Sessions attended the Mayflower event as chairman of Trump's national security advisory committee. During his January 10, 2017, confirmation hearing on his nomination to be Attorney General, Sessions failed to reveal several meetings with Kislyak to the Judiciary Committee.[3725] According to an amended submission from Sessions, these included a meeting with Ambassador Kislyak in Sessions's Senate office in September 2016 and an encounter with the Ambassador at the July 2016 Republican National Convention in Cleveland. However, Sessions consistently said he could not recall meeting Kislyak at the Mayflower event.[3726]

(U) The Committee held an open hearing with Sessions to address this issue on June 13, 2017. In prepared remarks issued as a Department of Justice press release on the same day, Sessions stated:

> *Though I do recall several conversations I had during that pre-speech reception, I do not have any recollection of meeting or talking to the Russian Ambassador or any other Russian officials. If any brief interaction occurred in passing with the Russian Ambassador during that reception, I do not remember it . . . . But whether I ever attended a reception where the Russian Ambassador was also present is entirely beside the point of this investigation into Russian interference with the 2016 campaigns. Let me state clearly: I have never met with or had any conversations with Russians or any foreign officials concerning any type of interference with any campaign or election. Further, I have no knowledge of any such conversations by anyone connected to the Trump campaign.*[3727]

(U) When Vice Chairman Warner pressed Sessions on his failure to recall his meeting with Kislyak at the Mayflower, Sessions responded: "I don't recall it, Senator Warner. It would've been certainly, I can assure you, nothing improper, if I'd had a conversation with him. And it's conceivable that it occurred. I just don't remember it."[3728]

[3724] (U) Simes Tr., p. 113; Kushner Tr., p. 55.
[3725] (U) Senate Judiciary Committee, "Confirmation Hearing on the Nomination of Hon. Jeff Sessions to be Attorney General of the United States," January 10-11, 2017.
[3726] (U) Letter, Sessions to Grassley and Feinstein, March 6, 2017.
[3727] (U) "Attorney General Jeff Sessions Prepared Remarks To The United States Senate Select Committee on Intelligence," June 13, 2017.
[3728] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Open Hearing with Jeff Sessions, June 13, 2017, p. 37.

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(U) The Committee asked multiple individuals in attendance at the event that day if they saw Sessions and Kislyak together.[3729] All knew Senator Sessions, but none knew who the Russian ambassador was. Thus, they could not speak to seeing them together. In the spring of 2017 following Sessions' confirmation hearing, CNI issued a statement that said: "We are not aware of any conversation between Ambassador Kislyak and Senator Jeff Sessions at the reception. However, in a small group setting like this one, we consider it unlikely that anyone could have engaged in a meaningful private conversation without drawing attention from others present."[3730] The Committee asked Simes about his recollection of any encounter between Sessions and Kislyak. Simes told the Committee: "I did not focus on who was talking to who. But since you asked and since it became an issue, I have looked into this after the event, and I could not find a single person who saw Mr. Kislyak and Mr. Sessions talking to each other."[3731]

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[3729] (U) These included Cory Lewandowski, Hope Hicks, J.D. Gordon, Rick Dearborn, Sandy Luff, Jared Kushner, John Mashburn, and Stephen Miller.
[3730] (U) "Statement Regarding President Trump's April 27, 2016 Foreign Policy Speech at the Center for the National Interest," *The National Interest,* March 8, 2017. *The National Interest* is the flagship journal of CNI.
[3731] (U) Simes Tr., p. 64.
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H. (U) Maria Butina and Alexander Torshin

1. (U) Introduction and Findings

(U) The Committee sought to understand the activities of Russian national Maria Butina and Russian government official Alexander Torshin related to the 2016 U.S. election. Starting in 2013, and continuing over a several year period, Butina and Torshin established a broad network of relationships with the leaders of the National Rifle Association (NRA), conservative political operatives, Republican government officials, and individuals connected to the Trump Campaign, and took steps to establish informal communications channels to influence American government policy towards Russia. Butina and Torshin's activities were known to and almost certainly approved by the Kremlin and the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In December 2018, Butina pleaded guilty to failing to register as a foreign agent of Russia for her U.S. activities. The Committee sought to understand whether Butina's and Torshin's activities, and that of their associates, amounted to a counterintelligence threat.

(U) During its investigation, the Committee interviewed a number of individuals with direct insight into the nature of Butina and Torshin's activities. The Committee interviewed Butina on April 16, 2018.[3736] However, the Committee faced significant limitations in its efforts to fully understand Butina and Torshin's activities. In particular, the Committee's ability to gain insights into elements of their efforts that occurred in Russia was limited, and the Committee never spoke with Torshin. The Committee's inability to compel testimony from Butina's close associate and financial backer Paul Erickson also hindered its ability to fully address some aspects of Butina and Torshin's activities.[3737]

(U) The Committee found that Maria Butina and Alexander Torshin engaged in a multi-year influence campaign and intelligence-gathering effort targeting the NRA, the Republican Party, and conservative U.S. political organizations for the benefit of the Russian government. Their goal was to develop and use backchannel communications to influence U.S. policy outside of the formal diplomatic process to Russia's advantage and to the detriment of the United States.

(U) Torshin's and Butina's efforts began in at least 2013 and continued until at least 2018. Torshin and Butina initially leveraged Torshin's existing relationships with the NRA's

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[3736] (U) Butina's testimony was frequently incomplete and misleading.

[3737] (U) Erickson did produce documents pursuant to a Committee subpoena, but he asserted his Fifth Amendment rights in response to a subpoena for his testimony. Erickson was indicted in February 2019 for money laundering and wire fraud. *See* U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of South Dakota, "Sioux Falls Man Charged with Wire Fraud and Money Laundering," February 7, 2019. Documents were also produced to the Committee by the NRA, sporadically and on a rolling basis, beginning in October 2018 and lasting through February 2020, which substantially constrained the Committee's ability to make use of the later-produced materials. It is not clear to the Committee why the NRA's production was delayed so significantly.

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senior leadership. In 2015, Butina and Torshin hosted several NRA leaders in Moscow, where they convened meetings between the NRA delegation, Russian oligarchs, and other Kremlin-connected figures, including individuals subject to U.S. sanctions. The NRA delegation welcomed these interactions, and some later facilitated Torshin and Butina's continuing efforts by inviting them to events in the United States and making introductions. Over time, Butina and Torshin gained further access to U.S. conservative political circles and met prominent Republican figures such as a Republican candidate for president, a Republican congressman, and Donald Trump Jr.

(U) Torshin was Butina's primary backer and link to elements of the Russian government. Torshin advised Butina on where to focus her efforts and assisted her in making inroads with the NRA and elsewhere. Butina reported back to Torshin on her U.S. activities, including in written papers that she understood Torshin would share with Russian government entities, such as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA). Butina's reports included assessments of the Republican Party's presidential nominees; the NRA's relationship with the Republican Party; and individuals who were of potential interest to Russian influence efforts.

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(U) Butina provided Torshin with written assessments of Republican presidential candidates, including their likelihood of winning the Republican Party nomination and the general election. After Trump became the presumptive nominee, and throughout the general election, Butina and Torshin focused their influence efforts on the Trump Campaign to shape the incoming Trump administration's position on Russia. On several occasions, Butina and Torshin attempted to negotiate meetings for themselves with Trump and between Trump and Russian President Vladimir Putin.

[redacted] The Committee found Butina's and Torshin's connection to Dmitry Rogozin significant [redacted]

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(U) Butina had support from, and contact with, numerous Kremlin-linked oligarchs, whom she and Torshin introduced to NRA visitors in Moscow. These individuals included Konstantin Nikolaev, a major financial backer of Butina's gun-rights organization with reported ties to the Russian Presidential Administration and Russian security services, and U.S.-sanctioned Dmitry Rogozin, then the Deputy Prime Minister of the Russian defense and space industries.

(U) Butina's access to the NRA and conservative political organizations was greatly enabled by Americans, including Paul Erickson and David Keene. Erickson was almost certainly aware that she was acting in furtherance of Russian government interests and coordinating her activities with Torshin. Erickson and Keene helped Butina identify opportunities to advance her goals, including by inviting and accompanying her to conferences and meetings and introducing her to politically-active individuals.

2. (U) Background on Maria Butina and Alexander Torshin

i. (U) Maria Butina

(U) Butina was born in Barnaul, Russia, a city in Siberia, and graduated from Altai State University in 2010.[3738] In 2010, Butina, whose father had taught her how to shoot, founded a small gun rights organization in Barnaul.[3739] Then, after starting a regional furniture chain, Butina said that she moved to Moscow in 2011 with the intention of growing her business.[3740] Because the furniture business did not seem viable in Moscow, she sold the business and turned to work in social media advertising.[3741] She also shifted her attention back to the gun rights organization, expanding the group's membership and ultimately registering it as a nation-wide organization under the name "Right to Bear Arms" in 2014.[3742]

(U) Although private gun ownership is generally outlawed in Russia, Butina explained that she had little difficulty in growing her organization and obtaining national registration.[3743] Butina acknowledged general opposition by the Russian government to gun rights, but said her

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[3738] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Maria Butina, April 16, 2018, p. 5. In 2008, Butina briefly participated in a program run by the International Republican Institute (IRI) in association with Vladimir Ryzhkov, a former Russian government official who she described as an "oppositional figure" who had funding from Mikhail Khodorkovsky. *Ibid.*, pp. 12, 100–101.
[3739] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 7.
[3740] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 10–11.
[3741] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 11.
[3742] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 9–10.
[3743] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 8–9 ("We didn't have any formal resistance. We had problems with [the] change in registration, because it's a bit controversial by default, as you may guess.").

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group was able to work with the Duma.[3744] According to Butina, the organization eventually grew to over 10,000 members.[3745]

(U) Butina in part chalked her success up to "good lawyers."[3746] But, she also benefited from broad connections to Russian government officials and oligarchs, including Alexander Torshin, Konstantin Nikolaev, and Dmitry Rogozin, among others.

(U) Butina told the Committee that she met Alexander Torshin in 2011 or 2012, during her first year in Moscow, following a public demonstration by her group. Torshin, who at the time was the first vice chairman of the Federation Council—ostensibly Russia's version of the Senate—attended the demonstration, and Butina said she knew him from his Twitter account.[3747] Butina subsequently met with Torshin in his office and they "became friends."[3748] When Torshin later became the Deputy Governor of Russia's Central Bank, Butina took the title of his "special assistant," accompanied him on trips to the United States, was present for interactions with the NRA and U.S. political figures, and also provided English interpretation and translation.[3749]

(U) In addition to Torshin's support, Butina also secured financial backing for her gun rights organization from two significant Russian funders: Konstantin Nikolaev and Igor Zaytsev.[3750]

(U) Nikolaev, a Russian oligarch with reported ties to the Russian Presidential Administration and Russian security services,[3751] is a part owner of Russian private rail transport company N-trans,[3752] and serves on the board of American Ethane, a Houston-based ethane company chaired by Mikhail Yuriev, a former Deputy Chairman of the Russian Parliament.[3753]

[3744] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 34.
[3745] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 19.
[3746] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 9.
[3747] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 16–17.
[3748] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 17.
[3749] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 18–21.
[3750] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 22–23.
[3751] (U) Mike McIntire, "Billionaire Backer of Maria Butina Had Russian Security Ties," *The New York Times*, September 21, 2018; Jon Swaine, "Maria Butina: ties emerge between NRA, alleged spy and Russian billionaire," *The Guardian*, July 26, 2018.
[3752] (U) Butina Tr., p. 181.
[3753] (U) *See* Letter, Yuriev to U.S. Department of State, April 26, 2015 (TSG000700–01). Nikolaev's son, Andrey, was also in communication with Darren Blanton around and following inauguration. Written Responses, Blanton, August 16, 2019. Blanton is a businessman who secured a contract (through his relationships with Michael Flynn and Steve Bannon) to provide social media influencing for the Trump Campaign in 2016. *See infra* Vol. 5, Sec. III.J.4.

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Butina told the Committee that Nikolaev supported gun rights because he was a libertarian,[3754] but also acknowledged that Nikolaev is an investor in a major Russian gun manufacturer run by his wife.[3755] According to Butina, Nikolaev approached her through an individual named Igor Pisarsky to offer financial backing with no strings attached: "we don't want anything; you do whatever you want; we just support this issue."[3756]

(U) Butina described Zaytsev, her other donor, only as the owner of a chain of jewelry stores outside of Moscow.[3757]

(U) Butina also found an ally in Dmitry Rogozin, who served as a Deputy Prime Minister of Russia over the defense and space industries from 2011 to 2018.[3758] Rogozin was Russia's ambassador to NATO from 2008 to 2011.[3759] In March 2014, he was sanctioned by the United States for his role in Russia's invasion of Ukraine.[3760] As of May 2018, Rogozin was appointed to serve as the General Director of the Russian State Corporation for Space (Roscosmos).[3761] Rogozin had no formal role with Butina's group, but he was on the board—along with Torshin—of the "Federal Practical Shooting Association," a Russian organization that promotes shooting competitions.[3762] Butina told the Committee that Rogozin also led a group to advocate for changes to Russian gun rights laws that brought together manufacturers and advocacy organizations, on which Butina had a seat.[3763]

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[3754] (U) Butina Tr., pp. 22, 125.
[3755] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 178.
[3756] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 182. Butina described Pisarsky as a "PR person" who she said "has done several presidential campaigns for pro-government candidates and anti-government candidates in Russia." *Ibid.*, p. 176.
[3757] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 22–23.
[3758] [redacted] Butina recalled that Rogozin "control[led] the military complex of Russia." Butina Tr., p. 156. Rogozin met with Putin regularly. *See* Event Feed, President of Russia, kremlin.ru (readouts of meetings between Putin and Rogozin). [redacted]
[3759] (U) "Putin Picks Dmitry Rogozin, a leading nationalist, to be NATO envoy," *The New York Times*, January 10, 2008; Lada Korotun, "Russian Senators approve Grushko to be Russia's new ambassador to NATO," *Atlantic Council*, July 17, 2012.
[3760] (U) The White House, "FACT Sheet: Ukraine-Related Sanctions," March 17, 2014.
[3761] (U) Events, "Dmitry Rogozin appointed General Director of Roscosmos State Corporation for Space Activities," kremlin.ru, May 24, 2018.
[3762] (U) Butina Tr., pp. 183–184.
[3763] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 186–187.
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(U) Butina told the Committee that she eventually determined that she "need[ed] to take an absence" from Russia and "get an education in the West."[3767] She matriculated to the American University School of International Service and started living full-time in the United States in May 2016.[3768] Emails between Erickson and Butina suggest that Erickson funded at least part of Butina's education and living expenses, either directly or through Bridges LLC.[3769]

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[3765] (U) *Ibid.*
[3766] (U) *Ibid.*
[3767] (U) Butina Tr., p. 6.
[3768] (U) *Ibid.*; Email, Butina to Erickson, May 31, 2016 (MB 0002918). The Committee requested documents pertaining to Butina from American University. The documents were ultimately not produced, despite negotiations over the request.
[3769] (U) *See, e.g.*, Butina Tr., pp. 117, 121–22, 154; Email, Singh to Erickson, May 16, 2016 (MB 0001553) (approving apartment lease application for Maria Butina); Check, Bridges LLC to Butina in the amount of $10,000, February 1, 2016 (signed by Paul Erickson for "February distribution," submitted as proof of income verification).
[3770] [redacted] Additional information on [redacted] and the Trump Tower Proposal is provided *infra* Vol 5, Sec. III.D.3.v.

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[redacted] The Committee assesses that the nature and extent of Butina's contacts and certain communications are indicative of work for the Russian intelligence services and inconsistent with her claims to the Committee about her activities and intentions in the United States. [redacted]

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(U) On December 13, 2018, Butina pleaded guilty to conspiring to act as an unregistered agent of Russia during her time in the United States.[3780] Butina admitted that, beginning in at least March 2015, she sought to establish and use "unofficial lines of communication with Americans having influence over U.S. politics," at the direction of Torshin and for the benefit of the Russian government.[3781] On April 26, 2019, Butina was sentenced to 18 months in prison, including time served, and released back to Russia on October 25, 2019. The Committee's investigation encompassed conduct that relates to her guilty plea, as discussed further below.

ii. (U) Alexander Torshin

(U) Alexander Porfiryevich Torshin is a Putin-aligned Russian politician who has served in legislative and executive capacities in the Russian government and has supported Kremlin influence operations targeting the United States and its democratic processes.

(U) In 2015, Torshin was appointed as the State Secretary – Deputy Governor of the Central Bank of the Russian Federation. He retired from his post on November 30, 2018.[3782] The Central Bank of Russia is part of the Russian government and operates as the country's central bank and monetary authority. Prior to his Central Bank appointment, Torshin was the First Deputy Chairman of the Federation Council of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation.[3783] He was a member of the Federation Council from 2001 to 2015.[3784]

[3779] (U) *Ibid.*

[3780] (U) *See* Statement of Offense, *United States v. Mariia Butina*, Case 1:18-cr-00218-TSC (D.D.C. December 13, 2018). Butina had been arrested on July 15, 2018.

[3781] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 2.

[3782] (U) Central Bank of the Russian Federation, Press Service, "Personnel Changes," November 30, 2018.

[3783] (U) *See, e.g.*, Alexander Torshin, "Terror from the Caucasus," *The National Interest*, March 24, 2011. On April 6, 2018, Torshin was listed among 17 Russian government officials sanctioned by the Department of the Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control for Russia's global "malign activity." Treasury, "Treasury Designates Russian Oligarchs, Officials, and Entities in Response to Worldwide Malign Activity," April 6, 2018.

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(U) Public reporting indicates that Torshin's targeting of U.S. political figures began as early as 2009, with then-Governor Sarah Palin of Alaska. According to documents released by the Alaska Governor's Office in response to a public records request, an aide wrote to Palin in May 2009 that she had "received a request to call the Russian Ambassador regarding a proposed visit by Mr. Alexander Torshin, First Deputy Chairman of the Federal Council of the Russian Federal Assembly." The office referred the meeting to the Lt. Governor, who later said that he did not recall meeting with Torshin.[3787]

[3785] (U) *Ibid.*

[3786] [redacted]

[3787] (U) Tim Mak, "Documents Reveal How Russian Official Courted Conservatives In U.S. Since 2009," *NPR*, May 11, 2018.

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(U) In 2011, Torshin met David Keene, the incoming-NRA president, at the annual NRA convention in Pittsburgh through the NRA Secretary, Jim Land.[3788] Keene understood that Torshin was "the speaker of the upper house" of the Russian legislature and assumed Torshin had a "good relationship" with the government.[3789] According to Butina and press reporting, Tennessee attorney G. Kline Preston may also have been involved in the introduction.[3790]

(U) Keene said that Torshin was "looking for assistance to try and validate his efforts to reform gun laws in Russia" and "wanted the association" with the NRA for that purpose.[3791] Keene also told the Committee that when he and Torshin spoke, Keene "spent a lot of time talking about the NRA's role and how we promote our policies," which likely gave Torshin insight into the connections between the NRA and U.S. politics.[3792]

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(U) Torshin registered as a life member of the NRA on February 10, 2012. The membership lists the email address of Igor Matveev, a Russian diplomatic official with whom he traveled to the United States in 2012, and G. Kline Preston's phone number.[3795]

[3788] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with David Keene, p. 22. In a written statement to the Committee, which he described as a draft but still provided, Keene said that Torshin had asked for the introduction. *Ibid.*, pp. 20–21, 25; *see* Written Statement, Keene to SSCI (Keene Production 000297). In his interview, however, Keene hedged: "I don't know that, actually. That's what I put, but he may well have. Or Jim may have suggested or he may have said: You're getting a new president [of the NRA]; could I meet him?" Keene Tr., p. 25.

[3789] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 26.

[3790] (U) Butina Tr., p. 44; Anita Wadhwani, Joel Ebert, "Nashville lawyer who introduced Russian operative to the NRA has ties to Blackburn," *The Tennessean*, March 20, 2018.

[3791] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 28–29.

[3792] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 103.

[3793] [redacted]

[3794] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 6.

[3795] (U) Email, Robinson to Grable, November 22, 2017 (NRA Production, 0000328, 0000333) (attaching screenshot of NRA membership records for Torshin and Butina); Email, Grable to Hallow, November 22, 2017 (NRA Production, 0000335).

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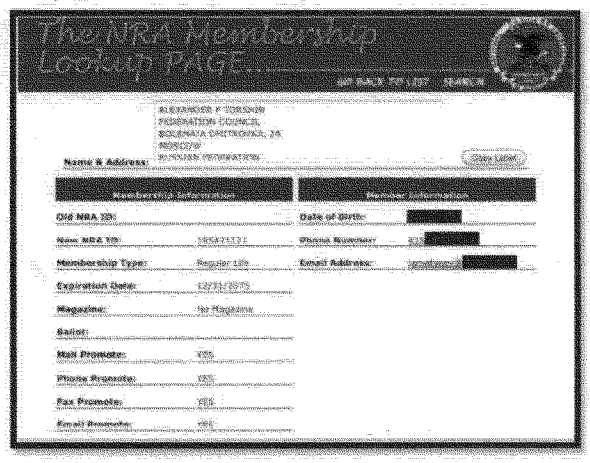

(U) In 2012, Preston invited Torshin to Tennessee to observe the U.S. presidential election.[3796] Matveev joined Torshin.[3797] Preston also reportedly accompanied Torshin to observe Russian elections in 2011, 2012 and 2016.[3798] The Committee did not examine the origins of the relationship between Preston and Torshin, although Preston and Torshin were in contact during the 2016 U.S. election cycle.[3799]

[3796] **(U)** The Tennessee Secretary of State acknowledged this in a statement to *NPR*. Tim Mak, "Depth of Russian Politician's Cultivation of NRA Ties Revealed," *NPR*, March 1, 2018. Documents released to NPR in response to public records requests include an October 11, 2012, memorandum for the Tennessee Secretary of State, regarding "Kline Preston," which states that "Russian Senator Alexander Torshin would like to observe our Presidential election." Tim Mak, "Documents Reveal How Russian Official Courted Conservatives In U.S. Since 2009," *NPR*, May 11, 2018. Torshin later posted a photo of himself in line at a polling place on Twitter on election day. *See* Tweet, @torshin_ru, November 8, 2012.

[3797] **(U)** Documents released to NPR in response to public records requests also include an email from the Tennessee Coordinator of Elections dated October 11, 2012, stating "The gentlemen from Russia who are coming to observe the election are: Senator Alexander P. Torshin and Mr. Igor A. Matveev. . . . Kline Preston will be the local host." Tim Mak, "Documents Reveal How Russian Official Courted Conservatives In U.S. Since 2009," *NPR*, May 11, 2018.

[3798] **(U)** Preston describes these trips on his law firm website. *See* klineprestonlaw.com/services/international-law ("Mr. Preston has served as an election observer in three Russian elections: the 2011 Parliamentary Elections, the 2012 Presidential Elections and the 2016 Parliamentary Elections."). Preston has also spoken about these trips in the press. *See, e.g.*, Tim Mak, "Documents Reveal How Russian Official Courted Conservatives In U.S. Since 2009," *NPR*, May 11, 2018.

[3799] **(U)** Twitter direct messages, Torshin and Preston (Preston Production).

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3. (U) Torshin and Butina Establish Relations with the NRA

(U) In 2013, several NRA members—most notably its former President, David Keene—visited Moscow at Torshin's invitation to attend a conference hosted by Butina, where Keene had been asked to give remarks.[3800] This trip marked the beginning of Butina's access to the NRA and conservative U.S. political organizations.

i. (U) 2013 NRA Trip to Moscow

(U) Torshin invited Keene to Moscow to speak to Butina's organization, the Right to Bear Arms, at its second annual conference in October 2013.[3801] At the time, Keene had not met Butina and her organization was relatively small, but he still accepted the invitation.[3802] He went in his official NRA capacity, and the NRA paid for his trip.[3803]

(U) The NRA hired Paul Erickson[3804] to do advance work on the trip and accompany Keene, even though he did not speak Russian and Keene did not know if he had been to Moscow before.[3805] Erickson and Keene had known each other for about a decade.[3806] Keene said that Erickson picked the Marriott hotel, arranged a museum visit, and selected restaurants for lunch,[3807] although Erickson's emails indicate that Butina made those arrangements herself.[3808]

(U) On October 17, 2013, in their first contact known to the Committee, Erickson emailed Butina with details about his and Keene's travel itinerary.[3809] Erickson advised that Keene "may have one (1) formal diplomatic meeting on Wednesday, October 30 in the

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[3800] (U) Keene was NRA president from May 2011 to May 2013 and has been on the board since 2000. Keene Tr., pp. 6–7, 46.
[3801] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 42. Butina recalled things differently, saying that Torshin provided her with a business card for an NRA staff member and that she sent the NRA an email invitation. Butina Tr., p. 24.
[3802] (U) Keene Tr., pp. 42, 46–47.
[3803] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 46–47.
[3804] (U) On November 18, 2019, Erickson pleaded guilty to one count of wire fraud and one count of money laundering, arising out of fraudulent schemes that resulted in over $2.3 million in loss, affecting over 78 people. *See* Plea Agreement and Statement of Factual Basis, *United States v. Paul Erickson*, 4:19-cr-40015 (D.S.D. November 18, 2019). Documents reviewed by the Committee suggest that Butina may have been involved in one of Erickson's schemes relating to the sale of land in North Dakota, and count eight of the indictment, a charge to which Erickson pleaded guilty, references a check made out to "M.B." As noted elsewhere, Erickson may have used some of these funds to help Butina finance her education.
[3805] (U) Keene Tr., pp. 44–45.
[3806] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 43–44.
[3807] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 54.
[3808] (U) Email, Butina to Erickson, October 18, 2013 (PAE0002659–2660).
[3809] (U) Email, Erickson to Butina, October 17, 2013 (PAE0000078).

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afternoon," after his and Keene's arrival.[3810] Butina responded with an invitation on Torshin's behalf for a 4:00 p.m. lunch on October 30.[3811] Erickson and Keene accepted the lunch invitation.[3812]

(U) After Keene arrived in Moscow on October 30, he had dinner with Torshin and Torshin's wife.[3813] He did not recall any other meetings with government officials, although emails between Erickson and Butina suggest that Keene was scheduled to meet with Dmitri Peskov, the Press Secretary for the Russian Presidential Administration, on the evening of November 1.[3814] The convention itself took place on October 31 and November 1, and Keene was scheduled to give remarks on the second day.[3815] Keene told the Committee that he spoke about "the history of firearms restrictions and freedoms in the United States."[3816] The event was attended by several hundred participants, from Russia and fifteen other countries.[3817]

(U) Following the convention, Butina and Erickson remained in contact. On November 3 and 7, 2013, Butina emailed Erickson and asked that he "refrain from publishing photos" of Keene and Torshin "during [their] personal meeting at the restaurant," recommending instead that he only share photos from the conference.[3818] She explained, "I need time to think about how to position the issue."[3819] Butina also advised Erickson: "Our officials are very closely following the publication of journalists abroad."[3820] Butina told the Committee that she was concerned "Torshin would be very much criticized for his pro-American position."[3821] However, Torshin had been regularly attending NRA events for several years and was, according to Butina, already an open supporter of her organization, and gun rights, generally, and the conference attracted "a lot of media coverage."[3822] Erickson accommodated the request.[3823]

[3810] (U) Email, Erickson to Butina, October 17, 2013 (PAE0000078). The Committee did not determine which meeting Erickson was referring to.
[3811] (U) Email, Butina to Erickson, October 18, 2013 (PAE0002659–2660).
[3812] (U) *See* Emails, Erickson and Butina, October 18, 2013 (PAE0002658).
[3813] (U) Keene Tr., p. 48.
[3814] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 54; Email, Erickson to Butina, October 31, 2013 (PAE0001376–1377) ("I will be free Friday night after 9 PM (at the conclusion of Mr. Keene's meeting with Dmitri Peskov).").
[3815] (U) Schedule of speeches, Program of the Second Annual Meeting (Keene Production 000017).
[3816] (U) Written Statement, Keene to SSCI (Keene Production 000298).
[3817] (U) Keene Tr., p. 54; Butina Tr., p. 26.
[3818] (U) Email, Butina to Erickson, November 3, 2013 (PAE0000047); Email, Butina to Erickson, November 7, 2013 (PAE0002843, 2827).
[3819] (U) Email, Butina to Erickson, November 3, 2013 (PAE0000047).
[3820] (U) Email, Butina to Erickson, November 7, 2013 (PAE0002843).
[3821] (U) Butina Tr., p. 31.
[3822] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 33–34.
[3823] (U) Email, Erickson to Butina, November 7, 2013 (PAE0002843).

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(U) On November 6, 2013, Erickson also began assisting Butina in applying for a visa to the United States to visit the NRA "for advice and guidance."[3824] This is the first instance that the Committee is aware of in which Butina used the NRA as a basis for travel to the United States. The Committee found no evidence that this trip occurred, but Butina and Erickson met in Israel in early 2014, when they first became romantically involved.[3825] Over time, Erickson became integral to Butina's activities and assisted her in developing relationships with individuals and organizations involved in U.S. politics.

ii. (U) Butina and Torshin Pursue Follow-up Contacts with the NRA; John Bolton Records a Video for Butina's Organization

(U) Butina and Torshin pursued several additional contacts with the NRA following the conference.

(U) First, Butina and Torshin requested additional American support for Russian gun rights legislation following the conference, which culminated in remarks by John Bolton to be presented to the Duma.[3826] Keene, responding to a request from either Torshin or Butina, contacted Bolton for the event.[3827] Keene did not recall mentioning Torshin's name to Bolton, but did tell Bolton that the request had come from the speaker of the Duma.[3828]

(U) In a letter to the Committee, Keene wrote that Torshin told him "Bolton's speech went over very well and that he [Bolton] received a standing ovation from the Russian Senate on its completion."[3829] It is not clear that Bolton's remarks were part of a formal Duma proceeding, however. According to Butina, Bolton simply taped the remarks and they were subsequently transmitted to Butina by Erickson on December 9, 2013.[3830] Butina then showed the video the following day at a session that included Duma members and also her organization.[3831]

[3824] (U) Email, Butina to Erickson, November 6, 2013 (PAE0002849–2852); Email, Erickson to Butina, November 7, 2013 (PAE0000906, 899); Email, Butina to Erickson, November 12, 2013 (PAE0000769) (attaching copy of draft visa application).

[3825] (U) Butina Tr., p. 104.

[3826] (U) Written Statement, Keene to SSCI (Keene Production, 000298).

[3827] (U) Recollections varied about exactly how this transpired. According to Butina, it was her idea to find a "respect[ed] American politician or NRA member who would address [her] group and endorse [it]." She asked Erickson, who in turn asked Keene, and they came back with the idea to use Bolton. Butina Tr., p. 251–52. Keene recalled that Torshin asked him to find an American speaker to talk about gun rights at an upcoming meeting of the Duma. Keene said that Torshin specifically asked for an American, but did not want someone from the NRA. Keene proposed John Bolton, who was a friend of his, and Torshin agreed. Keene Tr., pp. 81–82.

[3828] (U) Keene Tr., pp. 82–83.

[3829] (U) Written Statement, Keene to SSCI (Keene Production, 000298).

[3830] (U) Email, Erickson to Butina, December 9, 2013 (PAE0000072).

[3831] (U) Email, Erickson to Butina, December 11, 2013 (PAE0003013); Photograph of Bolton's remarks to Butina's organization (PAE0001217). The Committee did not seek to engage with Bolton.

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(U) On December 13, Keene emailed Butina directly to follow up on the Bolton video. He also asked for advice from Butina and Torshin on whether to invite Dmitry Rogozin to an event in Las Vegas in 2014:

> *I'm glad the Bolton tape worked out and I hope we helped a little.*
> *A friend of the NRA here called me to ask a favor the other day. He is apparently a friend of Deputy Prime Minister Dmitry Rogozin who would like to attend the S.H.O.T. Show in Las Vegas in January. Rogozin is, according to my friend, a firearms lover and has heard that the show is something worth attending.*
> *. . . . My friend asked if I would be willing to have NSSF invite Rogozin and I told him I would get back to him.*
> *In all that has to do with Russia, we take our lead from you and Senator Torshin. If the two of you think we should do this favor, I will. If not, we won't. If you want me to arrange the invitation, we can make clear that the favor is being done because of our friendship with Torshin.*[3832]

[3832] **(U)** Email, Keene to Butina, December 13, 2013 (PAE0000302, PAE0000296).

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(U) Later that day, Butina responded with her and Torshin's recommendation to extend the invitation to Rogozin:

> *We talked with Mr. Torshin on your invitation [to] Mr. Rogozin. We are confident that this will greatly strengthen our position in Russia.*
> *Dmitry O. really is a great lover of weapons. Moreover, I am a member of one of his expert groups for changes in our legislation on weapons.*
> *If you mention in conversation about Senator Torshin and me it would be great!*[3833]

(U) In addition, in early November 2013, Butina and Erickson discussed the concept of an NRA-hosted event in Moscow in 2014 to honor Butina's group, Torshin, and General Mikhail Kalashnikov, an idea that Torshin and Keene had raised during the Right to Bear Arms conference. Erickson characterized the idea as having "HIGH importance to the NRA," and suggested that "the NRA would bring its top officers and key supporters to Moscow in a show of support for your work." He added: "Our hope would be that Sen. Torshin would be featured at this banquet AND, if appropriate, that Sen. Torshin would invite President Putin to attend as well."[3834] Keene explained the idea to the Committee as a way to raise funds from the NRA's most significant donors, who comprise the NRA's "Ring of Freedom" group.[3835]

(U) Keene said that the idea did not come to fruition because of souring diplomatic relations and because Kalashnikov passed away in December 2013.[3836] In January 2014, Keene—the opinion editor at *The Washington Times*—published an op-ed by Torshin about Kalashnikov, which Butina and Erickson helped translate to English.[3837]

iii. (U) Butina Attends the 2014 NRA Annual Meetings in Indianapolis

(U) In April 2014, Butina attended the NRA's annual meetings in Indianapolis. Torshin did not accompany her.[3838] This was her first trip to the United States, although she had previously been rejected for a visa.[3839] She obtained her visa for this trip with Keene and Erickson's assistance,[3840] and in one email to Keene, Butina asked for advice to prepare for her interview:

[3833] **(U)** Email, Butina to Keene, December 13, 2013 (PAE0000620).
[3834] **(U)** Email, Erickson to Butina, November 7, 2013 (PAE0000087–88).
[3835] **(U)** Keene Tr., p. 23.
[3836] **(U)** *Ibid.*, p. 24.
[3837] **(U)** *Ibid.*, pp. 57–58; Butina Tr., pp. 42–43; Alexandr Torshin, "Kalashnikov, the man and the weapon," *The Washington Times*, January 2, 2014.
[3838] **(U)** Butina Tr., pp. 24–25.
[3839] **(U)** *Ibid.*, p. 13.
[3840] **(U)** Email, Erickson to Keene and Hallow, April 7, 2014 (PAE0000626, PAE0000633–635) (forwarding Butina's update on her visa interview and advising that "we need to make our visa assistance calls in the next 48

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Is there anything that I should say – or not say – in this interview in light of your calls made on my behalf? I don't want to say the wrong thing, or not say the right thing, that would undo the steps you've taken on my behalf.[3841]

Keene responded, "Don't mention calls. Just proceed as normal course of business."[3842] Keene told the Committee that he had spoken with a staff member for then-Congressman Edward Royce to help Butina's visa efforts, which he described as a "standard call."[3843]

(U) Butina arrived in Indianapolis on April 22.[3844] While at the annual meetings, Butina planned to meet with Keene,[3845] and Keene invited her to the NRA's "Ring of Freedom" reception as his guest and scheduled her to deliver five minutes of remarks at the dinner.[3846] Keene also said Butina would "be introduced at other functions,"[3847] and Butina recalled meeting the NRA Chief Executive, Wayne LaPierre, and its then-president, Jim Porter, and giving the latter a framed picture.[3848]

(U) Following the Indianapolis meetings, Butina invited Keene on a return visit to Moscow for her organization's third annual conference, to be held in September 2014. Keene declined due to the mid-term elections and because he planned to be on the road, but added a promise to "come next fall if you still want me" and extended an invitation to Torshin and Butina to attend the 2015 NRA Annual Meeting in Nashville.[3849]

(U) At the end of 2014, Butina pursued further opportunities to engage with Keene and the NRA. On December 1, Butina emailed Erickson to request his assistance with a plan for two Russian firearms companies to visit the United States for the April 2015 NRA convention in Nashville and to meet NRA leadership and key donors.[3850] According to Butina's email, both

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hours" and reiterating the need for "[t]he favor we need from a U.S. Congressman."); Email, Keene to Butina, April 7, 2014 (PAE0000973) ("I will personally follow up at this end on the visa request, etc, so don't hesitate to contact me at any time.")

[3841] (U) Email, Butina to Keene, April 8, 2014 (PAE0005026).

[3842] U) Email, Keene to Butina, April 8, 2014 (PAE0005026).

[3843] (U) Keene Tr., pp. 69–70. It is unclear what Keene meant by "standard call." At the time, Royce was Chairman of the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

[3844] (U) Email, Butina to Erickson, April 9, 2014 (PAE0001704).

[3845] (U) Email, Keene to Butina, April 10, 2014 (PAE0002651).

[3846] (U) Email, Keene to Butina, April 10, 2014 (PAE0002669).

[3847] (U) *Ibid.*

[3848] (U) Butina Tr., pp. 130–31.

[3849] (U) Email, Butina to Keene, August 26, 2014 (MB 0006933).

[3850] (U) Email, Butina to Erickson, December 1, 2014 (PAE0000528–529). One of the companies was the "Scientific Research Institute of Applied Chemistry." The other was the "Vyatsko-Polyansky Engineering Plant," which, according to open-source information, was a subsidiary of Rostec, the Russian state-owned holding

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were interested in developing business opportunities to sell firearms in the United States and were "very well prepared to pay" her for the trip.[3851] On January 22, 2015, Butina sent her request to Keene to help the two Russian companies secure invitations to the Nashville convention.[3852] It is unknown if representatives from the companies ultimately traveled to the United States to meet with the NRA.

(U) In January 2015, Torshin was appointed as the vice chairman of the Russian Central Bank, which required him to leave his position in the Federation Council. On January 20, Butina alerted Keene by email—which she then forwarded to Erickson—of Torshin's appointment, and expressed concern over the implications for Torshin's continuing relationship with the NRA: "We have not known yet are these news good or bad. . . . We also will discuss the upcoming NRA Annual Meeting and the possibility to him to participate [in] it but I think there are very few chances that it is possible now."[3853]

4. (U) Torshin and Butina Leverage NRA Relationships

(U) Beginning in 2015, Torshin and Butina developed and operationalized a plan, which she called the "Diplomacy Project," to create channels for informal communication between the Russian and U.S. governments. The plan involved using their existing connections in the NRA to develop further contacts with the Republican Party and conservative U.S. political circles. Their effort was known to, and likely approved by, the Kremlin and Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

i. (U) Butina and Torshin Develop a Plan for an "Informal Channel of Communication" Between the United States and Russia

(U) In mid-February 2015, Butina wrote to David Keene and his wife, Donna, with an update about Torshin's appointment and his "recommendation" that she expand her relationship with the Republican Party and, with the Keenes' help, lay the foundation for a "trusted dialogue" between Russia and the United States:

> *Yesterday I met with Mr. Torshin. After his appointment to a new high position within the Russian Central Bank, his position is greatly strengthened because his*

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conglomerate. In 2017, the Vyatsko-Polyansky Engineering Plant declared bankruptcy. *See* "'Hammer' will go under the hammer," *Kommersant*, February 7, 2017.

[3851] (U) Email, Butina to Erickson, December 1, 2014 (PAE0000521, 528–529).

[3852] (U) Butina also provided Keene with descriptions of the weapons these companies produced, passports for their representatives, and letters from business partners. Email, Butina to Keene, January 20, 2015 (PAE0002440).

[3853] (U) Email, Butina to Keene, January 20, 2015 (PAE0002440).

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appointment was the result of private conversations with our president. Of course, this provides additional opportunities to promote our thoughts and ideas. . . . However, I can write that in connection with the now changed situation, he recommended that I expand my participation in conferences and meetings in the political circles of the US Republican Party as much as possible. There will be a day soon when new leadership will need a trusted dialogue between our countries. For help and advice on this issue, he recommended (which I totally agree!) to look only to you.[3854]

(U) Two weeks later, Butina was invited to two events scheduled for February 26, hosted by *The Washington Times* during the CPAC conference.[3855] Erickson sent Butina an email the next day attaching a photo of her and Walker from one of the events.[3856]

(U) Following Torshin's recommendation, Butina formalized her plan in a document that she subsequently translated using Google-Translate and emailed to Erickson on March 24, 2015.[3857] The subject line of the email was "The Second Pozner," a reference to a Soviet Union spokesperson who Butina described as "the unofficial transmitter of Gorbachev's and Yeltsin's policies in the US."[3858] In it, Butina described a plan, entitled in the email as "Project Description: Diplomacy," to use her connections with the NRA to create an "informal channel of communication" with the next U.S. presidential administration, which she predicted would be a Republican one, for the benefit of the Russian government; she also requested funding for the project.[3859]

(U) In the document, Butina described the perceived centrality of the NRA to Republican Party politics, her own connections with NRA leadership (specifically Keene), and touted her interactions with leading Republican Party presidential candidates:

[3854] **(U)** Email, Butina to Keene and Keene, February 10, 2015 (PAE0002077, 2084).
[3855] **(U)** Email, D. Keene to Butina, February 24, 2016 (PAE0000248); Email, D. Keene to Butina, February 24, 2016 (PAE0000271). At the time, Keene served as an opinion editor of *The Washington Times*. Keene Tr., p. 7.
[3856] **(U)** Email, Erickson to Butina, February 26, 2015 (PAE0001353); Email, Butina to Erickson, April 14, 2015 (PAE0001952).
[3857] **(U)** Email, Butina to Erickson, March 24, 2015 (PAE0002573, 2560–2565). A Russian version was separately translated and provided as an exhibit to the government's sentencing memorandum in Butina's criminal case. The wording is similar, but not identical. *See* United States' Memorandum in Aid of Sentencing, *United States v. Mariia Butina*, 1:18-cr-00218-TSC (D.D.C. April 19, 2019), and Exhibit 3 thereto. In one line in the government's exhibit, Butina writes: **"The [Republican Party] leadership sees a connection: 'Spokesperson - [redacted] – access to VVP,'"** but the translation is not as clear in the Committee's Google-translated version. *Ibid.* (bold in original).
[3858] **(U)** United States' Memorandum in Aid of Sentencing, *United States v. Mariia Butina*, 1:18-cr-00218-TSC (D.D.C. April 19, 2019), Exhibit 3.
[3859] **(U)** Email, Butina to Erickson, March 24, 2015 (PAE0002573, 2560–2565).

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> *During [her] recent visits to events in the United States RP [Republican Party] speaker [Butina] was presented to all the main leaders of the top of the RP as a "representative of informal diplomacy" of the Russian Federation. Also took her personal acquaintance with Scott Walker and all candidates presidential primary RP.* [3860]

(U) Butina summarized her activities in the United States and then wrote, in bold: **"Thus the groundwork for reliable contact in negotiating with the future US administration can be said to have been laid."**[3861] Under the header "Next Steps," Butina continued by identifying her plan to develop contacts with the Republican Party leadership:

> *Speaker [Butina] should take part in all upcoming major conferences RP (about 1 time per month in different cities across the US – the list is attached below in Appendix 2), to act in the American press as an expert on Russia and have regular contact with the leadership of the [Republican Party].*[3862]

(U) Butina concluded the description with a request for funding in the amount of $125,000 to attend a series of Republican-focused conferences and interface with Russian government and business figures to understand their interests.[3863]

(U) Several days later, Erickson responded that he "underst[oo]d your need to discuss with your Russian patrons/sponsors your potential contacts in America with political, media and business leaders."[3864] He added:

> *Your challenge in your "special project" will be to balance two opposing imperatives: Your desire to communicate that you speak for Russian interests that will be ascendant (still around) in a post-Putin world while simultaneously doing nothing to criticize the President or speed the arrival of his successor. . . .*
> *[A]s with the media contacts, there is NO limit as to how many American companies that you can meet—at the highest levels—if you are able to represent that you are a potential line of communication into future Russian Federation governments.* [3865]

[3860] (U) Email, Butina to Erickson, March 24, 2015 (PAE0002561).
[3861] (U) United States' Memorandum in Aid of Sentencing, *United States v. Mariia Butina*, 1:18-cr-00218-TSC (D.D.C. April 19, 2019), Exhibit 3 (bold in original).
[3862] (U) Email, Butina to Erickson, March 24, 2015 (PAE0002562).
[3863] (U) Email, Butina to Erickson, March 24, 2015 (PAE0002561).
[3864] (U) Email, Erickson to Butina, March 29, 2015 (PAE0000678).
[3865] (U) *Ibid.*

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(U) In addition to recommending certain networking opportunities to further Butina's "diplomacy" project, Erickson also organized her travel through the United States that summer. The trip included stops in South Dakota to visit Erickson's home and a youth camp engagement; Nevada for FreedomFest, Wisconsin for Scott Walker's campaign announcement, and Tennessee for, among other things, dinner with G. Kline Preston, before returning to Moscow.[3866]

(U) Erickson was not alone in providing travel recommendations to Butina. In March 2015, Donna Keene sent Butina a list of "Key Conservative Meeting Dates" from the Conservative Action Project. That email included apparent recommendations and notes from the Keenes, and Erickson was copied on the email.[3867]

(U) Butina later made her pitch for Republican Party cooperation with Russia in a June 12, 2015, article she published with *The National Interest*, entitled "The Bear and the Elephant."[3868]

ii. (U) Butina and Torshin Attend the 2015 NRA Convention and Meet Scott Walker

(U) In April 2015, Butina and Torshin traveled to Nashville, Tennessee to attend the NRA's annual meetings. Erickson helped to arrange the trip and communicated with the NRA about Butina and Torshin's travel plans.[3869] Nick Perrine, assistant to the NRA's President,[3870] handled the itinerary.[3871] Formal invitations for Butina and Torshin were provided by the NRA presumably to assist with obtaining visas.[3872]

(U) Prior to the NRA event, the Center for National Interest (CNI), a conservative public policy think tank, arranged meetings and a lunch for Torshin and Butina with several U.S. Government officials and other individuals.[3873] Meetings were scheduled with Stanley Fischer, vice-chairman of the Federal Reserve; Nathan Sheets, the Under Secretary of Treasury for

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[3866] (U) "Maria's Trip to the U.S.A.," (PAE0000714). The Committee assesses, based on the use of Butina's initials and the timing, that Erickson caused $8,000 to be wired to one of Butina's bank accounts shortly before the trip. *See* Indictment, *United States v. Paul Erickson*, 4:19-cr-40015 (D.S.D. November 18, 2019).

[3867] (U) Email, Keene to Butina and Erickson, March 16, 2015 (PAE0000195).

[3868] (U) Maria Butina, "The Bear and the Elephant," *The National Interest*, June 12, 2015. Butina shared the article with Keene after it was published. Email, Butina to Keene, June 17, 2015 (PAE0002535–2536). *The National Interest* is published by The Center for National Interest (CNI).

[3869] (U) Email, Erickson to Butina, April 1, 2016 (PAE0000269).

[3870] (U) Keene Tr., p. 189.

[3871] (U) Emails, Perrine and Butina, March 16–March 26, 2016 (PAE0000386–394).

[3872] (U) *See* Letter, Land to Butina, February 5, 2015 (NRA Production, 000001); Letter, Land to Torshin, February 5, 2015 (NRA Production 000002).

[3873] (U) Email, Saunders to Torshin, April 5, 2015 (PAE0000414–415).

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International Affairs; and Randy Weber, a Republican member of the House Foreign Affairs Committee.[3874] The CNI lunch, which took place on April 7, was led by Hank Greenberg, and attended by David Keene, Grover Norquist, and several other individuals from CNI, including Dmitri Simes, Richard Burt and Paul Saunders.[3875] Simes, the President and CEO of CNI, had previously met Torshin on a trip to Moscow.[3876] In an email to K.T. McFarland, who later joined the Trump Transition Team and eventually became the Deputy National Security Advisor, Erickson described the lunch as a "'Russian star Chamber' of guests" to provide "[d]eep briefings ahead of the Russian 'invasion' of the NRA Annual Meeting in Nashville at the end of the week."[3877] Afterwards, Torshin met with Greenberg and two associates to discuss "Russia's economic situation" and the ITB (Investtgorbank), a Russian bank where Greenberg had made a significant financial investment that was proving problematic.[3878]

(U) Butina and Torshin flew from Washington, D.C., to Nashville on the evening of April 7, 2015. On April 8, at Keene's invitation, Torshin gave remarks at the NRA's Charlton Heston Recognition Dinner that Keene summarized as, "Thank you. I'm so honored to be

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[3874] (U) *Ibid.*; Email, Saunders to Butina, April 4, 2015 (PAE0000392); "Events for Mr. Alexander Torshin & Ms. Maria Butina" (PAE0002077).

[3875] (U) Email, Saunders to Torshin, April 5, 2015 (PAE0000414–415); Email, Negrouk to Butina (PAE0000401, 409–410).

[3876] (U) Simes Tr., 120–121.

[3877] (U) Email, Erickson to McFarland, April 4, 2015 (PAE0001227).

[3878] (U) Email, Saunders to Torshin, April 5, 2015 (PAE0000414–415). A fund run by Greenberg, Starr Foundation, had invested in ITB in 2008, according to open sources. *See* "Westerners shell out Rub 5 bln for 40% of Investtorgbank," *Banki.ru*, June 27, 2008. In August 2015, several months after Torshin's meeting with Greenberg, Erickson emailed Greenberg with research by Butina on questions Greenberg "had raised on the call" that morning about the Russian Central Bank. Email, Erickson to Greenberg, cc: Butina, August 3, 2015 (MB 0003861). Butina indicated that Simes later engaged Torshin (and to a lesser extent, Butina) in an unsuccessful effort to help Greenberg's financial position with ITB. Butina Tr., pp. 109–110 (stating that Butina instructed Simes and Greenberg to use her as a conduit to Torshin). In Butina's November 2016 messages with Torshin, they discussed ways to stem Simes's calls to Torshin on the ITB matter. *See* Twitter direct messages, Butina and Torshin, November 17, 2015. For his part, Simes became wary of Butina after she appeared to him in various roles—at first as a translator for Torshin, then later as substantively involved with Torshin and the Central Bank. Simes Tr., pp. 125–127. In November 2016, Butina told Torshin that Simes "gave a direct order to his staff to not talk to me under the threat of being fired. He says I work for the SVR." Twitter direct messages, Butina and Torshin, November 13, 2015 (Direct messages between Butina and Torshin were originally produced by Butina to the Committee in Russian and then translated). Simes similarly testified to the Committee that he had expressed significant reservations about Butina: "I could not understand—I did not know and I don't want to say more than I know, because I cannot say with any degree of confidence that any of them, particularly Ms. Butina, were Russian intelligence agents. What I knew, that she was not what she was trying to pretend to be, particularly because she clearly had multiple personalities in her discussions with Americans." Simes Tr., p. 128. Simes described his last interaction with Butina, in which Butina invited him to dinner to talk about the Central Bank. He declined, but she insisted, saying she had "something important to share," and so he agreed to meet her at his office. But Butina then arrived at CNI with Paul Erickson and again they invited him to dinner; Simes refused, cut the meeting short, and directed his staff not to let her into CNI again. *Ibid.*, pp. 126–127.

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here."[3879] Butina translated for Torshin.[3880] Torshin was the only foreign official at the dinner, although Keene claimed that others had attended in the past.[3881] Butina and Torshin were also slated to attend the Ring of Freedom reception on April 9 before being hosted by Keene for dinner that night.[3882]

(U) During the Nashville convention, Keene gave a replica of a Civil War revolver to Torshin; Keene further suggested that they use the diplomatic pouch to help Torshin get it back to Russia.[3883] Torshin rejected the idea.[3884] In chats with Butina, Torshin later asked about the revolver's make and year issued for shipment to Russia.[3885] A photograph captures Keene (second from left) presenting a revolver to Torshin (far right)[3886]:



(U) Their itinerary also included attendance at the ILA (Institute for Legislative Action) Leadership Forum, which Keene described as a forum for political speakers that is hosted by the

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[3879] (U) Keene Tr., pp. 95–96; Email, Perrine to Butina, March 20, 2015 (PAE0000387); Email, Perinne to Butina, April 4, 2015 (PAE0000690).
[3880] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 96.
[3881] (U) *Ibid.*
[3882] (U) Email, Perrine to Butina, April 4, 2015 (PAE0000690, 699) (attaching events schedule).
[3883] (U) Keene Tr., pp. 162–163.
[3884] (U) *Ibid.*
[3885] (U) Twitter direct messages, Torshin and Butina, July 10–23, 2015.
[3886] (U) Twitter direct message, Butina to Torshin, August 9, 2015 (MB 0000106).

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NRA's political lobbying arm.[3887] Torshin later posted on Twitter that he had met Trump.[3888] Keene did not have any personal knowledge as to whether Torshin and Butina attended the forum or whether Torshin in fact met Trump.[3889] The Committee has no further information on whether Torshin met Trump.

(U) Butina and Torshin were specifically interested in meeting U.S. Government officials at the NRA meetings. Butina asked the NRA for "a list of U.S. Governors or Members of Congress that might be present at some time during the Annual Meeting."[3890] Perrine responded with a link to a list of Republican politicians who planned to attend the NRA-ILA leadership forum.[3891] Butina later shared with Erickson a file of "all the important people [they would] meet," which she called "The VIP Presentation."[3892] Neither Butina nor Erickson produced this file to the Committee.

(U) At one reception during the convention, Keene introduced Torshin and Butina to Scott Walker. Keene, who is from Wisconsin, was supporting Walker's candidacy at the time.[3893] Keene said he did not recall which reception it was or whether he had invited them to the reception in the first place.[3894] Butina and Torshin presented Walker with a gift from Russia and spoke to Walker briefly.[3895] Butina described their conversation with Walker as "small talk," but acknowledged that she expressed her desire for "good relations" between Russia and the United States.[3896] An email she later sent to Erickson, translated from Russian, was more detailed: "We talked about Russia, any aggression against our country, the president or my countrymen I have not heard. Who knows, maybe such a meeting is the beginning of a new dialogue between Russia and the United States and back from the Cold War to a peaceful existence of the two great powers?!"[3897]

(U) Butina and Torshin remained interested in Walker's political prospects. Later that summer, on July 13, Butina and Erickson flew to Wisconsin to attend Scott Walker's official

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[3887] (U) Keene Tr., pp. 97–98.
[3888] (U) Tweet, @torshin_ru, August 23, 2015. According to public reporting, Torshin also claimed that Trump said to him: "You're from Russia. When are you going to invade Latvia?" Tim Dickinson, "Inside the Decade-Long Russian Campaign to Infiltrate the NRA and Help Elect Trump," *Rolling Stone*, April 2, 2018.
[3889] (U) *Ibid.* Emails indicated Torshin and Butina offered to provide an item for the ILA auction, which the ILA declined. Emails, Butina and Perrine, March 23, 2015 (PAE0002914–2915).
[3890] (U) Email, Butina to Perrine, March 20, 2015 (PAE0002917).
[3891] (U) Email, Perrine to Butina, March 20, 2015 (NRA Production, 0000775).
[3892] (U) Email, Butina to Erickson, April 5, 2015 (PAE0001324).
[3893] (U) Keene Tr., pp. 99–100.
[3894] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 101–02.
[3895] (U) Butina Tr., p. 136.
[3896] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 142–43.
[3897] (U) Email, Butina to Erickson, April 24, 2015 (PAE0000380–381). The email suggests that this text was to be used in a blog post about the meeting, based on a decision by Torshin.

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announcement of his candidacy for president. Judging from a photo Erickson later sent to Butina, Butina met former Senator Jim Talent, Walker's national security advisor, at the event.[3898] Butina kept Torshin apprised of developments with Walker, telling him of her plans to attend the announcement and asking for the Russian Federation's view of his candidacy. Torshin replied, "no one is even looking in that direction. You will be the creator of something sensational, God Willing!" In a chat the next day with Torshin, Butina wrote: "Impressed. His chances are very high."[3899]

(U) At Torshin's request, Butina provided an analytical assessment of Walker's announcement and prospects for the Republican nomination.[3900] In a paper titled "US Republican Party candidate Scott Walker's announcement on joining the presidential race, analysis of the election campaigns, and a preliminary forecast," Butina provided historical background on Walker's political career and assessed his chances at winning the nomination. She also described an interaction with him and touted her prior contacts:

> *After the event, Mariya Butina had an opportunity for a short personal contact with Walker . . . . As a reminder, Mariya Butina has had personal contact with Walker more than once, taking part in his private reception under the Framework of The Conservative Union annual conference in Washington as well as in a private meeting at the at the annual gathering of members of the USA National Rifle Association (the NRA) in 2015.*[3901]

(U) Butina was not the only Russian government representative making inroads with the NRA. In 2015, Ambassador Kislyak interacted repeatedly with NRA leadership. In mid-June, Kislyak hosted Keene for lunch at the Russian Embassy. Keene recalled that the two spoke about the NRA museum and the possibility of Keene helping Kislyak with his duck hunting on the Eastern Shore of Maryland.[3902] Ambassador Kislyak later visited the NRA on August 20, 2015, where he met with Allan Cors and David Keene.[3903]

[3898] (U) Email, Erickson to Butina, July 13, 2015 (MB 0007286–88).
[3899] (U) Twitter direct messages, Butina and Torshin, July 13–14, 2015.
[3900] (U) Twitter direct messages, Butina and Torshin, July 14, 2015.
[3901] (U) Twitter direct messages, Butina and Torshin, July 14, 2015. Butina's descriptions of her activities, as conveyed in these analytical papers, were often written in the third person.
[3902] (U) Keene Tr., p. 176.
[3903] (U) Email, Holden to Staples, August 20, 2015 (NRA Production, 000026) (providing "daily report" noting that at 10:34 a.m. "The Russian Ambassador Sergey Kiflyak [sic] is on site. I escorted him to the South tower and stayed with him until Mr. Cors, Mr. Keene and Nick Perrine arrived."); Emails, Keene and Melnik (Chief of Staff to Kislyak), August 17, 2017 (NRA Production, 0003680) (agreeing to August 20 visit).

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(U) In mid-June, Butina inquired about Keene's lunch with Kislyak, and Keene gave her a read-out.[3904] It was not clear when or how Butina had learned of the lunch, or if she was involved in arranging it. When asked, Butina speculated that Keene and Kislyak may have met through a pre-existing project to promote Russian culture by the *The Washington Times*, where Keene worked, in connection with the Russian Embassy.[3905] But she also recalled meeting Kislyak in person and talking with him "about the NRA, and I told [him] that, look, these are great guys and why wouldn't you have communication and talk to them?"[3906]

(U) Butina's contemporaneous notes of a May 2015 meeting with Kislyak, obtained by the FBI via a search of her computer, suggest that Butina and Kislyak had a detailed conversation related to U.S. politics. For example, Butina told Kislyak she would "send the name of the advisor [to Scott Walker] who can come to Moscow."[3907] The notes also suggested that Kislyak expressed his belief that the NRA could "become one of the points of cooperation" and wanted to meet with Keene; Butina agreed to send him Keene's contact information.[3908] Based on this, the Committee found it likely that Butina was involved in arranging the meeting and provided Kislyak and the Russian government with details about Keene and the NRA.

iii. (U) Butina Attends the FreedomFest Convention

(U) In July 2015, Butina attended the libertarian FreedomFest convention in Las Vegas with Erickson. Erickson helped to secure an invitation for Butina and registered them for private events with Norquist, Dinesh D'Souza, and Peter Thiel.[3909] The formal invitation arrived on June 25.[3910]

(U) Although it did not initially appear on her schedule, Butina attended a speech by Trump and asked him whether, if elected president, he would continue the sanctions imposed against Russia in 2014. Trump responded:

[3904] (U) Email, Keene to Butina, June 17, 2015 (PAE0002535–2536).
[3905] (U) Butina Tr., pp. 58–59.
[3906] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 59.
[3907] (U) United States' Memorandum in Aid of Sentencing, *United States v. Maria Butina*, Case 1:18-cr-00218-TSC, pp. 5–6, April 19, 2019, and Exhibit 5 thereto. Butina did not produce these notes to the Committee, and they were partially redacted in public filings. Butina may have been referring to Jim Talent, an advisor to the Walker campaign whom Butina had previously met.
[3908] (U) For example, the notes indicate that Kislyak informed Butina that he had attended a museum with a redacted name "when its office was in Washington." United States' Memorandum in Aid of Sentencing, *United States v. Maria Butina*, Case 1:18-cr-00218-TSC, pp. 5–6, April 19, 2019, and Exhibit 5 thereto. Keene told the Committee a similar story about his encounter with Kislyak, and relayed that Kislyak said that he would visit the old NRA museum during a prior tour in Washington, D.C., but that it had since moved, and he wanted to see the new one in Fairfax. Keene Tr., pp. 175–177
[3909] (U) Email, Erickson to Butina, June 25, 2015 (PAE0000468).
[3910] (U) Email, Dillon to Butina, June 25, 2015 (PAE0000112).

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I know Putin, and I'll tell you what, we get along with Putin. . . . I believe I would get along very nicely with Putin, okay? And I mean where we have the strength. I don't think you'd need the sanctions.

(U) In her interview with the Committee, Butina suggested that her question to Trump came about as pure happenstance, without anyone's assistance or tasking.[3911] Butina did tell the Committee, however, that she was excited by her ability to ask a question of Trump and called Torshin from the restroom, noting that it "was my best report."[3912] Erickson attended the event with Butina, and may have taken the picture Butina posted to her Twitter account the evening of July 11, with the Google-translated text: "Asked Donald Trump about his position on Russia. Trump is saying about mitigation of sanctions."[3913]

(U) During her time at FreedomFest, Butina also met Patrick Byrne, former CEO of Overstock.com, for the first time. Butina did not convey her interest in Byrne at FreedomFest to the Committee, noting that "someone was talking about Bitcoin, and there were some fresh ideas that I wanted to discover," but not mentioning Byrne by name.[3914] However, the Committee assesses that both Erickson and Butina viewed Byrne, at least initially, as a vector to yet another Republican presidential candidate, Senator Rand Paul.

(U) On July 9, 2015, Erickson sent Butina an email with a proposed draft message that she was to send to Byrne. The draft message thanked Byrne for greeting her at FreedomFest, and stated that "[Byrne's] remarks about the coming 'electronic' changes in our 21st Century economy were exciting." The email expressed Butina's desire to talk to Byrne about the kinds of reforms Russia should be embracing, stating that "[we] need ideas like yours that are foreign to a generation of leaders that tend to go back to old Soviet ways." The draft concluded by saying "I am at Freedom Fest until Sunday – maybe if you had 10 minutes in your schedule we could have coffee or a drink. I am thirsty for great ideas!!"[3915]

(U) That evening, Erickson sent an email with the subject line "Byrne Me!" to Ralph Benko, suggesting that Erickson and Butina had attended the July 9 panel discussion about

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[3911] (U) Butina Tr., p. 243.
[3912] (U) *Ibid.*, 244.
[3913] (U) Email, Butina to Erickson, March 11, 2017 (MB 0004323–4324).
[3914] (U) Butina Tr., p. 241.
[3915] (U) Email, Erickson to Butina, July 9, 2015 (PAE0000082). The Committee only obtained Erickson's draft message. Neither Butina nor Erickson produced an actual email that was sent to Byrne, although other documents produced to the Committee suggest it, or something similar, was sent to Byrne. The time stamp for the email, and its equivalent in production from Butina, indicates Erickson sent the draft text to Butina on July 9, 2015. Email, Erickson to Butina, July 9, 2015 (MB0003883).

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Bitcoin at which Byrne was scheduled to speak.[3916] The email purported to provide the recipient a "quick report from the front[.]" In it, Erickson described how he greeted Byrne and discussed Overstock.com's work with women in Afghanistan, and Byrne's interest in Butina.[3917]

(U) Benko replied 20 minutes later, and suggested a more-than-passing knowledge of Butina, saying "Maria would capture the attention of any red blooded American."[3918] He went on to describe Byrne's potential importance to Paul's campaign:

> *Keep in the back of your (and maybe her) mind that Patrick has let himself be tapped by Rand to be Rand's tech swami, good move by Rand, and. . . after eliminating the burst of notoriety by That Asshole The Donald, today's polls have Rand tied with Jeb! and Rand is hanging in there in the top tier in the early primary states.*
> *You don't have to believe that Rand is viable. . . Just believe that Patrick Believes.*[3919]

(U) Later that evening, Erickson forwarded the entire email chain to Butina, with a one sentence suggestion: "For your preparation!"[3920]

iv. (U) Butina and Torshin Meet with Rep. Dana Rohrabacher in Moscow

(U) In August 2015, Rep. Dana Rohrabacher traveled to Russia as part of a Congressional Delegation (CODEL). David Keene recommended that, during his trip, he meet with Torshin.[3921] To facilitate the introduction, Keene sent a letter to Torshin—through Butina—on July 17.[3922] Keene's letter requested meetings for Rohrabacher with Torshin and other Russian government officials "who can brief them on the ways in which Washington and Moscow work together" in combating terrorism, and suggested a meeting with the Russian Foreign Minister.[3923] Butina translated the document and sent it to Torshin the next day over Twitter. Torshin agreed to the meeting.[3924]

[3916] (U) FreedomFest 2015 schedule, freedomfest2015.sched.com.
[3917] (U) For example, Erickson wrote: "But when he met our Russian gun rights woman, Maria, his eyes lit up and his schedule cleared . . . they are discussing economic reforms in Russia in a private meeting tomorrow. I think we now know how to capture his attention . . . and it ain't with women in burkas." Email, Erickson to Benko, July 9, 2015 (MB0003888) (ellipses in original).
[3918] (U) Email, Benko to Erickson, July 9, 2015 (MB0003887).
[3919] (U) *Ibid.*
[3920] (U) *Ibid.* In addition to the language identified here, the Committee found further discussion of Byrne's potential intimate involvement with or interest in Butina, as noted *infra*.
[3921] (U) Rohrabacher Tr., pp. 52–53.
[3922] (U) Twitter direct messages, Torshin and Butina, July 18, 2015.
[3923] (U) Letter, Keene to Torshin, July 17, 2015 (Keene Production, 000001–000002).
[3924] (U) Twitter direct messages, Torshin and Butina, July 18, 2015.

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(U) On August 3, ahead of the meeting, Torshin and Butina discussed Rohrabacher over Twitter direct message, and Torshin expressed his belief that Rohrabacher was "under the watch" of the Russian Foreign Ministry:

> ***Torshin**: Mariya! Remind me once again the last name of the Congressional committee chair who is coming to see us?*
>
> ***Butina**: Dana Rohrabacher.*
>
> ***Butina**: Head of the subcommittee for international relations for Europe, Eurasia, and emerging threats*
>
> ***Torshin**: Thanks! What do they write about him? How is he with respect to Russia?*
>
> ***Butina**: A member of the NRA.*
>
> ***Butina**: You won't believe it: he supports the annexation of Crimea to Russia.*
>
> ***Butina**: He voted against financial support from the US to the new Ukrainian government*
>
> ***Butina**: Against the US sanctions with respect to Russia, called them ridiculous.*[3925]

(U) Torshin later added:

> ***Torshin**: Precisely for this reason I think that he is under the watch of the RF MFA.*[3926]

(U) Rohrabacher recalled that he met with Torshin and Butina for breakfast.[3927] In an email to Keene after the breakfast, Butina wrote: "We had a very good and important conversation. We are sure that it will be very helpful in building the future relations between the two countries."[3928] Butina added that they "discussed with Dana that we could meet in the U.S.

[3925] (U) Twitter direct messages, Torshin and Butina, July 28–August 3, 2015.
[3926] (U) Twitter direct messages, Torshin and Butina, August 3, 2015.
[3927] (U) Rohrabacher Tr., pp. 52–53.
[3928] (U) Email, Butina to Keene, August 6, 2015 (PAE0001998).

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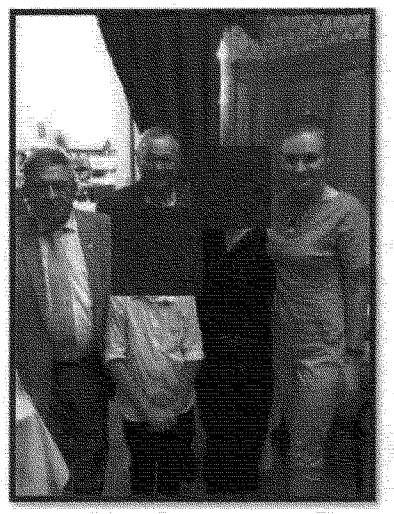
in October when I come next time and think about the actions we could do together."[3929] She attached a photo from the meeting to her email[3930].



v. (U) Butina and Torshin Host a 2015 NRA Trip to Moscow

(U) Butina and Torshin hosted Keene and several other NRA members, along with some family and additional guests, in Moscow from December 8 to December 13, 2015. The group of visitors included David Keene and Donna Keene; David Clarke, then Sheriff of Milwaukee County; Arnold Goldschlager; James Liberatore; Joseph Gregory; and Pete Brownell, the future NRA president.[3931]

(U) According to Keene, Butina and Torshin had proposed the trip.[3932] Butina explained that she and Torshin believed it was "very important to return the hospitality" from their NRA

[3929] (U) *Ibid.*
[3930] (U) Email, Butina to Keene, August 6, 2015 (PAE0001991) (attaching a photograph) (redactions not in original).
[3931] (U) List of trip participants (MB 0004811). Clarke's wife, Goldschlager's daughter, and Liberatore's wife also attended.
[3932] (U) Keene Tr., pp. 120–121.

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visits and to invite the NRA to Russia.[3933] Butina recalled sending an email to Keene to propose that members of the NRA's Golden Ring of Freedom spend time in Moscow as part of a scheduled NRA trip to Israel.[3934] In early August, Keene shared with Butina an "initial list" of individuals he was considering inviting.[3935]

(U) On August 12, Torshin and Butina discussed the NRA's plans over private Twitter messages, including the possibility of hosting "high level meetings" in Moscow if the NRA delegation was sufficiently "respectable."[3936]

(U) By September, Butina was preparing for the NRA visit, buying the tickets, and creating a list of participants to send to Torshin.[3937] Butina emphasized the need for politically-connected people to participate in the NRA's trip. In October, Butina contacted Erickson for support on identifying political elites. She wrote: "I strongly need the information about how are people below important POLITICALLY to make the NRA trip and their meetings in . . . you know where . . . . "[3938] She asked specifically about Cors, Keene, Goldschlager, and Liberatore.[3939] She stressed: "I do not need bio. I need how influential they are in the USA politics."[3940] Butina also extended an invitation to Pete Brownell in late October, suggesting that he could join the NRA delegation and, while in Moscow, meet with Russian gun manufacturers and retailers for business.[3941] Brownell agreed to join the trip on November 24.[3942]

(U) Butina was concerned that Cors might be unable to attend. On November 13, Butina emailed David and Donna Keene about the pending trip and highlighted several "high level special events" that Torshin had arranged, in part to persuade Cors to reconsider attending: "Many of these very high level special events were granted to us because these Russian figures were going to meet the 'head of the most powerful political organization in America.'"[3943]

[3933] (U) Butina Tr., p. 147.
[3934] (U) Butina Tr., pp. 147–48.
[3935] (U) Email, Keene to Butina, August 6, 2015 (MB 0003863). The list included Joe Gregory, Chairman of the NRA Golden Ring of Freedom; Allan Cors, NRA President; George Kollitides, former President and CEO of the "Freedom Group" and an NRA Foundation Board member; Jim Liberatore, President and CEO of the Outdoor Channel who was interested in doing a "non-political short series of shows that he would tentatively call 'Putin's Russia' featuring the Russian outdoors, hunting, fishing and conservation efforts"; John Bolton; and Ed Goeas, a pollster.
[3936] (U) Twitter direct message, Torshin and Butina, August 12, 2015.
[3937] (U) Twitter direct message, Torshin and Butina, September 19, 2015. *See also* Email, Butina to Donna Keene, September 2, 2015 (MB 0004817).
[3938] (U) Email, Butina to Erickson, October 19, 2015 (PAE0000959).
[3939] (U) *Ibid.*
[3940] (U) *Ibid.*
[3941] (U) Email, Butina to Brownell, October 25, 2016 (MB 0004007).
[3942] (U) Email, Perrine to Butina, November 24, 2015 (NRA Production, Bates No. 0003293)
[3943] (U) Email, Butina to Keene, November 13, 2015 (PAE0002603–2605)

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(U) In her email to the Keenes, Butina emphasized several additional events, including private meetings with[3944]:

- (U) **Nikolai Patrushev**—"First Secretary of the Russian Security Counsel [sic] (the man that advises President Putin on a daily basis on all national security and military affairs—the equal to your «National Security Advisor»)";
- (U) **Dmitri Rogozin**— "First Deputy Prime Minister responsible for the production of ALL Russian arms—the unofficial leader of the Russian military industrial complex";
- (U) **Pavel Gusev**— "leading media oligarch in all of Russia" who is "the unofficial media advisor to President Putin," who would be in a position to "secure [Keene's] interview with President Putin"[3945];
- (U) **Igor Pisarsky**— "[t]he founder of the most important PR firm in Russia- who runs President Putin's presidential campaigns"; and,
- (U) **Konstantin Nikolaev**— "the oligarch that has personally funded «The Right To Bear Arms» for several years."

(U) Butina shared with the Keenes the purported belief of the Russian press, which she claimed was very interested in interviewing Cors, "that the NRA could influence American presidential politics and future relations with Russia."[3946] Butina also implied to the Keenes that the Russian Presidential Administration was aware of, and monitoring, the NRA's upcoming visit: "Many powerful figures in the Kremlin are counting on Torshin to prove his American connections – a last minute important member cancellation could affect his political future."[3947]

(U) Butina's contemporaneous messaging with Torshin reflected their interest in securing the participation of Russian government officials in the trip. On October 6, Butina sent Torshin an updated list of seven potential NRA delegation members, and discussed the agenda

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[3944] (U) *Ibid.*

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[3946] (U) Email, Butina to Keene, November 13, 2015 (PAE0002603–2605).

[3947] (U) *Ibid.*

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for the visit, including meetings with Rogozin, Lavrov, and Nikolaev, and a "political program."[3948]

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[3948] (U) Twitter direct message, Torshin and Butina, October 6, 2015. The participant list from Butina included Cors and his wife; Gregory; Goldschlager and his daughter; and Keene and his wife.

[3949] [redacted]

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(U) Keene told the Committee that he was particularly interested in seeing Putin and possibly interviewing him for *The Washington Times*.[3950] Keene made the request through Butina and Torshin.[3951] Keene, Torshin, and Butina may have discussed Keene's interest in the interview during dinner on October 28, at the University Club in Washington, D.C.[3952]

(U) On November 2, Butina and Torshin discussed Keene's request over Twitter direct message, as well as the other meetings being arranged for the NRA delegation to speak with Russian government officials:

> ***Butina***: *Do I ask Keene for an official letter to VVP [Vladimir Putin] from the newspaper? With a request for an interview. I am deciding about [Evgeny] Lukyanov.*
>
> ***Torshin***: *Lukyanov gave his consent (they are supposed to contact you), the relevant deputy minister of foreign affairs is very interested. He will coordinate the delegation's meeting in the MFA and will recommend a meeting to D. O. Rogozin. The publication issue is more complicated. There is a tradition that VV gives an interview to a particular foreign media outlet only on the eve of his visit to that media outlet's home country. I will look for Peskov. Request an interview with the President, Peskov, or Rogozin.*[3953]

(U) In mid-November, Torshin and Butina discussed the complications of setting up a meeting for the NRA delegation with Dmitry Rogozin, who was under U.S. sanctions. The NRA group expressed an interested in meeting with Rogozin despite the sanctions, so Butina and Torshin contemplated a less formal interaction to reduce the potential for violating sanctions:

[3950] (U) Keene Tr., pp. 124–125.
[3951] (U) *Ibid.* Keene also told the Committee that Butina and Torshin also attempted to arrange a meeting with Putin's chief of staff so that Keene could to "make the personal appeal that way," but they were unsuccessful. *Ibid.*, p. 125–126.
[3952] (U) Calendar, David Keene, October 28, 2015 (Bates No. 000018); Emails, Erickson and Butina, October 27, 2015 (PAE0002029).
[3953] (U) Twitter direct message, Torshin and Butina, November 2, 2015.

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***Torshin**: Hi! I spoke with Dmitriy Olegovich [Rogozin]. He is ready, but we can seriously "set up" the Americans. Since D.O. is under the American sanctions, the State Department does not recommend their people meet with him. There is a fine for this (S. [Steven] Segal was already fined for D.O.). D.O. said about FPR [Federation of Practice Shooting] that he would give the order to gather high profile people to the meeting. The conversation was polite and kind. A.T.*

***Butina**: We discussed the topic about D.O. Our colleagues said that they still want a meeting. I suggest not making it such a formal function and inviting him to lunch or dinner?*

***Butina**: This will smooth over the issue a little but it won't resolve it. I warned them.*[3954]

(U) Butina, as well as Erickson, advised the NRA group of the identities and status of the Russian government counterparts it might meet with during the visit. For example, in one email to the Keenes seeking to secure Cors's participation, Butina floated a "possible meeting with 'Russia's highest leader'"—Vladimir Putin—if the "leader of the NRA" joined the delegation.[3955] In another email, Butina recommended against bringing gifts for four specific Russian government officials, including Rogozin and Lavrov.[3956] Erickson also sent an email about a meeting with "Russia's highest leader" to Brownell;[3957] Brownell responded to Erickson: "This would be a very interesting meeting"[3958] and forwarded it to Brownell's Director of Compliance to convey "the nature of the nra to Russia meeting."[3959]

(U) The issue of sanctions also arose prior to the trip. In an email to Brownell on November 23, 2016, Erickson wrote:

You (individually) would NOT be allowed to meet with Deputy Prime Minister Dmitry Rogozin – he appears at the top of the current Obama "sanctions list." . . . For obvious reasons, the "Russian leader" whom I just wrote about is missing from this list . . . and you would NOT be barred from leading the delegation to the Kremlin for this meeting.[3960]

[3954] **(U)** Twitter direct messages, Torshin and Butina, November 12– November 16, 2015.
[3955] **(U)** Email, Butina to David and Donna Keene, November 23, 2016 (Brownell Production 00086).
[3956] **(U)** Email, Butina to Donna Keene and Perrine, November 19, 2015 (PAE0001472–1473); *see also* Email, Perrine to Dewitt, December 8, 2016 (NRA Production 0001310–1312).
[3957] **(U)** Email, Erickson to Brownell, November 23, 2015 (Brownell Production 00052).
[3958] **(U)** Email, Brownell to Erickson, November 23, 2015 (Brownell Production 00053).
[3959] **(U)** Email, Brownell to McAllister, November 23, 2015 (Brownell Production 00781).
[3960] **(U)** Email from Erickson to Brownell, November 23, 2015 (Brownell Production 00053).

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(U) Overall, Keene was "comfortable with what [Butina] laid out" in the final itinerary.[3961] The NRA delegation arrived in Moscow on December 8.[3962] On December 9, members of the delegation met with Lavrov in his office. That day, Torshin informed Keene that the Putin interview would not happen, but asked if Keene would "like to stop by and see the foreign minister" for a courtesy meeting.[3963] According to Butina, Torshin pitched Lavrov based on the political benefits: "Torshin knows him. They suggested—how we showed this NRA trip was: Well, we have a chance to become friends with this country. Obama's term is coming to the end. That would be a very good natural connection on that topic."[3964] She also claimed it was beneficial for her organization to obtain high-profile meetings to show the NRA that she and Torshin had "influence."[3965]

(U) Keene agreed to the Lavrov meeting, and took along a small group: Clarke, Gregory, Torshin, and Butina also attended.[3966] According to a tweet by Clarke, the discussion with Lavrov involved the Middle East,[3967] although Butina and Keene told the Committee that fishing and hunting were the focus.[3968] The conversation lasted approximately 20 minutes.[3969]

[3961] (U) Keene Tr., p. 130. Keene made this comment when presented with a version of the itinerary that did not reference Rogozin or Putin. However, as noted, Keene had been trying to meet with Putin, and other itineraries he received prior to the trip, including a trip package prepared for him by NRA staff, included Rogozin and Lavrov. *See, e.g.*, Email, Perrine to Keenes, November 25, 2016 (NRA Production 0003366–3388) (attaching itinerary).

[3962] (U) *Ibid.* Brownell arrived earlier than the rest of the group and met with various Russian gun manufacturers for business reasons. *See* Emails, Brownell and Perrine et al., November 27–28, 2015 (Brownell Production 00185–186); Emails, Butina and Brownell, November 27–December 4, 2015 (Brownell Production 00219–224, 290–294); Emails, Brownell and Nikolaeva, December 11, 2015 (Brownell Production 00320–321).

[3963] (U) Keene Tr., p. 127. In his interview, Keene made it sound like the Lavrov meeting was a surprise, but it appeared to have been on the schedule for some time. *See, e.g.*, Email, Perrine to Keenes, November 25, 2016 (NRA Production 0003366–3388) (attaching itinerary).

[3964] (U) Butina Tr., pp. 157–158.

[3965] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 159.

[3966] (U) Keene Tr., p. 127; Butina Tr., pp. 155–156.

[3967] (U) Tweet, @SheriffClarke, December 10, 2015 ("Met earlier with Russian Foreign Minister who spoke on Mid East.").

[3968] (U) Butina Tr., pp. 155–156; Keene Tr., pp. 132–134.

[3969] (U) According to Butina, this was because their arrival was delayed by Moscow traffic. Butina Tr., p. 158. Keene said it lasted only 20 minutes because Lavrov had a phone call with then-Secretary of State Kerry. Keene Tr., p. 135.

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(U) On December 9th, Pavel Gusev hosted dinner.[3970] Lunch was hosted by Pisarsky the next day, December 10.[3971] Nikolaev was scheduled to attend the lunch, but Keene did not recall meeting him.[3972]

(U) Other encounters with Russian government figures occurred on the last day of the trip, when the NRA group visited a Russian shooting club. One was a meeting with Rogozin, which, despite the months of planning and behind-the-scenes discussions, both Keene and Butina portrayed to the Committee as ultimately a coincidence. Keene recalled seeing Rogozin and Rogozin's wife during a tour of the facility, and then seeing them afterwards in the board room.[3973] According to Keene, the president of the board, Vitaly Kryuchin,[3974] "did the talking," and Rogozin spoke for less than a minute: "He said: Thank you for coming to our facility, we're happy to host you, and then turned it over to him [the president]."[3975] Igor Shchyogolev, a member of the board and aide to Putin, was scheduled to attend the reception.[3976] Like Rogozin, Shchyogolev was subject to U.S. sanctions resulting from Russian aggression in Ukraine.[3977]

(U) Keene was fully aware that Rogozin was subject to U.S. sanctions based on information in the press, but did not see that as a reason to avoid him.[3978] While Butina requested that no photos be taken, Rogozin permitted some pictures (including one of Brownell and Gregory), which he later published.[3979] Butina and Torshin were surprised by Rogozin's publication of the photographs, and expressed some concerns in private messaging that this would "create problems" for the American visitors.[3980]

(U) Butina said she expected the group would meet with Rogozin and had made such a request, but was not sure it would happen "until the last moment."[3981] However, she downplayed

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[3970] (U) Keene Tr., p. 137; Butina, "THE PROGRAM of the visit of the delegation from The National Rifle Association of America (The NRA) to Moscow, 8 -13 December 2015" (MB 0000066–83).
[3971] (U) Keene Tr., p. 139; Butina, "THE PROGRAM of the visit of the delegation from The National Rifle Association of America (The NRA) to Moscow, 8 -13 December 2015" (MB 0000066–83).
[3972] (U) Keene Tr., p. 139.
[3973] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 140–141.
[3974] (U) Email, Brownell to Perrine, December 12, 2015 (Brownell Production 00326–328) (sharing Kryuchin's business card).
[3975] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 144–145.
[3976] (U) Twitter direct messages, Torshin and Butina, December 13, 2015. Shchyogolev is also known as Igor Shchegolev. Keene did not recall if Shchyogolev was present. Keene Tr., p. 146.
[3977] (U) Treasury, Ukraine-related Sanctions, July 16, 2014 (adding Shchyogolev to Specially Designated Nationals list).
[3978] (U) Keene said: "You don't do business with him, you don't give him things . . . it doesn't mean you . . . shun him." Keene Tr., p. 143.
[3979] (U) Butina Tr., pp. 169.
[3980] (U) Twitter direct messages, Torshin and Butina, December 13, 2015.
[3981] (U) Butina Tr., pp. 170–71.

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the conversation as "a little bit how is gun rights in America, . . . how it's in Russia, . . . [and] the Practical Shooting Association."[3982] Butina claimed another encounter at the shooting association with an individual in the Russian Presidential Administration was also a "coincidence."[3983]

(U) Overall, Torshin and Butina expressed satisfaction with the NRA trip and hoped to "reap dividends from the outcome."[3984] They discussed the implications of the "valuable contact" they had developed with the NRA and the importance of that contact for Torshin's "mission of reviving relationships between the two countries."[3985] In messages to Butina, Torshin also described Rogozin's reaction to the NRA visit: "[C]ontacts with the NRA are very important and interesting for him right now. We gave this issue a 'push.' So far there have been only 'pluses.'"[3986]

vi. (U) Financing the Trip and Butina's Formation of Bridges LLC

(U) Financing the trip presented some complications. Butina told the Committee that her organization intended to fund the NRA delegation's stay in Moscow,[3987] and Keene likewise understood that "The Right to Bear Arms was paying for the in-Russia costs and we [the NRA] were paying for the transportation."[3988] Keene told the Committee he was not aware of any Russian government money used to support the trip.[3989] But, as Butina explained, one of her wealthy donors, Konstantin Nikolaev, was paying the expenses in Russia.[3990] Nonetheless, Butina's organization did not have funds available for two last-minute members of the trip from the Outdoor Channel, Jim Liberatore and his wife, so she paid out of her own pocket and requested reimbursement.[3991] The cost for them was approximately $6,000, which Pete Brownell paid in June 2016 through personal check to Bridges LLC, a business entity Butina created in the

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[3982] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 163.
[3983] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 163–64. It is unclear whether Butina was saying that a meeting with Sergei Shutalev, who Butina described as a "PR person" in the Russian presidential administration was a coincidence, or whether she was referring to a meeting with another individual that she did not name. Some of the planned Russian government meetings did not occur. For example, Keene had no recollection of a meeting with Lukyanov, which Butina said was canceled. Keene Tr., p. 131; Butina Tr., p. 155. Similarly, Butina said there was no meeting that took place with the Russian Security Council. Butina Tr., p. 155.
[3984] (U) Twitter direct messages, Torshin and Butina, December 13, 2015.
[3985] (U) *Ibid.*
[3986] (U) Twitter direct messages, Torshin and Butina, December 29, 2015.
[3987] (U) Butina Tr., p. 82.
[3988] (U) Keene Tr., pp. 128–129.
[3989] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 130.
[3990] (U) Butina Tr., p. 180.
[3991] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 81–82.

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United States.[3992] The NRA invoiced Brownell for this expense and the Clarkes' expenses, which it processed as a "special project."[3993]

(U) Butina said she did not want payment to come directly to her organization because of how it might be perceived: "a western company paying money, donating money to the Russian not-profit organization supporting gun rights, would be seen very badly. It's like the West is sponsoring gun rights fight."[3994] She also said that the payment to Bridges LLC was the NRA's preference.[3995]

(U) Butina, with Erickson's help, had formed Bridges LLC in mid-February 2016 to receive payments on a consulting project with the Outdoor Channel to help develop a program called "Unknown Russia."[3996] Butina's efforts appeared largely directed at ascertaining whether Putin would "participate" in the show, and in communications with the producers, she implied that she had initiated "solid" contacts "directly with the office of President Putin."[3997] She told the Committee that these were exaggerations,[3998] although Butina's communications with Torshin suggest that she minimized these contacts in her testimony and was not fully forthcoming. For example, on March 17, Torshin told Butina that he had spoken with Alexey Gromov (Putin's Deputy Chief of Staff) about the show and would need to send a letter to Peskov. Later, on March 30 and 31, Torshin told Butina that he would be meeting with Anastasia Chernobrovina, a member of the Russian Geographic Society's "Media Council," who appeared interested and would be speaking with Peskov. On May 13, Torshin explained that Peskov would be making the decision on Putin's participation in the show.[3999]

[3992] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 81–82, 86; Email, Brownell to Butina, June 14, 2016 (MB 0002945–47). Butina separately described exploring a potential business deal with Brownell in relation to the sale of weapons parts in Russia, discussed *infra*. Butina Tr., pp. 87–89.

[3993] (U) Emails, Brownell, Perrine, and Hallow, April 24–25, 2016 (Brownell Production 593–596); Emails, Perrine and Wilmes, June 15, 2016 (NRA Production 0005347–5348); Invoice, Brownell to NRA, May 26, 2016 (NRA Production 0005351).

[3994] (U) Butina Tr., pp. 82–83.

[3995] (U) *Ibid.*

[3996] (U) Email, Butina to Cremin, February 12, 2016 (PAE0001226); Email, Butina to Kerkvliet, February 22, 2016 (PAE0001817) (discussing incorporation of Bridges LLC); Email, Keene to Butina, August 6, 2015 (PAE0000254).

[3997] (U) Email, Butina to Cremin, May 13, 2016 (PAE0000074–75). With Erickson's help, Butina negotiated and signed an Independent Contractor Agreement on February 21, 2016, to be a "Consultant and Pre-Production Coordinator," for which she received a $5,000 monthly fee, plus expenses. Email, Erickson to Butina, January 26, 2016 (PAE0001483, 1489) (drafting contract language for Butina to send to Winnercomm). The contract was formally executed with Winnercomm, Inc., a production company. *See* Independent Contractor Agreement (PAE0000340–347).

[3998] (U) Butina Tr., p. 97–98.

[3999] (U) Twitter direct messages, Torshin and Butina, March 17, 30–31, May 13, 2016.

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(U) Ultimately, the producers lost confidence in Butina's ability to secure approval for the show.[4000] Erickson drafted emails that he suggested Butina send to the producers to persuade them to extend her contract. In one July email, Erickson suggested she write:

> *I continue to receive updates from my contacts within President Putin's office concerning "Unknown Russia"— even during these summer vacation weeks. My sources remain hopeful for such a production this fall and they await my arrival in Moscow the first week of August for further discussions.*[4001]

(U) In late August 2016, Erickson further suggested connecting the project to Trump's victory in the 2016 presidential election:

> *Unofficially, my sense is that President Putin feels that there is a much better chance at future cooperation with America—on several fronts—if Trump defeats Hillary in the November general election.*[4002]

(U) Erickson also wrote:

> *Of particular note was that the Russian delegation to the NRA Annual Meeting in May (which I led) had a chance to meet Donald Trump's son over dinner and was excited to learn of Donald, Junior's love of hunting . . . AND interest in exploring Russia. These points were communicated independently to President Putin's office. This could provide a VERY interesting twist to one (or more) potential "Unknown Russia" episodes if the son(s) of the American President were seen hunting with the Russian leader.*[4003]

(U) The Committee was unable to determine if Butina ultimately sent the emails drafted by Erickson or if, as the emails indicated, she had additional communications with Putin's office.[4004] Having made no notable progress in securing Putin's participation in the show or obtaining formal approval for filming, the producers terminated the contract. Ultimately, Butina was paid $20,000 by the producer, Winnercom, for four months of work.[4005]

5. (U) Torshin and Butina Pursue Political Contacts with Russian Approval

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[4000] **(U)** Email, Cremin to Butina, May 13, 2016 (PAE0000074–75).
[4001] **(U)** Email, Erickson to Butina, July 13 (PAE0000622).
[4002] **(U)** *See, e.g.*, Email, Erickson to Butina, August 29, 2016 (PAE0000147).
[4003] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[4004] **(U)** Butina Tr., p. 99 ("I had the connection. But that was just this emails [sic] to the public office.").
[4005] **(U)** *Ibid.*, p. 97.

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(U) The NRA's 2015 trip to Moscow served as a launching pad for Torshin and Butina's continued efforts to build an informal channel of communication from the Russian Federation to U.S. policy makers, which manifested in various ways, including attendance at the National Prayer Breakfast; a series of "Friendship Dinners" sponsored by George O'Neill; the NRA annual meetings; and contact with a Trump Campaign foreign policy advisor.

i. (U) Butina and Torshin Attend the National Prayer Breakfast and the Russian National Prayer Breakfast

(U) In mid-December 2016, Torshin and Butina discussed attending the 2016 National Prayer Breakfast as the "next step" in leveraging their NRA relationship, and Torshin raised the subject at the Russian MFA in late December.[4006] After meeting with the MFA, Torshin messaged Butina: "Today's discussion about the Prayer Breakfast went well. I did not get the 'green light' yet but everyone was in favor."[4007] By early January, approval was apparently obtained, because on January 10, 2016, Butina emailed a contact at the NRA for tickets.[4008] Erickson later secured tickets through then-Congressman Mark Sanford's office,[4009] to whom Butina drafted a note of thanks, expressing the "importance of unofficial contacts" between Russia and the United States.[4010]

(U) Joe Gregory, one of the attendees of the December 2015 NRA trip to Moscow, recalled through a letter from counsel that he "put Ms. Butina in touch with certain individuals in connection with her attendance at the National Prayer Breakfast."[4011] One of those individuals was Doug Burleigh, son-in-law of Doug Coe, the National Prayer Breakfast organizer and the head of the Fellowship Foundation.[4012]

[4006] (U) Twitter direct messages, Torshin and Butina, December 29, 2015.
[4007] (U) Twitter direct messages, Torshin and Butina, December 29, 2015.
[4008] (U) *See, e.g.*, Email, Butina to Hallow, January 10, 2016 (PAE0001608). Hallow responded that the NRA did not have a table or tickets to provide. Email, Hallow to Butina, January 10, 2016 (PAE0001607).
[4009] (U) *See* Email, Roberts to Erickson, January 27, 2016 (PAE0001647–51) (responding to Erickson and attaching invitation from Sanford to Butina and Torshin); Email, Erickson to Butina, February 3, 2016 (PAE0001709) (providing instructions to retrieve a ticket from Sanford's office);
[4010] (U) *See* Email, Butina to Erickson, February 12, 2016 (MB 0003163–MB 0003164) (sharing draft letter to Sanford). Butina did not produce a final transmitted version of the email to the Committee, so it is unclear whether she ultimately sent it.
[4011] (U) Letter, McKinney to Wyden, November 15, 2018; Email, Gregory to Butina, January 19, 2016 (PAE0001615–16). Gregory had stayed in contact with Butina following the December 2015 NRA trip.
[4012] (U) "Nashville / Prayer Breakfast / Safari Club Grand Tour" (PAE0001915); Email, Butina to Burchfield and Burleigh, January 28, 2016 (PAE0000683); Butina Tr., p. 317.

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(U) In addition, Butina spent several days in Nashville at Gregory's invitation, prior to traveling to Washington, D.C. on Gregory's private jet.[4013] Following the event, Butina and Torshin flew with Gregory to Las Vegas to attend a Safari Club International convention.[4014] According to a letter from Gregory's counsel, Gregory paid for Torshin's and Butina's hotel rooms in Las Vegas.[4015]

(U) On February 10, 2016, Butina sent a summary document to Torshin entitled, "Note on A.P. Torshin's visit to the National Prayer Breakfast attended by U.S. President Barack Obama, and also a meeting with a member of the Rockefeller family, George O'Neill."[4016]

(U) Butina and Torshin built on these connections during the March 2016 Russian Prayer Breakfast. On March 15, 2016, Butina and Torshin attended the Russian Prayer Breakfast in Moscow at the President Hotel, and Torshin gave remarks. The event was attended by several Americans, including Doug Coe[4017] and Johnny Yenason.[4018] A week later, Coe's daughter, Debbie Burleigh, and her husband, Doug Burleigh, met Butina and Torshin in Moscow for a pre-arranged dinner to talk about the 2017 National Prayer Breakfast.[4019]

(U) According to an email to Butina from Debbie Burleigh, during the event, Coe and Torshin discussed the possibility of Putin attending the 2017 National Prayer Breakfast. According to Burleigh's correspondence with Butina, Torshin had "suggested to President Putin that he consider coming to the Prayer Breakfast next year, Feb. 2017 and Pres. Putin did not say 'no'!"[4020] Burleigh and Butina discussed certain conditions that would need to be met for Putin to attend.[4021] More immediately, however, Torshin and Butina began preparations for a series of meetings involving their U.S. contacts and attendance at the 2016 NRA annual convention.

[4013] (U) Letter, McKinney to Wyden, November 15, 2018. While in Nashville, Butina took in a hockey game and attended a women's luncheon and bible study.
[4014] (U) *Ibid.*
[4015] (U) *Ibid.*
[4016] (U) Twitter direct messages, Torshin and Butina, February 10, 2016. The Committee did not obtain a copy of this "summary" document.
[4017] (U) On February 10, shortly after the National Prayer Breakfast in Washington, D.C., Butina told Torshin that she had sent him a "detailed biography of Coe," who she emphasized was a "VERY interesting person," as well as a note about the Fellowship, which she called a "very big-time organization." Twitter direct messages, Torshin and Butina, February 10, 12, 2016.
[4018] (U) Email, Clay to Dearborn, May 16, 2016 (CRC-000016–CRC-000020) ("Mr. Torshin and Ms. Butina were. invited by my colleague, Johnny Yenason, who was introduced to them by Peter Sautov (Russian Ambassador: for the Russian National Prayer Breakfast)."); Clay Tr., p. 13.
[4019] (U) Email, Butina to Burleigh and Burleigh, March 22. 2016 (PAE000407); Twitter direct messages, Torshin and Butina, March 21, 2016.
[4020] (U) Email, Burleigh to Butina, March 29, 2016 (PAE000405–407).
[4021] (U) According to the emails, several conditions would need to be met: "President Putin w[ould] need to receive a personal invitation"; second, "there must be an understanding that it is a 'yes' from the new American president

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ii. (U) George O'Neill's Russian-American "Friendship Dinners"

(U) In early 2016, around the same time of the National Prayer Breakfast, Butina and Torshin developed a relationship with George O'Neill, Jr., one of Erickson's "oldest friends in politics,"[4022] to whom Butina and Torshin referred as the "Rockefeller heir." In a January 29, 2016, email describing O'Neill to Butina before their introduction, Erickson noted: "He met Torshin on a trip to Moscow five years ago and is VERY interested in forming a U.S./Russia 'friendship pact' (sound familiar??)"[4023] Erickson also shared Butina's "bio" with O'Neill and introduced them by email on February 2, noting Butina's "Russian political mentor, Alexander Torshin," and suggesting that Butina, Torshin and O'Neill meet in person on the periphery of the National Prayer Breakfast.[4024] Butina recalled that she first met O'Neill in Las Vegas during the Safari International convention, which took place after the Prayer Breakfast.[4025] O'Neill later joined Erickson in funding Butina's education at American University.[4026]

(U) Working with O'Neill and Erickson, Butina and Torshin developed a concept for meetings involving U.S. and Russian figures as an informal channel of communication between the two countries. Butina and Torshin's strategy on how to utilize O'Neill began at least as early as February 26, when Butina delivered to Torshin a "Note on Organizing a Channel of Informal Communication between Russia and the USA," referring to it in her messages to Torshin as the "paper about our Rockefeller."[4027] In it, Butina emphasized the potential to influence American foreign policy:

> *The indicated initiative may become the main channel of Russian-American informal communication . . . , which will generate the necessary background for promoting pro-Russian sentiment in the USA. The special advantage of this proposal resides in the fact that the presence of bilateral interest will, on the one hand, cancel out the questions of American ill-wishers about "the Kremlin's*

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and President Putin to avoid any misunderstanding and embarrassment"; and there must be an "understanding that other heads of state would be attending the same prayer breakfast." In addition, Butina conveyed that Putin would need to receive the invitation from the U.S. President and the total number of heads of state would need to be at least 15. Email, Butina to Burleigh, March 30. 2016 (PAE000403–404); Twitter direct messages, Torshin and Butina, March 30–31, 2016. As discussed below, Butina and Torshin returned to the 2017 National Prayer Breakfast, with a much larger Russian delegation. The conversation between Burleigh and Butina about Putin may have contributed to a later invitation to Torshin and Butina to meet Trump at the 2017 breakfast.

[4022] (U) Email, Erickson to Butina, January 29, 2016 (PAE0001674).

[4023] (U) *Ibid.*

[4024] (U) Email, Erickson to Butina and O'Neill, February 2, 2016 (PAE0001705).

[4025] (U) Butina Tr., p. 224–25. Butina appeared to have the dates of the convention confused, and believed it had occurred in January. The evidence shows that it actually occurred in February.

[4026] (U) Butina Tr., p. 121–23.

[4027] (U) Twitter direct messages, Torshin and Butina, February 26, 2016.

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> *hand" in the organization and in attempts at propaganda and, on the other, will make it possible to exert the speediest and most effective influence on the process of making decisions in the American establishment.*[4028]

(U) On March 10, Erickson sent Butina and O'Neill a proposed list of suggested participants for an event following the NRA convention.[4029] Butina shared the list with Torshin,[4030] and responded on his behalf: "George, Mr. Torshin is very much impressed by you and expresses his great appreciation for what you are doing to restore the relations between the two countries. He also wants you to know that Russians will support the efforts from our side."[4031] On March 14, Butina reported additional developments from Torshin's conversations with the Kremlin to O'Neill:

> *Mr. Torshin confirmed his desire in our Russian-American project and will participate [in] the meetings. He talked to some people in Presidential Administration—they also gave a «green light» as Russians say for building this communication channel. They are working on the third person for the meetings choosing between very strong Russian businessman or governmental official.*[4032]

(U) Butina wanted to invite Patrick Byrne to the O'Neill dinners, and she also pursued an invitation for Byrne at the St. Petersburg International Economic Forum, or SPIEF. On February 22, Butina sent to Torshin a "proposal regarding the Participation of speaker Patrick Byrne at the St. Petersburg Economic Forum" and identified Byrne as "one of the future participants of our events with Rockefeller. It would be good to invite him to the forum if you have a possibility to assist."[4033] In addition to sending the proposal directly to Torshin via Twitter direct message, the communication chain suggests Butina also sent the proposal to Torshin's office at the Central Bank.[4034]

(U) On April 5, 2016, Torshin followed up with Butina about Byrne's participation at the Forum, noting that he had spoken with Dmitriy Sergeyevich Stolkov, who Torshin described as "the contact person in the Administration of the President of the RF." Torshin also advised

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[4028] (U) Maria Butina, "Note on Organizing a Channel of Informal Communication between Russia and the USA," February 26, 2016; United States' Memorandum in Aid of Sentencing, *United States v. Butina*, Case 1:18-cr-00218-TSC (D.D.C. May 1, 2019), Exhibit 7.
[4029] (U) Email, Erickson to Butina, March 11, 2016 (PAE0001916–17).
[4030] (U) Twitter direct messages, Torshin and Butina, March 13, 2016 ("They sent me a list of participants of that Russian-American meeting from their side. I'll hand it over on Tuesday.").
[4031] (U) Email, Butina to O'Neill and Erickson, March 11, 2016 (PAE0000970).
[4032] (U) Email, Butina to O'Neill, March 14, 2016 (PAE0001925).
[4033] (U) Twitter direct messages, Torshin and Butina, February 22, 2016.
[4034] (U) *Ibid.*

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Butina to contact Armen Khacatryan to arrange Byrne's appearance on a panel.[4035] Khacatryan is, or was, the Deputy Director of the Roscongress Foundation, the forum organizer for SPIEF.[4036]

iii. (U) Butina and Torshin Arrange Meetings in Moscow for Rep. Rohrabacher

(U) In mid-March 2016, O'Neill worked with Butina to arrange a meeting in Moscow for Rohrabacher with Russian political figures. In a March 16, 2016, email to Butina and Erickson, O'Neill wrote:

> *Dana is a BIG proponent of friendship and cooperation with Russia and is very supportive of our efforts. He is leading a Congressional trip for his sub committee to Moscow on March 30 and would like to meet you and Torshin and any other Russian politician, who is interested in closer relations with the US.*[4037]

O'Neill specifically identified Rohrabacher's interest in nuclear cooperation and recommended a meeting with Evgeny Pavlovich Velikhov, a Russian nuclear scientist and former president of the Kurchov Institute.[4038] O'Neill also underscored that Rohrabacher would "gladly participate and assist us" with the contemplated "friendship dinners," and was planning in parallel a dinner in April about "the pros and cons of being friendly and cooperating with the Russians."[4039]

(U) Torshin attended Rohrabacher's meeting with Velikhov on April 2, and Butina encouraged him to discuss their work with O'Neill.[4040] The substance of the meeting also included U.S. politics. After the meeting, Torshin told Butina that the U.S. guests "talked a lot about the Prayer Breakfast, the NRA, and the elections in the U.S.A." Communications between Erickson and Butina suggest that some of Rohrabacher's guests—apparently associated with Radio Free Europe—said something to offend Torshin.[4041]

[4035] (U) Twitter direct messages, Torshin and Butina, April 5, 2016.
[4036] (U) *See* Roscongress.org/en/speakers/khachatryan-armen-/biography.
[4037] (U) Email, O'Neill to Butina and Erickson, March 16, 2016 (PAE0001934–35).
[4038] (U) Email, O'Neill to Butina and Erickson, March 17, 2016 (PAE0001936).
[4039] (U) Email, O'Neill to Butina and Erickson, March 16, 2016 (PAE0001934–35).
[4040] (U) Twitter direct messages, Torshin and Butina, March 31, 2016 – April 1, 2016. Butina herself helped to arrange the meeting. Email from Maria Butina to George O'Neill and Paul Erickson, March 23, 2016 (MB 0002977) (describing plan to arrange the meeting with Velikhov).
[4041] (U) Twitter direct messages, Torshin and Butina, April 3, 2016. Email, Erickson to Butina, April 8, 2016 (PAE0002418). Later, as to O'Neill, Torshin remarked: "His activity aroused no interest in our country and I won't be able to take part in his plans." Accordingly, he advised Butina to "step away from him" and made clear that he would not participate in any O'Neill gatherings in Russia. Twitter direct messages, Torshin and Butina, April 3, 2016. Torshin later directed Butina to "decline contact: like, no time, got other responsibilities or something of that kind." Torshin also hinted to Butina that he (Torshin) was "in a system that was being guarded," although Butina

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(U) On April 21, O'Neill drafted a letter to Torshin apologizing for Rohrabacher's reportedly "intemperate remarks" and explaining, in part, his interest in sponsoring a dinner series in order to "further good relations between the Russian Federation and a NEW American presidential administration next January."[4042]

6. (U) 2016 NRA Convention and Efforts to Pursue Contact with Trump

(U) At around the same time, Butina and Torshin discussed a return trip to the NRA annual meetings in 2016. On February 17, Torshin reiterated the need to "develop ties with the NRA."[4043] By February 21, Butina conveyed to Torshin that Trump had "won the last really important primaries," and they should consider him the "presumptive Republican nominee."[4044] In mid-March, Butina informed Torshin that Trump had referred to Putin as a "strong leader" and had effectively clinched the nomination.[4045] Butina also cryptically proposed that Torshin "[t]hink about if we should invite someone from the Trump Administration in order to unofficial[ly] meet with someone from our . . . ," although she left the sentence unfinished.[4046]

(U) On April 20, Torshin pressed Butina to secure invitations to the NRA annual meetings and to begin preparations.[4047] Butina, who had made that request to Pete Brownell months earlier, on January 26, had already secured them.[4048] Despite an initial travel conflict, Torshin appeared to seek ways to justify his attendance internally within the Russian MFA. He requested that Butina write to him "specifically about a possible meeting with Trump and the other candidates" because "maybe MID [Russia's Ministry of Foreign Affairs] will ask to have me sent."[4049] Torshin emphasized that MID's interest appeared to be in securing an invitation to observe the U.S. presidential election.[4050]

(U) Likely in response, Butina prepared a written note for Torshin on the NRA convention on April 22, entitled "Note on the Annual General Convention of the National Rifle

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might be "freer in [her] preferences, but in a personal capacity." Twitter direct messages, Torshin and Butina, April 20, 2016.

[4042] (U) Letter, O'Neill to Torshin, April 21, 2016 (PAE0002055–2058). It is not clear from document productions if the letter was sent. O'Neill conveyed a similar sentiment to Butina in a separate letter. Letter, O'Neill to Butina, April 11, 2016 (MB 0002966–2967).

[4043] (U) Twitter direct messages, Torshin and Butina, February 17, 2016.

[4044] (U) Twitter direct messages, Torshin and Butina, February 21, 2016.

[4045] (U) Twitter direct messages, Torshin and Butina, March 15–16, 2016.

[4046] (U) Twitter direct messages, Torshin and Butina, February 26, 2016 (ellipses in original).

[4047] (U) Twitter direct messages, Torshin and Butina, April 20, 2016.

[4048] (U) Email, Butina to Brownell, January 25, 2016 (MB 0000026–28). In this email, Butina requested invitations for herself, Torshin, Pavel Gusev, Igor Pisarsky, and Vadim Zadorozhny.

[4049] (U) Twitter direct messages, Torshin and Butina, April 22, 2016.

[4050] (U) Twitter direct messages, Torshin and Butina, April 22, 2016.

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Association of the USA and the Possibilities of Setting Up Informal Communications between Russia and the USA." Butina's document included the following statements tying the NRA trip to the Russian MFA's interest in influencing Republican candidates' views, specifically Trump's, on Russia (emphasis in original)[4051]:

- (U) "The assumption is that **the influence of the NRA on election results is critically important for the Republican Party**."
- (U) "**[T]he leadership of the NRA is inviting Mr. Torshin** not just to attend the general assembly of the organization and to speak at it, but is even **granting him access to closed meetings with the VIP speakers at the conference. In May 2016 he has the chance to speak personally with the leaders of the Republican primary race–Mssrs. Trump, Cruz and Kasik** [sic]."
- (U) **"Torshin is invited to the National Republican Convention .... In accord with Mr. Torshin's wish, he can be an observer at the presidential election in November 2016 in a US state that interests him."**
- (U) "On April 22, **Donald Trump announced a change** ... in his election strategy, where **the candidate plans to pay closer attention to foreign policy. Important** in these circumstances **are those contacts with the candidate and his entourage that will help form Trump's correct view of Russian-American relations. Attending the general assembly of the NRA in May 2016 fully provides this unique opportunity.**"

(U) After Butina provided her written note, Torshin obtained approval from his "boss" to travel to the NRA convention.[4052] Butina quickly arranged flights and developed a list of gifts to provide to their NRA contacts and the Republican candidates, including Trump and his entire family.[4053] She also told Torshin that they had obtained a meeting with Trump at the NRA.[4054] Torshin, however, was dubious that arranging a meeting with Trump, who they had begun referring to as "the future president," would be helpful during the campaign, and told her to focus instead on their NRA connections, which would "certainly prove useful."[4055]

[4051] (U) Twitter direct messages, Torshin and Butina, April 22, 2016 (bold as in original).
[4052] (U) Twitter direct messages, Torshin and Butina, April 28–29, 2016.
[4053] (U) Twitter direct messages, Torshin and Butina, April 29, 2016.
[4054] (U) Twitter direct messages, Torshin and Butina, May 4, 2016.
[4055] (U) Twitter direct messages, Torshin and Butina, May 11, 2016.

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(U) On May 5, 2016, Kislyak was also scheduled for lunch with Allan Cors and David Keene at the Ambassador's residence.[4056] Cors and Keene later declined Kislyak's invitation to attend the Day of Russia celebration on June 9, 2016.[4057]

(U) The possibility of meeting Trump during the convention initially arose with Johnny Yenason, who had met Butina at the Russian Prayer Breakfast and invited Butina and Torshin to a dinner he was involved in organizing on Thursday, May 19.[4058] Yenason owned a Pennsylvania plumbing company, was an NRA member, and was active in political and religious circles.[4059] On May 2, Yenason emailed Butina and Torshin and offered an introduction to Trump in connection with the dinner:

> *I would like to know if you would be interested in joining a couple of us after the dinner to meet with Donald Trump, our presidential front runner. . . . I believe this would be very interesting for both you and Alex especially if [M]r. Trump is elected our next president. You may if you wish be involved in helping introduce [M]r. Trump to President Putin.*[4060]

Butina responded: "Thank you very much for the priceless opportunity to meet Mr. Trump! It's an honor and might be a good deal for the relationships between the two countries in the future."[4061]

(U) Several days later, Erickson emailed Rick Dearborn about the idea, with the subject line "Kremlin Connection":

> *Happenstance and the (sometimes) international reach of the NRA placed me in position a couple of years ago to slowly begin cultivating a back-channel to President Putin's Kremlin. Russia is quietly but actively seeking a dialogue with the U.S. that isn't forthcoming under the current administration. And for reasons that we can discuss in person or on the phone, the Kremlin believes that the only possibility of a true re-set in this relationship would be with a new Republican White House. . . .*

[4056] (U) Email, Perrine to Cors, May 3, 2016 (NRA Production 0003719).
[4057] (U) Email, Perrine to Russian Embassy Staff, June 8, 2016 (NRA Production 0003724).
[4058] (U) Email, Yenason to Butina, March 21, 2016 (MB 0002233) ("It was so good meeting you at the prayer breakfast. I have spoken to my colleagues about inviting you and our friend too [sic] our dinner at the NRA convention. I'm also interested in talking to you about being a guest speaker at our dinner.").
[4059] (U) Clay Tr., p. 36.
[4060] (U) Email, Yenason to Butina, Clay, Ryan, and Torshin, May 2, 2016 (MB 0000004).
[4061] (U) Email, Butina to Yenason, Clay, and Ryan, May 2, 2016 (MB 0002231).

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President Putin's emissary on this front has arranged to attend next week's NRA Annual Meeting in Louisville, KY. He is attending a small private reception that Mr. Trump has (allegedly) committed to on Thursday night, May 19 in order to make "first contact" (nothing more than the presentation of a gift for Mrs. Trump tied to the Russian Orthodox Church- a fascinating artifact). The reception is being hosted by a nondescript organization called "Heroes for Freedom and Liberty" (a veterans support group).

Putin is deadly serious about building a good relationship with Mr. Trump. He wants to extend an invitation to Mr. Trump to visit him in the Kremlin before the election. Let's talk through what has transpired and Sen. Sessions' advice on how to proceed.[4062]

Dearborn told the Committee that he did not recall receiving Erickson's email and did not believe he responded to this request.[4063]

(U) Rick Clay, a politically-connected NRA member from West Virginia and friend of Yenason, also pursued the issue with his own Trump Campaign contacts, including Dearborn and Jordan Karem. Clay first raised the subject with Dearborn by phone on May 15, telling Dearborn that there was an invitation for Trump to attend an event in Russia and that a meeting between Trump and Putin could be arranged while Trump was there.[4064] In Clay's view at the time, "the optics [of this meeting] would [have] be[en] tremendous" from a political perspective.[4065]

(U) At Dearborn's request,[4066] Clay provided additional information in a follow-up May 16 email, with the subject line "Russian backdoor overture and dinner invite":

When Johnny informed me that he had made Mr. Torshin and Ms. Butina's acquaintance, I invited them to attend our dinner . . . and speak at our event which they enthusiastically accepted. At the same time I learned that Mr. Trump would be speaking at the NRA Convention in Louisville KY the day after our dinner. I contacted Jordan Karem . . . who works for the Trump Campaign organizing events. Jordan indicated he might be able to obtain entrance of a

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[4062] **(U)** Email, Erickson to Dearborn, May 10, 2016 (PAE0002913).
[4063] **(U)** SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Rick Dearborn, October 23, 2017, pp. 65–66.
[4064] **(U)** *Ibid.*, p. 81; Clay Tr., pp. 48–51. Dearborn was connected to Clay through Joel Brubacker, Chief of Staff to Senator Shelley Moore Capito. Dearborn Tr., pp. 80–81; *see also* Clay Tr., pp. 46–47 (describing initial contact with Dearborn through Capito's office).
[4065] **(U)** Clay Tr., pp. 51–52.
[4066] **(U)** Dearborn Tr., p. 81.

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small group from our event to include the Russian delegation to meet Mr. Trump. I then informed Johnny Yenason of this development and asked him to speak to Mr. Torshin and Ms. Butina if they would like to have an opportunity to meet Mr. Trump if it could be arranged. They both agreed it would be an honor to meet him if possible. I informed Jordan Karem of this request and he said he would advance this up the latter [sic] with the Trump Campaign, (As of today I have not heard any word in regards to the request). A few days passed and I received a call from Johnny Yenason about a conversation he had with Ms. Butina and Mr. Torshin about meeting Mr. Trump. They indicated to him that they had been asked by Mr. Putin to see if Mr. Trump would be willing to meet with him in the near future and to explore this possibility with him at this meeting if it could be arranged.

During a subsequent conversation with Ms. Butina and Mr. Torshin, Mr. Torshin requested that he meet privately with someone of high rank in the Trump Campaign prior to the May 20th NRA address by Mr. Trump, so that he can convey to them this is a real overture and such a meeting would elevate any doubt that this is not some type of ploy or mischaracterization to meet Mr. Trump under false pretenses.

(U) Clay continued:

Mr. Torshin believes, as does [sic] several people associated with this Christian event in Russia, that he will personally approach Franklin Graham (They are good Friends and associates in Christ) to extend and [sic] invite to Mr. Trump to this event in Russia and while Mr. Trump is there he will arrange the meeting with President Putin and Mr. Trump.

Please excuse the play on words but this is HUGE! The optics of Mr. Trump in Russian [sic] with Franklin Graham attending an event of over 1000 World Christian Leaders addressing the Defense of Persecuted Christians accompanied by a very visible meeting between President Putin and Mr. Trump, would devastate the Clinton campaigns [sic] effort to marginalize Mr. Trump on Foreign Policy and embolden him further with Evangelicals.[4067]

(U) Clay also made two asks of Dearborn and the Trump Campaign:

[4067] **(U)** Email, Clay to Dearborn, May 16, 2016 (CRC-000016–CRC-000020).

[redacted]

[redacted]

- **(U)** A "[p]rivet [sic] meeting with a high ranking representative of the Trump Campaign with Mr. Torshin before the NRA event."[4068]

- **(U)** A "[m]eet and greet with a small delegation from the Freedom Dinner with Mr. Trump that will include both Mr. Torshin, Ms. Maria Butina, [and] Three Medal of Honor Recipients."[4069]

(U) Dearborn initially responded that he would be "[w]orking on this first thing in the am."[4070] He told the Committee that he did not "connect the dots" to the earlier Erickson request.[4071] He forwarded Clay's email to Jared Kushner, Paul Manafort, and Rick Gates the next day, noting that Clay:

> *[W]ants Alexander Torshin, The Deputy Governor of the Bank of Russia to meet with a high level official in our campaign at the Louisville, KY NRA event to discuss an offer he claims to be carrying from President Putin to meet with DJT: They would also like DJT to visit Russia for a world summit on the persecution of Christians at which Putin and Trump would meet.*[4072]

(U) Kushner, dubious of the Campaign's ability to verify any messages that people claimed to be bringing from foreign leaders, directed Dearborn to decline.[4073] On May 18, Dearborn responded to Clay: "I've asked about a [meeting] but we are not able to accommodate it at that event in KY."[4074] Dearborn did not discuss the request with Karem, but told the Committee that he may have mentioned it to J.D. Gordon or John Mashburn.[4075]

(U) After Clay relayed the Campaign's response to Yenason, Yenason encouraged him to persist: "I would suggest a follow up to Rick and see if the Trump camp is interested. They may think they missed the opportunity because the events are over. This is not the case[,] we can

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[4068] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[4069] **(U)** *Ibid.* Clay told the Committee that he harbored some skepticism about the request because it had come to him through multiple other people, but still believed there was a "slim chance that this could be real." Clay Tr. p. 49.
[4070] **(U)** Email, Clay to Dearborn, May 16, 2016 (CRC-000016).
[4071] **(U)** Dearborn Tr., pp. 82–83.
[4072] **(U)** Email, Dearborn to Kushner, Manafort and Gates, May 17, 2016 (RD 000009). Dearborn said that he was dubious of the request, and that using the phrase "an interesting request" really meant "[t]his is nutty," but he was trying to be respectful. Dearborn Tr., p. 87.
[4073] **(U)** Email, Kushner to Dearborn, May 17, 2016 (RD 000001).
[4074] **(U)** Email, Dearborn to Clay, May 18, 2016 (CRC-000021).
[4075] **(U)** Dearborn Tr., pp. 93, 96. Dearborn was doubtful that Karem would have been able to arrange a meeting with Trump. *Ibid.*, p. 96.

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still move this forward."[4076] Clay continued to contact Dearborn about the possibility of a meeting, sometimes through other contacts.[4077] Clay's requests continued periodically through September 2016; Dearborn told the Committee that he declined Clay's attempts to broker a meeting each time, believing that it was a settled issue from the Campaign's perspective.[4078]

(U) By early May, Torshin's participation at the NRA annual meetings appeared limited by his ongoing health issues and he almost canceled his travel entirely.[4079] Torshin ultimately decided to fly from Russia to Louisville for a single day, arriving early Saturday morning, May 21, and departing early Sunday morning, May 22.[4080] Torshin asked Butina whether Trump would be at the convention that day, and also planned to join Keene for a private birthday dinner—which Keene had specifically rescheduled to allow Torshin to attend.[4081]

(U) Dmitri Osipkin, identified as the "Chairman of the Board of Foundation on Development of Perspective Defense Strategies and Technologies," joined Butina. Butina shared Osipkin's bio with Erickson,[4082] and in a later email to O'Neill, Erickson touted Osipkin's political connections:

> *In anticipation of the coming Sunday night / Monday night international friendship dinners, please find attached the bio on the Russian banker / friend of the Kremlin that Maria is hosting in Louisville at the NRA Annual Meeting and that she will be bringing to Washington, DC on Sunday. Dmitry Osipkin is interesting and well-connected – the conduit to a range of other powerful figures within Moscow.*[4083]

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[4076] **(U)** Email, Yenason to Clay, May 18, 2016 (CRC-000063).
[4077] **(U)** For example, on May 20, Dearborn received an email from another staffer for Senator Sessions that "David Black . . . reached out to me about a possible meeting with Trump and some Russian diplomats at the NRA convention – facilitated by Rick Clay. He said that Rick has been in touch with you." Email, Montgomery to Dearborn, May 20, 2016 (RD 000018).
[4078] **(U)** Dearborn Tr., pp. 97–102. Dearborn did not know if the request had ever been raised with Trump. *Ibid.*, p. 102.
[4079] **(U)** Twitter direct messages, Torshin and Butina, May 11, 2016.
[4080] **(U)** Twitter direct messages, Torshin and Butina, May 11 & 16, 2016.
[4081] **(U)** Twitter direct messages, Torshin and Butina, May 19, 2016.
[4082] **(U)** Email, Butina to Erickson, May 19, 2016 (MB 0001550) (attaching bio).
[4083] **(U)** Email, Erickson to O'Neill, May 19, 2016 (PAE0002155).
[4084] [redacted]

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(U) Butina and Osipkin arrived in Louisville together on May 18 and departed for Washington, D.C., on May 22. Perrine of the NRA again helped with creating their itinerary and managing logistics.[4085] On May 19, Butina and Osipkin attended two dinners. First, they joined David Keene for dinner at Brendon's Catch.[4086] Then, they were escorted across town by police to attend a fundraiser organized by Johnny Yenason, Rick Clay, and Mark Ryan.[4087] According to Clay, Yenason had requested that Butina speak at the dinner because of her work on gun rights, and that Torshin speak at the dinner because of his involvement with the Russian Orthodox Church.[4088] Torshin was not yet in Louisville, so Osipkin attended as a "stand-in."[4089]

(U) While at the dinner, Butina likely met Bobby Hart, a gunsmith from Pennsylvania who is friends with Trump Jr. That evening, Hart texted Trump Jr. about Butina's interest in meeting him, and referenced a past connection to Osipkin, who had secured hunting permits for Trump Jr. and Hart in Ukraine[4090]:

2016-05-19 21:59:46

From +[redacted]

Hey Donny I'm having dinner with the president of the Russian NRA and she would absolutely love to meet with you while you're down here and invite you to their Summit that they have in Russia as her guest she is with the guy that got our license to hunt when we're there very well accomplished shooter as well

2016-05-20 10:41:22

From +[redacted]

Iam in freedom hall are you here buddy

[4085] (U) Email, Butina to Erickson, May 17, 2016 (PAE0001969–74) (forwarding email exchange with Perrine and attaching itinerary).
[4086] (U) Calendar invitation, Perrine to Keene, "Dinner with Russian Guests," May 19, 2016 (NRA Production 0000143) (identifying by name Butina and Osipkin).
[4087] (U) Clay Tr., p. 20–23. The fundraiser was called "Heroes for Freedom and Liberty Dinner" and benefited the Hershel "Woody" Williams Medal of Honor Foundation.
[4088] (U) *Ibid*, p. 21.
[4089] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 33. Over 400 people attended the dinner, including Kentucky Governor Matt Bevin and several of his cabinet members. Clay Tr., p. 27. Other attendees included Jordan Karem, who began working for Trump in July 2015 when the campaign began, later became press director for Mike Pence, and ultimately joined the White House advance team after inauguration. *Ibid.*; Steve Holland, "Trump's 'body guy' plans to leave White House soon: officials," *Reuters*, November 26, 2018.
[4090] (U) Text messages, Hart to Trump Jr., May 19–20, 2016 (DJTJR01282).

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According to Trump Jr., the hunting trip to Ukraine took place just before Trump Jr. traveled to Russia for the first time in 2003 or 2004.[4091] He did not recall Osipkin and did not appear to respond to Hart's message about Butina.[4092]

(U) Butina and Osipkin attended NRA meetings and receptions on May 18, May 19, and May 20.[4093] On May 20, Trump gave a speech, as did Trump Jr.[4094] Butina attended Trump's speech, but said she did not meet him during the convention.[4095] Keene did not recall attending the events with Butina or Osipkin, whom he described as Torshin's assistant.[4096]

(U) Butina and Osipkin, joined by Torshin, dined with Keene and Keene's wife on Saturday, May 20, for Keene's birthday.[4097] During dinner that night, Torshin, Butina and Osipkin met Trump Jr.

(U) Keene and Butina told the Committee that Keene made reservations at a different restaurant, but Keene had mistakenly brought them to Brendon's Catch, where they had eaten two nights earlier.[4098] The restaurant initially provided Keene's group—himself, his wife, Butina, Torshin and Osipkin—with a private room that had been reserved for an NRA function, and then relocated them when the other NRA group arrived.[4099] As they were being relocated, Pete Brownell, whose group of NRA members was taking the room, arrived with Trump Jr. and introduced him to Keene, Torshin, Butina, and Osipkin.[4100] Butina, Torshin, and Osipkin all had their photos taken with Trump Jr., some of which Butina produced to the Committee[4101]:

[4091] (U) Trump Jr. Tr., pp. 225, 340–342.
[4092] (U) *Ibid*, p. 342.
[4093] (U) Events for Delegation from Russia, NRA Annual Meetings – Louisville, KY, May 18–22, 2016 (PAE0001391–93).
[4094] (U) Keene Tr., p. 151–153.
[4095] (U) Butina Tr., p. 224.
[4096] (U) Keene Tr., p. 154.
[4097] (U) Email, Perrine to Butina, May 18, 2016 (PAE0001970).
[4098] (U) Keene Tr. pp. 154–155; Butina Tr. pp. 213–214.
[4099] (U) Keene Tr. pp. 154–155; Butina Tr. pp. 213–214.
[4100] (U) Keene Tr. pp. 154–155; Butina Tr. pp. 213–214.
[4101] (U) Twitter direct message, Butina to Torshin, November 9, 2016 (MB 0000338) (sharing photo from Dmitry Osipkin of Butina, Osipkin and Torshin with Trump Jr.); Butina Tr., p. 211; Twitter direct message, Butina to Torshin, May 22, 2016 (MB 0000256); Twitter direct message, Butina to Torshin, May 22, 2016 (MB 0000256–57).

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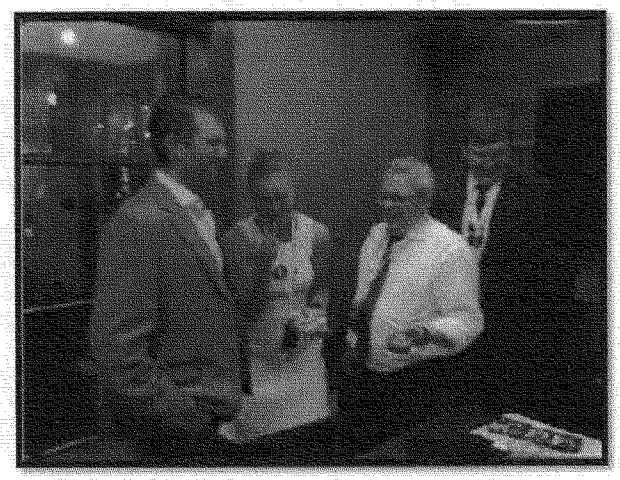





(U) Butina described the encounter in her interview:

It was small talk. Mr. Torshin presented to Donald Trump Junior a coin or like something that he always had in his pockets, and he wished the best to his father, the best to Melania Trump, and the best to his family and his wife. We didn't have a lot of time to talk because they were about to have dinner, and then they walked us out to the bigger room where the NRA delegation was there having dinner with Donald Trump Junior, and asked us to introduce ourselves. I

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remember that because I was translating what Torshin told. He told: We are NRA life members; we are traveling from Russia.[4102]

(U) Butina told the Committee that she did not report this meeting with Trump Jr. to the Russian government, but either Torshin or Osipkin might have.[4103] According to Butina, it was "absolutely a possibility that [the] Russian government was aware that this meeting happened."[4104]

(U) Torshin himself told Butina in a Twitter message that he would "not report [about the trip] in written format," and would instead brief the MFA verbally.[4105] Torshin also spoke with his "boss," who encouraged him to continue to "develop 'non-state relations.'"[4106] In addition, Torshin requested that Butina provide him with a written analysis of Trump's remarks and those of "other high-ranking guests."[4107]

(U) After the convention, Butina and Osipkin returned to Washington, D.C. for a May 23 dinner at the Army Navy Club arranged by O'Neill.[4108] Butina attended this dinner, called it "interesting" in messages to Torshin (who did not attend), and promised to write an assessment about it.[4109] Butina said that the dinner was focused on "civil society groups" and not attended by politicians,[4110] although Erickson referenced attendance by "Russian banking oligarchs," and claimed that "[n]o one else is dealing with the Kremlin at this high a level today."[4111]

[4102] (U) Butina Tr., pp. 211–212. Keene, who was distracted at the time and may have been outside, said he did not recall a conversation taking place during the Trump Jr. encounter. Keene Tr., pp. 166–167.
[4103] (U) Butina Tr., pp. 211–212.
[4104] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 219. The Committee assesses the Russian government did have insight into this meeting, due to the fact that similar meetings were relayed to the Russian MFA. For example, in October 2016, Trump Jr. traveled to Paris where he gave remarks at a dinner hosted by the Center for Political and Foreign Affairs, a pro-Russia think tank, for a fee of approximately $90,000. Trump Jr. Tr. II, pp. 370–372. Beforehand, Trump Jr. had lunch with Randa Kassis and Fabian Baussert, who operate the think tank. *Ibid.* Trump Jr. recalled speaking with them about the election and Syria. *Ibid.*, pp. 375–377. Kassis later wrote in a Facebook post that has since been removed: "I succeeded to pass Trump, through the talks with his son, the idea of how we can cooperate together to reach the agreement between Russia and the United States on Syria," and press reporting suggests she passed information about their conversation to the Russian MFA. *See* David S. Cloud, "Donald Trump Jr.'s 2016 trip to Paris for lunch with Moscow-linked couple remains a puzzle," *Los Angeles Times*, November 17, 2017.
[4105] (U) Twitter direct messages, Torshin and Butina, May 24, 2016.
[4106] (U) *Ibid.*
[4107] (U) Twitter direct messages, Torshin and Butina, May 22, 2016.
[4108] (U) Email, O'Neill to Butina and Erickson, May 20, 2016 (MB 0002907).
[4109] (U) Twitter direct messages, Torshin and Butina, May 24, 2016.
[4110] (U) Butina insisted that the dinners were focused on "civil society groups' communications, when you have friendship beyond just the presidents and beyond the top level, which was normal," akin to a "Track II" dialogue. She claimed that the phrase "back channel communication" was being used in that context. Butina Tr., pp. 228–231. K.T. McFarland was invited, but did not attend, according to Butina. *Ibid.*
[4111] (U) Email, Erickson to O'Neill and Butina, April 20, 2016 (PAE0000712).

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7. (U) Efforts to Establish a U.S.-Russia Communications Channel

(U) On July 12, Dana Rohrabacher organized a dinner at The Monocle, a restaurant near the Capitol in Washington, D.C., to discuss his position on U.S. foreign policy towards Russia.[4112] As previously described, Torshin and Butina had met repeatedly with Rohrabacher to discuss Russia-U.S. relations, and Rohrabacher's visits to Russia had been monitored by the Russian MFA. The guests included then-Senator Jeff Sessions and Campaign policy advisor Sam Clovis.[4113]

(U) According to Clovis, "[t]he whole thing was about Russia." He told the Committee: "Rohrabacher was advocating a position that was absolutely untenable from a campaign perspective and certainly from my perspective. . . . [W]hat he proposed that night, was that we ought to be allied with Russia in dealing with the Middle East and a much stronger association, much stronger relationship with Russia."[4114]

(U) Rohrabacher agreed that the event was "a lot of talk about Russia . . . I guess you might call it policy. But we were discussing what America's role should be with Russia."[4115] He described the event:

> *There were probably about 25 people. We had a big table. Faith Whittlesey, my old friend from the Reagan years who was U.S. Ambassador to Switzerland, was there. . . . There was one guy from the—there was one guy from the Trump campaign. He was—I don't remember his name. I do remember he was overweight and I was not impressed with him. But he was there.*

(U) Rohrabacher said there were some differences of opinion in the room, with some, including himself and Whittlesey, "advocating a cooperative effort," while others, including Clovis, took a more "hard line" approach.[4116]

(U) Erickson was at the dinner as well. Clovis recalled interacting with Erickson and giving him a card.[4117] This interaction apparently prompted Erickson, on July 16, to email Clovis that he had been "developing a back-channel to the Kremlin for the past couple of years":

[4112] (U) Clovis Tr., pp. 87—88, 91.
[4113] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 91. Clovis was invited by Brandon Wheeler, a friend of Rohrabacher. Email, Clovis to Wheeler, Rohrabacher, Manafort, and Ahn, July 12, 2016 (DJTFP00012854).
[4114] (U) Clovis Tr., pp. 90–94.
[4115] (U) Rohrabacher Tr., p. 61.
[4116] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 60–621.
[4117] (U) Clovis Tr., pp. 93–94.

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I briefly mentioned at the Rohrabacher dinner that I've been developing a back-channel to the Kremlin for the past couple of years – really, just the recipient of their outreach. Comes now an important inquiry on that front.

Was Trump supporter Carter Page's recent visit to Moscow (major speech delivered a couple of weeks ago) his idea based upon his previous years in Russia, or were you (or the campaign) aware of or sanctioned his remarks?

Carter EXACTLY echoes the "new relationship with Russia" strains echoed at the dinner, by nominee Trump and by smart international security experts. His speech is sweeping the Russian internet AND has deeply interested the most inner circles of the Kremlin. For a host of reasons, it has further reinforced Putin's / Russia's desire for a Trump victory over a pointless "Hillary re-set" administration.

Clovis said he did not respond to the email and did not tell anyone about receiving it, despite claiming he was "always hinky about anybody who wanted to talk about Russia."[4118]

(U) If Clovis had voiced his opposition to Russia so forcefully at the dinner, it is unclear why Erickson would have chosen Clovis as the target of his outreach.[4119] Butina told the Committee that Erickson did not tell her about this email or the nature of his outreach to the Trump Campaign.[4120] She was also not aware of how Erickson had developed his information about the "inner circles of the Kremlin," but posited that Erickson made these representations based on assumptions and public reporting, and not some other form of inside access.[4121]

(U) The following week, Erickson also reached out to George O'Neill about the "U.S./Russia friendship dinners." In the July 23 email, Erickson suggested to O'Neill that Butina wanted to add Byrne as a new member of the dinners:

Patrick Byrne, the founding CEO of Overstock.com, met Maria last July at Freedom Fest in Las Vegas and has been stalking her ever since . . . [he] supports 'our' vision of a new dawn of relations between the two countries. He . . . would find it effortless to attend a monthly dinner in Washington with whomever

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[4118] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[4119] **(U)** Clovis's interactions with George Papadopoulos regarding Campaign engagement with Russia are described *infra* Vol. 5, Sec. III.E.
[4120] **(U)** Butina Tr., p. 270.
[4121] **(U)** *Ibid.*, p. 265–270.

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of our original cast might wish to dine at a given time . . . Maria VERY much wants you two to meet to compare your genius level IQ's.

Finally, I'd like to add Byrne to the very small circle of Maria Butina college scholarship providers (you and I and an NRA poohbah are the founding trio). Byrne is a bachelor by choice and consequences of his intellectual gifts and limitations, but is now concerned with his mortality and family legacy. Since meeting Maria, he has found ever more creative ways to pitch a standing $1 million offer to her 'to have a baby with him.' He is utterly enamored of her imagined gene stock and believes that a baby would cement not only his familial line but also relations between our two nations . . . . I think that he could be persuaded by men like you and me to support Maria in more concrete – if less carnal – terms.[4122]

Erickson forwarded the entire July 23 email to Butina, lurid details included, with the note: "For your files – the start of a conversation!!!"[4123]

(U) During the same time frame, Butina and Torshin exchanged messages about the Trump Campaign and their potential inroads. In early July, Butina sent Torshin a paper forecasting the results of the election, which Torshin expected to send to the MFA.[4124] A July 18 discussion focused on how to leverage Butina's American "contacts," particularly with respect to a Rohrabacher-associated "pro-Russian club" and Carter Page:

Torshin: *. . . How are things with Trump?*

Butina: *Trump chose the governor of Indiana, Pence, as vice-president. Pence is absolutely an NRA guy. . . .*

Torshin: *... What are you thinking of doing with your contacts? Otherwise, if there's a [Trump] victory, they'll forget about us!*

Butina: *I think you are right. Most of all, it's necessary, as you had thought, to go to the elections as an observer from the NRA!*

Butina: *There's this pro-Russian club here – well-known senators, Trump advisors, who are for relations with the RF. It would be good to get contact with them up and running...*

[4122] **(U)** Email, Erickson to O'Neill, July 23, 2016 (PAE0002955, 2938).
[4123] **(U)** Email, Erickson to Butina, July 23, 2016 (PAE0002955).
[4124] **(U)** Twitter direct messages, Torshin and Butina, July 3, 2016.

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Torshin: *Of course! Perhaps you should meet with the younger one, or is that difficult?*

Torshin: *And what kind of club is that? Rohrabacher and others? Give me the contact information – I'll try to find out. . . .*

Butina: *Right now I would rather meet with Carter Page. He's Trump's advisor for the RF and heads the pro-Russian group. He was in Moscow at a meeting with Putin last year. Can you find out how we feel about him?*

Torshin: *I'll try, but tomorrow. Not long ago one of his advisors was in Moscow. I don't remember the last name.*

Butina: *. . . Thank you very much for the information. Carter Page is his name. This is very important. I have not yet agreed to a meeting with him. It depends on your opinion.*

Butina: *Regarding the younger Trump – a meeting is possible, but, more likely, with you than with me. They are crazy busy now.*[4125]

Despite her representations to Torshin about Page, Butina told the Committee that she had no direct contact with Page and did not have any information about his activities other than what was publicly reported.[4126]

(U) Although she did not meet with Page, Butina did meet several times with J.D. Gordon, a former Trump Campaign national security advisor who she first encountered at a Swiss Embassy reception on September 28.[4127] That evening, following the reception, Erickson connected the two by email, asserting that Gordon was "playing a crucial role in the Trump transition effort and would be an excellent addition to any of the U.S. / Russia friendship dinners you occasionally hold. His perspective on international security is informed and listened to by all the 'right' people in the immediate future of American politics."[4128] Seizing on other comments Gordon had made to the Russian government-sponsored channel RT and his role in developing the RNC's Ukraine platform, Butina invited him to an upcoming O'Neill dinner on October 4, at the Army Navy Club, "to discuss a future strategic alliance between Russia and America on

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[4125] (U) Twitter direct messages, Torshin and Butina, July 18, 2016.
[4126] (U) Butina Tr., pp. 264–269.
[4127] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 275. Gordon told the Committee that he held his position on the Campaign from March until August 2016. Gordon Tr., p. 5.
[4128] (U) Email, Erickson to Gordon and Butina, September 28, 2016 (MB 0000010).

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issues like international terror."[4129] Butina then recommended to O'Neill that Gordon, who she referred to as "Trump's foreign policy advisor," as well as Byrne, be invited.[4130]

(U) Butina told the Committee that she knew Gordon was a Trump advisor and "[h]e seemed to have a pro-Russian position, so I thought it would be beneficial if he would be in the George group because it supports U.S.-Russia relations."[4131] On October 2, she advised Torshin that she was meeting with "Trump's Russia advisors" and sought his guidance on presenting the Russian position on Trump:

> ***Butina***: *. . . On Tuesday I am meeting with Trump's Russia advisors.*
>
> ***Torshin***: *Interesting!*
>
> ***Butina:*** *What position should we hold on our side?*
>
> ***Torshin***: *Very carefully. Tell them according to different "surveys," Russians have good feelings for him. About the readiness to work positively...*
>
> ***Butina:*** *What's from the government side? Are we ready to meet?*
>
> ***Torshin***: *This is a question of a completely different level! Better not ask it. You can talk about the initiative of the "prayer breakfast" of Doug Coe. And about possibility of collaboration on the NRA line.*
>
> ***Butina:*** *Understood!*
>
> ***Torshin***: *We need to do it in a way so that it is clear you are the person who can provide a channel of cooperation on a sound level. . . .* [4132]

(U) Gordon was unable to attend the dinner, but the two continued their correspondence in an effort to meet again.[4133] Gordon took Butina to a Styx concert at the Warner Theater on October 18, following a happy hour.[4134] Butina likewise recalled meeting with Gordon at a bar

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[4129] (U) Email, Butina to Gordon, September 29, 2016 (MB 0000011–12).
[4130] (U) Email, Butina to O'Neill, September 29, 2016 (MB 0007157).
[4131] (U) Butina Tr., p. 276.
[4132] (U) Twitter direct messages, Torshin and Butina, October 2, 2016.
[4133] (U) Emails, Gordon to Butina, September 29 & October 5, 2016 (MB 0000013–15).
[4134] (U) Email, Gordon to Butina, October 13, 2016 (PAE0000724); Email, Butina to Gordon, October 13, 2016 (PAE0000730).

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in downtown Washington, D.C., possibly before the concert, where they spoke about both Gordon's and Trump's positive views on Russia:

> *I told him that I support good U.S.-Russian relations and the restoration of the communication between the two countries. He was the same way. He told: Yes, I agree with, and Trump agrees with that. And that's pretty much it. But you don't hear it very often, so I was very pleased that he supports this idea.*[4135]

(U) Butina invited Gordon to her birthday party on November 12 and the two later exchanged emails about a happy hour in December, but Butina did not recall any further communications of substance.[4136] The Committee did not ask Gordon any questions about these interactions.

(U) In contemporaneous conversations with Torshin, Butina touted her meetings with Gordon, and the O'Neill dinners, as pathways to the Trump Campaign. On October 5, she wrote that she "will be connecting people from the prayer breakfast to this group" and that she was "setting up the groundwork." On October 13, she said that she had "met with the Trump[] academia wing on international policy." On October 20, when Torshin asked her what was "new with the elections campaign," she responded:

> *I talk to all of Trump's Russia advisors. There are three of them. They do not have any other contacts at the RF. Just you and I. At the same time, I am working in a group that is writing proposals to him on foreign policy strategy. I have a couple of people on his staff. And you know everything about the Prayer Breakfast.*[4137]

8. (U) After the Election and the 2017 National Prayer Breakfast

(U) Butina monitored the election results closely on November 8 and reported back to Torshin on Trump's victory. They both celebrated the result as "a wonderful chance to improve American-Russian relations."[4138] They also believed it "important that [their] efforts are noticed," and Torshin encouraged Butina to "ask our friends about the possibility to go to the inauguration" and committed to "developing our connections."[4139] Butina followed up with two papers for Torshin and the MFA: "Notes about the resource base of contacts with the team of the

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[4135] **(U)** Butina Tr., pp. 277–279.
[4136] **(U)** Butina Tr., pp. 282–284.
[4137] **(U)** Twitter direct messages, Torshin and Butina, October 20, 2016.
[4138] **(U)** Twitter direct messages, Torshin and Butina, November 9, 2016.
[4139] **(U)** Twitter direct messages, Torshin and Butina, November 9, 2016.

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newly elected president of the USA Donald Trump" and "Establishment of the dialogue with the team of the newly elected president of the USA."[4140]

(U) In the first paper, sent on November 10, 2016, Butina proposed that she and Torshin "use the existing personal groundwork" they had laid "in establishing informal relationships in U.S. political circles . . . for the purposes of assessing, monitoring, forecasting, and developing the policies of the [Russian Federation] vis-à-vis" the United States. Butina also explained:

> *During the last 5 years, [Torshin] and Butina have constantly worked on establishing unofficial contact, based on common views and a system of conservative values, with a number of key [Republican Party] organizations in the US, including the executive level of [the Republican Party,] its intellectual establishment and [Republican Party] organizations.*[4141]

(U) In the second paper, sent on November 11, 2016, Butina proposed organizing a conference on building Russian-American relations under Trump. Butina recommended presenting the conference as a "private initiative" rather than a "government undertaking," because the event would "create… a foundation for further talks on the level of government officials" without any government officials needing to attend the event.[4142]

(U) Torshin read the proposals and initiated contact with the MFA to seek further guidance on their American efforts. However, he was "afraid" that the MFA would "not go for it," and in a private Twitter message, instructed Butina to proceed cautiously:

> *Take notice – Trump has already received a good letter from VVP [Putin]. We cannot be in discord here. A discussion can be held but a participation of Russians cannot be arranged. The MFA cannot tell me anything about the Prayer Breakfast. In general, the MFA's attitude toward the breakfast was formed a long time ago – it is negative! As for the inauguration, they say yes, go! About the breakfast – so far no response. I understand them – the principle is "do not harm!"*[4143]

(U) Despite the MFA's reportedly "negative" attitude, Butina and Torshin worked toward securing tickets to the Prayer Breakfast. Butina was in contact with Doug Burleigh of the

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[4140] (U) Twitter direct messages, Torshin and Butina, November 9–11, 2016.
[4141] (U) United States' Memorandum in Aid of Sentencing, *United States v. Maria Butina*, Case 1:18-cr-00218-TSC, p. 9, April 19, 2019 (quoting Maria Butina, "Notes about the resource base of contacts with the team of the newly elected president of the USA Donald Trump," November 10, 2016).
[4142] (U) *Ibid.* (quoting Butina, "Establishment of the dialogue with the team of the newly elected president of the USA," November 11, 2016).
[4143] (U) Twitter direct messages, Torshin and Butina, November 12, 2016.

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National Prayer Breakfast committee[4144] as well as its Chairman, Doug Coe. On November 15, 2016, she reported to Torshin that they had received invitations.[4145] Torshin's response suggested that the MFA was cautiously considering the event: "Everyone is afraid and is waiting for the order. I can't get through to the relevant deputy of Lavrov."[4146] Nonetheless, by November 30, the two had developed a list of nine Russians to include as part of a delegation to the Prayer Breakfast.[4147] By late December, the list had grown to 12, and Torshin had obtained approval from the MFA for the trip.[4148]

(U) Butina was transparent with Erickson as to the intent of the Russian delegation. On November 30, 2016, she told him that "[p]eople in the list are hand-picked by Mr. Torshin and me and are VERY influential in Russia. They are coming to establish a back channel of communication."[4149] She also advised O'Neill, on November 29, that she was "putting together a very influential delegation of Russians to the US." Erickson helped Butina draft an email intended for Burleigh, which included a suggestion that Putin might attend: "Should the next U.S. President move to thaw relations with Russia, it is extremely likely that President Putin would attend the prayer breakfast in a gesture of unity between Russian Orthodox believers and American Christians."[4150]

(U) Butina relayed each update of the Russian delegation to Erickson, who was assisting her in organizing their attendance at the breakfast. The delegation notably included, among others[4151]:

- (U) Vadim Lobov, Executive Director of the Moscow University of Industry and Finance "Synergy";
- (U) Aysen Nikolaev, Mayor of Yakutsk;[4152]
- (U) Sergey Shakhov, former Kremlin staffer;

[4144] (U) Email, Burleigh to Butina, November 6, 2016 (PAE0001053) (forwarding Prayer Breakfast invitation).
[4145] (U) Twitter direct messages, Torshin and Butina, November 13–15, 2016.
[4146] (U) Twitter direct messages, Torshin and Butina, November 15, 2016.
[4147] (U) Twitter direct messages, Torshin and Butina, November 30, 2016.
[4148] (U) Twitter direct messages, Torshin and Butina, December 26, 2016 ("I was told at the MFA today that there are no objections to my trips .... The response from MFA is perfect. . . . I am serious.").
[4149] (U) Email, Butina to Erickson, November 30, 2016 (MB 0002872).
[4150] (U) Email, Erickson to Butina, October 21, 2016 (PAE0002042).
[4151] (U) Email, Erickson to Yushioka, Butina, and Burleigh, January 27, 2017 (PAE0001003, 1010); Butina Tr., pp. 299–306; *see also* Evgenia Pismennaya and Ilya Arkhipov, "The Butina 11: Meet the Russians 'Handpicked' for Trump Event," *Bloomberg*, December 14, 2018.
[4152] (U) Nikolaev is now the Head of the Sakha Republic.

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- **(U)** Alexander Erkhov, part owner of "Uralprivatbank";
- **(U)** Alexander Karpov, owner and board member of Russian developer "GK Regiony";
- **(U)** Igor Pisarsky, businessman involved in politics and public relations;
- **(U)** Andrey Kolyadin, former Kremlin staffer; and,
- **(U)** Stanislav Puginsky, part-owner of Russian law firm Egorov, Puginksy, Afanasiev & Partners.

Two last-minute additions—Kolyadin and Puginsky—obtained invitations from Rohrabacher, through Erickson and Jack Abramoff.[4153]

(U) On January 31, before the National Prayer Breakfast began, the Russian delegation attended one of the O'Neill "friendship dinners" at the Hotel George.[4154] The idea for a dinner with the Russian visitors to the National Prayer Breakfast appeared to originate with O'Neill, but was eagerly embraced by Erickson and Butina.[4155] In a January 22, 2016, email, Erickson suggested that O'Neill "pitch the dinner/delegation to Members of Congress or people of importance" by emphasizing the attendees' status and Putin's involvement:

> *The Russian Federation is sending a full contingent to this year's National Prayer Breakfast as its first semi-official delegation to the U.S. under the leadership of President Trump. (Past years might have elicited two or three attendees—this year a powerful 15.) It is consequential that the FIRST delegation is targeting the prayer breakfast – this is of a piece with President Putin's continued emphasis on the role of the Russian Orthodox Church in Russian life. Putin would specifically like to use a common faith as a bridge between these two cultures.*
>
> *The delegation is being led by Russian Central Bank Deputy Governor Alexander Torshin (previously President of the Russian Senate). It is populated by key mayors, university presidents and personal advisors to President Putin. Reaction to the delegation's presence in America will be relayed DIRECTLY to President Putin and Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov (who both had to personally approve the delegation's travel to this event).*[4156]

[4153] **(U)** Email, Abramoff to Erickson, January 5, 2017 (PAE0001334).
[4154] **(U)** Butina Tr., p. 227.
[4155] **(U)** Email, Erickson to O'Neill and Butina, January 5, 2016 (MB 0002155); Email, Butina to O'Neill, January 5, 2016 (MB 0002160).
[4156] **(U)** Email, Erickson to O'Neill and Butina, January 22, 2016 (MB 0004103).

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(U) Among the American attendees were: Rohrabacher, Congressman Thomas Massie, and Ron Maxwell, a film producer who claimed to have contact with Steve Bannon.[4157] After the dinner, Butina wrote to O'Neill and referenced Putin: "Our delegation cannot stop chatting about your wonderful dinner. My dearest President has received the message." Butina told the Committee that she had "exaggerated a little bit" in the email, but nonetheless suggested that Torshin's political connections could be used to transmit messages: "Regardless that Torshin is not the closest person, he's still in the United Russia, which means he definitely could write a memo and try to give it in certain channels."[4158]

(U) A document containing Butina's notes from the Breakfast were recovered from her computer by the FBI.[4159] Butina did not produce these notes to the Committee. Although partially redacted in public filings, the notes covered a number of Butina's activities during the Breakfast and surrounding events from January 30 to February 3. They included the O'Neill Friendship Dinner, where two individuals "really want[ed] to go to Moscow" and where the Russian representatives invited one person to the Moscow Economic Forum and another to the Russian Prayer Breakfast. The notes also indicate that Pisarsky was introduced on multiple occasions as Putin's campaign manager.[4160]

(U) Butina and Torshin were briefly on a list to meet Trump during the National Prayer Breakfast. Burleigh had contacted Butina to offer her and Torshin a chance to meet President Trump in private during the Breakfast: "We have this wonderful possibility and Trump might meet you guys before the National Prayer Breakfast. So that means you have to come a couple of hours before and then there might be a green room and you might have a picture with the President."[4161] Public reporting indicates that the meeting was canceled the night before, after a White House national security aide flagged Torshin as an individual with "baggage," including ties to organized crime.[4162] Butina told the Committee she thought the cancellation was due to the event having been overbooked.[4163]

[4157] (U) Email, Erickson to Butina, January 31, 2017 (MB 0004170–4171) (list of American guests); Butina Tr., pp. 229–230.
[4158] (U) Butina Tr., p. 234.
[4159] (U) United States' Memorandum in Aid of Sentencing, *United States v. Butina*, Case 1:18-cr-00218-TSC (D.D.C. May 1, 2019), Exhibit 8. At the end of the notes, Butina wrote "Please contact Maria Butina with any questions," suggesting that the notes might have been prepared for an audience.
[4160] (U) *Ibid.*
[4161] (U) Butina Tr., p. 314.
[4162] (U) Michael Isikoff, "White House pulled out of meet and greet with 'conservatives' favorite Russian' over suspected mob ties," *Yahoo News*, April 2, 2017.
[4163] (U) Butina Tr., p. 66.

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COMMITTEE SENSITIVE – RUSSIA INVESTIGATION ONLY

(U) After the event, Burleigh emailed Butina about strategically selecting invitees and appealed to their shared vision of the Russian visit: "I think this will be even more important as our President takes a deeper involvement in meeting with senior Russian leaders who are invited in the future."[4164]

(U) On December 13, 2018, Butina entered a plea of guilty to conspiring to act as an unregistered agent of Russia during her time in the United States.[4165] Butina admitted that beginning in at least March 2015, she sought to establish and use "unofficial lines of communication with Americans having power and influence over U.S. politics," at the direction of Alexander Torshin and for the benefit of the Russian government.[4166] On April 26, 2019, Butina was sentenced to 18 months in prison, including time served; she was deported to Russia on October 25, 2019.

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[4164] (U) Email, Burleigh to Butina, February 23, 2017 (PAE0001370.
[4165] (U) *See* Statement of Offense, *United States v. Butina*, Case 1:18-cr-00218-TSC (D.D.C. December 13, 2018).
[4166] (U) *Ibid.*
[4167] [redacted] For [redacted] the IRA's influence operations during the 2016 U.S. election, *see infra* Vol. 2.

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COMMITTEE SENSITIVE – RUSSIA INVESTIGATION ONLY

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I. (U) Allegations, and Potential Misinformation, About Compromising Information

1. (U) Introduction and Findings

(U) Russia has a longstanding practice of collecting compromising information to attempt to influence or coerce prominent individuals, posing a potential counterintelligence threat. Allegations that the Russian government had compromising information on then-candidate Trump emerged in 2016, and were more fully made public in early 2017, through memos produced by Christopher Steele. Separate but related allegations, which were not public, in some cases predated both Steele's memos and the 2016 U.S. presidential campaign. Collectively, the allegations raised a potential counterintelligence concern, that Russia might use compromising information to influence the then-presidential candidate's positions on relations with Russia. The Committee sought, in a limited way, to understand the Russian government's alleged collection of such information, not only because of the threat of a potential foreign influence operation, but also to explore the possibility of a misinformation operation targeting the integrity of the U.S. political process.

(U) Of particular concern to the Committee were the following:

[redacted][4168]

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[4168] (U) *DOJ OIG FISA Report.* While the *DOJ OIG FISA Report* included some of this information, the report omitted other information, and contained a potential factual error, which resulted unintentionally in a misleading portrayal of the intelligence report. Some of that portrayal from the *DOJ OIG FISA Report* has been declassified. The contents of the intelligence report, including the information which was omitted by the Inspector General, is described herein. For more information on Steele, *see infra* Vol. 5, Sec. IV.B.

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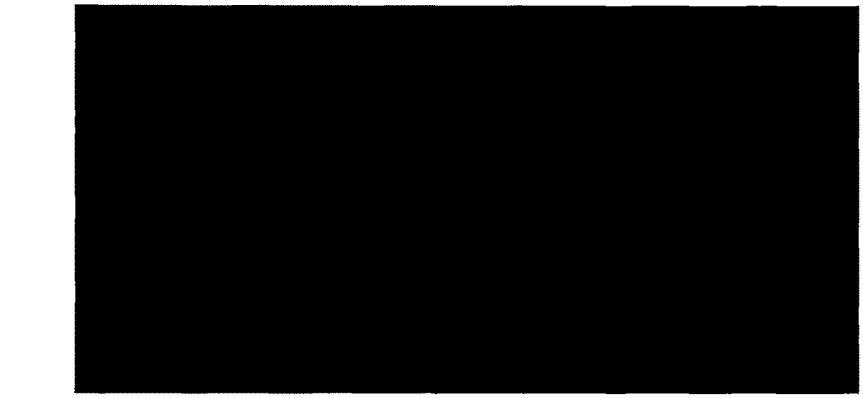

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(U) In the course of the Committee's inquiry, witnesses provided information about two of Trump's three known trips to Russia. Some individuals the Committee engaged with have relationships with Trump and have traveled with him to Russia, others have never met him, and none of them were part of the Campaign. A number of witnesses told the Committee their memories were unclear, and some of the information they provided could not be corroborated. The Committee collected this testimony and other information, but it did not establish that the Russian government collected *kompromat* on Trump, nor did it establish that the Russian government attempted to blackmail Trump or anyone associated with his campaign with such information.

(U) Separate from Steele's memos, which the Committee did not use for support, the Committee became aware of three general sets of allegations. First, testimony and other information provided by several witnesses indicated that an individual named David Geovanis alleged that he had information about Trump's relationships with women in Moscow.

(U) Geovanis is a Moscow-based U.S. businessman who holds a Russian passport and may be a dual U.S.-Russian citizen. The Committee is not aware of Geovanis having any direct connection with the Trump Campaign. Geovanis has claimed that, during Trump's travel to Russia, both in 1996 and 2013, Geovanis was aware of Trump engaging in personal relationships with Russian women. Geovanis has suggested that the Russian government was also likely aware of this information.

(U) Geovanis has ties to Kremlin-linked oligarchs, several of whom are sanctioned by the United States. Some of Geovanis's contacts are also associated with Russia's intelligence and security services, and some are involved in Kremlin foreign influence operations. Geovanis, who may have been under personal financial strain since at least 2013, has said that his relationships with former members of the Russian security services are useful for doing business

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4171 [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

in Russia. Geovanis also has a reputation in Moscow for a pattern of conduct regarding women that could make him, and potentially those around him, vulnerable to *kompromat* operations.

(U) While the Committee is not specifically aware of Geovanis sharing his alleged information regarding Trump with the Russian government, he has not been discreet with it. He is believed to have told a number of people in Moscow and elsewhere about some of this information, at least some of whom are in the U.S. expatriate business community, and he may have also spoken to the press about it. Geovanis refused to cooperate with the Committee's investigation, and some of his communications indicate that he has recently avoided returning to the United States.

(U) The second set of allegations relate to a Moscow-based businessman, Sergey Khokhlov, who overheard two people in Moscow, in October 2015, discussing sensitive tapes of a Trump visit to Russia. He relayed what he heard to Giorgi Rtskhiladze, a friend and business associate of Michael Cohen. In October 2016, Rtskhiladze informed Cohen of the alleged tapes in Moscow, and Cohen informed Trump and several others. Cohen has said that there was no additional action taken, and that he had been aware of other similar allegations that began shortly after Trump's travel to Moscow in 2013, none of which Cohen was able to corroborate.

(U) The third set of allegations relate to an individual, then an executive at Marriott International, which is the parent company of Ritz Carlton, who overheard two other Marriott executives discussing how to handle a tape of Trump with women in an elevator at the Ritz Carlton Moscow. Neither the allegedly overheard conversation, nor the content described, could be corroborated.

(U) Apart from allegations related to Trump, the Committee found that the Ritz Carlton in Moscow is a high counterintelligence risk environment. The Committee assesses that the hotel likely has at least one permanent Russian intelligence officer on staff, government surveillance of guests' rooms, and the regular presence of a large number of prostitutes, likely with at least the tacit approval of Russian authorities.

2. (U) Threat Posed by Russian Intelligence Services' Collection of Kompromat

[redacted]

4172 [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[4173] (U) *Ibid.*

[4174] [redacted]

[4175] (U) There was press coverage in 2011 regarding Donald Trump's desire to run for president in 2012, which may have heightened foreign intelligence interest in him. Neil King Jr, "Trump Candidacy for White House Gaining Ground," *The Wall Street Journal*, April 20, 2011.

[4176] [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

3. (U) David Geovanis and Potential Counterintelligence Concerns

(U) In some circles of the U.S. expatriate business community in Moscow it has been common for visiting businessmen to be taken to nightclubs or parties where prostitutes are present.[4178] It is likely that Russian security or intelligence services capitalize on those opportunities to collect information.[4179] During the 1990s and into the 2000s, David Geovanis developed a reputation in Moscow, in part as a host for visiting businessmen.[4180] Several witnesses told the Committee that Geovanis also engaged in a pattern of behavior regarding women that made him, and potentially others around him, vulnerable to exploitation by the Russian intelligence and security services.[4181]

[4177] (U) *Ibid.*

[4178] [redacted]

[4179] (U) *Ibid.*; SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Peter O'Brien, November 5, 2018, pp. 50-51.

[4180] [redacted]

[4181] (U) The Committee found multiple instances, in testimony, emails and text messages, from multiple individuals including Geovanis himself, that were corroborative of this general reputation and conduct. Some of the communications were historical, others were more contemporary. Only a limited subset of that information is

[redacted]

[redacted]

i. Geovanis's Professional Background and Connections to Oligarchs

(U) As previously noted, Geovanis is a Moscow-based businessman who holds a Russian passport and may be a dual U.S.-Russian citizen.[4182] Geovanis worked in the United States before moving to Moscow in 1991.[4183] In Moscow, Geovanis worked as a representative for the American investor Bennett LeBow,[4184] developing and investing in real estate for a Russian-American joint venture called Liggett-Ducat and for Brookemil Ltd.[4185] Likely starting in 1997, Geovanis worked for Soros Private Equity Partners in Moscow and London until approximately 2001 or 2002.[4186]

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included here. [redacted]

[4182] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Robert Curran, January 14, 2019, p. 18; Email, Geovanis to LeBow, August 22, 2017 (LeBow 000413-414); Email, Email, LeBow to iikruglov@mail.ru, August 22, 2017 (LEBOW 000413-414); Somerset Coal, sales script (LEBOW 0001862); Geovanis and Anatoli Samochornov had the same legal representation. The Committee does not have any information indicating that Samochornov and Geovanis know each other.

[4183] (U) In Beverly Hills, Geovanis worked for Drexel Burnham Lambert, an investment firm that filed for bankruptcy in 1990. Leon Black also worked at the firm. Bennett LeBow was a significant investor with the firm and a client of Black. Geovanis, Black and LeBow all participated in Donald Trump's 1996 trip to Moscow. SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Leon Black, August 8, 2018, pp. 6-7, 15-21; Steven Pearlstein, "Icon of an Era" *The Washington Post*, February 14, 1990.

[4184] (U) LeBow, who has known Geovanis for many years and visited him repeatedly in Russia, refused to be interviewed by the Committee. This limited the Committee's potential understanding of Geovanis, his relationships with individuals of concern in Russia, and his allegations. LeBow made documents available for the Committee to review, but, despite the Committee's requests, refused to provide the documents, which constrained the Committee's ability to make use of them.

[4185] (U) Black Tr., pp. 20-23; Geovanis's professional biography from London & Regional Properties, archived version; Somersetcoal.ru, "About Us"; Bloomberg.com, "David Geovanis: Executive Profile & Biography," archived version.

[4186] (U) As of 2003, Geovanis served on the board of Svyazinvest, a Russian state-owned telecommunications holding company. Bloomberg.com, "David Geovanis: Executive Profile & Biography," archived version.

Geovanis may have been on the board of Svyazinvest as a representative of the Cyprus-registered Mustcom, which was affiliated with Soros. Valeria Korchagina, "Did Soros Finally Exit Svyazinvest?" *The Moscow Times*, March 18, 2004. A close Geovanis friend, Robert Curran, believed that Geovanis had been let go from his work with Soros and did not believe that Geovanis and Soros had an ongoing relationship. Curran Tr., pp. 34-36.

[redacted]

[redacted]

(U) In 2001 or 2002, Geovanis went to work as a Managing Director for Oleg Deripaska's Basic Element investing in real estate.[4187] Oleg Deripaska is one of the Kremlin's most significant malign influence operatives, has close ties to the Russian intelligence services, and has been involved in the targeting of foreign elections.[4188]

(U) According to Robert Curran, a longtime close friend of Geovanis:[4189]

> *The way I understand it is that Oleg amassed this huge conglomerate of aluminum companies, and related resource companies, and he did so in a manner that would be considered less elegant in the west. . . . And he basically needed a guy that looked good on paper, that had some basic banking contacts in the west, and could go to a meeting and talk reasonably intelligently to western bankers to finance whatever operations he had there. So basically, David—although he had very few responsibilities at the actual company—he was just kind of the white guy that they brought in to help along with these meetings with westerners. From what I understand, it was a pretty cushy job. He was getting paid a lot of money, and his biggest complaint was he had nothing to do. So, they'd just basically say, David, we need you to go to this meeting or that meeting. He had a big name in the company, he didn't do much, and I think eventually he lost interest, and he lost favor. I think he had very little actual contact with Oleg aside from these meetings, and eventually they went their separate ways.*[4190]

(U) By 2007 or 2008, after leaving Basic Element, Geovanis went to work for the investment firm London and Regional properties, again involved in real estate.[4191] By 2012 Geovanis was working at TPS Group, which also invests in real estate and is associated with

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[4187] (U) Geovanis also appears to have served as Managing Director at Kanchen Energy Capital, registered in Jersey, which is linked to Deripaska and Basic Element. Curran Tr., p. 35; Bloomberg.com, "David Geovanis: Executive Profile & Biography," archived version.

[4188] (U) Geovanis worked on the Rodina hotel in Sochi, which is owned by Deripaska. Somerset Coal, sales script (LEBOW 0001862). For more on Deripaska and his connection to Russian intelligence services and the Russian government, *see infra* Vol. 5, Sec. III.A.8.i.

[4189] (U) Curran, who has known Geovanis since college, lived with Geovanis in Moscow for five or six years in the early-mid 1990s. As of early 2019, Curran was still in regular contact with Geovanis. As part of his professional photography work, Curran's photograph titled "The Capitalist" includes Geovanis and women who were models in Moscow at the time. Curran told the Committee that a number of his photographs hang in the Trump SoHo hotel and that one of them was given to Ivanka Trump as a gift by Alex Sapir, who is a friend of Curran. Curran recalled emailing with Ivanka Trump regarding the photographs that would be used in the hotel. Curran Tr., pp. 8, 38-39, 13–15.

[4190] (U) Curran Tr., pp. 31–33. Felix Stater, who knows Geovanis and has been to his apartment in Moscow, claimed to have not spoken to him in more than 10 years but was aware of Geovanis's work for Deripaska. Sater Tr., pp. 310–311.

[4191] (U) Bloomberg.com, "David Geovanis: Executive Profile & Biography," archived version.

[redacted]

[redacted]

Arkady Rotenberg, a Russian oligarch closely connected to Putin. Rotenberg is now sanctioned by the United States along with his brother and son.[4192]

(U) Curran suggested to the Committee that, by 2013, Geovanis was having financial trouble.[4193]

(U) Following the 2016 U.S. election, Geovanis traveled to the United States. In January of 2017, while in the United States, Geovanis met with Bennet LeBow, who subsequently offered Geovanis a job working for LeBow's company, Somerset International, which sells machines for processing coal.[4194] The company, Somerset, did not have a presence in Russia at the time, and LeBow hired Geovanis to start a Russia-based office. Curran told the Committee that Geovanis' efforts to sell Somerset machines in Russia were not going well.[4195] According to Curran, Geovanis "mentioned that he went to Oleg [Deripaska] at one point to see if he could introduce him to some of these coal barons…he went to Oleg and said, help me out, I got this new job and I want to hold on to it."[4196]

(U) Somerset's sales script advertises Geovanis's connection to Deripaska, as well as to Roman Abramovich, Viktor Vekselberg, Arkady Rotenberg,[4197] Alexander Ponomarenko[4198] and

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[4192] [redacted] Arkady Rotenberg and his brother Boris Rotenberg were sanctioned by the United States in 2014, and his son, Igor Rotenberg, was sanctioned by the United States in 2018. *See* Treasury, "Treasury Sanctions Russian Officials, Members Of The Russian Leadership's Inner Circle, And An Entity For Involvement In The Situation In Ukraine," March 20, 2014; Treasury, "Treasury Designates Russian Oligarchs, Official, and Entities in Response to Worldwide Malign Activity," April 6, 2018; [redacted] While at TPS Group in 2012, Geovanis was in contact with LeBow regarding an "investment opportunity" that Geovanis hoped to propose to Leon Black. Using vague descriptors rather than names, Geovanis suggested that the investment would be a good way for Apollo to "ingratiate" itself likely with Putin, and that Putin would vouch for investing with TPS given his close relationship likely with Rotenberg. *See* Email, Geovanis to LeBow, March 28, 2012 (LEBOW 0000093).

[4193] (U) Curran Tr., p. 11-12.

[4194] (U) Email, Geovanis to LeBow, January 20, 2017 (LEBOW 0000110); Email, LeBow to Geovanis, January 27, 2017 (LEBOW 0000113). On that trip Geovanis also met, separately, with Liebman in New York, and stayed with Curran in Florida. Curran Tr., p. 65-66; Liebman Tr., p. 20; *see also* Black Tr., p. 22.

[4195] (U) Curran Tr., pp. 30–31.

[4196] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 33-34. The timing of Curran's recollection is unclear, but it may not be consistent with private representations Geovanis has made to Somerset. *See* Email, Geovanis to LeBow, March 1, 2019 (LEBOW 0002938).

[4197] [redacted]

[4198] [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

Nikolay Tsvetkov, several of whom are sanctioned by the United States and have close ties to the Kremlin or Russian intelligence.[4199] Geovanis's deputy at Somerset's Russia office formerly worked for the Russian security services.[4200]

[redacted] Additionally, as of 2017, Geovanis served on the Supervisory Board of 4Finance, a company based in Latvia that is controlled by Russian oligarch Oleg Boyko.[4201] Boyko has concerning ties to the Russian government, to Russian intelligence and security services, and to organized crime. [redacted] Moldovan press has reported that Boyko was involved in a Kremlin-backed foreign election influence operation there.[4203]

(U) Geovanis has been associated with the Russian state-funded Skolkovo Foundation and technology park, which has been controlled by U.S.-sanctioned Putin-associate Viktor

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[4199] (U) Somerset Coal, sales script (LEBOW 0001862). In some communications reviewed by the Committee, Geovanis used vague language to avoid the direct use of these individuals' names, and Putin's name, in emails.

[4200] [redacted] In a 2007 interview, Geovanis said that he sometimes plays hockey with veterans of the FSB and Russian Federal Protective Service (FSO), which he said could be useful for doing business. Nikolai Fedyanin, "David Geovanis: Home and life of a foreigner in Russia," *Salon*, 2007. Curran told the Committee that Geovanis, "is a developer and promoter, so he tends to embellish, particularly in interviews." Curran Tr., p. 28. On August 25, 2017, Geovanis emailed LeBow a link to a May 9, 2016, photo of Putin and Sergei Khlebnikov, who is Lieutenant General in the FSO leadership. The email's subject line was, "Kremlin Commandant," but contained no further information. Email, Geovanis to LeBow, August 25, 2017 (LEBOW _0000417); Khlebnikov has been the president of the Kremlin Horse Riding School, and Geovanis has been on the board. Somersetcoal.ru, "David Geovanis," archived version. "The first equestrian art festival in Russia was held in Grozny," *Tass.ru*, September 28, 2011; The FSO is Russia's equivalent of the U.S. Secret Service and is closely associated with Vladimir Putin. "The improbable careers of Vladimir Putin's bodyguards; Proximity is power," *The Economist*, June 22, 2019.

[4201] (U) 4finance.com, "4finance Announces Management and Board," June 30, 2017.

[4202] [redacted]

[4203] [redacted]

[redacted]

Vekselberg.[4204] Geovanis encouraged his current company, Somerset, to establish its Russia office at Skolkovo, which it did.[4205] The FBI has warned that the Skolkovo Foundation "may be a means for the Russian government to access our nation's sensitive or classified research, development facilities and dual-use technologies with military and commercial applications."[4206] An outside paper published by the U.S. Department of Defense indicates that the Skolkovo Foundation is involved in the development of sensitive military technologies for Russia, and that "sophisticated physical security, consisting of cameras, thermal imaging, and alarms, also suggest that not all of the center's efforts are civilian in nature."[4207]

[redacted]

(U) As of June, 2018, Geovanis was aware of media and Committee interest in him and seemed to be avoiding returning to the United States.[4211]

i. (U) Geovanis's Perceived Access to Trump in 2016

(U) The Committee is not aware of Geovanis having any direct connection with the Trump Campaign.[4212] Nevertheless, Geovanis referred to his connections to Trump in emails

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[4204] [redacted]

[4205] **(U)** Email, Geovanis to LeBow, February 10, 2017 (LEBOW 0000116).

[4206] **(U)** Lucia Ziobro, "FBI's Boston office warns businesses of venture capital scams," *Boston Business Journal*, April 4, 2014.

[4207] **(U)** Seth Elan, "Russia's Skolkovo Innovation Center," *EUCOM Strategic Foresight*, July 29, 2013, p. 5.

[4208] [redacted]

[4209] [redacted]

[4211] **(U)** Emails, S. Geovanis to A. Geovanis, June 12, 2018 (S. Geovanis Production); Email, Geovanis to Potter, June 11, 2018, (S. Geovanis Production).

[4212] **(U)** The Committee asked several witnesses from the Trump Campaign and Trump Organization whether they had met or heard of Geovanis, and none had. *See* Cohen Tr. II, p. 335; Graff Tr., p. 115; Kushner Tr. II, p. 160; Bannon Tr., p. 383.

[redacted]

[redacted]

around the time of the campaign, and others around Geovanis also seemed to be aware of these connections.

(U) On May 17, 2016, Geovanis forwarded LeBow an outreach email from a journalist regarding Donald Trump and Russia. Geovanis wrote, "will not comment, unless the Donald wants me to."[4213] On August 8, 2016, Geovanis emailed Curran to notify him that Trump had listed Howard Lorber as one of Trump's economic advisors.[4214] Other individuals in the expatriate business community in Moscow believed that Geovanis had a connection to Lorber.[4215]

(U) On August 15, 2016, Curran emailed Geovanis a press article regarding Paul Manafort and Ukraine, writing, "Your friend Oleg [Deripaska] and Donald are mentioned."[4216]

(U) On October 23, 2016, Geovanis responded to an invitation to a upcoming holiday dinner in Moscow. He wrote to a group of U.S. expatriate businessmen, "I'm in, unless Donald wins and appoints me as Ambassador."[4217] During the campaign, Geovanis also sent at least one Trump-related email that he signed "Mr. Ambassador."[4218] Curran told the Committee:

> *I think [Geovanis] had a brief fantasy for a second that Trump would make him an ambassador. It was sheer fantasy. I remember he actually looked in to some of the qualifications and different levels of scrutiny—that he felt that once he looked into it that—I said, you're crazy. No one is going to make you ambassador.*[4219]

(U) On November 10, 2016, Geovanis wrote to LeBow that "everyone in Moscow" was excited about Trump's victory and the prospect of "normalizing relations."[4220] Geovanis and LeBow then made plans to meet in January 2017, when Geovanis would be traveling to the United States.

4. (U) Trump's Travel to Moscow in 1996

[4213] (U) Email, Geovanis to LeBow, May 17, 2016 (LEBOW 0000096).
[4214] (U) Email, Geovanis to Curran, August 8, 2016 (Curran Production).
[4215] (U) *See, e.g.*, Text messages, McFarren and [redacted] (MCFARREN-SSCI 655). LeBow sent an image regarding Russia to Lorber in October of 2017 and noted in the subject line that it was "[f]rom David Geovanis." Email, LeBow to Lorber, October 9, 2017 (LEBOW 0000494).
[4216] (U) Email, Curran to Geovanis, August 15, 2016 (Curran Production).
[4217] (U) Email, Geovanis to O'Brien, et al., October 23, 2016 (O'Brien Production). On December 6, 2016, O'Brien emailed the group regarding the upcoming holiday party, stating "maybe David can entice Donald over with some old friends." Email, O'Brien to Geovanis, et al., December 5, 2016 (MCFARREN-SSCI 256).
[4218] (U) Email, Geovanis to Curran, August 8, 2016 (Curran Production).
[4219] (U) Curran Tr., p. 53.
[4220] (U) Emails, Geovanis and LeBow, November 10, 2016 (LEBOW 0000105).

[redacted]

[redacted]

(U) Donald Trump and David Geovanis likely first met during Donald Trump's travel to Moscow in November 1996, with other U.S. investors, to explore real estate development opportunities.[4221]

[redacted]

[4221] (U) Based on information provided by the Trump Organization, witnesses, and open source reporting, the Committee is aware of Donald Trump making three trips to Russia, 1987, 1996, and 2013, all of which have been publicly reported. Documents produced by the Ritz Carlton Moscow indicate that a guest named Donald Trump stayed at the hotel in late January 2008, and late June 2011. Based on open source reports these records likely refer to Donald Trump Jr. Email, Kuhlen to Walia, et al., January 11, 2017 (RC-Moscow 010). Michael Crowley, "Trump Jr.'s love affair with Moscow," *Politico,* July 12, 2017. Oren Dorell, "Donald Trump's ties to Russia go back 30 years," *USA Today,* February 15, 2017; The Committee found no evidence to support the reported claim, made by Sergei Millian, that Trump traveled to Russia in 2007 to attend the Millionaire's Fair. Catherine Belton, "The shadowy Russian émigré touting Trump," *Financial Times,* November 1, 2016.

[4222] [redacted]

[4223] [redacted] This information may be partially corroborated by communications provided by LeBow. *See* Email, Geovanis to LeBow, January 27, 2017 (LEBOW 0000113).

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

(U) Several U.S. businessmen, architects, and other individuals took part in the 1996 trip.[4225]

(U) Curran understood that "David was kind of like assigned to show [Trump] around town, take him to dinner."[4226] Leon Black, who participated in the trip, told the Committee that Geovanis had "very good social skills" but was "probably not as serious analytically" and was "more junior."[4227] Black explained:

> *[Geovanis] was I guess a combination of kind of knowing the geography, since he lived there, and knowing various people and had developed various relationships. Back then you had the mayor, who was Luzhkov, and you had an artist named Tsereteli. He was always putting different people together with different people.*[4228]

[4224] [redacted] The Committee is only aware of travel by Trump to Russia in 1987, 1996, and 2013.

[4225] **(U)** Those individuals likely included Bennett LeBow, Leon Black, Howard Lorber, Ron Bernstein, Theodore Liebman, and Matthew Calamari. Liebman Tr., p. 35-36; *see also* Igor Tabakov, photographs published by the *Associated Press*, 1996; Black Tr., pp. 23–26 ("Mr. LeBow was the senior partner and Howard was a partner, but I think it was more LeBow in charge.").

[4226] **(U)** Curran Tr., pp. 41–42.

[4227] **(U)** Apart from Geovanis, Leon Black is, or has been, connected to several entities and individuals that appear elsewhere in this Report. Black served on the board of the Russian Direct Investment Fund (RDIF) until 2014, and has previously met with Kirill Dmitriev. Black Tr., pp. 7–12. In 2011, Black reportedly met one-on-one with Vladimir Putin. "Putin gets SWF, PE backing for Russia fund," *Reuters*, September 16, 2011. Black also knows Oleg Deripaska, and has interacted with him in Russia and the United States prior to Deripaska being sanctioned by the United States in 2018. *Ibid.*, pp. 30–33. Black knows Allen Vine, whom Black described as "consigliere" to the Russian oligarch Suleiman Kerimov, who was sanctioned by the United States in 2018. *Ibid.*, pp. 42–44. Black told the Committee, "Steve Bannon and I have a common friend, and I went over to see my friend and Bannon was meeting him for breakfast. And so on two occasions I spent time talking to Steve Bannon." *Ibid.*, pp. 40–41. Black noted a personal, but not close, relationship with Jared Kushner and Ivanka Trump, as well as a business transaction between Apollo and Kushner Companies that Black was not involved in, or aware of, until after the fact. *Ibid.*, pp. 18–19.

[4228] **(U)** *Ibid.*, p. 21. Black told the Committee: "I remember various Georgian feasts at Tsereteli's place, and there were loads of government officials that would come in and out of those dinners," but Black did not recall which Moscow trips those dinners occurred on. *Ibid.*, p. 24. Black told the Committee he had not spoken to Geovanis in 15 years. *Ibid.*, p. 21.

[redacted]

[redacted]

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(U) Early in Trump's Moscow trip a party was hosted by the Brooke Group, for Trump, at a room called "The Library" at the Baltschug Kempinski Hotel, where the group of American investors likely stayed.[4229]

[redacted]

(U) At the party, Trump may have begun a brief relationship with a Russian woman named [redacted]. Theodore Liebman, an architect who lived in Moscow and New York in the 1990s, and who traveled to Russia with Trump and the other investors from the Brooke Group, attended the event.[4231] According to Liebman, shortly before the party Geovanis had a chance encounter with [redacted] who Geovanis knew, and Geovanis invited her to the Brooke Group party.[4232]

(U) Liebman told the Committee:

> *I went down to the party with David. He drove me....When we arrived, she [redacted] was walking out of the Kempinski and knew David....[David] said: "Why don't you come to a party? We're having a party upstairs for Donald Trump". . . he said: "It's a cocktail party. You should come. Donald Trump is going to be there." And she said: "Okay. When does it start?" "In a few minutes. We're going to go up and check the room."*[4233]

(U) Curran told the Committee that, based on what Geovanis told him, "I think [Trump and [redacted] might have had a brief romantic relationship," and that "[Geovanis] said then that

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[4229] (U) Liebman Tr., pp. 14-15, 32; Black Tr., p. 23.

[4230] [redacted]

[4231] (U) Liebman Tr., pp. 14-15.

[4232] (U) Liebman Tr., pp. 16-17. [redacted] was the winner of the [redacted] beauty pageant [redacted] Miss Moscow [redacted] which later became Miss Russia. Curran told the Committee that, after the fall of the Soviet Union, Curran was a judge for the contest, and met [redacted] who he dated for a brief period in the 1990s. During that relationship, which Curran said was not serious, Curran introduced [redacted] to Geovanis, with whom Curran was living at the time. Curran Tr., pp. 8–9, 52, 55-57; [redacted]

[4233] (U) Liebman Tr., p. 17.

[redacted]

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[redacted]

he saw them before he left and then he saw them again together . . . I'm not sure if it was the next day or a subsequent day or whatever. I do remember he said that he saw them together."[4234]

(U) Several historical press reports, some of which are Russian, indicate possible contact subsequent to the Moscow trip. One [redacted] article from 1998 reported:

> *. . . Donald Trump warmly welcomed the guests, among whom was the charming* [redacted]*, "Miss Moscow* [redacted] *Trump recalled that two years ago, during his stay in Moscow,* [redacted] *was for him the most beautiful hostess of the capital, whose charms were not overshadowed even by Claudia Schiffer and Tina Turner, who lived in the same hotel. He recalled with pleasure the excellent company with which he spent time in Moscow.*[4235]

(U) In a 2007 interview [redacted] was asked about her interactions with famous people, including Trump. [redacted] was quoted as stating:

> *With some I was briefly met by chance, while others there was a much longer relationship due to mutual affection. For example, Trump is a person who I like very much. I cannot call him a friend, because we do not call up and do not meet daily, but perhaps we would live in the same city (I am in New York or he would be in Los Angeles), we would communicate more closely. Let's just say we are on a friendly footing.*[4236]

(U) Following Trump's travel to Moscow in 1996, Geovanis may have had some contact with Trump in the United States. Curran told the Committee, "I know he [Geovanis] went and met with him [Trump] in New York at some point . . . David told me he went up to see Donald in Trump Tower," possibly in the late 1990s.[4237]

(U) During and after the 2016 election, Curran and Geovanis continued to communicate about Geovanis's relationship with Trump, and in some cases, [redacted].[4238]

[4234] (U) Curran Tr., pp. 59, 80–81; Curran, who did not attend the Brooke Group party, recalled that Geovanis told him at the time, "I ran into your girlfriend, and I was with Donald, and I introduced her to Donald, and they are kind of hanging out." Curran said that he did not have clear or direct knowledge of this relationship firsthand, and that his understanding of it came from what Geovanis had relayed to him in 1996 and again in 2017. Curran Tr., pp. 80–81; Written Responses, Curran, November 8, 2018.

[4235] [redacted]

[4236] [redacted]

[4237] (U) Curran Tr., pp. 43–44.

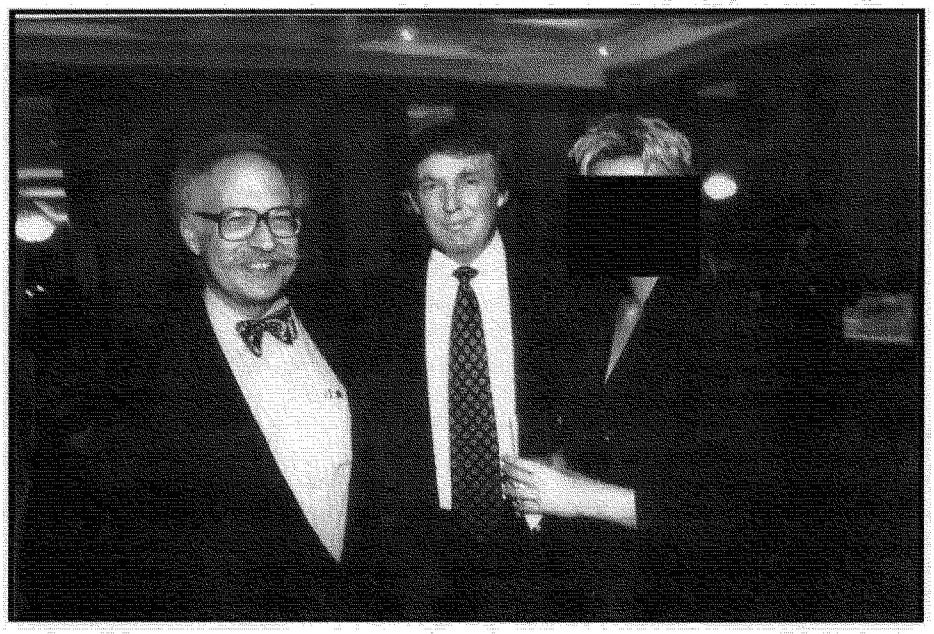
[4238] (U) On May 4, 2016, Curran forwarded a news article to Geovanis regarding Donald Trump's high likelihood of securing the nomination. Curran wrote, "To think we're one degree apart this to miss Russia and you [sic]."

[redacted]

[redacted]

(U) In January 2017, Geovanis, who was in the United States, visited Liebman at his apartment in New York and asked if Liebman had any photographs from the 1996 Brooke Group party at the Kempinski. Liebman told the Committee that he had not seen Geovanis in a number of years prior to this.[4239]

(U) On January 29, 2017, Liebman emailed Geovanis the photograph below, likely from 1996, depicting Trump and [redacted] at Geovanis's request.[4240]



Email, Curran to Geovanis, May 4, 2016 (Curran Production).

[4239] (U) Liebman Tr., p. 23.

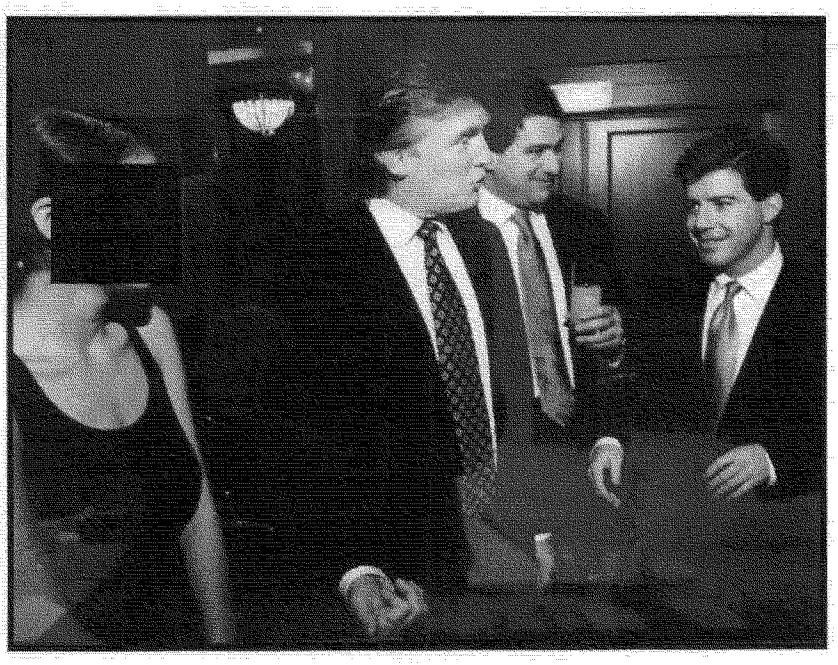
[4240] (U) Email, Liebman to Geovanis, January 29, 2017 (Curran Production); Curran Tr., pp. 55–56. From left to right the photo shows: Theodore Liebman, Donald Trump, and [redacted]. Written Responses, Curran, November 8, 2018.

[redacted]

[redacted]

(U) The next day, Geovanis forwarded the photograph to Curran by email, with no message text. Curran told the Committee that, following Geovanis's meeting with Liebman in New York, Geovanis traveled to Miami and stayed with Curran for several days. During that visit they discussed the Brooke Group party in Moscow.[4241]

(U) On January 31, 2017, Geovanis emailed Curran the photo below, showing Geovanis with Trump and others. The email had no text:[4242]



[4241] (U) Email, Geovanis to Curran, January 30, 2017 (Curran Production); During Geovanis's early 2017 visit, Curran asked Geovanis, "What exactly happened . . . did they hook up, or whatever?" According to Curran, Geovanis responded, "yeah, well, I saw them again the next day and they were together, so." Curran Tr., pp. 16, 61.

[4242] (U) The photograph, likely taken at Brooke Group party, shows from left to right: David Geovanis's then-wife [redacted], Donald Trump, Leon Black and David Geovanis. Written Responses, Curran, November 8, 2018. Curran did not identify Black. The full image appears to show that this is a framed photograph, of which a photograph was taken with a cellphone. Email, Geovanis to Curran, January 31, 2017 (Curran Production).

[redacted]

[redacted]

(U) Black told the Committee that he did not recall any compromising behavior during the trip.[4243] Black also did not recall the event in the photograph.[4244] Black did recall going to a concert with Trump, followed by a "discotheque" where they may have met others, potentially including Geovanis, but Black's memory was unclear.[4245] Black later added that he and Trump "might have been in a strip club together."[4246]

(U) Geovanis is believed to have told others in Moscow, and elsewhere, of his 1996 interactions with Donald Trump. It is not clear if these allegations are related to, or separate from, the interaction with [redacted] that was previously described.

(U) Peter O'Brien, the former CFO of the Russian government-controlled firm Rosneft, has hosted an annual holiday dinner for expatriate U.S. businessmen in Moscow.[4247] Likely at the holiday dinner in December of 2015, which more than 20 businessmen attended, a number of individuals were telling stories or jokes and Geovanis was encouraged to tell a story about a Trump visit to Moscow, the timing of which is unclear, that a number of people in the room had already heard from Geovanis.[4248]

(U) O'Brien recalled Geovanis talking about "spending time with [Trump] during that trip, and the mention of Trump being with younger women, including in official meetings, which some people in Russia thought was weird."[4249] O'Brien, who said his recollection was vague, told the Committee:

> *[Geovanis] told a little bit about how [Trump] had spent time going around to some different meetings in Moscow to talk about potential real estate deals. And the culmination of the story was that [Trump] had a meeting in the Moscow mayor's office and he showed up with two beautiful young women on his arm, and people thought that was kind of strange. A, that he was with them, and B, that he hadn't just left them wherever he met them.*[4250]

[4243] (U) Black Tr., pp. 27, 37, 39.
[4244] (U) Written Responses, Black, November 21, 2018.
[4245] (U) Black Tr., p. 27.
[4246] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 37.
[4247] (U) Email, O'Brien to SSCI, October 4, 2018. O'Brien Tr., p. 11; O'Brien told the Committee that he has known Igor Sechin for many years. *Ibid.*, p. 98. Sechin is a close associate of Putin.
[4248] (U) Email, Courtney to O'Brien, et al., December 16, 2015 (O'Brien Production) (attaching images of the event); Peter O'Brien provided a written response to the Committee, stating that, "David spoke about a visit Mr. Trump had made to Russia at least several years prior" to 2015. Written Responses, O'Brien, October 4, 2018. In an interview with the Committee on November 5, 2018, O'Brien stated that he believed Geovanis to be describing a trip to Moscow by Trump in the "early 2000s." O'Brien Tr., p. 21. As previously noted, the Committee is unaware of travel by Trump to Russia other than in 1987, 1996, and 2013.
[4249] (U) O'Brien Tr., p. 21.
[4250] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 23–24.

[redacted]

[redacted]

(U) According to O'Brien, "The implication of his story was that [Trump] had spent the night with these two women and showed up at this first meeting the next day."[4251] O'Brien explained:

> *For years in Russia there were a number of Russian government officials or others who were exposed in these strip clubs doing not very nice things that their wives, if they have wives, probably didn't know about. I think most of us appreciated that there was that risk in these types of clubs. So, I think once David told that story, we were all concerned about that.*[4252]

(U) There are indications that Geovanis may have also told this story to the press. A February 2018 story in *The New Yorker* includes an anecdote that closely resembles the one allegedly told by Geovanis.[4253]

(U) Almost a year later, on October 22, 2016, O'Brien sent an invitation email to the group of expatriate businessmen, including Geovanis, regarding the 2016 holiday dinner in Moscow. In that email, O'Brien wrote, "I keep thinking that VVP [Putin] must have some great material on Donald."[4254] O'Brien told the Committee that this comment was based only on Geovanis's comments at the holiday dinner the prior year.

5. (U) Trump's Travel to Moscow in 2013

[redacted]

[4251] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 51.
[4252] (U) O'Brien Tr., p. 50.
[4253] (U) Jeffrey Toobin, "Trump's Miss Universe Gambit," *The New Yorker*, February 19, 2018.
[4254] (U) *Ibid.*
[4255] [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

(U) Two individuals told the Committee that they recalled Geovanis describing spending time with Trump during Trump's 2013 trip to Moscow for the Miss Universe pageant.[4257]

(U) Bob Foresman's recollection was vague, but he told the Committee:

> *I remember some involvement that he [Geovanis] had had with Trump when he came for the beauty pageant. I think was what it was. So David Geovanis was the only person that I had ever met, to the best of my recollection, that had had anything to do with Donald Trump coming to Russia for this beauty pageant or whatever it was.*[4258]

(U) William McFarren, whose memory was also vague, told the Committee that Geovanis gave a toast at a holiday gathering, likely the same expatriate holiday dinner described above. According to McFarren, "To the best of my recollection, Mr. Geovanis said that he showed Mr. Trump around Moscow during the Miss Universe pageant in 2013. He did not get into specifics, but intimated that there was partying and that Mr. Trump should be nice to him in

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[4256] [redacted]

[4257] (U) Foresman Tr., p. 221; Written Responses, McFarren, January 18, 2019; Geovanis had previously been involved in other corporate sponsored pageants in Russia. Curran Tr., pp. 44–45. *See also* Emails, Geovanis and S. Geovanis, April 8–9, 2018 (S. Geovanis Production).

[4258] (U) Foresman Tr., p. 221. Foresman could not recall where or when he heard Geovanis talk about this, but that it may have been at one of the expatriate holiday dinners in Moscow.

[redacted]

[redacted]

light of the information he had."[4259] The latter part of this statement may have been made in jest.[4260]

(U) The Committee notes that Shugart, who was responsible for the 2013 Miss Universe pageant, told the Committee that she had never heard of Geovanis and did not recognize his picture.[4261] Schiller, who assisted Trump at the pageant, also said he did not recognize Geovanis' picture.[4262] Emin Agalarov told the Committee that he did not know Geovanis.[4263]

(U) Other allegations regarding the 2013 Miss Universe pageant have originated from sources other than Geovanis, or at least cannot be clearly linked to him. For example, as discussed elsewhere in this Report, Schiller told the Committee that, on the 2013 trip, an unknown individual approached him with an offer of women for Trump, and that Schiller declined.[4264]

(U) Separately, a former executive at Marriott International, of which Ritz Carlton is a part, said that shortly after the 2013 Miss Universe contest he overheard two other Marriott executives at a small corporate gathering discussing a recording from one of the elevator security cameras at the Ritz Carlton Moscow.[4265] One of the Marriot executives who was involved in the conversation—previously a manager of the Ritz Carlton Moscow—had clearly seen the video,

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[4259] (U) Written Responses, McFarren, January 18, 2019. McFarren described the holiday gathering as "a loud dinner at a crowded steak restaurant, at which multiple toasts were given, and where there was a lot banter [sic], jokes, and cross-talking." This is generally consistent with the yearly holiday dinner hosted by O'Brien, which McFarren was invited to, and likely attended, in 2015. Email, O'Brien to Courtney et al, December 13, 2015; Email, McFarren to O'Brien et al, December 16, 2015 (O'Brien production). McFarren did not recall the date of this toast. Written Responses, McFarren, January 18, 2019.

[4260] (U) Attorney Proffer, William McFarren, January 30, 2018.

[4261] (U) Shugart Tr., pp. 176-177.

[4262] (U) Schiller Tr., p. 96.

[4263] (U) E. Agalarov Tr., p. 63.

[4264] (U) For more on this topic, *see infra* Vol. 5, Sec. III.C.

[4265] [redacted] January 13, 2017, the then-manager of the Ritz Carlton Moscow emailed executives at Verny Capital (the hotel's owner) and at Ritz Carlton Europe, [redacted] regarding Trump's stay at the hotel in 2013. The manager reported that three hotel staff who remembered that Trump stayed there did not recall any "unusual happenings," that there was no damage to the room, and that "we strongly doubt" that there were cameras in the room. Email, Kuhlen to Ospanov, et al., January 13, 2017 (RC-Moscow 002).

[redacted]

[redacted]

which allegedly showed Trump in an elevator involved with several women who the discussant implied to be "hostesses." The executive who had seen the video had asked the other, more senior, executive what to do with the recording. The former executive said the two discussants then left to continue the conversation in a more private location, and he did not hear anything further.[4266]

(U) Neither executive who allegedly had the conversation recalled it, nor did they recall seeing the recording.[4267] The Committee was not able to resolve these discrepancies.[4268]

(U) Finally, Michael Cohen has testified that he became aware of allegations about a tape of compromising information in late 2013 or early 2014, shortly after the Miss Universe 2013 pageant and significantly prior to the 2016 U.S. election cycle.[4269] The alleged tape related to Trump and prostitutes.[4270] Cohen has testified that he discussed the allegations with Trump, who asked Cohen to find out where the allegations were coming from. Trump told Cohen that the allegations were not true. Cohen has said that in 2014 or 2015 he asked a friend, Giorgi Rtskhiladze, [4271] to see if Rtskhiladze could find out if the tape was real.[4272]

(U) Cohen estimated that, over the course of several years, six different people contacted him regarding the alleged tape. Cohen stated that one individual threatened to release the alleged information if the individual was not paid a large sum of money. Cohen indicated that he would have been willing to pay the individual to suppress the information if it could be verified, but

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4266 [redacted] Both of these individuals continue to work for Marriott, and have been based largely or exclusively outside the United States. The executive who allegedly saw the recording [redacted] was perceived by a former Ritz Carlton Moscow employee to have been corrupt and "too close to the Russians." [redacted]

4268 [redacted]

4269 (U) Cohen Tr. II, p. 126; HPSCI Transcript of the Interview with Michael Cohen, Part 2, March 6, 2019, p. 227-228.

4270 (U) FBI, FD-302, Cohen 9/12/2018.

4271 (U) Giorgi Rtskhiladze, a U.S. businessman originally from the country of Georgia is a former business partner and friend of Michael Cohen. Rtskhiladze has privately claimed to have some access to Roman Abramovich. Emails, Rtskhiladze to Cohen, December 31, 2016 (RTSKHILADZE-0000098-99, 108). Rtskhiladze has stated that Zurab Tsereteli is his godfather, and that Tsereteli is close friends with Putin. Emails, Rtskhiladze to Cohen, December 31, 2016 and January 18, 2017 (RTSKHILADZE-0000114). In January 2017, Cohen acquired a ticket for Rtskhiladze to attend the inaugural ball, which Rtskhiladze then attended. Emails, Rtskhiladze and Cohen, January 20–21, 2017 (RTSKHILADZE-0000163, 177). Rtskhiladze was involved in business with the Agalarovs in the mid-2000s. E. Agalarov Tr., p. 66.

4272 [redacted] FBI, FD-302, Cohen 9/12/2018; [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

Cohen was never shown any evidence. Cohen has also said that individuals in the media contacted him regarding a tape of Trump. [4273]

(U) According to Rtskhiladze:

> *During an October 2015 phone call that Mr. Rtskhiladze had with his friend and former business associate, Sergei Khokhlov,*[4274] *Mr. Khokhlov stated that while having dinner at a restaurant, Mr. Khokhlov overheard a stranger at a table next to him discuss tapes from Donald Trump's visit to Russia. The overheard dinner conversation was not important to Mr. Rtskhiladze and Mr. Khokhlov so they did not discuss this matter again. Mr. Khokhlov was aware that Mr. Rtskhiladze and his Georgian partners were in business with the Trump Organization. Due to the news about the Access Hollywood tapes and its potential impact on Mr. Trump's reputation, Mr. Rtskhiladze sent a text message to Mr. Cohen to inform him that an individual was overheard discussing sensitive tapes of Mr. Trump's trip to Russia.*[4275]

(U) A detail of Rtskhiladze's characterization of this event shifted over time. Rtskhiladze's original written response to the Committee, through counsel, stated that Khokhlov "overheard someone at a party bragging about alleged tapes of Mr. Trump." An earlier letter from Rtskhiladze's counsel to the Attorney General also characterized the event as a "party." In a second written submission to the Committee, Rtskhiladze through counsel included a clarification: "The comment about the tapes was not overheard by Mr. Khokhlov at 'a party' per se, but specifically was overheard at a restaurant from an individual at a nearby table."[4276]

[4273] **(U)** According to Cohen, those individuals included David Pecker, Dylan Howard and Harvey Levin. FBI, FD-302, Cohen 9/12/2018.

[4274] **(U)** According to Rtskhiladze, through counsel, Khokhlov is a Moscow-based businessman. Khokhlov and Rtskhiladze met in 2004 in Moscow through a mutual friend and business associate. Khokhlov and Rtskhiladze have since remained friends, "speaking on the phone or text messaging every six (6) to eight (8) months." Rtskhiladze last saw Khokhlov in 2009. Letter, Rtskhiladze to SSCI, May 11, 2020. Rtskhiladze said their interactions since then have been related to "catching up about family, friends etc." Khokhlov was aware of Rtskhiladze's relationship with Michael Cohen, and of Trump development efforts in Russia and the country of Georgia. Written Responses, Rtskhiladze, September 16, 2016. Rtskhiladze indicated that Khokhlov is connected to "Roman." From context this appears to be Roman Abramovich. Emails, Rtskhiladze to Cohen, January 2, 2017 (RTSKHILADZE-0000126). Rtskhiladze has also said that Khokhlov attends many interesting and entertaining parties. FBI, FD-302, Rtskhiladze 5/10/2018.

[4275] **(U)** Written Responses, Rtskhiladze, September 16, 2016.

[4276] **(U)** Written Responses, Rtskhiladze, August 23, 2019; Letter, Bolden to Barr, April 23, 2019 (Rtskhiladze Production); Written Responses, Rtskhiladze, September 16, 2019.

[redacted]

[redacted]

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(U) Rtskhiladze's subsequent exchange with Cohen via text message, believed to take place on October 30, 2016, reads:[4277]

From	To	Body	Timestamp: Date	Timestamp: Time
Giorgi Rtskhiladze	Michael Cohen	Stopped flow of some tapes from Russia but not sure if there's anything else. Just so u know...	10/30/2016	7:30:22 PM(UTC+0)
Michael Cohen	Giorgi Rtskhiladze	Tapes of what?	10/30/2016	7:48:51 PM(UTC+0)
Giorgi Rtskhiladze	Michael Cohen	Not sure of the content but person in Moscow was bragging had tapes from Russia trip.	10/30/2016	7:52:12 PM(UTC+0)
Giorgi Rtskhiladze	Michael Cohen	Will try to dial you tomorrow but wanted to be aware	10/30/2016	7:52:41 PM(UTC+0)
Giorgi Rtskhiladze	Michael Cohen	I'm sure it's not a big deal but there are lots of stupid people	10/30/2016	7:53:25 PM(UTC+0)
Michael Cohen	Giorgi Rtskhiladze	You have no idea	10/30/2016	7:53:46 PM(UTC+0)
Giorgi Rtskhiladze	Michael Cohen	I do trust me.	10/30/2016	7:54:27 PM(UTC+0)
Giorgi Rtskhiladze	Michael Cohen	He needs to make it to the WH Mike!	10/30/2016	7:57:40 PM(UTC+0)

(U) This exchange was followed by a telephone conversation, possibly the following day, regarding the alleged tape.[4278] Cohen said that he spoke to Trump regarding the text messages in October 2016, as well as to Donald Trump Jr. and to Schiller.[4279] Rtskhiladze has said that Khokhlov subsequently called and stated that the tapes were fake, but Rtskhiladze said this information was not conveyed to Cohen.[4280]

[redacted]

[redacted] *did not identify evidence of a later call from Khokhlov to Rtskhiladze.* [redacted] *did locate an email dated January 11, 2017, [the day after unverified allegations were published] from Rtskhiladze to publicist M.A. Bonvicino reading, "told MC there was something there b 4 election." When the publicist responded, "I recall," Rtskhiladze replied, "well that's what happens when you visit crocus I guess."*[4281]

(U) Though Rtskhiladze did not have personal insight into the matter, he assessed that if compromising material existed, Crocus Group would likely be responsible.[4282]

[4277] (U) Text Messages, Cohen and Rtskhiladze, October 30, 2016–November 9, 2016 (SCO_MC0000028).
[4278] (U) HPSCI Transcript of the Interview with Michael Cohen, Part 2, March 6, 2019, pp. 226–227.
[4279] [redacted] *SCO Report*, Vol. II, pp. 27–28 [redacted]
[4280] [redacted]
[4281] (U) *Ibid.*
[4282] [redacted] *Ibid.*; FBI, FD-302, Rtskhiladze 5/10/2018. Aras Agalarov's associate, Yuri Chaika, the longtime former Prosecutor General of Russia, has a history of utilizing compromising information. Andrew Kramer, "The Master of 'Kompromat' Believed to Be Behind Trump Jr.'s Meeting," *The New York Times*, July 17, 2017. Most notably, in

[redacted]

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[redacted]

[redacted] The Committee is aware of a realistic and well-resourced, but fake, video of someone who looks like Trump portraying him in a situation consistent with the uncorroborated allegations that were made public in January of 2017. The video may have first appeared on the public internet in January of 2019. [redacted]

i. (U) The Counterintelligence Threat at the Ritz Carlton Moscow

[redacted] As discussed elsewhere in this Report, during the 2013 trip to Moscow for the Miss Universe pageant the Agalarovs arranged for Donald Trump to stay at the Ritz Carlton hotel.[4285] [redacted]

(U) According to two former employees of the Ritz Carlton in Moscow, in 2013 there was at least one [redacted] officer permanently stationed at the hotel. This non-uniformed [redacted] officer was believed to be a [redacted] and had access to the hotel's property management system, guest portfolios and notations, as well as the network of "hundreds" of security cameras at the hotel.[4288] The [redacted] was believed to be able to monitor the camera feeds from his

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the late 1990s, Chaika was reportedly involved in the use of a video recording to oust a Russian government official who was investigating corruption in the Russian leadership. The recording, which was made public, showed the official in a compromising situation with two women. Chaika himself replaced the ousted official, who claimed that the tape was falsified. Putin, who was the head of the FSB at the time, "authenticated" the tape involving the women. Chaika also has ties to the [redacted] crime syndicate [redacted] Chaika, whose son is sanctioned by the United States, is an associate of Natalia Veselnitskaya. Treasury, "Issuance of Global Magnitsky Executive Order; Global Magnitsky Designations," December 21, 2017.

[4283] [redacted]

[4285] (U) For more on the Ritz Carlton hotel in Moscow, *see infra* Vol. 5, Sec. III.C.

[redacted]

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[redacted]

office. It was believed that the officer reported both to his [redacted] leadership, and directly to the owner of the hotel, Bulat Utemuratov of Verny Captial.[4289]

(U) The former employees did not know whether there were cameras permanently in certain rooms, but both believed it was possible, and there was awareness of recording devices being prearranged in rooms in anticipation of the arrival of particular guests.[4290] One of the former employees also believed that one of the drivers affiliated with the Ritz Carlton in Moscow was from the [redacted] and had easy access to a secure government area.[4291]

(U) Both former employees also recalled a significant presence of paid sex workers at the hotel.[4292] One reported that a third-party security firm that was employed by the hotel was responsible for managing the women, in addition to its other duties.[4293]

[4289] [redacted] Utemuratov is a close associate of President Nazarbayev of Kazakhstan, and through that relationship was perceived to also be close to the Kremlin. One former employee of the hotel said that Utemuratov was dangerous, and that the [redacted] at the hotel was scared of him. [redacted]

[4290] [redacted]

[4291] [redacted]

[4292] [redacted] A former employee recalled there often being more than fifty such women per night at the hotel, and that there would be "casting sessions" in the evenings where some women would be selected by individuals on behalf of other individuals. [redacted]

[4293] [redacted] Speaking more generally about the hotel, one former employee explained that "there is almost nothing you cannot do there." [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

J. (U) Influence for Hire

1. (U) Introduction and Findings

(U) Over the course of this investigation, the Committee identified an international marketplace for digital services to shape popular sentiment and electoral outcomes. These services—many of which are based overseas—use an array of personal information to build targeted messaging profiles. During elections, campaigns can use these profiles to direct select political advertisements and narrative content toward specific audiences calculated to be most susceptible to the messaging. This practice of "micro-targeting" is in turn designed to influence the thoughts and judgments of voters. The use of messaging to sway voter sentiment is not a new development. However, it is now enabled by advanced data analytics and algorithmic targeting, the globally expansive reach of social media, and user-generated data and personal information that is often unwittingly provided or illicitly obtained.

(U) The Committee sought to learn more about the extent to which foreign-based influence companies played a role in shaping the outcome of the 2016 U.S. presidential election, either directly or through work with American counterparts. Several companies engaged in this activity, including Cambridge Analytica, Psy Group, and Colt Ventures, exhibited some type of foreign ties. The Committee examined these specific companies and their activities related to the 2016 U.S. election to better understand how foreign influence, including the use of techniques and methodologies honed by foreign governments and intelligence services, may have been exerted in 2016. The Committee did not examine the effectiveness of the work these companies may have conducted.

(U) All three companies either aspired to apply micro-targeted social media messaging techniques comparable to those employed by Russian information operatives with the Internet Research Agency, or actively engaged in the application of these techniques. One of these entities, Cambridge Analytica, had a degree of intersection with and proximity to Russia, and specifically Russia's intelligence services. Others had different types of foreign contacts. All of these entities were engaged with the Trump Campaign to some extent, but the Committee found no convincing evidence that Russia's government or intelligence services worked with or through any of these companies in furtherance of Moscow's 2016 U.S. election interference.

(U) There are, however, limitations to the Committee's understanding of this subject. In particular, the Committee did not have access to numerous essential witnesses, including Alexander Nix, a non-U.S. citizen who generally disregarded the Committee's requests for an appearance, and Lieutenant General Michael Flynn, who exercised his Fifth Amendment right against self-incrimination. Additional individuals with potentially critical understanding of how these companies marketed or applied tools to influence electoral outcomes, either declined to appear before the Committee or were not sought as witnesses. Further, testimony specific to

[redacted]

[redacted]

certain events and relationships is either inconsistent across witnesses, or appears to purposely minimize the witnesses' knowledge or recollection. Finally, the Committee was unable to obtain the corporate communications of Cambridge Analytica or SCL Group, which had already been seized by U.K. authorities.

2. (U) SCL and Cambridge Analytica

(U) Now defunct, Cambridge Analytica was a U.K.-based data analytics firm and political consultancy founded in 2013 as an offshoot of an existing U.K. data analytics firm and consultancy, Strategic Communication Laboratories (SCL). During the 2016 U.S. presidential campaign, Cambridge Analytica attempted to solicit business from a number of Republican Party candidates for president in 2016. Following the end of Ted Cruz's candidacy and Cambridge Analytica's work for his campaign, Cambridge Analytica shifted its focus to the Trump Campaign.

i. (U) Cambridge Analytica's Founding

(U) According to Christopher Wylie, who worked at SCL from June 2013 through November 2014[4294], SCL evolved from a single company with multiple divisions—Defense, Commercial, Elections, and Social—to a holding company with the divisions ultimately being spun off into subsidiary companies. Nigel Oakes served as the chief executive officer for the holding company, SCL Group, which also entailed overseeing the operations of SCL-Defense, the corporate component responsible for 80 percent of SCL Group's revenue.[4295]

(U) Alexander Nix, a former financial analyst who joined SCL in 2003, served as Cambridge Analytica's CEO.[4296] Nix's responsibilities with SCL Group were described by Wylie as the "odds and ends" that comprised SCL Group's non-defense work: SCL-Commercial, SCL-Elections, and SCL-Social.[4297] Nix began exploring the possibility of opening a data analytics division at SCL in 2010 after becoming intrigued by the applications for data analysis that Google Analytics was creating. Nix identified the Republican Party's lack of a data analytics program comparable to that of the Democrat Party as a business opportunity, and began meeting with conservative donors in the United States.[4298]

[4294] (U) In 2017, Wylie made a series of public allegations against Cambridge Analytica. *See, e.g.*, Christopher Wylie, Written Statement to the Senate Judiciary Committee, May 16, 2018; Carole Cadwalladr, "'I made Steve Bannon's psychological warfare tool': meet the data war whistleblower," *The Guardian*, March 18, 2018.
[4295] (U) Proffer, Wylie, May 17, 2018.
[4296] (U) Bannon Tr., p. 225.
[4297] (U) *Ibid.*; SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Brittany Kaiser, August 17, 2018, pp. 24–25.
[4298] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Brittany Kaiser, August 17, 2018, pp. 21-22.

[redacted]

[redacted]

(U) Cambridge Analytica's primary investor, the Mercer family, later introduced Cambridge Analytica to the Trump Campaign. According to Wylie, a client of SCL-Defense had met with several associates of Steve Bannon, and Bannon's associates then helped connect Bannon to SCL Group. Bannon subsequently introduced Nix to Robert and Rebekah Mercer as potential investors in SCL Group.[4299]

(U) Bannon recalled that he met Nix between mid-2013 and 2014, in the context of doing investment due diligence for Robert Mercer. According to Bannon, Mercer believed that SCL Group's data analysis capabilities and relationship with Cambridge University presented an investment opportunity and set about creating a U.S. entity that would be capitalized and in part operated by SCL Group data scientists, including Nix, on a contractual basis. Bannon recalled that Nix was the chief executive officer for the U.S. entity.[4300]

(U) According to Wylie, a series of meetings between the Mercers, Bannon, and Nix preceded the eventual financial backing by the Mercers. Although Robert Mercer wanted to invest directly in SCL Group, his legal counsel advised that his investment should entail a U.S. entity.[4301] This advice precipitated the creation of Cambridge Analytica. Cambridge Analytica was established with an initial $15 million investment by Mercer, who owned a corresponding 90 percent ownership share of the company. The remaining 10 percent ownership share belonged to SCL-Elections, in exchange for "assignment and deposit general" of SCL-Elections intellectual property.[4302]

(U) According to Wylie, Robert Mercer served as president of Cambridge Analytica, while Bannon was the vice-president, Jennifer Mercer was the treasurer, and Nix was named to the company's board.[4303] Wylie indicated that Cambridge Analytica's foundational arrangement was designed to enable Cambridge Analytica's use of SCL Group intellectual property without making Cambridge Analytica part of SCL Group. Moreover, this arrangement included an exclusive provision contract whereby all of Cambridge Analytica's clientele would be serviced by SCL-Elections. Cambridge Analytica did not have any employees of its own, pursuant to this arrangement. Cambridge Analytica's work was performed by employees of SCL-Elections,

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[4299] (U) Proffer, Wylie, May 17, 2018.
[4300] (U) Bannon Tr., p. 239.
[4301] (U) Proffer, Wylie, May 17, 2018.
[4302] (U) *Ibid.*
[4303] (U) *Ibid.* As of May 17, 2018, Rebekah and Jennifer Mercer signed a written consent as the board members of Cambridge Analytica, LLC. *See* Voluntary Petition for Non-Individuals Filing for Bankruptcy, *In re: Cambridge Analytica LLC*, Case No. 18-11500-shl (Bankr. S.D.N.Y May 17, 2018); A related May 31, 2018 Statement of Financial Affairs for Cambridge Analytica LLC lists Alexander Nix as part of the Board of Managers and CEO, Rebekah Mercer as part of the Board of Managers and Vice President, and Jennifer Mercer as part of the Board of Managers, with all three holding their respective positions from March 6, 2014 through January 23, 2018. *See* Statement of Financial Affairs for Cambridge Analytica, Case No. 18-11500-shl (Bankr. S.D.N.Y. May 31, 2018).

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contractors, or through a company retained by Cambridge Analytica that hired subcontractors.[4304]

(U) The precise character of Cambridge Analytica's workforce vis-à-vis SCL Group was the subject of conflicting statements by witnesses to the Committee, and a matter not ultimately resolved in the course of the Committee's investigation.[4305] According to Steve Bannon, Cambridge Analytica was "totally independent" of SCL Group. Bannon told the Committee that Cambridge Analytica had its own workforce separate and apart from SCL Group's employees, and characterized the assertion that Cambridge Analytica employees essentially worked for SCL Group as "inaccurate." Bannon added that the appearance of Cambridge Analytica and SCL Group having the same workforce was a byproduct of Nix and some of the Cambridge Analytica data scientists episodically doing work for both companies.[4306] However, according to Brittany Kaiser, who opened the first U.S.-based Cambridge Analytica office in Alexandria, Virginia, in October 2015, at least initially, Cambridge Analytica and SCL Group "were one and the same company."[4307] Kaiser explained that as Cambridge Analytica grew, "some people were only Cambridge Analytica or only what we called 'the rest of the world' . . . staff. But when I joined there were maybe twelve or fifteen full-time staff members and everybody worked on everything."[4308] At its largest, the company comprised 130 employees. At the height of its operations in the United States, there were approximately forty people working for Cambridge Analytica in New York City, and about another twenty in Washington, D.C.[4309]

[4304] **(U)** Proffer, Wylie, May 17, 2018.

[4305] **(U)** The Committee is aware of at least two U.S. entities established under SCL Group—Cambridge Analytica LLC and SCL USA, Inc.—based on a review of court documents filed in 2018. *See* Voluntary Petition for Non-Individuals Filing for Bankruptcy, *In re: Cambridge Analytica LLC*, Case No. 18-11500-shl (Bankr. S.D.N.Y May 17, 2018). These two entities were part of a complex arrangement between Cambridge Analytica, SCL Group and its related entities, and other entities operating in the United States, the United Kingdom, and elsewhere. The Committee does not purport to have fully uncovered the extent of the corporate structure. Furthermore, the Committee's witnesses attributed activities to a single entity (e.g., "Cambridge Analytica") that may have in fact been undertaken by several entities within the complex arrangement or may have been ambiguous, such as Cambridge Analytica, LLC in the United States or Cambridge Analytica, Ltd. in the United Kingdom. The Committee has attempted to substantiate and/or appropriately attribute the facts within the limitations of evidence it gathered.

[4306] **(U)** Bannon Tr., pp. 221–231.

[4307] **(U)** Kaiser Tr., pp. 11–12.

[4308] **(U)** *Ibid.* Kaiser indicated that she was introduced to Nix in approximately 2013, and began working for Nix and Cambridge Analytica in late 2014. Kaiser assumed a permanent position with Cambridge Analytica in February 2015, which she held until January 31, 2018. Kaiser further stated that she worked on both political and commercial projects during her time with Cambridge Analytica. *See ibid.*, pp. 5–12

[4309] **(U)** *Ibid.*, pp. 82–86. Kaiser did not differentiate between Cambridge Analytica and SCL Group, and she further estimated that approximately sixty people worked in the London office, which she referred to as "Headquarters." She also clarified that the New York office was primarily concentrated on commercial issues, whereas the Washington, D.C. office primarily concentrated on political issues.

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(U) Bannon described his own role with Cambridge Analytica as that of a "typical investment banker," conducting due diligence on behalf of principal investor Robert Mercer and taking a board position from which capitalization decisions could be overseen.[4310] Bannon later introduced the Trump Campaign to Cambridge Analytica as a potential client.[4311]

ii. (U) International Operations of Cambridge Analytica and SCL

(U) Both SCL and Cambridge Analytica personnel were engaged in election-related work around the globe. Kaiser indicated that at the time of her employment by Cambridge Analytica, SCL Group was running "between eight to ten national elections every year for prime minister and president, all around the world." According to Kaiser, she offered Cambridge Analytica's services to prospective clients in approximately 30 different countries, and worked on "seven to eight national projects" during her tenure across "Africa, Asia, and Latin America."[4312]

(U) Cambridge Analytica and SCL engaged in a variety of efforts to influence the outcomes of elections abroad.[4313] According to Wylie, he was hired by SCL Group to be director of research, based in part on his previous experience working on political campaigns and in developing micro-targeting strategies.[4314] Wylie alleged that Cambridge Analytica engaged in the "procuring [of] hacked material for the benefit of its clients," the use of "specialized technologies and intel gathering services from former members of Israeli and Russian state security services," and the management of information operations on behalf of pro-Russian parties in Eastern Europe and the Baltics.[4315] Kaiser stated that Cambridge Analytica had an office based in Skopje, Macedonia, from which political projects targeted at Macedonia as well as other regional projects were run.[4316] Kaiser described some of Cambridge Analytica's work in Eastern Europe prior to her joining the company, including a program that sought to test the effectiveness of Russian propaganda, ostensibly in order to develop counter-propaganda strategies.[4317]

[4310] (U) Bannon Tr., pp. 223–231.
[4311] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 268–270.
[4312] (U) Kaiser Tr., pp. 9–10. After November 2016, commercial clientele became the chief focus of Cambridge Analytica's business. According to Kaiser "[c]ommercial clients from all around the world were calling to figure out how they could use us for their advertising, and that became the core income of the company." *Ibid.*, pp. 24–25.
[4313] (U) An investigations committee of the U.K. House of Commons revealed the considerable scope and opaque nature of this work. *See* U.K. House of Commons, Digital, Culture, Media and Sport Committee, "Disinformation and 'fake news': Final Report," February 14, 2019.
[4314] (U) Proffer, Wylie, May 17, 2018.
[4315] (U) *Ibid.*
[4316] (U) Kaiser Tr., p. 127.
[4317] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 124–125.

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(U) According to Wylie, in spring 2014, Steve Bannon approved proceeding with Cambridge Analytica-sponsored focus groups concerning Vladimir Putin and Russian expansionism, preparatory to the development of a predictive response model. Wylie also indicated that Mr. Bannon and Konstantin Kilimnik, a Ukrainian political operative with established ties to a Russian intelligence service and a protracted working relationship with Paul Manafort, were two of three individuals likely responsible for this idea.[4318] Wylie added that of the two hundred predictive response models Cambridge Analytica was developing in the United States, Vladimir Putin was the only world leader addressed, and Russian expansionism was the only foreign topic contemplated.[4319]

(U) Sam Patten, a U.S.-based foreign political consultant, worked for Cambridge Analytica and SCL in at least Nigeria,[4320] Mexico,[4321] Kosovo,[4322] and the Czech Republic.[4323] Patten had met Nix through Anna Miller, a mutual friend, in 2014, and was subsequently hired by Nix to do work on projects in the United States, before working abroad as a contract employee for the company.[4324] Bannon indicated he had no personal knowledge of Patten's work as an employee or contractor of Cambridge Analytica or SCL and that he further had never worked on any projects with Patten.[4325]

iii. (U) Aleksander Kogan

[4318] (U) Kenneth P. Vogel and Andrew E. Kramer, "Russian Spy or Hustling Political Operative? The Enigmatic Figure at the Heart of Mueller's Inquiry," *The New York Times,* February 23, 2019.
[4319] (U) Proffer, Wylie, May 17, 2018.
[4320] (U) Kaiser Tr., pp. 67-68, Patten Tr., p. 30. Kaiser told the Committee that while Patten ran the Nigeria-based campaign, Cambridge Analytica may have assisted the client retain former Israeli Mossad agents, working in a private capacity, to conduct opposition research against the client's political opponent. Kaiser Tr., pp. 67–68.
[4321] (U) FBI, FD-302, Patten 5/22/2018; Kaiser Tr., p. 203. Patten told the FBI that after an initial visit to his home by what Patten believed to be FBI agents, he deleted emails, some of which pertained to work he had performed for Cambridge Analytica in Mexico because he had been told that his work there was "off the books." FBI, FD-302, Patten 5/22/2018.
[4322] (U) Patten Tr., pp. 30, 34. Patten told the Committee the nature of the work in Kosovo was to support the Liberal Party in the parliamentary elections that occurred in the spring of 2017.
[4323] [redacted] *Ibid.*, pp. 29–38. Some of Patten's other foreign work had significant ties with other individuals connected to the Committee's investigation, primarily through Konstantin Kilimnik. Patten told the Committee that, to his knowledge, "there's no connection" between Kilimnik and Cambridge Analytica. *Ibid.*, p. 38. [redacted]
[4324] (U) Patten Tr., pp. 29–32.
[4325] (U) Bannon Tr., pp. 253–256.

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(U) Aleksander Kogan is a social psychologist who began working at Cambridge University in 2012 as a research associate and university lecturer.[4326] In early 2013, Kogan began collaborating with Facebook on studies designed to elicit information on human connection and the expression of emotion. According to Kogan, to further these studies, Facebook provided him with several macro-level datasets concerning friendship connections and emoticon usage. In the context of this collaboration with Facebook, Kogan created a Facebook app named the "CPW Lab App," which was designed to collect individual Facebook users' data in order to analyze it in conjunction with the datasets previously provided by Facebook.[4327]

(U) According to Kogan, he was introduced to Christopher Wylie through a mutual connection in 2014. Wylie, acting on behalf of SCL Group, asked Kogan to provide "survey-consulting services," to include collection of Facebook data and the generation of personality profiles. Kogan agreed to undertake the work and to do so, registered a company, Global Science Research, and repurposed the CPW Lab App under a new billing—the "GSR App." The GSR App was intended to collect self-provided user data from survey responses, and additional information from the Facebook "friends" of survey participants, whose privacy settings allowed the App to access their information. The GSR App was eventually revised and released as an interactive personality quiz named "This is Your Digital Life." According to Kogan, the GSR App ultimately collected approximately 30 million individual personality profiles, which were transferred to SCL Group. Kogan has indicated that he is unaware of any evidence that would support the contention that the Trump Campaign used this data to micro-target voters.[4328]

(U) Wylie described Kogan's work as consisting of research projects undertaken in Russia. According to Wylie, the Russian government sponsored some of Kogan's research, and Kogan traveled to Russia in this context to deliver presentations on the work he was doing at Cambridge Analytica, unbeknownst to his colleagues.[4329] A March 15, 2014, email from SCL Group employee Marcus Beltran to Nix, Wylie, and Kieran Ward referenced "the interesting work Alex Kogan has been doing for the Russians," in relation to its compatibility with "predictive crime-based CRM [customer relationship management]" and "criminal psychographic profiling" analytics being applied elsewhere.[4330]

(U) According to Bannon, he first met Kogan in 2013 or 2014 in the context of a presentation on SCL Group's technical capabilities. Bannon indicated that he had no awareness

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[4326] (U) Testimony of Dr. Aleksandr Kogan before the United States Senate, Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation Subcommittee on Consumer Protection, Product Safety, Insurance, and Data Security, June 19, 2018.
[4327] (U) *Ibid.*
[4328] (U) *Ibid.* Kogan's written testimony states that data collected from the "This Is Your Digital Life" application was not transferred to SCL.
[4329] (U) Proffer, Wylie, May 17, 2018.
[4330] (U) Email, Beltran to Nix, Ward, and Wylie, March 15, 2014 (WYL001009).

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of work Kogan had ever performed for the Russian government. According to Bannon, while Kogan was an employee of SCL Group, Kogan performed services under contract on Cambridge Analytica's behalf.[4331] Communications provided to the Committee indicate that at least between June and November 2014, Kogan was performing services under contract directly for SCL Group, and on at least some occasions for SCL-Elections, specifically.[4332]

(U) In addition to Kogan's acquisition of Facebook user data through the GSR App, Kaiser stated that Cambridge Analytica obtained data from at least two other applications on the Facebook platform: specifically, the "Music Walrus" and "The Sex Compass" applications.[4333]

iv. (U) Cambridge Analytica and Lukoil

(U) According to Wylie, from spring 2014 through 2015 Cambridge Analytica representatives were meeting with representatives of Lukoil, a Russian multinational corporation headquartered in Moscow and the second largest company in Russia.[4334] The publicly stated reason for the meetings was the potential design of a Lukoil customer loyalty card to be used in Turkey. Wylie indicated to the Committee that Nix's presentations, however, entailed discussion of rumor and disinformation campaigns and undermining confidence in institutions.[4335] Kaiser, however, told the Committee that Cambridge Analytica engaged Lukoil for a prospective contract that would entail using the oil company's data to create "customer experience programs" for an application that would be used in conjunction with Lukoil's gas stations in Turkey. In the context of these discussions, Kaiser was told the data could also be useful for political activities in Turkey, since Cambridge Analytica sought both political and commercial work simultaneously in most countries.[4336] Limited email records suggest that the project would initially entail modeling Lukoil's "loyalty data" to identify new customers and "create bespoke psychographic messaging for existing customers."[4337] Kaiser furnished a February 2015 presentation focusing on customer retention that SCL-Commercial prepared for Lukoil.[4338] Both Wylie and Kaiser did not believe a contract ever resulted from these discussions.[4339]

[4331] (U) Bannon Tr., pp. 245–248.
[4332] (U) Email, Nix to Rust and Cheffins, June 25, 2014 (WYL000282–WYL000285).
[4333] (U) Kaiser Tr., p. 99.
[4334] (U) Proffer, Wylie, May 17, 2018. In 2014, the Obama Administration implemented economic sanctions against Russia in response to the occupation of Crimea. Lukoil was added as a named entity to the Sectoral Sanctions Identifications List maintained by the Department of the Treasury's Office of Foreign Asset Control on September 12, 2014.
[4335] (U) Proffer, Wylie, May 17, 2018.
[4336] (U) Kaiser Tr., pp. 66-67, 121–123.
[4337] (U) Email, Nix to Wylie, July 17, 2014 (WYL 001065–WYL 001066).
[4338] (U) SCL Commercial Presentation for Lukoil, February 18, 2015 (KAISER_LK01–KAISER_LK26).
[4339] (U) Kaiser Tr., pp. 66–67; Proffer, Wylie, May 17, 2018.

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(U) In May 2018 testimony to the Senate Judiciary Committee, Christopher Wylie stated that "Lukoil has formal information sharing agreements with the Russian Federal Security Service ('FSB') and is known to conduct intelligence gathering on behalf of the FSB."[4340] Although the scope and nature of the work Cambridge Analytica attempted to pursue with Lukoil is unclear, the Committee did not independently corroborate allegations that Lukoil intended to use Cambridge Analytica to impact elections. However, the Committee is concerned about the role Lukoil may play in effecting Russia's efforts to interfere in foreign elections generally.[4341]

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The Moldovan election was ultimately won by pro-Russian candidate Igor Dodon, whose campaign platform centered largely on pursuing closer ties with Russia in preference over relations with the European Union.[4345]

v. (U) Cambridge Analytica's U.S. Operations

(U) According to Wylie, Cambridge Analytica aspired to use data-driven models for social change by identifying the subsets of a given population susceptible to particular messaging. Rather than focusing on the core population segment at the center of an issue, Cambridge Analytica's work was predicated on changing the minds of the 5 percent of the population on the fringes of that issue, on the rationale that 5 percent can be determinative of

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[4340] (U) Wylie, Written Statement to the Senate Judiciary Committee, May 16, 2018.

[4341] (U) Carole Cadwalladr and Emma Graham-Harrison, "Cambridge Analytica: links to Moscow oil firm and St Petersburg university," The Guardian, March 17, 2018.

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[4345] (U) Alexander Tanas and Alessandra Prentice, "Pro-Russian candidate triumphs in Moldova presidential race," *Reuters*, November 13, 2016.

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most voting outcomes.[4346] Wylie outlined for the Committee the active, hands-on role Bannon and Robert Mercer played in co-founding the company in order to compete for political clients in the United States. Wylie suggested that Bannon engaged SCL Group and became Vice President of Cambridge Analytica in order to "build an arsenal of informational weapons [that] he could deploy on the American population."[4347]

(U) According to Kaiser, almost every client meeting she had during her time at Cambridge Analytica that involved a political figure was preceded by an introduction by Bannon, Rebekah Mercer, or Kellyanne Conway—an advisor to the Mercers at the time. According to Kaiser, Conway was very involved in negotiating Cambridge Analytica's transition from working for the Cruz Campaign to supporting the Trump Campaign, prior to Ted Cruz dropping out of the race.[4348]

(U) Kaiser described the data sets purchased and licensed by Cambridge Analytica as "comprehensive" and comprising anybody in the United States over the age of 18 with a financial history: "[T]he database was built as a base off of the Experian credit file, and then on top of that was layered national data sets from Infogroup, Magellan, Acxiom, Label & Lists. So it would cover basically anybody that was of age and had any sort of commercial activity."[4349] According to Kaiser, Cambridge Analytica attempted to purchase the Facebook group "For America," which was predicated on dissemination and sharing of politically conservative content, that Kaiser characterized as "the largest political group on Facebook." Explaining the commercial appeal of this Facebook group, Kaiser said it reached as many as 30 million people per day at the height of its activity.[4350]

(U) Kaiser told the Committee that Nix cited lax personal data protections as a reason to pursue business opportunities in the United States. As Kaiser described the vulnerability of personal data in the United States to unwitting collection, "[i]n the United States, we're by default opted in just by being in this country. So data can be collected and held and monetized and modeled without the opt-in of individuals, which allows you to do almost anything that you want, legally . . . he was wanting to build a data science company that was able to undertake large-scale data collection and modeling before the laws changed."[4351]

vi. (U) Cambridge Analytica and the Trump Campaign

[4346] (U) Proffer, Wylie, May 17, 2018.
[4347] (U) *Ibid.*
[4348] (U) Kaiser Tr., pp. 40–43.
[4349] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 101–102.
[4350] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 118.
[4351] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 51–52.

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(U) Throughout the Committee's investigation, testifying witnesses associated with the Trump Campaign consistently minimized the role that Cambridge Analytica played in the execution of the campaign. Nevertheless, the testimony of witnesses not attached to the Trump Campaign and materials produced to the Committee suggest that Cambridge Analytica's data scientists and messaging specialists were intimately tied to the Trump Campaign effort.

(U) According to Kaiser, discussion about engaging the Trump Campaign with a commercial offer began at Cambridge Analytica in May 2015, with the suggestion that Nix meet with Corey Lewandowski. Kaiser indicated that Bannon had been advocating for a meeting between Cambridge Analytica and members of what would become the Trump Campaign, prior to the announcement of Trump's candidacy. An actual meeting related to Cambridge Analytica's possible work for the Trump Campaign did not occur until September 2015, when Nix and Kaiser met with Bannon in Washington, D.C. According to Kaiser, then-candidate Trump called Bannon during the meeting, and instructed Bannon to have Nix and Kaiser come to New York City to meet with Lewandowski.[4352] A meeting took place the following day, and while "eight or ten weeks" of contract negotiations followed, Cambridge Analytica's offer to run a fundraising campaign for the Trump Campaign never materialized.[4353] Bannon indicated that he had no recollection of the September 2015 phone call with Donald Trump that Kaiser described.[4354]

(U) Cambridge Analytica proposed offers of work to almost every one of the 2016 Republican presidential primary campaigns, including the campaigns of Rick Perry, Carly Fiorina, Chris Christie, Ben Carson, Jeb Bush, and Scott Walker.[4355] During their respective 2016 presidential campaigns, Carson spent over $430,000 for Cambridge Analytica's services, while Cruz spent approximately $5.8 million.[4356] Within a week of Ted Cruz dropping out of the race for the Republican nomination, all Cambridge Analytica employees working on the Cruz Campaign began transitioning over to work on the Trump Campaign.[4357]

(U) Kaiser stated to the Committee that Cambridge Analytica was ultimately successful in contracting work with the Trump Campaign in part because some competitor data firms were

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[4352] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 144-145. Kaiser told the Committee that the meeting with Lewandowski needed to occur early in the morning, as Lewandowski would be accompanying Trump to his appearance at a rally in Washington, D.C. against the nuclear deal with Iran. *See ibid.*, p. 145. Trump participated in a rally against the Iran nuclear deal on September 9, 2015. *See* Katie Zezima, "Donald Trump, Ted Cruz headline Capitol rally against Iran nuclear deal," *The Washington Post*, September 9, 2015.

[4353] (U) Kaiser Tr., pp. 145–146.

[4354] (U) Bannon Tr., p. 268.

[4355] (U) Kaiser Tr., pp. 152–153.

[4356] (U) Maegan Vazquez and Paul Murphy, "Trump isn't the only Republican who gave Cambridge Analytica big bucks," *CNN*, March 21, 2018.

[4357] (U) Kaiser Tr., pp. 154–156.

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unwilling to work with the Trump Campaign.[4358] According to Rick Gates, a close business associate of Paul Manafort and eventual deputy chairman for the Trump Campaign, the Campaign made a determination shortly after the Republican National Convention to use Cambridge Analytica's services, although views on using Cambridge Analytica varied.[4359] The Republican National Committee (RNC) did not want to use the company and Brad Parscale, a digital media strategist who had been working with the Trump Organization since 2011 and served as digital director for the Trump Campaign was reluctant to bring a new company into the Campaign's operations.[4360] However, according to Gates, Kushner wanted to use Cambridge Analytica and ultimately negotiated a package of services, with payment slated to be delivered at the end of the campaign.[4361] Kushner told the Committee that the Mercers aggressively advocated for the Trump Campaign's use of Cambridge Analytica, and in order to secure the Mercers' support for then-candidate Trump, the Campaign engaged with Cambridge Analytica.[4362]

(U) Cambridge Analytica began work under contract with the Trump Campaign shortly after Trump became the Republican Party's nominee.[4363] Kaiser's initial work for the Trump Campaign entailed helping to build Project Alamo, as the Trump Campaign's digital operation in San Antonio, Texas, came to be known, including the database and the qualitative and quantitative research programs that underwrote the project. This involved working with Conway to continuously develop, administer, and refine nationwide polling models.[4364]

(U) Parscale indicated that he made the decision to hire Cambridge Analytica to work for the Trump Campaign in June 2016, after receiving approval from Paul Manafort and Jared Kushner. Parscale characterized Cambridge Analytica's work for the Trump Campaign as "[m]ainly helping us raise donations, fundraising." Parscale also described Cambridge Analytica's work supporting the Trump Campaign's media and advertising purchases.[4365] According to Parscale, Cambridge Analytica's team in San Antonio began with a presence of three employees, and eventually expanded to at least 12 by the end of the campaign.[4366]

[4358] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 156–159.
[4359] (U) FBI, FD-302, Gates 10/29/2018.
[4360] (U) FBI, FD-302, Gates 10/29/2018; "Brad Parscale: Trump names 2020 election campaign chief," *BBC*, February 27, 2018.
[4361] (U) FBI, FD-302, Gates 10/29/2018.
[4362] (U) Kushner Tr. II, pp. 84–85.
[4363] (U) *Ibid.*; Kaiser Tr., p. 159. Filings indicate payments were made later. *See* Federal Election Commission, Disbursements, Donald J. Trump for President, Inc. to Cambridge Analytica, LLC, 2015–2016 (indicating first disbursement of July 29, 2016). According to FEC filings, payments continued through December 12, 2016, totaling $5,912,500 for "Data Management" and "Data Management Services."
[4364] (U) Kaiser Tr., pp. 161–164.
[4365] (U) Parscale Tr., pp. 55–62.
[4366] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 60.

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(U) Concerning Nix, Parscale indicated that he hired Cambridge Analytica to support the Trump Campaign "because I met Matt Oczkowski, who was the head of products for them," despite the fact that Parscale "didn't like Alexander Nix. I didn't like anything about him. I told him to his face."[4367] Kushner told the Committee that although he had met Nix "a few times," he had very little interaction with the Cambridge Analytica employees working in support of the Trump Campaign.[4368]

(U) Parscale told the Committee that Cambridge Analytica performed work in support of the Trump Campaign's data efforts.[4369] Parscale also told the Committee that he declined Cambridge Analytica's offer to use the company's "psychographic profiling" services.[4370] However, the Committee obtained documents in the course of its investigation that suggest Cambridge Analytica's data may have been used in support of the Trump Campaign, and the Campaign may have leveraged Cambridge Analytica's "psychographic analysis" capabilities. A presentation slide titled "Data Flow and Supported Programs" (see first image below) depicts bidirectional data flow from the Trump Campaign to Cambridge Analytica, with an intermediate step involving data held by the Republican National Committee.[4371] Additionally, the Cambridge Analytica node of the data flow depiction is titled "Digital Media Psychographic Analysis," and is connected directly to the Trump Campaign node by a directional arrow titled "Reporting," at least suggesting that the Trump Campaign was receiving the results of Cambridge Analytica's analysis.[4372] A separate slide titled "Data Process Flow," (see second image below) shows a bidirectional arrow from Cambridge Analytica's "Psychographic Analysis" to both the Republican National Committee's "GOP Data Center" and the Trump Campaign's "ALAMO."[4373]

[4367] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 53.
[4368] (U) Kushner Tr., pp. 12–13.
[4369] (U) Parscale Tr., pp. 57-58.
[4370] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 60–61.
[4371] (U) Trump Data Team Presentation, August 22, 2016 (FLYNN_SSCI_00011770).
[4372] (U) *Ibid.*
[4373] (U) *Ibid.* (FLYNN_SSCI_00011773).

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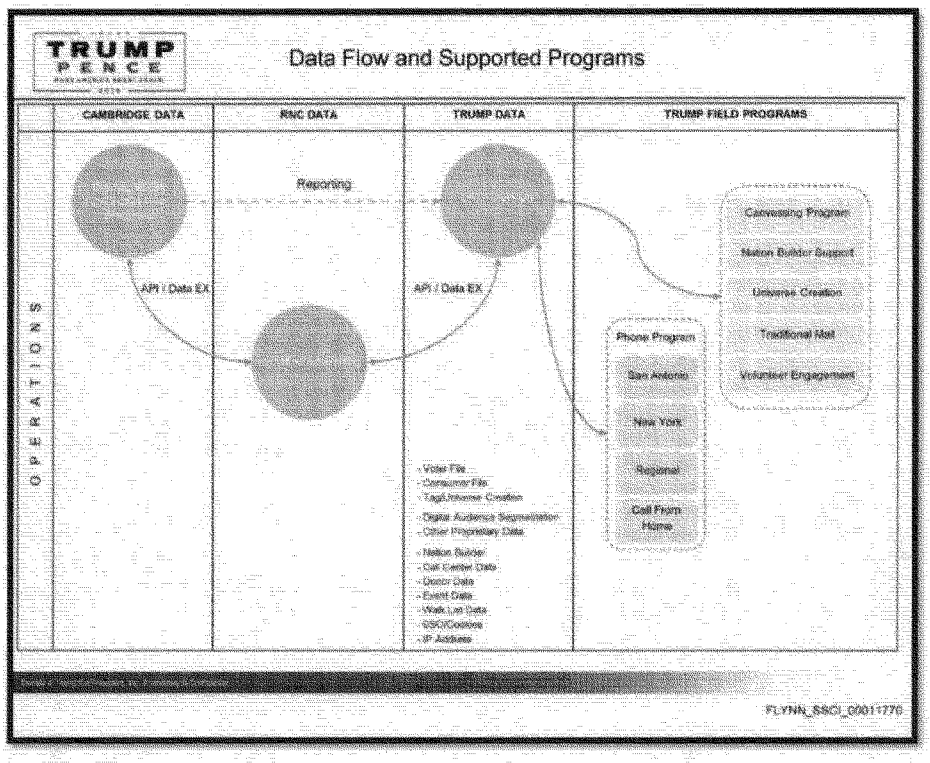

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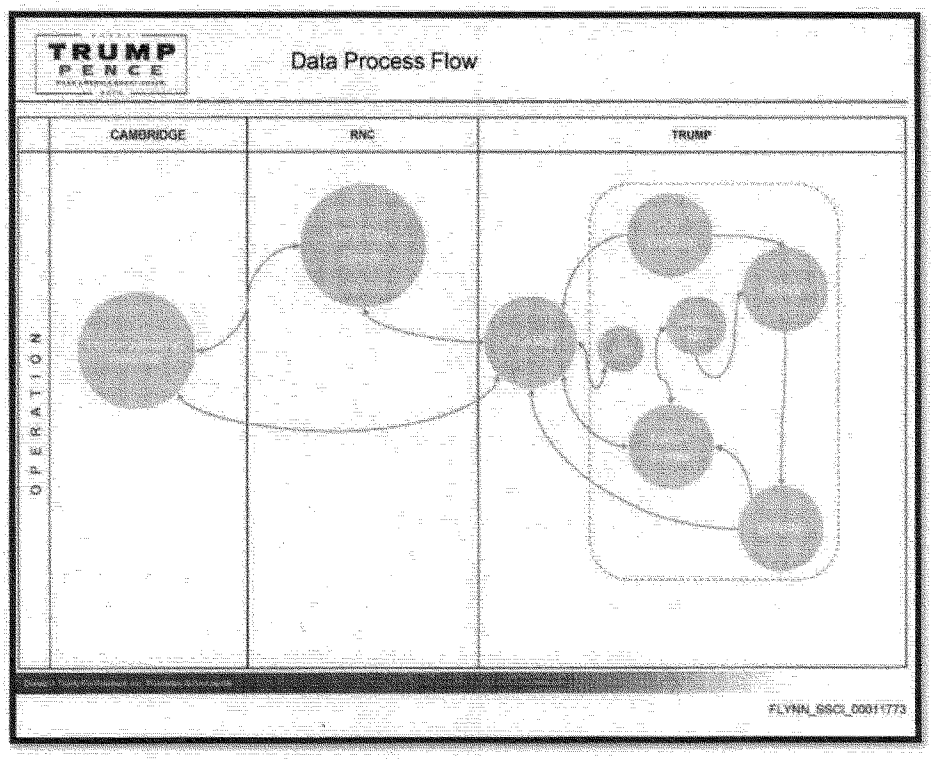

(U) Gates also told the FBI that Cambridge Analytica employees had made representations to him that that the company was based in the U.S., with operations that entailed multiple U.S. components. Gates later learned and was concerned that Trump Campaign data was transmitted to and analyzed in the United Kingdom, component to Cambridge Analytica's services.[4374]

(U) In testimony to the Committee, however, Parscale stated he chose not to use Cambridge Analytica's data during the campaign, opting rather to use Republican National Committee data in the alternative because it was "more accurate" and performed better in field

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[4374] (U) FBI, FD-302, Gates 10/29/2018. Gates recalled this becoming an issue "because of the time difference between the UK [United Kingdom] and the East Coast." *See ibid.*

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testing.[4375] Parscale described Cambridge Analytica's media and advertisement support to the Trump Campaign as consisting of a separate team based in San Antonio, Texas. This team worked in connection with the Data Trust database, according to Parscale.[4376] The work of this team consisted chiefly of creating visualization tools that communicated data trends relative to the electorate, which enabled more effective deployment of then-candidate Trump to election events.[4377] According to Parscale, Cambridge Analytica's work for the Trump Campaign entailed access to the Campaign's data stores and those of the Republican National Committee, but never involved Cambridge Analytica bringing in new data.[4378]

(U) According to Kaiser, the representations of Cambridge Analytica employees working on Project Alamo to her indicated that data owned by Cambridge Analytica played no part in the work done for the Trump Campaign; to her knowledge, "Project Alamo was built completely from scratch." Kaiser acknowledged this was atypical, in that "every other project" Cambridge Analytica worked on was built off a copy of the company's main database. Kaiser indicated that the data for Project Alamo came from the Republican National Committee's Data Trust database and other data sets that were purchased and licensed to be added to the Data Trust data.[4379]

vii. (U) Cambridge Analytica and WikiLeaks

(U) According to open source information, during the 2016 campaign, Nix emailed Julian Assange, the ostensible head of WikiLeaks, about the possible release of Hillary Clinton's 33,000 deleted emails.[4380] In particular, the reports indicated that Nix sought a searchable database of emails related to Clinton.[4381] In October 2017, Assange publicly confirmed "an approach by Cambridge Analytica" and claimed to have rejected it.[4382]

(U) The Committee obtained no additional information related to this alleged outreach. Numerous individuals affiliated with the Trump Campaign, including those likely to have been

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[4375] (U) Parscale Tr., pp. 59–60.
[4376] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 57.
[4377] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 57–58.
[4378] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 58.
[4379] (U) Kaiser Tr., pp. 163–164.
[4380] (U) Betsy Swan, "Trump Data Guru Alexander Nix: I Tried To Team Up With Julian Assange," *The Daily Beast*, October 25, 2017.
[4381] (U) Kara Scannell, Dana Bash, and Marshall Cohen, "Trump campaign analytics company contacted WikiLeaks about Clinton emails," *CNN*, October 25, 2017.
[4382] (U) Betsy Swan, "Trump Data Guru Alexander Nix: I Tried To Team Up With Julian Assange," *The Daily Beast*, October 25, 2017. Following initial publication, the article added: "[A]fter publication, Assange provided this statement to *The Daily Beast*: 'We can confirm an approach by Cambridge Analytica and can confirm that it was rejected by WikiLeaks.'"

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closest to the outreach such as Bannon, indicated that they had no prior awareness of Nix's communication with WikiLeaks.[4383]

viii. (U) Declaration of Bankruptcy

(U) On May 17, 2018, "Cambridge Analytica LLC a/k/a Cambridge Analytica Commercial LLC a/k/a Cambridge Analytica Political LLC a/k/a Anaxi Solutions Inc. . . . and SCL USA, Inc." filed voluntary petitions for bankruptcy relief in the United States Bankruptcy Court for the Southern District of New York.[4384]

(U) Emerdata was created as a new holding company for the purposes of owning the assets of Cambridge Analytica and SCL Group.[4385] Media reporting indicates that upon Emerdata's August 2017 incorporation, SCL Group's chairman, Julian Wheatland, and SCL's chief data officer, Alexander Tayler, were listed as the company's original owners.[4386] On March 7, 2018, Firecrest Technologies Limited, a subsidiary of Emerdata, was incorporated. Alexander Nix was briefly identified as the director of Firecrest Technologies Limited, before being replaced by Alexander Tayler.[4387] On March 16, 2018, Jennifer and Rebekah Mercer joined Emerdata as directors. Nix also served as a director for Emerdata from January 23, 2018 to March 28, 2018. Emerdata characterizes its business as "[d]ata processing, hosting, and related activities," but little is known about the actual activities of the company.[4388]

3. (U) Psy Group

(U) Psy Group, which was in bankruptcy proceedings in Israel as of December 2018, was an intelligence company specializing in social media manipulation and on-line reputation and perception management.[4389] Psy Group representatives engaged with Trump Campaign senior officials in 2016 for a contract to perform work on behalf of the Campaign.[4390] These

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[4383] (U) Bannon Tr., pp. 284–285; Parscale Tr., p. 66. The Committee is aware of other efforts to obtain Clinton emails, *see infra* Vol. 5, Sec. III.B and Vol. 5, Sec. III.L.1.
[4384] (U) Letter, Lamonica to Burr and Warner, February 15, 2019.
[4385] (U) Kaiser Tr., pp. 44-45.
[4386] (U) Wendy Siegelman, "Cambridge Analytica is dead – but its obscure network is alive and well," *The Guardian,* May 5, 2018.
[4387] (U) U.K. Government Companies House Listing, "Firecrest Technologies Limited," Company Number 11238956
[4388] (U) U.K. Government Companies House Listing, "Emerdata Limited," Company Number 10911848; Wendy Siegelman, "Cambridge Analytica is dead – but its obscure network is alive and well," *The Guardian,* May 5, 2018.
[4389] (U) Psy Group presentation, "Reality is a Matter of Perception" (PSY000352–PSY000369).
[4390] (U) Toi Staff, "Multiple Trump campaign staffers 'reached out' to Israel firm under FBI scrutiny," *The Times of Israel,* December 1, 2018.

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engagements, which included multiple proposals and presentations, purportedly never materialized into any Campaign work.

i. (U) Psy Group's Founding and Structure

(U) Psy Group was founded in Israel on December 22, 2014, as a private intelligence firm specializing in collection and analysis of information, as well as online reputation management and targeted influence.[4391] Joel Zamel, an Australian living in Israel, told the Committee that he founded Psy Group with Daniel Green and Elad Schaffer.[4392] Zamel indicated that Psy Group comprised two entities: a parent company named IOCO Ltd. in Cypress and a subsidiary company based in Israel named Invop Ltd.[4393] According to Zamel, he was a majority shareholder in Psy Group, while Green and Schaffer were minority shareholders.[4394] Zamel said IOCO was responsible for business development, contracting, and marketing, while the Israel-based Invop, where the majority of Psy Group employees were located, performed in an operational capacity.[4395]

(U) Royi Burstien, an Israeli citizen, was the chief executive officer at Psy Group. Burstien had left the Israeli military in 2014 and established I2A ("Intelligence Influence Analysis"), a private online influence and intelligence company that operated from approximately March to October 2014. Burstien was introduced to Zamel in 2014 by a mutual acquaintance, Itai Yonat. Zamel established Invop later that year, and hired Burstien as chief executive officer.[4396]

(U) Zamel described Burstien's background as including work in the intelligence field conducting influence operations. The precise nature of Burstien's work in the intelligence field

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[4391] (U) Simona Weinglass, et al., "Israeli firm under FBI scrutiny in Trump probe allegedly targeted BDS activists," *The Times of Israel,* June 6, 2018; Psy Group presentation, "Shaping Reality through Intelligence and Influence" (PSY000125–PSY000129).

[4392] (U) Zamel Tr., pp. 7–8. Zamel is also associated with Wikistrat, a crowd-sourced consulting platform that Zamel co-founded in 2009, *see* Crunchbase.com, profile of Wikistrat.

[4393] (U) Zamel Tr., pp. 8–10. The Committee does not purport to have fully uncovered the extent of the corporate structure. Furthermore, the Committee's witnesses attributed activities to a single entity (e.g., "Psy Group") that may have in fact been undertaken by several entities within the corporate arrangement or may have been ambiguous. The Committee has attempted to substantiate and/or appropriately attribute the facts within the limitations of evidence gathered.

[4394] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 11–12.

[4395] (U) *Ibid.* pp. 15–16. Although communication and records were produced to the Committee by Psy Group, Zamel "wiped" his personal devices after they were returned to him by the SCO following a search, and therefore did not himself produce records to the Committee. *Ibid.*, pp. 98–101. Burstien estimated Zamel's ownership stake in IOCO Ltd. at 90 percent. Attorney Proffer, Burstien, April 12, 2019.

[4396] (U) Attorney Proffer, Burstien, April 12, 2019.

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is not known to the Committee.[4397] Burstien primarily communicated with Zamel using the encrypted application Wickr, communications on which automatically disappear after a period of time, and therefore were not produced to the Committee.[4398]

(U) Zamel described Invop's suite of client services as including intelligence gathering and influence campaigns that use avatars, websites, blogs, and other internet vehicles to target specific online audiences.[4399]

ii. (U) Psy Group Operations

(U) The Committee reviewed several documents that described the suite of services offered by Psy Group. One corporate overview, entitled "Shaping Reality through Intelligence and Influence, sent from Psy Group to American international political consultant George Birnbaum in May 2016, highlighted Psy Group's capabilities in "influence" and "intelligence."[4400]

- (U) Psy Group's "Influence+" suite of services involved advertising, media, and public relations "to reach any target audience, including decision makers, influencers and the general public, to help deliver key messages, sway opinion and help highlight or tone down issues of relevance."[4401]

- (U) Under a section titled "Influence Campaigns," Psy Group's capability to conduct influence activities was described as "unique, actionable intelligence that is leveraged through influence activities. By utilizing our covert capabilities in the campaign, we are able to reach each target audience credibly and effectively, including through the utilization of objective, trusted parties or proxies."[4402]

- (U) Psy Group's "[i]ntelligence [o]ffering" included a "multi-level approach to intelligence collection" that combined open source research, cyber operations including social engineering and "honeypots . . . to extract required information from the right sources," and "covert techniques and capabilities in the physical world."[4403]

[4397] (U) Zamel Tr., pp. 13–14.
[4398] (U) Attorney Proffer, Burstien, April 12, 2019.
[4399] (U) Zamel Tr., p. 33.
[4400] (U) Email, Epstein to Birnbaum, May 24, 2016 (PSY000124–PSY000129) (attaching Psy Group presentation, "Shaping Reality through Intelligence and Influence").
[4401] (U) *Ibid.*
[4402] (U) *Ibid.*
[4403] (U) *Ibid.*

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(U) When asked about Psy Group's services, Zamel testified that "[t]he company had very clear boundaries . . . we don't do hacking, we don't break the law."[4404]

(U) Another set of Psy Group promotional materials advertised the company's "Influence Campaign" capability and a suite of attendant services that included "[o]nline reputation management, [o]ffline campaigns, [o]nline campaigns, '[h]oney traps,' and [d]edicated activities."[4405]

- (U) In relation to employing "individualized avatars, fake accounts, influence operations," and "amplification" of messaging through automated social media accounts, Zamel asserted to the Committee that Psy Group had the ability to conduct these activities, but "didn't do anything like that in the U.S. or in the [2016] elections."[4406]

- (U) In relation to "honey traps," Zamel explained that this entailed "building a platform, a website, or online forum to encourage discussion about certain topics. To obtain information about a target saying certain things, or having a certain agenda. To capture some information. Maybe conducting an avatar operation on that platform that's controlled by the company."[4407]

(U) Describing Psy Group's capabilities and personnel, Birnbaum explained:

> *These guys came out of the military intelligence army unit, and it's like coming out with a triple Ph.D. from M.I.T. The amount of knowledge these guys have in terms of cybersecurity, cyber-intelligence . . . they come out of a unit in which their minds in terms of understanding cybersecurity–the algorithms that they can create–it's just so beyond what you could get [with] a normal education that it's just unique . . . there are hundreds and hundreds of Israeli start-up companies that the founders are guys who came out of this unit.*[4408]

(U) Birnbaum distinguished Psy Group from Black Cube, a separate private intelligence firm founded in 2010 by former Israeli intelligence officers: Psy Group "was a technology service that you just apply an algorithm to and it works. It wasn't setting up fake companies and fake employees and sending someone with a wire into a room and videotaping them. That's

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[4404] (U) Zamel Tr., pp. 92–93.
[4405] (U) Email, Mortman to Long, Kohler, Burstien, and Elwood, March 31, 2017 (PSY000351–PSY000369).
[4406] (U) Zamel Tr., p. 83.
[4407] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 94. Traditionally, a "honey trap" refers to the use of sexual entrapment to compromise a potential source of information in intelligence operations.
[4408] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview of George Birnbaum, February 20, 2019, p. 63.

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more what Black Cube does. . . ."[4409] Zamel indicated that Psy Group never did any direct work on behalf of Black Cube, nor did Psy Group ever work as a sub-contractor to Black Cube.[4410]

[redacted] Zamel indicated that Burstien and members of his team were involved in cultivating client opportunities, often through PR firms.[4411] [redacted] Apart from Psy Group's pitches to the Trump Campaign, described below, the Committee identified three projects of note, including two involving Russian oligarchs:

- **(U) Erik Prince**: One project, alternately named "Black Jack" and "Jack Black," was intended to improve the online reputation of American businessman and co-founder of the Blackwater private security services firm, Erik Prince, presumably in response to a request from Prince. Zamel indicated that a contract for work never materialized. Zamel said that he was introduced to Erik Prince in 2016 by former CIA official Cofer Black. According to Zamel, several follow-on meetings with Prince occurred, at which Zamel and Prince discussed human rights work related to the Middle East.[4413]

- [redacted] **Oleg Deripaska**: According to Burstien, Psy Group undertook an "intelligence project" (codenamed "Project Starbucks") in probably 2015 for Oleg Deripaska involving a business dispute with a large Austrian company, possibly connected to real estate. It was unclear what specifically prompted the project, but Deripaska was "mad about it" and wanted to find derogatory information on the Austrian company to expose their unscrupulous (and purportedly "fraudulent") business practices. Deripaska hired Israeli national Walter Soriano, who subsequently put Deripaska or his unidentified representatives in touch with Psy Group. Psy Group did not find any derogatory information on the Austrian company. Burstien may have met with Deripaska once in Switzerland relating to this project. Although he was the CEO, Burstien did not

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[4409] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 126.

[4410] (U) Zamel Tr., pp. 24–26.

[4411] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 102. Another U.S.-based employee, Phil Elwood, performed business development work for Psy Group in Washington, D.C. Zamel claimed that he was not involved in the day-to-day business side of Psy Group and only heard about major projects that would be briefed to and the strategic advisory board by Burstien. *Ibid.*, pp. 18–19, 37–41. As a result, he also claimed not to be aware of the Deripaska and Rybolovlev projects at the time they occurred. *Ibid.*, pp. 31, 37.

[4412] [redacted]

[4413] (U) Zamel Tr., pp. 50–59. The Committee's efforts to interview Prince were unsuccessful, as he exercised his Fifth Amendment right against self-incrimination in electing to not appear before the Committee. Prince did submit to the Committee a personal statement as well as documents on November 22, 2017. See Letter, Prince to SSCI, November 22, 2017. Prince's statement contains conspicuous omissions and partially contradicted claims. For more information on Prince and further details inconsistencies and omissions in Prince's statements, *see infra* Vol. 5, Sec. III.K.iii.

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know the value of the contract.[4414] [redacted]

- [redacted] **Dmitri Rybolovlev**: Psy Group undertook a separate "intelligence project" in 2016 for Dmitry Rybolovlev relating to a dispute with the art dealer Yves Bouvier. Walter Soriano linked Rybolovlev with Psy Group to find derogatory information on Bouvier, possibly by suggesting that Bouvier was using his art dealing to skim money from customers. The contract value was approximately $150,000, and entailed Invop's conducting open source research on Bouvier. Burstien did not recall meeting Rybolovlev, though another Psy Group employee probably did, and stated that Soriano would have been present for that meeting.[4416] [redacted]

iii. (U) Psy Group's Engagement with the Trump Campaign: Project Rome/D-Day

(U) In the spring of 2016, Psy Group pitched an influence and intelligence project to the Trump Campaign through Rick Gates and Birnbaum. Referred to as both "Project Rome and "Project D-Day," the proposal was developed over several months, but ultimately never came to fruition, as described below.

(U) On March 23, 2016, Kory Bardash, the head of Republicans in Israel, emailed George Birnbaum and Eitan Charnoff, a project manager at Psy Group, to virtually introduce them to each other. Bardash wrote: "I have spoken to both of you about the other. Hopefully you can have a mutually beneficial chat."[4418]

(U) Separately, on March 29, 2016, Birnbaum met with Rick Gates at the Mandarin Oriental hotel in Washington, D.C., having been introduced to Gates by mutual friend Eckart

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[4414] (U) Attorney Proffer, Burstien, April 12, 2019. [redacted]

[4415] [redacted]

[4416] (U) Attorney Proffer, Burstien, April 12, 2019.

[4417] [redacted]

[4418] (U) Email, Bardash to Birnbaum and Charnoff, March 23, 2016 (PSY000005–PSY000006).

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Sager. During this meeting, Gates referenced "the challenge of the delegates" and "opposition research on Hillary Clinton" and asked Birnbaum whether there was "any Israel[i] technology that could help us with some of these goals?"[4419] Specifically, Gates asked about using technology to identify Republican delegates as either "pro-Trump, anti-Trump, or 'on the fence,'" and further, whether the last category of delegates might be influenced through social media. Gates also asked about using publicly available information to conduct opposition research against Hilary Clinton and "up to ten of her closest circle."[4420] Birnbaum indicated that this was his first and only in-person meeting with Gates.[4421]

(U) The next day, March 30, 2016, Birnbaum contacted Charnoff to discuss Psy Group conducting work for the Trump Campaign.[4422] Charnoff then sent an email to Psy Group employees Arnon Epstein, Royi Burstien, and others, outlining a business opportunity for Psy Group with the Trump Campaign. Charnoff explained that he (Charnoff) and Epstein had been in contact with "a major American campaign consultant who [had] been tasked by the [T]rump campaign." Charnoff indicated "[t]hey want us to [use] social platform analytical tools as well as our Rublik department capabilities to identify who is truly with [T]rump and who isn't and then run an influence campaign to impact their decision using avatars and creating third party assets and outreach." Charnoff closed his email noting that "[b]y the end of today they want a rough estimate of what it will cost," and that within the ensuing three days, a timeline and more exact cost estimate were required.[4423]

(U) In a follow-on email to the same recipients, Charnoff indicated that following Birnbaum's consultation with "the campaign," the prospective work for the Trump Campaign would be divided into two projects. The first project consisted of opposition research on "the female opposing candidate," and comprised "dig[ing] up dirt as well as active [information] gathering on associates." The second project was focused on U.S. state delegates voting in the Republican primary and entailed using social media analysis to index delegates as "pro [T]rump, against and unknown." Charnoff further stated that the latter two categories of delegates would be targeted in an influence campaign "to support [T]rump and not change the convention rules."[4424]

(U) In an email under the subject line "Project D-Day" sent April 1, 2016, Arnon Epstein indicated Psy Group had been authorized to "move to the planning phase of the activity,"

[4419] **(U)** The reasoning behind Gates's stated preference for "Israeli technology" is not known to the Committee. This meeting occurred at the very start of Paul Manafort's and Rick Gates's work on the Trump Campaign.
[4420] **(U)** Birnbaum Tr., pp. 25-27.
[4421] **(U)** *Ibid.*, p. 27.
[4422] **(U)** *Ibid.*, pp. 42–44.
[4423] **(U)** Email, Charnoff to Epstein, Burstien, Vesely, Fogel, and "Yossef," March 31, 2016 (PSY000008–PSY000009).
[4424] **(U)** Email, Charnoff to Epstein, Burstien, Vesely, Fogel, and "Yossef," March 31, 2016 (PSY000012).

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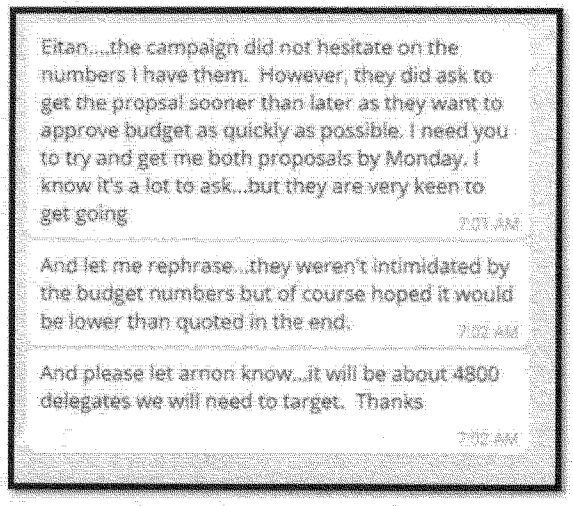
subsequent to "several conversations last night with George [Birnbaum] (the contact to D's team)." Epstein included a screenshot of his purported conversation with Birnbaum (see image below).[4425] With respect to opposition research, Epstein noted that:

> *As for the intel on the Lady and her team, he's talking about up to 10 people in her inner-inner circle. We told him an estimate of 10 people and her would be around $250K for passive work + very light active. We explained we suggest not to go heavy active at the moment because of the issues we discussed. We spun it a bit and said we are not concerned for us, but wish to prevent any blowback or flags raising pointing to him at this point.*[4426]



(U) A Psy Group project breakdown for "Project D-Day" indicated that Psy Group's efforts comprised four teams ("Team Black," "Team Rubik," "Team Blue," and "Team Red"), and contemplated the involvement of as many as 53 employees.[4427]

(U) In an email sent April 1, 2016, George Birnbaum offered guidelines to Epstein and Charnoff for drafting the proposal. Among Birnbaum's suggestions were "run intensive

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[4425] **(U)** Email, Epstein to Charnoff, Burstien, Vesely, Fogel, "Yossef," and Tzach, April 1, 2016 (PSY000013–PSY000014).
[4426] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[4427] **(U)** Psy Group "Project Budget Calculator for Project Name D-Day" (PSY000294).

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influence campaigns on the unknown delegates themselves and on the influencers of the delegates," and "[f]or the Clinton Proposal . . . run an intensive, deep open source opposition research campaign on Hillary and her 10 closest associates (names to be supplied by [the] campaign). Depending on information found, apply a second layer of info gathering to make sure no stone was left unturned. Anything else you might want to add as well."[4428]

(U) On April 5, Epstein emailed the proposal, now called Project Rome, to Birnbaum.[4429] The proposal included a project to conduct "influence services" targeting the Republican convention delegates, a second project proposal to conduct "opposition intelligence research" on Clinton, and a "sample report."[4430] The cost estimate for the "influence services" proposal was $3.21 million, with an additional $100,000 for media expenses,[4431] with a cost estimate for "negative opposition" of $400,000.[4432]

(U) The sample report provided a background profile of a California delegate for the Republican Party.[4433] The profile included biographical data including places of residence and employment, marital status, political and religious leanings, and personal interests. While it was noted that the delegate was already "a strong supporter of Donald Trump, and therefore no active influence is required at this point," the profile recommended "infrequent monitoring (monthly) to check whether any changes in opinions or sentiments towards Trump." The portfolio began with an overview description of the sourcing for the analysis, described the report as being based on "available OSINT (Open Source Intelligence)," and noted that "[i]n the event that additional information is required, Psy Group can carry out various active intelligence activities to extract additional information based on the needs and directions."[4434]

(U) According to Birnbaum, he informed Rick Gates that he had received the project materials from Psy Group. In response, Gates instructed him to send Psy Group proposals to an

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[4428] (U) Email, Birnbaum to Epstein to Charnoff, April 1, 2016 (PSY000015).
[4429] (U) Email, Epstein to Birnbaum, April 5, 2016 (PSY000067–PSY000080) (attaching proposals for both efforts as well as a sample intelligence report on a particular delegate).
[4430] (U) *Ibid.*
[4431] (U) Psy Group, "Project 'Rome' Campaign Intelligence & Influence Services Proposal," April 2016 (PSY000073); Attorney Proffer, Burstien, April 12, 2019.
[4432] (U) Psy Group, "Project Rome Opposition Intelligence Research," April 2016 (PSY000076); Attorney Proffer, Burstien, April 12, 2019.
[4433] (U) Psy Group, "Base Intelligence Report on Felicia Michelle Tweedy," April 3, 2016 (PSY000077–80). The individual in the profile was a district-level delegate to the 2016 Republican National Convention from the State of California.
[4434] (U) *Ibid.*

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individual named Scott Wilkinson.[4435] Birnbaum did not know who Wilkinson was, but sent him the proposals nonetheless.[4436]

(U) In a later exchange of emails sent on May 8, 2016, under the subject line "campaign proposal," Psy Group employees discussed capabilities to make available to the Trump Campaign, including "psyop campaigns" concerning "the opposition." The Psy Group employees also discussed the use of "[h]undreds of avatars driving negative messaging," and "physical world ops like counter protests, hecklers, etc." as means of advancing the referenced "psyop campaigns."[4437]

(U) On the basis of the Committee's investigation, however, it appears that Project Rome was never implemented by Psy Group. Birnbaum recalled that "this just kind of disappeared and died, and nothing came of it."[4438] Burstien similarly did not believe that Invop or Psy Group ever actually performed work relating to Project Rome. Burstien and Psy Group ultimately abandoned hope of working with Birnbaum after he canceled several meetings in Israel to discuss the project with them.[4439]

iv. (U) Zamel Pitches the Trump Campaign

(U) After the Project Rome proposal pitched by Psy Group through Birnbaum had fallen through, Zamel also approached the Trump Campaign for a similar project in the second half of 2016. Zamel engaged the Trump Campaign with George Nader, an advisor to the United Arab Emirates, who had raised the possibility of his (Nader's) financing a social media effort by Zamel targeting the 2016 U.S. presidential election.[4440]

(U) Zamel indicated that he first communicated with Nader in early 2016. Zamel and Nader were introduced by John Hannah, an advisor of Zamel's, and began communicating multiple times a week and sometimes daily.[4441] In June 2016, the two met in St. Petersburg, Russia, as Nader was attending the St. Petersburg International Economic Forum, in order to

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[4435] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview of George Birnbaum, February 20, 2019, pp. 86–87.
[4436] (U) Birnbaum Tr., pp. 86–88. Gates sent Birnbaum and Wilkinson an email introduction, which explains how Birnbaum would have been able to transmit the proposals without already knowing Wilkinson. *See* Email, Gates to Birnbaum and Scott Wilkinson, April 5, 2016 (Birnbaum Production).
[4437] (U) Emails, Vesely, Burstien, Epstein, Fogel, "Yossef," and Mortman, May 8, 2016 (PSY000295–PSY000296).
[4438] (U) Birnbaum Tr., pp. 86–111.
[4439] (U) Attorney Proffer, Burstien, April 12, 2019.
[4440] (U) Zamel Tr., pp. 70–72. George Nader, who was interviewed as part of the SCO's investigation, later pleaded guilty to transportation of a minor boy for purposes of illegal conduct and possession of child pornography. *See* U.S. Attorney's Office, Eastern District of Virginia, "Man Pleads Guilt to Child Exploitation Crimes," January 13, 2020.
[4441] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 112–115.

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discuss business opportunities. According to Zamel, U.S. politics was never discussed during this meeting with Nader.[4442]

(U) According to Zamel, he and Nader continued to meet a few more times in New York, Washington, D.C., and elsewhere.[4443] Sometime in July 2016, Nader expressed an interest in meeting with someone affiliated with either the Trump Campaign or Donald Trump's family. To broker such a meeting, Zamel contacted Erik Prince, who he understood to be involved in the presidential campaign.[4444] Erik Prince was in the process of cultivating his own access to the Trump Campaign and indicated that if successful, he might be able to assist in Zamel's efforts to connect Nader with the Campaign.[4445]

(U) In the midst of that discussion, on August 1, 2016, Royi Burstein sent Zamel a document describing Psy Group's capabilities relating to the 2016 U.S. presidential election.[4446] The two-page summary document was titled "Project Rome" and dated May 2016, but differed from the similarly-named proposal created for Birnbaum. The document outlined a suite of services Psy Group would make available to a client, including "generat[ing] influence through various online and offline platforms, assets and techniques," and the creation and promotion of "tailored third-party messaging directed toward optimizing impact and acceptance within the target audience(s)." The proposal overview noted that Psy Group's services "focus on select voter groups/segments that may not be susceptible to campaign messaging originating from the candidate or organizations known to be affiliated with the candidate." The proposal also identified minority communities, suburban female voters, and undecided voters as being among the prospective targeted voter segments.[4447] Burstien did not believe he ever heard back from Zamel about the summary document.[4448]

(U) Shortly thereafter, in early August 2016, Zamel, Erik Prince, and George Nader met with Donald Trump Jr. at the Trump Tower building in New York. According to Zamel, Prince led the meeting. Prince and Trump Jr. discussed issues pertaining to the Campaign. Later in the

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[4442] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 115–120. Zamel recalled that, several days later, Nader sent him a picture of Nader with Vladimir Putin, which Zamel understood was meant to demonstrate Nader's access. *See ibid.*, pp. 117–118, 128–129.
[4443] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 124.
[4444] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 129–133.
[4445] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 132–135.
[4446] (U) Attorney Proffer, Burstien, April 12, 2019; Email, Burstien to Zamel, August 1, 2016 (PSY000289 – PSY000292). Burstien stated Zamel originally requested the document in May 2016, though he did not recall sending the document to Zamel until August 1, 2016. *See* Attorney Proffer, Burstien, April 12, 2019. Zamel said Burstien would not have been aware of Zamel's specific use of the proposal in approaching the Trump Campaign with Nader. *See* Zamel Tr., pp. 71–72.
[4447] (U) Psy Group, "Project 'Rome' Campaign Intelligence & Influence Services Proposal," May 2016 (PSY000290–PSY000292).
[4448] (U) Attorney Proffer, Burstien, April 12, 2019.

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meeting, Nader raised issues pertinent to the Middle East, specifically ISIS and Iran. Zamel indicated that Stephen Miller joined the roughly 25-minute meeting at about the half-way point. Zamel did not recall Russia being mentioned at any time during the meeting.[4449]

(U) Near the conclusion of the meeting, Zamel explained "very briefly" the work of his private intelligence firms, Wikistrat and Psy Group. In relation to Psy Group, Zamel asked Trump Jr. whether Psy Group's conducting a social media campaign paid for by Nader would present a conflict for the Trump Campaign. According to Zamel, Trump Jr. indicated that this would not present a conflict. Trump Jr. also indicated that a Psy Group social media campaign would not conflict with the Trump Campaign's own efforts.[4450]

(U) In testimony to the Committee, Donald Trump Jr. indicated that he remembered George Nader from the August 2016 meeting, but was familiar with Joel Zamel's name only from preparing for Committee testimony. According to Trump Jr's. recollection of the August 2016 meeting, Erik Prince visited Trump Jr.'s office on relatively short notice, and was accompanied by Nader and Zamel. Trump Jr. did not recall any conversation concerning Middle East extremist groups or Iran sanctions, or organized efforts to assist the Trump Campaign, but he did remember talking to the individual later established to be Zamel about "combatting fake news."[4451]

(U) Zamel indicated that in the weeks after the August meeting with Donald Trump Jr., Nader "circumvented" Zamel and began to communicate directly with Trump Jr., leaving Zamel "cut out." Asked whether Erik Prince ever encouraged Nader to pay Psy Group to undertake the project Zamel and Nader were considering, Zamel responded affirmatively and indicated that Prince made a statement along the lines of "[y]ou should pay him." Zamel quoted a price of "five to ten [million dollars]" to Nader for the work and in response Nader indicated he would be willing to pay five million dollars to begin the work.[4452] The Committee did not find or receive information probative of the source of the five million dollars referenced by Nader.

(U) Zamel told the Committee that Psy Group performed no work relative to the 2016 U.S. presidential election; "[n]ot a tweet, not a character, nothing."[4453] Nonetheless, as described below, Zamel engaged in work on behalf of Nader, for which he was paid in excess of $1 million.[4454]

[4449] **(U)** Zamel Tr., pp. 136–150.
[4450] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[4451] **(U)** Trump Jr. Tr. II, pp. 94–98.
[4452] **(U)** Zamel Tr., pp. 159–171.
[4453] **(U)** *Ibid.*, p. 173.
[4454] **(U)** *Ibid.*, pp. 190–191. Zamel declined to state the exact amount paid by Nader, stating that the amount was "over a million dollars" and "under five million." *See ibid.*

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v. (U) After the 2016 U.S. Presidential Election

(U) Zamel indicated that in mid-November 2016, Nader contacted him seeking to obtain "a lot of documents on extremist groups," and "something that shows social media's impact on the election." Zamel described the desired analysis as "a reflection on what social media's effect on the election was as seen by different sources." Zamel indicated that Nader never explained why he wanted the social media analysis.

(U) Zamel never communicated the request for the social media analysis to Psy Group, opting instead to bring the request to Daniel Green, despite Green's lack of relevant experience or proficiency in data analytics, polling, or political analysis. According to Zamel, Green "Googled a bunch of articles" and summarized the content in a presentation that was prefaced with the disclaimer: "This is an academic study based on open source materials."[4455]

(U) Zamel presented the social media analysis to Nader in New York in January 2017. Zamel stated he never provided a copy of the presentation to Nader, either in hard copy or electronically. The presentation was brought from Israel to New York on a thumb drive, presented on a single laptop computer, and transported back to Israel by Zamel. According to Zamel, Nader indicated that he intended to show the social media presentation to "the young man." Based on his familiarity with Nader's use of such descriptors, Zamel understood "the young man" to be Donald Trump Jr. After viewing the presentation with Zamel in January, Nader never again asked about the requested analysis. Zamel asserted that the presentation was deleted from the laptop computer and the thumb drive upon his return to Israel, adding that "at some point, [Nader] said: 'I don't need it.'"[4456]

(U) Zamel indicated that he was paid "over a million dollars" for the presentation and an accompanying analysis of the "Muslim Brotherhood and extremism."[4457] According to news media reporting, an associate characterized the amount of money paid to Zamel as "up to $2 million."[4458] Zamel indicated that payment for these materials from Nader came directly "from his personal account to a business entity related to me," and was made prior to the presentation of the requested analysis.[4459]

[4455] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 182–189.
[4456] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 182–217.
[4457] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 187.
[4458] (U) Mark Mazzetti, et al., "Trump Jr. and Other Aides Met With Gulf Emissary Offering Help to Win Election," *The New York Times,* May 19, 2018.
[4459] (U) Zamel Tr., pp. 196–198.

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(U) In a November 28, 2016 email, Psy Group employees discussed "creating avatar armies to offer a service which could offer a similar effect the way Trump used masses of fake accounts on social media to create trending hashtags and create buzz around certain hot topics."[4460] It was noted in this exchange that "due to FB's [Facebook's] anti-fraud we could only do this small scale on FB [Facebook] but on [T]witter there was still opportunity to develop an automated system."[4461] The exact meaning of the reference to Trump in this email is unclear. The Committee's investigation into Russia's use of social media to conduct foreign influence operations documents Russia's employment of fake online personas, often in support of the Trump Campaign, but the Committee did not find sufficient evidence to support the assertion that the Trump Campaign itself engaged in these practices.[4462]

(U) A breakdown of anticipated Psy Group revenue for work performed in Washington, D.C. was forwarded as an attachment to a February 11, 2017, email sent from Scott Mortman to Royi Burstien. Among the prospective revenue sources was a project for General Electric that Psy Group was expected to support through a subcontract with Cambridge Analytica.[4463]

(U) An email from February 5, 2018, detailed a series of Psy Group business development meetings. One such meeting was with David Eichenbaum, identified as a campaigner and "media expert for political campaigns, working for the Democratic party." Among the opportunities discussed was Psy Group's potentially working with Eichenbaum in support of his effort to "raise funds from West coast high tech HNWIs [high-net-worth individuals] to open a SuperPac that will focus on these new capabilities for the coming Congress / Senate / Governor races in 2018 – as a proof of concept for the 2020 national elections."[4464]

(U) According to Burstien's proffer, to capitalize on what was anticipated to be an expanded market for Psy Group's services following the Trump Campaign's victory, a "look-back" presentation touting the company's capabilities vis-à-vis social media was prepared by Invop. Burstien indicated that this presentation was not prepared at Zamel's request.[4465]

(U) Zamel stated that Rudy Giuliani introduced him to Jared Kushner "months after the inauguration" when he met with Kushner at the White House to discuss human rights issues in the Middle East, Iran, and "counter-extremism."[4466]

[4460] (U) Email, Vesely to Shraga, Yossef, Biton, Burstein, Eliyahou, and Mortman, November 28, 2016 (PSY000338).
[4461] (U) *Ibid.*
[4462] (U) *See infra* Vol. 2.
[4463] (U) Email, Mortman to Burstien, February 11, 2017 (PSY000310–311).
[4464] (U) Email, Charnoff to Burstien, Danilov, Cohen, and "Oren," February 5, 2018 (PSY000370–PSY000372).
[4465] (U) Attorney Proffer, Burstien, April 12, 2019.
[4466] (U) Zamel Tr., pp. 231–235.

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vi. (U) Additional International Activity

[redacted]

vii. (U) WikiStrat

(U) Zamel co-founded Wikistrat, a global crowd-sourced consulting firm, in approximately 2009.[4469] Zamel indicated that he spoke over the telephone with Lieutenant General Michael Flynn about Wikistrat's work in either 2014 or 2015, but the conversation never materialized into a personal or business relationship. Zamel indicated to the Committee that he had never actually met Flynn in person.[4470]

(U) According to Zamel, retired U.S. intelligence officer David Shedd served as an advisor to Wikistrat. During the 2016 U.S. presidential campaign, Shedd indicated that he was in contact with Jeff Sessions and asked Zamel to prepare a policy paper on hosting a conference of Muslim leaders from around the world for the purpose of collectively condemning the practice of suicide bombings as an illegitimate form of violence. In September 2016, Zamel accompanied Shedd to a meeting with then-Senator Jeff Sessions in his Senate office. The

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[4467] [redacted]

[4468] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 21.

[4469] (U) Crunchbase.com, profile of Wikistrat. Zamel described Wikistrat as a "crowd-sourced consulting" company with "a network of over 5,000 subject matter experts across 70 different countries around the world that we bring together online on our platform. We run war gaming simulations and studies for different agencies or corporations to think about complex issues or the future of different issues." *See* Zamel Tr., pp. 5–6.

[4470] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 175. Zamel stated that the conversation occurred just after Flynn retired from military service. *See ibid.* According to the Defense Intelligence Agency, Flynn retired on August 7, 2014. *See* DIA Public Affairs, "Lt. Gen Flynn retires from DIA, 33-year Army career," August 7, 2014.

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meeting concerned using social media to delegitimize ISIS.[4471] The Committee did not further explore this meeting.

4. (U) Colt Ventures and VizSense

i. (U) Initial Efforts to Work with the Trump Campaign

(U) Venture capital firm Colt Ventures was formed in 2003 by Darren Blanton, a Dallas-based investor who served as an adviser to the Trump Transition team.[4472] Colt Ventures is an investor in VizSense, a Dallas-based social-media and "micro-influencer" company co-founded by Jon Iadonisi and Timothy Newberry in 2015.[4473] Colt Ventures was paid $200,000 by the Trump Campaign for "data management services," a portion of which was remitted to VizSense for work it performed as part of the agreement between Colt Ventures and the Trump Campaign.[4474]

(U) In July 2016, Iadonisi discussed with Flynn the role "influencers" would play in determining the outcome of the 2016 U.S. presidential election. Flynn connected Iadonisi with the Trump Campaign, in the ambition of connecting him to "whomever is running these operations for the Trump campaign."[4475]

(U) Emails from August 18, 2016, indicate that Iadonisi spoke with Brad Parscale and another Trump Campaign staffer about VizSense. Iadonisi sent examples of VizSense's work the following day, including a "persuasion campaign using organically created content to drive a conversation . . . using influencers to spread the message." Iadonisi noted that this "same technique can be used in politics, where the *content and influencers* are surgically designed to deliver a political message to a specific audience, creating a digital bonfire of conversation."[4476]

[4471] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 243–249.
[4472] (U) *See* www.coltventures.com for an overview of Colt Ventures and www.coltventures/com/team.php for a profile of Darren Blanton; *see also* Matea Gold, "The mystery behind a Flynn associate's quiet work for the Trump campaign," *The Washington Post,* May 4, 2017.
[4473] (U) Crunchbase.com, profile of VizSense; Email, Flynn to Lawless, August 11, 2016 (FLYNN_SSCI_00010449–FLYNN_SSCI_000450).
[4474] (U) Federal Election Commission, Disbursements, Donald J. Trump for President, Inc., 2015-2016, reference December 5, 2016; Written Responses, Blanton, August 16, 2019; Email, Iadonisi to Blanton, Moore, and Flynn, November 14, 2016 (FLYNN_SSCI_00015144–FLYNN_SSCI_00015146) (discussing compensation arrangement).
[4475] (U) Emails, Flynn, J. Miller, Manafort, M.G. Flynn, Roys, and Scavino, July 15–19, 2016 (FLYNN_SSCI_00003066–FLYNN_SSCI_00003072).
[4476] (U) Emails, Iadonisi, Coby, Parscale, Flynn, M. G. Flynn, and Kushner, August 18 – September 7, 2016 (FLYNN_SSCI_00010812–FLYNN_SSCI_00010814).

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(U) In mid-September 2016, Iadonisi sent a proposal to Bannon, titled "Trump_Campaign_Proposal_9_9_16.pdf."[4477] Bannon requested that Blanton, Bannon's longtime friend who had recently sought to become involved in the Trump Campaign, meet with Iadonisi and review the proposal.[4478] Iadonisi, in turn, connected Blanton to Flynn, in connection with Bannon's request that Blanton review the proposal.[4479]

(U) On September 14, 2016, Iadonisi sent a draft statement of work to Darren Blanton that broke the notional work to be performed by VizSense into three deliverables: installation and set-up, analysis and tasking from Trump Campaign, and conducting of operations–with daily updates provided. The statement of work contemplated a fee of $769,000, and included services such as "[d]etermine critical voting districts . . . to focus the voter support team . . . efforts," "[a]ssess online sentiment/narratives according to each [critical voting district]," and "[p]rovide an executive summary about prominent narratives and proposed offensive operations needed to mobilize Trump voters in each [critical voting district]."[4480] That same day, in a separate email, Iadonisi described an operational concept that could "be used by the wider campaign effort (polling) to direct Trump advertising dollars with precision."[4481] On September 18, 2016, Iadonisi sent a contract services agreement to Bannon, Flynn, and others.[4482]

(U) VizSense's efforts to contract directly with the Trump Campaign were unsuccessful. On September 22, 2016, Iadonisi informed Flynn that he had heard through Blanton that "Steve Bannon is basing the campaign strategy on Brad Parscale and his team. They have declined our offer." Iadonisi further stated that in the alternative, "they asked if we could do it for free and focus on Trump fundraising. We would be able to keep 25% of what we raised." Iadonisi indicated that he declined the offer.[4483]

(U) Blanton, however, continued to pursue a contract. In an email exchange from September 27, 2016, Blanton indicated that Oczkowski "[h]as a team of data scientists and they sit right outside of [Dan Scavino's] door. I spoke to them and think that they have a good grasp to work with us if Steve [Bannon] is ok with that?" In response, Bannon told Blanton to "just

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[4477] (U) Email, Iadonisi to Bannon, September 13, 2016 (FLYNN_SSCI_00010889–FLYNN_SSCI_00010892).
[4478] (U) Email, Bannon to Blanton, September 13, 2016 (FLYNN_SSCI_00010890–FLYNN_SSCI_00010892).
[4479] (U) Emails, Flynn, Blanton, and Iadonisi, September 13, 2016 (FLYNN_SSCI_00010885–FLYNN_SSCI_00010888); Email, Flynn to Bannon, September 13, 2016 (FLYNN_SSCI_0010889–FLYNN_SSCI_0010892).
[4480] (U) Email, Iadonisi to Blanton, Flynn, and M. G. Flynn, September 14, 2016 (FLYNN_SSCI_00010908–FLYNN_SSCI_00010910).
[4481] (U) Email, Iadonisi to Blanton, Flynn, and M. G. Flynn, September 14, 2016 (FLYNN_SSCI_00010906–FLYNN_SSCI_00010907).
[4482] (U) Email, Iadonisi to Bannon, Blanton, Flynn, and M. G. Flynn, September 18, 2016 (FLYNN_SSCI_00010928– FLYNN_SSCI_00010931).
[4483] (U) Email, Iadonisi to Flynn, September 22, 2016 (FLYNN_SSCI_00011492).

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listen to" Oczkowski, but not commit to him.[4484] Blanton's overtures to Bannon continue with a subsequent email that same day, with the subject line "Did call on foreign voters this is the week they request ballots. Got to act quick." Blanton indicated that he "spoke to Jesse at [GOP] about foreign voters and have a strategy. He's getting me as many digital addresses as he can find. We need to send out a video request from [then-candidate Trump] via social [media] to ask for their votes."[4485]

(U) The following day, in a September 28, 2016 email, Blanton made a protracted appeal to Bannon about "the content strategy and GOTV [Get Out The Vote] plan."[4486] This exchange preceded a series of communications involving work Blanton performed on behalf of the Trump Campaign, leveraging targeted social media messaging to advance campaign-friendly messaging for overseas voters.

- (U) On September 30, 2016, Blanton emailed deputy manager to the Trump Campaign David Bossie that "[a]ccording to our expert in the UK these are some sample tweets that will move the needle to get votes with the millions of American citizens living overseas," adding that "[w]e can also monitor how they are resonating with influencers once we get approval to use our tools."[4487]

- (U) In an October 2, 2016 email to Bannon, Parscale, and Flynn, with the subject line "Re: Give us the go ahead and we will start feeding you intel on what the Chatter is on social and infographics to feed through our campaign funnels," Darren Blanton asked about messaging via "other mediums like Facebook," and whether "any of those tweets on [o]verseas voters got launched?"[4488]

- (U) In an exchange of emails from October 3, 2016, Blanton and Bannon communicated about a proposal that Blanton and Flynn were promoting. Bannon instructed Blanton to "[g]et with [David Bossie]." In responding, Blanton asked Bossie about his availability to discuss the proposal, and noted that "Flynn can tell you about [the proposal] when y'all are with Trump today."[4489]

ii. (U) [redacted] and Overseas Voters

[4484] (U) Emails, Blanton, Flynn, and Bannon, September 27, 2016 (DB-SSCI-000895–DB-SSCI-000897).
[4485] (U) Email, Blanton to Bannon, September 27, 2016 (DB-SSCI-000895).
[4486] (U) Email, Blanton to Bannon, September 28, 2016 (DB-SSCI-000890).
[4487] (U) Email, Blanton to Bossie and Bannon, September 30, 2016 (DB-SSCI-000888–DB-SSCI-000889).
[4488] (U) Email, Blanton to Bannon, Parscale, and Flynn, October 2, 2016 (DB-SSCI-000886).
[4489] (U) Email, Blanton to Bannon, Bossie, and Moore, October 3, 2016 (DB-SSCI-000885).

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4493 [redacted] *See* Samir Kajosevic, "Montenegro Prosecution Suspects Israeli Consultant of Coup Role," *Balkan Insight*, July 31, 2019.

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iii. (U) Colt Ventures Work on Behalf of the Trump Campaign

(U) On October 8, 2016, Flynn forwarded to Parscale a contract relative to work to be performed by Colt Ventures LP, as well as bank account and wire transfer routing information. Flynn indicated that "we have already begun work on the priorities" previously identified by Parscale. Flynn added that the "first priority is to immediately . . . support the influence component of the upcoming debate, learn from it and continue to provide value by helping to increase voter awareness and sentiment in support of [then-candidate Donald Trump]."[4501]

(U) In an October 8, 2016 email, Blanton asked Flynn whether he had obtained "any more feedback or updates from [the Trump] campaign?" In response, Flynn indicated that there had been "no feedback from Brad [Parscale] yet."[4502]

[4496] [redacted]
[4497] [redacted]
[4498] [redacted]
[4499] (U) *Ibid.*
[4500] [redacted]
[4501] (U) Email, Flynn to Parscale, M.G. Flynn, Blanton, Iadonisi, Bossie, and Bannon, October 7, 2016 (FLYNN_SSCI_00012941–FLYNN_SSCI_00012952).
[4502] (U) Emails, Blanton and Flynn, October 8, 2016 (DB-SSCI-000801–DB-SSCI-000801).

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(U) Blanton identified the Big League Truth Team, which appears to be a "fact checker site" associated with the Trump Campaign, as "one of the things we are going to help [the] campaign on."[4503] On October 9, 2016, Blanton forwarded an email to Flynn and Iadonisi with the subject line "Instructions," containing information on the "Big League Truth Team." The forwarded message instructed recipients that "[b]efore, during and after each debate we will send you messages we need you to spread online. Use Twitter, Facebook, Email and any other tool you have to spread what we send you." The message concluded by highlighting upcoming and past presidential debate dates, and an invitation to recruit additional members to the Big League Truth Team.[4504] Earlier in the day, Blanton sent a note in this regard to Peter Thiel, asking that he "get [his] people and all their friends to go get on [the Big League Truth Team] website.[4505] The Big League Truth Team was identified by Flynn as one of two named priorities provided by Brad Parscale, along with "the Clinton/Keane [Kaine] website," in an October 6 email to Blanton.[4506]

(U) In an email dated October 10, 2016, Blanton reported to Donald Trump Jr., and Flynn that "[w]e stirred up a shit load of positive traffic and [social media narratives] with Gen. Flynn and my team." Trump Jr. thanked Blanton, and Blanton replied that he was invigorating efforts targeting specific voter segments and that "Flynn and I will send you the report from what we stirred up last night and we can collaborate with you:" Trump Jr. responded to Blanton, "Great . . . get it out there. Other than the media spin there is no actual reason we shouldn't outperform prior GOP candidates with this group."[4507]

(U) The same day, Flynn provided Bannon a summary of results from what appears to be a social media messaging operation conducted on October 8-10, 2016, by the company VizSense.[4508] Denigrating Hillary and former President Bill Clinton, and depicting the latter as "a rapist" were central narratives to the messaging campaign. As evidence of the campaign's effectiveness, the presentation noted that Twitter activity around posts relevant to the theme "Bill Clinton is a [r]apist" amounted to 123.8 million impressions "in the 7 days before [VizSense] engaged."[4509] During the two days of the social media messaging campaign conducted by VizSense, which preceded the October 9, 2016, presidential debate at which the Trump

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[4503] (U) Email, Blanton to Besemer, Iadonisi, and Flynn, October 6, 2016 (FLYNN_SSCI-00012848); Email, Blanton to Flynn, Thiel, Iadonisi, October 9, 2016 (FLYNN_SSCI_00013180).
[4504] (U) Email, Blanton to Flynn and Iadonisi, October 9, 2016 (FLYNN_SSCI_00013178–FLYNN_SSCI_00013179).
[4505] (U) Email, Blanton to Flynn, Thiel, and Iadonisi, October 9, 2016 (FLYNN_SSCI-00013180).
[4506] (U) Email, Flynn to Blanton, October 6, 2016 (FLYNN_SSCI-00012818).
[4507] (U) Emails, Blanton, Flynn, and Trump Jr., October 10, 2016 (FLYNN_SSCI-00013484).
[4508] (U) Email, Flynn to Bannon, M. G. Flynn, Blanton and Iadonisi, October 10, 2016 (FLYNN_SSCI_00013493–FLYNN_SSCI_00013506) (with attachments).
[4509] (U) *Ibid.*

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Campaign attempted to seat a trio of women who have accused former President Clinton of making unwanted sexual advances,[4510] a total of "177.5 million impressions" were generated around this theme. An analysis of the social media messaging operation noted that "[t]he mission peaked on Twitter at exactly the calculated time–during the debate." Flynn appealed to Bannon to "help to get the contract moving," noting that he had been in contact with Parscale in this regard, but had heard nothing in response. Acknowledging that Parscale is "probably extremely busy," Flynn remarked that "we are ready to keep pushing the envelope to help us win."[4511]

(U) In an exchange of emails from October 2016, Flynn suggested directly to Iadonisi a line of campaign messaging focused on Hillary Clinton's neglect of cybersecurity protocols that would characterize Clinton as "soft on cybersecurity" and likely to "put our nation's secrets again at risk if she ever gets into the [White House]."[4512] In response, Darren Blanton remarked "[t]hat is so true and we need to virally distribute all these wiki leaks and take advantage of the cultural shift in the way people communicate. . . . We need to be the source and chef to prepare the wiki info to eat! It just needs to be researched and then broke down into bites so that the public influencers can distribute!! [sic]."[4513]

(U) In a November 2, 2016 email with the subject line "CUBA Project," Iadonisi sent a presentation to Flynn detailing what appears to be an influence campaign dubbed "OP Havana Spring." The materials were presented under the heading "COLT TEAM." An October 21, 2016, rally in support of Trump that occurred in Havana, Cuba, was central to the influence campaign, which was intended to "[c]onvert Cuban-American and Latinos from Miami into Trump Supporters." A presentation slide bearing the VizSense logo depicted social media engagement metrics subsequent to the rally, noting that "1.8 million impressions" and "6,182 mentions [were] generated in just 2 and a half days." The hashtags "#Castro4Clinton" and "#OperationMojito" were created to facilitate sharing of news about the rally on social media. "Vets4Trump" and "@DanpGabriel" were identified as instrumental in the initial circulation of this story on social media, but "[t]weets from campaign insiders or mega influencers would help give this story more legs to run into next week and reach more Hispanics in Florida and Nevada (third largest population of Cubans)." Among the final points captured in the presentation was that news of the rally was "very viral and should be spread further on Twitter and [Facebook] by

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[4510] **(U)** Jeremy W. Peters, "Trump Campaign Tried to Seat Bill Clinton's Accusers in V.I.P Box, *The New York Times,* October 10, 2016.

[4511] **(U)** Email, Flynn to Bannon, M. G. Flynn, Blanton, and Iadonisi, October 10, 2016 (FLYNN_SSCI_00013493-FLYNN_SSCI_00013506) (with attachments).

[4512] Email, Flynn to Iadonisi and Blanton, October 14, 2016 (FLYNN_SSCI_00013770).

[4513] **(U)** Email, Blanton to Flynn, Thiel, and Iadonisi, October 14, 2016 (DB-SSCI-000786).

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the Trump Campaign."[4514] The Committee was unable to definitively ascertain the effect of the Havana rally.

iv. (U) Colt Ventures and VizSense Get Paid

(U) A series of emails from late-October 2016 details the submission and final disposition of an invoice for services performed by Colt Ventures for the Trump Campaign. An initial itemized invoice for $650,000 was submitted on October 22, 2016 by Megan Moore, an executive assistant for Colt Ventures, to Jeff DeWit, the chief operating officer for the Trump Campaign. DeWit sent the invoice to Kushner, Parscale, Sean Dollman, and Steven Mnuchin, noting his objection to the invoice, claiming the services were never contracted for. Upon receipt of the note from DeWit, Parscale sent an email to Kushner stating that "[w]e actually never agreed to this and have no contract. Money became so tight and [Lieutenant General Flynn] never really said it would be a personal favor. This is WAY more than I agreed to."[4515] Kushner pursued the matter with Flynn, and ultimately assented to funding an initial tranche of work for $200,000 upon Flynn's vouching for the "exceptional results" of the work performed by Colt Ventures.[4516] According to Blanton, the funds were primarily for work performed by VizSense for its get-out-the-vote efforts, with a small portion used to reimburse Blanton for travel costs associated with work for the Trump Campaign.[4517]

[4514] (U) Email, Iadonisi to Flynn, November 2, 2016 (FLYNN_SSCI_00014679–FLYNN_SSCI_00014684).
[4515] (U) Email, Parscale to Kushner, October 23, 2016 (FLYNN_SSCI_00014465–FLYNN_SSCI_00014467).
[4516] (U) Emails, Moore, Parscale, DeWit, Kushner, Flynn, Dollman, Mnuchin, and Blanton, October 22–25, 2016 (FLYNN_SSCI_00014474–FLYNN_SSCI_00014495).
[4517] (U) Written Responses, Blanton, August 16, 2019.

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K. (U) Transition

1. (U) Introduction and Findings

(U) Immediately following the 2016 U.S. election, Russian government officials and oligarchs began approaching the Trump Transition team, directing their efforts through multiple individuals and channels of communication. The Transition's response to certain of these contacts was notable in light of the U.S. Government's determination that Russia had interfered in the 2016 U.S. election and its late-December decision to impose sanctions. Because the Russian government had engaged in a months-long active measures campaign targeting the election, which Trump had just won, the Committee examined these activities and the Transition's response in order to more fully understand what Moscow sought to gain and the counterintelligence vulnerabilities associated with the Transition.

(U) The Committee focused on several aspects of this outreach, including direct communications between Transition officials and Russian government officials. In addition to phone calls between Trump and Putin, the Committee examined a series of meetings and communications involving Jared Kushner and incoming National Security Advisor Michael Flynn with the Russian Ambassador, Sergei Kislyak, and the Chairman of a Russian bank, Sergei Gorkov, who was said to have a direct line to Putin.

(U) The Committee also scrutinized communications involving individuals informally associated with the Trump Transition and Russian oligarchs who had been tasked by Putin to conduct outreach. Most notably, Kirill Dmitriev pursued contacts and a business deal with American hedge fund manager Rick Gerson, which he used to deliver a Putin-authorized "reconciliation plan" to the Transition Team. Dmitriev also met with Erik Prince in the Seychelles with the intention of establishing contact with the Transition Team, a meeting that Prince said was known to Steve Bannon, to whom Prince said he reported. George Nader, a senior advisor to UAE Crown Prince Muhammad bin Zayed and contact of Dmitriev, facilitated these interactions.

(U) The Committee further explored activities within the Transition relating to the imposition of sanctions on Russia by the United States in response to Russia's election interference. The Committee reviewed a series of communications between Flynn and Kislyak on sanctions and the Transition's treatment of the issue, as well as other actions that had the potential to undermine the current administration's conduct of foreign policy.

(U) Although the Committee's investigation focused primarily on the Transition's interaction with Russia, evidence indicates that the Transition Team engaged in similar communications with other foreign countries. However, because the Committee limited its investigation to matters related to Russia, those exchanges are not described here.

[redacted]

[redacted]

(U) Russia and other countries took advantage of the Transition Team's inexperience, transparent opposition to Obama Administration policies, and Trump's desire to deepen ties with Russia, to pursue unofficial channels through which Russia could conduct diplomacy. The lack of vetting of foreign interactions by Transition officials left the Transition open to influence and manipulation by foreign intelligence services, government leaders, and co-opted business executives.

(U) Across the Transition Team's engagements with foreign actors, particularly with regard to Russia or individuals with ties to Russia, the Transition Team appeared disorganized and unprepared, which created notable counterintelligence vulnerabilities.

- (U) Transition officials had little awareness of their counterparts within foreign governments and did not appear to take sufficient security precautions in light of known foreign intelligence efforts against the election.

- (U) Russian officials, intelligence services, and others acting on the Kremlin's behalf were capable of exploiting the Transition's shortcomings for Russia's advantage. Based on the available information, it is possible—and even likely—that they did so.

(U) The Transition Team repeatedly took actions that had the potential, and sometimes the effect, of interfering in U.S. diplomatic efforts. These actions were not part of a visible overriding foreign policy; instead, efforts were narrow and transactional, seeking outcomes on only a select set of issues. This created unnecessary confusion among U.S. allies and other world leaders, creating the potential to harm America's ability to conduct diplomacy both bilaterally and in multilateral institutions, and undermine U.S. credibility and influence.

2. (U) Trump Transition Holds Meetings and Calls with Russian Officials

i. (U) Putin's Congratulatory Phone Call with Trump

(U) In the early morning hours of November 9, 2016, following Donald Trump's victory in the presidential election, Trump Campaign spokeswoman Hope Hicks received a phone call from a man claiming to be calling from the Russian Embassy who provided the first name "Sergey."[4518] Hicks did not clarify for the Committee whether he failed to provide a last name, or whether she simply had difficulty understanding the last name. Although Hicks understood "that he wanted help to connect the Kremlin by telephone with Trump to allow President Putin to

[4518] (U) Written Responses, Hicks, June 29, 2017.

[redacted]

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congratulate President-elect Trump," because of her difficulty understanding the caller, she suggested he send her an email about his request.[4519]

(U) According to Hicks, the call lasted approximately one to three minutes.[4520] She did not find the call to be unusual because she had received several calls from unknown numbers throughout the campaign, and had received several calls of congratulations for Trump since the election results had begun coming in the previous night.[4521] At 5:27 a.m., she received an email from Sergey Kuznetsov,[4522] a Political Officer at the Russian Embassy, with the subject line, "Message from President Putin."[4523] She assumed it was the same Sergey who had previously called her.[4524] The email contained two attachments with messages of congratulations from President Putin to the President-elect: one in Russian, and one in English.[4525] The message read:[4526]

[4519] (U) *Ibid.*
[4520] (U) *Ibid.*
[4521] (U) *Ibid.*
[4522] [redacted]
[4523] (U) Email, Kuznetsov to Hicks, November 9, 2016 (NSSCI00000029).
[4524] (U) Written Responses, Hicks, June 29, 2017.
[4525] (U) Email, Kuznetsov to Hicks, November 9, 2016 (NSSCI00000029–31).
[4526] (U) Letter, Putin to Trump, November 9, 2016 (NSSCI00000031).

[redacted]

[redacted]

Unofficial translation

Moscow, November 9, 2016

Dear Mr. Trump,

Please accept my sincere congratulations on the occasion of your victory in the US presidential election.

I look forward to working with you on leading Russian-American relations out of crisis, as well as resolving pressing issues of international agenda and searching for effective solutions to global security challenges.

I am confident that building constructive dialogue between Moscow and Washington based on the principles of equality, mutual respect and genuine consideration of each others interests is equitable to the interests of the people of our countries and the world community.

I wish you sound health, prosperity and success in such a responsible position as the head of state.

Respectfully,

Vladimir Putin

HIS EXCELLENCY
MR. DONALD J. TRUMP
PRESIDENT ELECT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Washington, D.C.

(U) In his email, Kuznetsov asked that Hicks convey the message to Trump.[4527] After receiving Kuznetsov's email, Hicks forwarded the request to Jared Kushner asking if the email seemed legitimate, and whether Kuznetsov was "who he claimed to be."[4528] In her message, Hicks said, "Can you look into this? Don't want to get duped but don't want to blow off Putin!"[4529] According to Hicks, "I understood Jared to have been serving as the conduit for foreign

[4527] (U) Email, Kuznetsov to Hicks, November 9, 2016 (NSSCI00000035).
[4528] (U) Written Responses, Hicks, June 29, 2017.
[4529] (U) Email, Hicks to Kushner, November 9, 2016 (NSSCI00000029).

[redacted]

[redacted]

representatives throughout the campaign, and therefore he was the person I assumed would know if this was a prank or a call from a legitimate official."[4530]

(U) After receiving Hicks's email, Kushner sent a message to Dimitri Simes, who had worked with Kushner on organizing the Mayflower Hotel foreign policy speech.[4531] Simes was the President and Chief Executive Officer of the Center for the National Interest, a think tank with expertise in Russia matters.[4532] Kushner did not ask about Kuznetsov's identity, but rather about the identity of the Russian Ambassador to the United States.[4533] In a written statement, Kushner said that he "thought the best way [to verify Kuznetsov's email] would be to ask the only contact I recalled meeting from the Russian government, which was the Ambassador," whose name he did not remember at the time.[4534] Simes responded approximately 15 minutes later with the name of the Russian Ambassador, Sergey Kislyak, saying, "Congratulations with a historic victory! This may become a real 21 century American revolution."[4535] Kushner forwarded Simes's response to Hicks.[4536]

(U) According to Hicks, Kushner was not able to confirm Kuznetsov's affiliation with the Russian Embassy.[4537] As a result, Hicks was unable to confirm Kuznetsov's identity before giving Trump the congratulatory letter from Putin.

(U) Hicks recalled Trump stating, in reaction to the letter, "Hmm; that's nice."[4538] She likened it to his reaction to congratulatory communications from other world leaders, saying, "[t]here wasn't anything that stands out about his reaction to this letter versus the others he was getting."[4539] Trump then asked Hicks to coordinate a telephone call with Putin.[4540]

(U) Hicks recalled emailing with the Russian Embassy to schedule the requested phone call between Trump and Putin, and sharing those "administrative emails" with Transition Team

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[4530] (U) Written Responses, Hicks, June 29, 2017.
[4531] (U) Email, Kushner to Simes, November 9, 2016 (NSSCI00000032). Events related to Trump's April 2015 speech at the Mayflower Hotel are discussed *infra* Vol. 5, Sec. III.G.
[4532] (U) Simes Tr., pp. 6–11.
[4533] (U) Email, Kushner to Simes, November 9, 2016 (NSSCI00000032).
[4534] (U) Statement of Jared Kushner to Congressional Committees, July 24, 2017.
[4535] (U) Email, Simes to Kushner, November 9, 2016 (NSSCI00000037). In his interview with the Committee, Simes claimed that the discussion about Russia's Ambassador was only conducted between his assistant and Kushner's assistant. Simes Tr., pp. 6–11. However, the emails were sent directly between Simes and Kushner.
[4536] (U) Email, Simes to Kushner, November 9, 2016 (NSSCI00000033).
[4537] (U) Written Responses, Hicks, June 29, 2017.
[4538] (U) Hicks Tr., p. 73.
[4539] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 74.
[4540] (U) *Ibid.*

[redacted]

[redacted]

officials "who were logging foreign correspondence."[4541] According to her recollection, this included Lieutenant General Michael Flynn and Megan Badasch.[4542]

(U) Trump and Putin spoke five days later, on November 14, 2016.[4543] Hicks reported that she was present when the call took place, but could hear only what Trump was saying; she did not know what Putin was saying.[4544] Hicks said she "assumed" that Trump was making calls like this using a secure line that had been installed following the election, but did not know if he in fact used a secure line in this instance.[4545] She was not present for the pre-brief and did not recall the topics that were discussed during the call, although she took notes of the call for a read-out and subsequent press release.[4546] She recalled that Flynn, Badasch, and Sean Lawlor were also in the room for the call.[4547]

[redacted]

[redacted]extend congratulations to Trump for his succes[redacted]encouraged future cooperation on Syria and Ukraine.[4549]

[4541] (U) Written Responses, Hicks, June 29, 2017.
[4542] (U) *Ibid.* Megan Badasch would eventually become the Deputy Executive Secretary for the National Security Council, working for both Flynn and General H. R. McMaster. *See* Patrick Radden Keefe, "McMaster and Commander," *The New Yorker*, April 28, 2018.
[4543] (U) According to a statement issued by the Trump Transition Team, the two discussed "a range of issues including the threats and challenges facing the United States and Russia, strategic economic issues and the historical U.S.-Russia relationship that dates back over 200 years." Elise Viebeck et al., "Trump, Putin agree in phone call to improve 'unsatisfactory' relations between their countries, Kremlin says," *The Washington Post*, November 14, 2016. The Kremlin issued a lengthier statement describing the call, which it said included "issues related to solving the crisis in Syria." *See* President of Russia, "Telephone conversation with US President-elect Donald Trump," kremlin.ru, November 14, 2016.
[4544] (U) Hicks Tr., p. 74.
[4545] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 76–77.
[4546] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 78–79.
[4547] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 74–76.
[4548] [redacted]
[4549] (U) *Ibid.*

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On Syria

[redacted]

Regarding Ukraine

[redacted]

ii. (U) Kushner's November 30, 2016, Meeting with Ambassador Kislyak

(U) On November 16, 2016, Ambassador Kislyak contacted Kushner's office seeking to set up a meeting with Kushner on December 1.[4553] Kushner directed his assistant, Catherine Vargas, to check with Dimitri Simes to "confirm . . . that this is the right guy."[4554] Vargas then spoke with CNI's Executive Director, Paul Saunders, who confirmed that Kislyak is the "best go-to guy for routine matters in the US. However, for more direct/substanial [sic] matters, Yuri Ushakov is Putin's top Foreign Policy advisor."[4555]

(U) On November 22, 2016, Kuznetsov emailed Hicks to request a separate meeting for Kislyak with Flynn in early December.[4556] Kuznetsov reiterated his request by email to Hicks on

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[4550] (U) *Ibid.*
[4551] (U) *Ibid.*
[4552] (U) *Ibid.*
[4553] [redacted]
[4554] (U) Email, Kushner to Vargas, November 16, 2016 (NSSCI00000038).
[4555] (U) Email, Vargas to Kushner, November 16, 2016 (NSSCI00000038).
[4556] (U) Email, Kuznetsov to Hicks, November 22, 2016 (Hicks Production).

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November 28, which Hicks then forwarded to Flynn.[4557] On November 29, 2016, Flynn reached out to Kuznetsov saying, "I understand you're looking to get in touch. I'm in NYC for a few days this week, maybe we meet next week."[4558] Kuznetsov responded that Kislyak would also be in New York, and could meet with him there either after his December 1 meeting with Kushner, or the evening before.[4559] Shortly thereafter, Flynn sent a note to Kushner informing him that he had told Kuznetsov that he (Flynn) might attend the meeting between Kushner and Kislyak instead of holding a separate meeting.[4560] Later that day, Kushner informed his assistant, Avi Berkowitz, that Flynn would join him in his December 1 meeting with Kislyak.[4561]

[redacted]

(U) In his interview with the Committee, Kushner described his approach to the meeting with Kislyak:

> *When I would meet with a lot of these foreign countries, again my goal at that point was really just to listen. But what I would do is say that the President[-elect] really had two objectives. One was to create as much peace in the world and the other one was to create as much global GDP in the world. So we wanted good trade, but obviously we wanted as much of that GDP to be in America.*[4564]

[4557] **(U)** Email, Kuznetsov to Hicks, November 28, 2016 (FLYNN_SSCI_00000350); Email, Hicks to Flynn, November 28, 2016 (FLYNN_SSCI_00000350).
[4558] **(U)** Email, Flynn to Kuznetsov, November 29, 2016 (FLYNN_SSCI_00000353).
[4559] **(U)** Email, Kuznetsov to Flynn, November 29, 2016 (FLYNN_SSCI_00000353).
[4560] **(U)** Email, Flynn to Kushner, November 29, 2017 (NSSCI00000085–86).
[4561] **(U)** Email, Kushner to Berkowitz, Bannon, Vargas, and Flynn, November 29, 2016 (NSSCI00000074).
[4562] [redacted]
[4563] **(U)** *Ibid.*, pp. 31–32.
[4564] **(U)** Kushner Tr., pp. 62–63.

[redacted]

[redacted]

(U) Kushner and Flynn met Kislyak at Trump Tower at 3:30 p.m. on November 30.[4565] According to Kushner, the meeting lasted 20-to-30 minutes.[4566] During the conversation, Kushner proposed using secure communications from inside the Russian Embassy for a call between the Transition and Russian military officials about Syria:

> *The Russian military . . . had a perspective on Syria that they wanted to share with us, and so he [Kislyak] wanted to know how to transmit that information. He basically said: Look, I could have them come in, but it seems like that wouldn't be convenient for them; may we set up a call? Do you have a secure line? We said we didn't have a secure line in the transition that we knew of. So I said: Well, why don't we use your secure line at your embassy? They said: Let's not do that. . . . [T]hey wanted to convey information to General Flynn. It was their information. How they conveyed that information was up to them. So I assumed that there was a secure way that people communicated and he wanted to have that information communicated in that way.*[4567]

(U) The Committee asked Kushner whether he had ever taken electronic surveillance precautions during meetings with Russian officials, such as asking participants to leave their phones outside the room.[4568] He did not recall having done so in his meeting with Kislyak, but said that at some point he became aware of technological vulnerabilities, and that "once I did, I obviously started taking different precautions in meetings. But I don't recall at what point that existed."[4569]

[redacted]

[4565] (U) Based on communications between the attendees, the Committee determined that that the meeting took place on November 30, although Kushner indicated to the Committee that it occurred on December 1, the date for which the meeting was originally planned. Text Message, Kushner to Bannon, November 30, 2016 (NSSCI00000145) ("Just left to meet ambassador"); *see* Written Statement, Kushner, July 24, 2017. However, last minute travel by Kushner forced them to hold the meeting two days early. Emails, Berkowitz, Vargas, and Kuznetsov, November 29–30, 2016 (AB-SSCI-0000016–18). According to Kushner, Steve Bannon was also invited to the meeting, but did not end up attending. Kushner Tr., pp. 67, 71; *see also* Calendar invitation, Kushner, Bannon, Flynn, and Nasim, November 30, 2016 (NSSCI00000088). Avi Berkowitz indicated to the Committee that he was responsible for escorting Kislyak into Trump Tower for the meeting on November 30. Written Responses, Berkowitz, July 5, 2017.

[4566] (U) Written Statement, Kushner, July 24, 2017.

[4567] (U) Kushner Tr., pp. 63–65.

[4568] (U) Kushner Tr. II, pp. 136–137.

[4569] (U) *Ibid.*

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[redacted]

(U) During their meeting, Kushner asked Kislyak to provide him with a point of contact who had a direct line to Putin. Kushner told the Committee:

> *What I realized very quickly from that was that in order to be successful in a lot of these things is that you don't want to let a lot of these disagreements or problems or opportunities get caught up in the morass of diplomatic protocol with diplomat who knows nothing talking to diplomat who knows nothing, basically having lunch.*
>
> *So what I found actually to be very successful so far is that by having the ability to have somebody who can get you quick answers on things and who can give you insight into what the leader of a different country is thinking, and obviously being able to do that on a confidential basis without fear of that getting out into the press, it's been very—I found it to be very productive.*[4571]

(U) According to Hope Hicks:

> *Jared came away from the meeting with the feeling that Ambassador Kislyak wasn't an influential player and somebody that was going to be directly involved in any future relationship with official representatives. He kind of felt like it was a waste of time. So when he followed up asking for a second meeting, it was like: I'm not doing that. But he sent Avi, because Kislyak said he had a message for Jared. So Avi went. The message was that he would like him to meet with this Russian banker.*[4572]

[redacted]

iii. (U) Kislyak Seeks a Follow-Up Meeting and Recommends Kushner Meet with Gorkov for a "Direct Line" to Putin

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4570 [redacted]
4571 (U) Kushner Tr., pp. 74–75.
4572 (U) Hicks Tr., pp. 88–89.
4573 [redacted]

[redacted]

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(U) On December 6, 2016, Ambassador Kislyak's office reached out to Kushner through Kushner's assistant, Vargas, asking for a second meeting in New York the following day, December 7.[4574] Kushner told Vargas that Avi Berkowitz, another of Kushner's assistants, would follow up with Kuznetsov on the meeting.[4575]

(U) On December 10, Berkowitz had a brief call with an individual from the Russian Embassy to discuss the meeting request.[4576] Berkowitz described the Embassy as being "persistent" in requesting that Kushner meet with Kislyak "to receive a message," but Berkowitz repeatedly demurred.[4577] According to Berkowitz, the Embassy was "hesitant at first, but ultimately willing" to meet with him instead of Kushner.[4578] On December 11, 2016, Berkowitz received a WhatsApp message letting him know that Kislyak's Chief of Staff, identified only by the first name Dmitry, would be contacting him to set up a time for a meeting with Kislyak in New York.[4579] After Dmitry messaged him, Berkowitz responded that Kushner would not be available to meet, but that he (Berkowitz) would be.[4580] The two eventually agreed to meet the next day at Trump Tower.[4581]

(U) At around 11:30 a.m., Berkowitz met Kislyak and Kislyak's aide on 56th Street and escorted them into Trump Tower, where he had secured a conference room on the 15th or 16th floor.[4582] According to Berkowitz, the meeting lasted only a minute or two.[4583] Kislyak only wanted to provide the name of another Russian official with direct access to Putin, as Kushner had requested during their first meeting:

> *[T]he message was something to the effect of that he would like or someone would like for Jared to meet with a Sergei Gorkov, who has a direct line to President Putin or Putin, something of that variety.*

[4574] (U) Email, Vargas to Kushner, December 6, 2016 (AB-SSCI-0000053).
[4575] (U) Email, Kushner to Vargas and Berkowitz, December 6, 2016 (AB-SSCI-0000054).
[4576] (U) Written Responses, Berkowitz, July 5, 2017.
[4577] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Avrahm Berkowitz, February 21, 2018, pp. 109–113.
[4578] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 114.
[4579] (U) Text Messages, "Dmitry" and Berkowitz, December 11, 2016 (AB-SSCI-0000001).
[4580] (U) Text Messages, "Dmitry" and Berkowitz, December 11, 2016 (AB-SSCI-0000002).
[4581] (U) Text Messages, "Dmitry" and Berkowitz, December 11, 2016 (AB-SSCI-0000002–3).
[4582] (U) Berkowitz Tr., pp. 120–125. At 7:19 a.m. that morning, "Dmitry" texted Berkowitz that Kislyak had an "urgent unexpected circumstance" and needed to move the meeting to 11:30 a.m. Text Messages, "Dmitry" and Berkowitz, December 12, 2016 (AB-SSCI-0000004).
[4583] (U) Berkowitz Tr., pp. 124.

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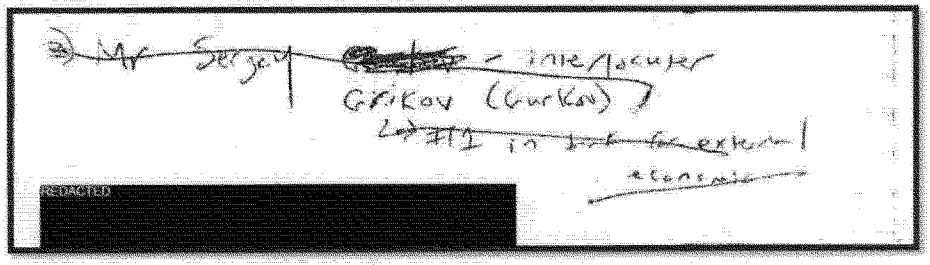
[redacted]

Then I actually asked the ambassador: Is that it? Because I was confused that a meeting would be necessary for that message. He sort of sheepishly responded: Yes, it was. I walked him and his aide out, and that was that meeting.[4584]

(U) Berkowitz said he had not previously heard of Gorkov, and his notes from this time period identify Gorkov's position as "#1 in bank for external economic."[4585]



[redacted] Since 2016, Sergey Gorkov has been the Chairman of Vnesheconombank (VEB), a Russian state-owned bank that was sanctioned on July 16, 2014, in response to Russia's destabilization of Ukraine and annexation of Crimea.[4586] Gorkov was appointed to his position at VEB by Putin.[4587] According to press reports, Gorkov is a graduate of the FSB Academy in Moscow, which is chartered to train Russian intelligence officers to serve in Russia's Federal

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[4584] **(U)** *Ibid.*, pp. 124–125. Berkowitz said he could not recall the Russian side using Gorkov's name other than during his in-person meeting with Kislyak. *Ibid.*, pp. 133–134. Berkowits's WhatsApp communications with a Russian Embassy employee setting up the time for the Gorkov meeting and the communications with Gorkov's aide after the meeting similarly did not make any direct reference to Gorkov or VEB.

[4585] **(U)** *Ibid.*, pp. 125–127, 130–131; *see* Handwritten notes, Berkowitz (AB-SSCI-0000028). Berkowitz told the Committee that he did not specifically recall making the note, and said that it was possible he made it during the meeting or that he may have made it after conducting an internet search to learn more about Gorkov. Berkowitz Tr., pp. 125–127.

[4586] **(U)** Treasury, "Announcement of Treasury Sanctions on Entities Within the Financial Services and Energy Sectors of Russia, Against Arms or Related Materiel Entities, and those Undermining Ukraine's Sovereignty," July 16, 2014. VEB has in the past been used as a non-official cover platform for the Russian Foreign Intelligence Service, SVR. *See* U.S. Attorney's Office, Southern District of New York, "Evgeny Buryakov Pleads Guilty In Manhattan Federal Court In Connection With Conspiracy To Work For Russian Intelligence," March 11, 2016.

[4587] **(U)** Treasury, "Announcement of Treasury Sanctions on Entities Within the Financial Services and Energy Sectors of Russia, Against Arms or Related Materiel Entities, and those Undermining Ukraine's Sovereignty," July 16, 2014.

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Security Service (FSB).[4588] [redacted]

(U) On December 8, 2016, American businessman Robert Foresman[4590] learned from VEB Deputy Chairman, Nikolai Tsekhomsky, that Gorkov was traveling to the United States in order to "meet with Wall Street . . . in the aftermath of the election to talk about investment climate in Russia and what the new U.S. political dynamic could mean for U.S./Russia business dialog and for outlook for relations with Russia."[4591] Foresman was told: "Putin is aware of this trip, and Sergey [Gorkov] will be briefing him after the trip," and he understood from Tsekhomsky that Gorkov had access to Putin and "may be a very relevant player for this U.S./Russia business dialog going forward."[4592]

(U) Immediately before Gorkov and Tsekhomsky departed for the United States, Foresman met with them in Moscow.[4593] During the meeting, Foresman and Gorkov discussed whether the incoming Trump administration really represented a "new era" in bilateral relations between the United States and Russia, although Foresman said that he did not recall any discussions of sanctions.[4594]

iv. (U) Kushner Meets with Gorkov

(U) Berkowitz told Kushner about the potential Gorkov meeting, and Kushner agreed to take it.[4595] Berkowitz then coordinated logistics with the Russian Embassy, and they settled on December 13 at 4:00 p.m. at Colony Capital.[4596]

(U) Although Kushner had specifically asked for an interlocutor with direct access to Putin, Kushner said that he only took the meeting in response to Ambassador Kislyak's continued efforts to set up another meeting, crediting a desire to avoid being "rude to the Russian ambassador and inadvertently insult Russia." Kushner explained that he saw less urgency for

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[4588] (U) Tom Winter and Robert Windrem, "Kushner Met With Russian Banker Who Is Putin Crony, Spy School Grad," *NBC News*, May 27, 2017.

[4589] [redacted]

[4590] (U) Robert Foresman is an American investment bank executive with longstanding ties to Russia and well-connected Russian individuals. *See infra* Vol. 5, Sec. III.K.4.

[4591] (U) Foresman Tr., pp. 117–121.

[4592] (U) Foresman Tr., pp. 117–121.

[4593] (U) Foresman Tr., pp. 123–131.

[4594] (U) *Ibid.* The discussions between Foresman and Gorkov are described *infra* Vol. 5, Sec. III.K.4.v.

[4595] (U) Emails, Berkowitz and Kushner, et al., December 12, 2016 (NSSCI00000107–108).

[4596] (U) Calendar invitation, Kushner and Berkowitz, December 13, 2016 (NSSCI00000111) ("Meeting: Sergey Gorkov"); Text messages, "Dmitry" and Berkowitz, December 12–13, 2016 (AB-SSCI0000005–AB-SSCI0000010). Colony Capital is an investment firm run by Thomas Barrack.

[redacted]

himself to meet with Russian officials because Rex Tillerson was "coming on board, [and] had a better relationship with Russia than I'll ever have."[4597]

(U) According to Kushner, Gorkov began the meeting by presenting him with two gifts: a bag of soil from Kushner's grandparents' hometown of Novogrudok, Belarus, and a painting made by children in the same town.[4598] Kushner recalled:

> *Then he basically said: Look, we're excited about the new relationship. I know President Putin is very frustrated with how his relationship with America has been. I'm friends with him. I think that for Russia and America there's a lot of opportunity. I run this big bank. This is what I do.*
>
> *He told me a lot about his bank, about the global economy. I gave my same spiel, basically saying: Look, right now I think there's a lot of opportunity in the world, things could be different under President Trump, again he wants peace, he wants more trade, all these different things. You know, basic get-to-know-you meeting, but not—very superficial, probably lasted 20, 25 minutes.*
>
> *In that meeting we did not talk about my business. We didn't talk about any financial transactions. It was just kind of an overall meeting. So again, never followed up again after that, not very eventful.*[4599]

(U) Kushner said he was uncertain of Gorkov's intentions at the meeting:

> *He just said to me that Putin was a friend of his. So he didn't directly—he was not very—he wasn't very explicit in that. Look, it may have been that that's what he was there to do. It may not have been. Maybe he's been a friend of the ambassador who he wanted to get a meeting with me, for all I know, so to just get a favor. I have no idea.*[4600]

(U) Kushner also told the Committee that he did not know about VEB's sanctions prior to the meeting, nor did the issue of sanctions come up during the meeting.[4601] When asked whether he had asked anybody to do research on Gorkov's background, Kushner responded that

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[4597] **(U)** Kushner Tr., p. 87.
[4598] **(U)** *Ibid.*, p. 82. The Committee notes that, given the eight hour time difference between Moscow and New York, Gorkov would have had less than a day to acquire the gifts for Kushner before departing for the United States. Berkowitz said he logged the gifts with the Transition. Berkowitz Tr., p. 155.
[4599] **(U)** Kushner Tr., pp. 82–83.
[4600] **(U)** *Ibid.*, pp. 84–85.
[4601] **(U)** *Ibid.*, p. 85.

[redacted]

he did not.[4602] However, Kushner's aide, Berkowitz, told the Committee that he did, in fact, conduct an internet search on Gorkov's background "when Jared asked me . . . who the person was."[4603] Berkowitz said that his search showed that Gorkov was a banker, but he did not recall discovering that Gorkov faced sanctions by the United States.[4604] Berkowitz also said that Kushner did not ask for any preparation materials before the meeting with Gorkov.[4605]

(U) Kushner described his meeting with Gorkov as primarily about future diplomatic relations between the United States and Russia.[4606] However, VEB released a statement to the press indicating that the meeting was business-related:

> *During 2016, when preparing the new Vnesheconombank's strategy, the Bank's CEOs repeatedly met with representatives of the world's leading financial institutions in Europe, Asia and America. In the course of negotiations the parties discussed the business practices applied by foreign development banks, as well as most promising business lines and sectors. The roadshow meetings devoted to Vnesheconombank's Strategy 2021 were held with representatives of major US banks and business circles, including the CEO of Kushner Companies Mr. Jared Kushner.*[4607]

[redacted]

[4602] **(U)** *Ibid.*, p. 81.
[4603] **(U)** Berkowitz Tr., p. 150.
[4604] **(U)** *Ibid.*, pp. 150–151.
[4605] **(U)** *Ibid.*, p. 150.
[4606] **(U)** Kushner Tr., pp. 82–83.
[4607] **(U)** Thomas Frank and Marshall Cohen, "Russian banker who met with Jared Kushner has ties to Putin," *CNN*, March 29, 2017; David Filipov, et al., "Explanations for Kushner's meeting with head of Kremlin-linked bank don't match up," *The Washington Post*, June 1, 2017; Patrick Reevell and Matthew Mosk, "Russian banker Sergey Gorkov brushes off questions about meeting with Jared Kushner," *ABC News*, June 1, 2017.
[4608] [redacted]

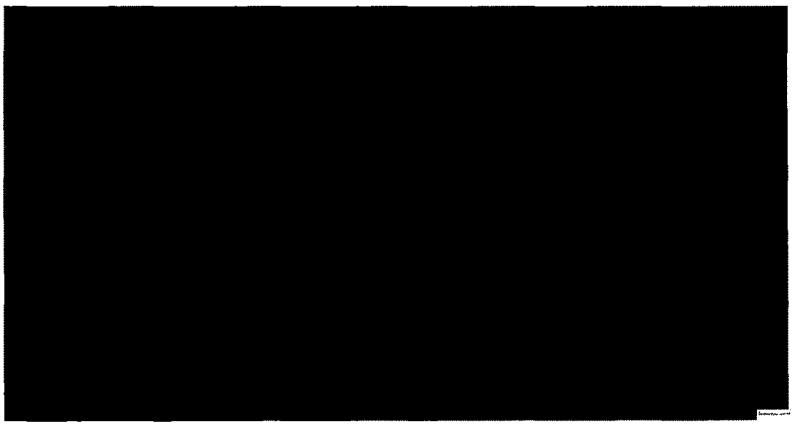
[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted] Immediately following the meeting between Kushner and Gorkov, Berkowitz received a text from an aide to Gorkov, [redacted], saying that Gorkov felt the meeting went well and that "[w]e will be in touch."[4609] Berkowitz replied saying "Same report here! Looking forward."[4610] Berkowitz, however, told the Committee he never discussed how the meeting went with Kushner, and he was merely attempting to be polite.[4611]

(U) As noted above, Foresman believed that Gorkov would be briefing Putin after the meeting. According to open source information, on December 14, 2016, the private aircraft which brought Gorkov to the United States traveled to Japan.[4612] On December 15 to December 16, Putin visited Japan, and reports indicated that Gorkov would join Putin there.[4613]

[redacted]



[redacted]

[4609] [redacted] Text messages, [redacted] and Berkowitz, December 13, 2016 (AB-SSCI-0000011); [redacted]

[4610] (U) *Ibid.*

[4611] (U) Berkowitz Tr., pp. 159–161.

[4612] (U) David Filipov, *et al.*, "Explanations for Kushner's meeting with head of Kremlin-linked bank don't match up," *The Washington Post*, June 1, 2017.

[4613] (U) *Ibid.*

[4614] [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

(U) On the morning of December 19, 2016, Gorkov's aide texted Berkowitz asking him to "[p]lease inform your side that the information about the meeting got a very positive response!"[4616] Berkowitz replied that he would do so, and Gorkov's aide told Berkowitz to "[l]et him know."[4617] Later that day, approximately ten hours later, Berkowitz responded that "I told him and he said: great! So thank you!"[4618] Berkowitz told the Committee that he had no recollection of speaking with Kushner related to this message.[4619]

(U) The next day, Gorkov's aide messaged Berkowitz that "we plan on our next visit in early Feb."[4620] Berkowitz responded, "[S]ee you then."[4621] Berkowitz and the aide intermittently exchanged short holiday greetings and a congratulatory note related to inauguration.[4622] The aide later asked Berkowitz if he could "arrange the meeting next week," but Berkowitz did not respond.[4623]

3. (U) Kirill Dmitriev Pursues Inroads to the Transition Team

(U) In addition to outreach through its officials, the Russian government also leveraged business leaders with Western ties to advance its foreign policy goals with the incoming administration.

(U) Some taskings for this activity came directly from Putin through quarterly meetings he held with a group of approximately 50 Russian oligarchs. According to Petr Aven, Chairman of the Board of Directors of Alfa Bank, during these meetings, oligarchs would receive

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4615 [redacted]

4616 (U) Text message, Ivanchenko to Berkowitz, December 19, 2016 (AB-SSCI-0000011)

4617 (U) Text messages, Ivanchenko and Berkowitz, December 19, 2016 (AB-SSCI-0000012)

4618 (U) Text messages, Berkowitz to Ivanchenko, December 19, 2016 (AB-SSCI-0000012)

4619 (U) Berkowitz Tr., p. 160. Kushner told the Committee that there "was no follow-up after that meeting." Kushner Tr. II, p. 129.

4620 (U) Text message, Ivanchenko to Berkowitz, December 20, 2016 (AB-SSCI-0000012).

4621 (U) Text message, Berkowitz to Ivanchenko, December 20, 2016 (AB-SSCI-0000012).

4622 (U) Text messages, Ivanchenko and Berkowitz, December 25, 2016–January 21, 2017 (AB-SSCI-0000013–14).

4623 (U) Text messages, Ivanchenko to Berkowitz, February 8–16, 2017 (AB-SSCI-0000015).

[redacted]

[redacted]

"suggestions or critiques" from Putin.[4624] Participants would treat such "suggestions" as directives from Putin, even if they were not explicitly stated as such, with the understanding that "there would be consequences . . . if [the oligarchs] did not follow through."[4625] At the fourth quarter 2016 meeting, Putin suggested to Aven that he believed the United States would seek to impose new sanctions on Aven or Alfa Bank.[4626] Putin "suggested" that Aven and Alfa Bank take steps to protect themselves, and noted the difficulty in making contacts within the incoming Trump administration.[4627] Aven said that Putin "expected him to try to respond to the concerns [Putin] had raised."[4628]

(U) Kirill Dmitriev, the CEO of the U.S.-sanctioned Russian Direct Investment Fund (RDIF), Russia's state-owned sovereign wealth fund, engaged in similar outreach to the Trump Transition.[4629] Like Aven, Dmitriev used multiple business contacts to try and make inroads with Trump Transition Team officials, described more fully below, based on his own direct tasking from Putin.

(U) The Committee notes that Dmitriev has direct access to Putin and frequently refers to Putin as his "boss."[4630]

[redacted]

[4624] (U) *SCO Report*, Vol. I, p. 146. The Committee did not interview Aven, but his efforts to engage the Transition Team are described in the *SCO Report*.
[4625] (U) *Ibid.*
[4626] (U) *Ibid.*
[4627] (U) *Ibid.*, Vol. I, pp. 146-147.
[4628] (U) *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 147.
[4629] (U) *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 147.
[4630] (U) *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 147.
[4631] [redacted]
[4632] (U) *Ibid.*

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

i. (U) Dmitriev Seeks Assistance from Nader to Contact Trump Transition

(U) The morning following the election, Kirill Dmitriev made the first of multiple attempts to reach out to members of Trump's inner circle.[4635] On November 9, 2016, Dmitriev sent a text to George Nader, a senior advisor to UAE Crown Prince Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, requesting a meeting with the "key people" in the incoming administration as soon as possible.[4636] RDIF, under Dmitriev's leadership, had co-invested in multiple projects with UAE sovereign wealth funds, which put Dmitriev in frequent contact with Nader.[4637]

- [redacted]

[redacted]

[4635] (U) *SCO Report*, Vol. I, p. 149.
[4636] (U) *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 150.
[4637] (U) *Ibid.*, Vol. I, pp. 147–148.
[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

(U) Nader had spent much of 2016 attempting to nurture contacts with both presidential campaigns, and keeping Dmitriev informed of his progress.[4640] For example, Nader participated in a meeting in August 2016 attended by Donald Trump Jr., Stephen Miller, Erik Prince, and Joel Zamel in which Nader discussed foreign policy matters and a potential social media campaign.[4641] Dmitriev and Nader discussed the possibility of Nader assisting Dmitriev in making contact with incoming Trump administration officials. Dmitriev asked Nader to help convey the message to incoming officials that, "we [Russia] want to start rebuilding the relationship in whatever is a comfortable pace for them. We understand all of the sensitivities and are not in a rush."[4642] Nader was told that Dmitriev and the Russian government had preferred that Trump win the presidency.[4643]

(U) Dmitriev then flew to New York that day to attend the World Chess Championship, which was being attended separately by Putin spokesperson Dmitry Peskov.[4644] In an effort to meet with Trump Transition officials, Dmitriev invited Nader to the tournament, specifically requesting that Nader invite Jared Kushner to the event so that Dmitriev could meet him.[4645] Dmitriev was eager for "a chance to see anyone from the Trump camp" in order to "start building for the future."[4646] Nader said that he did not pass along the invitation to Kushner.[4647] According to Nader, Dmitriev continued to raise with Nader the prospect of meeting Transition officials or others close to Trump, focusing particularly on Kushner and Donald Trump Jr.[4648]

[4639] (U) *Ibid.*

[4640] (U) *SCO Report*, Vol. I, p. 148. As noted above, George Nader, who was interviewed as part of the SCO's investigation, later pleaded guilty to transportation of a minor boy for purposes of illegal conduct and possession of child pornography. U.S. Attorney's Office, Eastern District of Virginia, "Man Pleads Guilty to Child Exploitation Crimes," January 13, 2020. Nader has also been charged with campaign finance crimes. *See* DOJ, "California CEO and Seven Others Charged in Multi-Billion Dollar Conduit Campaign Contribution Case," December 3, 2019.

[4641] (U) *See infra* Vol. 5, Sec. III.J.3.

[4642] (U) *SCO Report*, Vol. I, p. 150. Dmitriev also conveyed to Nader a willingness to conduct press interviews in which Dmitriev planned to convey optimism about the possibility of improved U.S.-Russia relations following Trump's election. *Ibid.*

[4643] (U) *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 148.

[4644] (U) *Ibid.*, Vol. 1, p. 150. According to the *SCO Report*, Dmitriev exchanged text messages with Russian businessman Andrey Guryev Jr., prior to leaving for the Championships. In their messages, Guryev wrote, "Go ahead, come to us for the chess. Trump received the invitation. There will be a total 'sold-out' [of the tournament if Trump attends] and uproar if he wins." Dmitriev responded, "My Arab friends are in close contact with him, I will ask." After Trump claimed victory, Guryev, Jr. messaged Dmitriev, "Well, it seems like this is it." Approximately one minute later, Guryev, Jr. wrote to Dmitriev, "Putin has won." *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 149.

[4645] (U) Vol. 1, p. 150.

[4646] (U) *Ibid.*

[4647] (U) *Ibid.*

[4648] (U) *Ibid.*

[redacted]

[redacted]

Nader said that Dmitriev informed him that he (Dmitriev) would also pursue other channels to reach Trump Transition Team officials.[4649]

ii. (U) Outreach through Rick Gerson

(U) Dmitriev subsequently tried other avenues to reach members of Trump's inner circle. In late November, UAE national security advisor Tahnoon bin Zayed connected Dmitriev to Rick Gerson, a New York hedge fund manager.[4650] Although Gerson and Dmitriev had never met, Gerson had a relationship with Muhammad bin Zayed and was a personal friend of Jared Kushner.[4651] Gerson told the Committee that Tahnoon bin Zayed made the introduction in order to make a business connection between the two men.[4652]

(U) Dmitriev called Gerson on December 1, 2016, and they talked for approximately 20 minutes.[4653] They also communicated via the private messaging application WhatsApp.[4654]

(U) According to Gerson, during the call they discussed several topics, including investments each had made in ride-sharing companies, and Gerson raised his interest in a ride-sharing company in India called OLA.[4655] That same day, Gerson sent Dmitriev a non-disclosure agreement related to a proposed OLA investment, followed the next day by an email that included an OLA investment summary that had been customized for RDIF.[4656] Although Dmitriev and RDIF sought to persuade Gerson that sanctions did not present an obstacle to doing business with RDIF, lawyers eventually advised Falcon Edge Capital against the deal because of U.S.-sanctioned VEB's relationship to RDIF.[4657]

[4649] (U) *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 151.
[4650] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Rick Gerson, October 19, 2018, pp. 8, 14–15.
[4651] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 8, 33.
[4652] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 16.
[4653] (U) WhatsApp Audio metadata, Dmitriev to Gerson, December 1, 2016 (GERSON_00000125). Gerson told the Committee and the FBI that he and Dmitriev had never met in person. Gerson Tr., p. 124. Although the *SCO Report* describes a conversation when the two men "met," *SCO Report*, Vol. I, p. 157, the Committee surmises that this is a reference to when they first spoke, and not necessarily an in-person meeting.
[4654] (U) [redacted] Gerson told the Committee that he "routinely" deleted his WhatsApp communications and could not produce them. Gerson Tr., p. 64.
[4655] (U) Gerson Tr., pp. 11–12.
[4656] (U) Email, Gerson to Dmitriev, December 1, 2016 (GERSON_00000373–418) (attaching NDA). The same day, Dmitriev returned the NDA with edits that included removing all references to the "Russian Direct Investment Fund" and replacing them only with the acronym "RDIF." Email, Dmitriev to Gerson, December 2, 2016 (GERSON_00000419–433).
[4657] (U) Gerson Tr., pp. 13–14, 32; *see also* Email, RDIF Legal to Schmidt, December 8, 2016 (GERSON_00000476) (discussing VEB, RDIF and sanctions); Email, RDIF General Counsel to Gerson, et al., January 6, 2016 (GERSON_00000486) (same). Gerson said that if RDIF invested in OLA, other sovereign wealth funds would automatically invest as part of a consortium, including funds in Abu Dhabi (Mubadala) and other Gulf states. *See* Gerson Tr., pp. 30–31.

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted] Despite Falcon Edge's decision not to engage in a business relationship with RDIF, Dmitriev continued to [redacted] in order to gain influence with the Trump Administration. [redacted]

[redacted]

(U) Although the purpose of the December 1 call was ostensibly business, Gerson said that during the call, Dmitriev also discussed a desire to have "better relations with the U.S."[4660] Dmitriev said that he was optimistic about the future of U.S.-Russia relations and made references to his "boss," which Gerson understood to be a reference to President Putin.[4661] Dmitriev told Gerson that Putin had tasked him with developing a reconciliation plan for United States-Russia relations.[4662] As a result, Gerson understood that Dmitriev had "two roles": "investments through the [RDIF] and being tasked" by Putin to "develop a reconciliation plan."[4663]

4658 [redacted]
4659 (U) *Ibid.*
4660 (U) Gerson Tr., p. 20.
4661 (U) *Ibid.*
4662 [redacted]
4663 (U) *Ibid.*

[redacted]

(U) Dmitriev also asked Gerson whom he should meet with in the incoming administration in order to advance this goal.[4664] Gerson committed to talking with members of the Transition Team, including Kushner and Flynn, to determine who the "key person or people" would be to discuss matters such as reconciliation with Russia, joint security concerns, and economic issues.[4665] Gerson also said that he informed Dmitriev that he was good friends with Kushner:

> *He told me he was interested in coming to the U.S. and speaking to everyone that he could. It wasn't just Mr. Kushner, and, in fact, he told me had been regularly traveling to the U.S. before then. And he went—and that he wanted to start to meet the new people during the transition or after.*[4666]

(U) After their conversation, Dmitriev emailed Gerson a number of press articles in which Dmitriev made positive comments about the possibility of rapprochement between the two countries following Trump's election.[4667] According to records obtained by the SCO, Dmitriev informed Gerson that if Russia was "approached with respect and willingness to understand our position, we can have Major Breakthroughs quickly."[4668]

(U) Although Gerson said that Dmitriev did not ask for advice, in subsequent messages, Gerson nevertheless offered his perspective on how to improve the relationship between the United States and Russia.[4669] Gerson recalled that he shared several ideas with Dmitriev. These included access to medical care for children in Syria, joint efforts to prevent nuclear terrorism, and Russian investment that would provide U.S. jobs in "hard hit" areas.[4670] According to Gerson, Dmitriev told him that the suggestions "actually made a lot of sense and he agreed," adding that he (Dmitriev) "was going to give these ideas to his boss."[4671]

(U) Both Gerson and Dmitriev understood that the plan would be provided to senior officials on both sides. Dmitriev "told Gerson that he was reporting directly to Putin and that the reconciliation plan would be reviewed by Putin."[4672] Gerson also "represented to Dmitriev that he knew Jared Kushner, Michael Flynn and Steve Bannon."[4673] Gerson further "told

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[4664] (U) *SCO Report*, Vol. I, p. 157.
[4665] (U) *Ibid.*
[4666] (U) Gerson Tr., p. 21–22.
[4667] (U) Email, Dmitriev to Gerson, December 1, 2016 (GERSON_00000380).
[4668] (U) *SCO Report*, Vol. I, p. 157; [redacted]
[4669] (U) Gerson Tr., p. 23–24.
[4670] (U) *Ibid.*
[4671] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 24–25.
[4672] (U) [redacted]
[4673] (U) *Ibid.*

[redacted]

[redacted]

Dmitriev that he would consult with Flynn and Bannon" on the plan and would "give it to the transition team," and specifically Kushner.[4674]

(U) In later December, Gerson told a colleague, "I'm in constant touch with Kirill the head guy. He told me he's under direct instruction from Putin to engage with U.S. firms."[4675] [redacted] In addition to their December 1 phone call, Gerson called Dmitriev on January 5, 2017, and they spoke for approximately 15 minutes.[4677]

(U) Gerson told the Committee that, at some point after their initial discussions in December, he took the collective ideas for U.S.-Russia reconciliation that he and Dmitriev discussed and put them in a list, which he sent to Dmitriev.[4678] According to Gerson, Dmitriev responded, having added an additional bullet to the list of ideas dealing with "something about Ukraine. Something following the Minsk Agreement on Ukraine. I didn't know what the Minsk Agreement of Ukraine was."[4679] The precise timing of these exchanges is somewhat unclear.

(U) On January 17, Dmitriev sent the plan to Gerson over WhatsApp[4680]:

[4674] (U) *Ibid.*; Gerson Tr., pp. 131–132.
[4675] (U) Email, Gerson to Udwadia, December 29, 2016 ([redacted]) ("I want to make this work and do a lot with [RDIF] going forward.").
[4676] [redacted]
[4677] (U) WhatsApp Audio metadata, Dmitriev to Gerson, January 5, 2017 (GERSON_00000124).
[4678] (U) Gerson Tr., pp. 131–132.
[4679] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 132–134.
[4680] (U) January 17, 2017, text message from Dmitriev to Gerson. During his interview, Gerson said he no longer had a copy of the document. Gerson Tr., p. 133. This copy was produced by Gerson to the Committee after his interview, with permission from SCO, which had obtained it separately and provided it to Gerson's counsel.

[redacted]

[redacted]

COMMITTEE SENSITIVE – RUSSIA INVESTIGATION ONLY

Resending the 5 point plan with proper numbering of points :):
Rick, here are some preliminary thoughts (including yours :)) on US Russia cooperation per our earlier discussion - we believe that is is [sic] a win-win approach. I plan to be in the US January 27-30 to further discuss with you and the most senior relevant people from the US side:

1. Jointly fighting terrorism and significantly enhancing our coordination in that area.
- setting up military coordination and joint actions in Syria
- resuming work of intelligence agencies of info sharing on terrorism
- a joint special forces mission where together US and Russia takes out a key ISIS person or place or frees an area then announces it after
- a massive joint humanitarian effort in Syria. A joint project to fund and build hospitals and emergency medical centers in Syria in both rebel and govt areas or at least to jointly flood both areas with medical supplies and basic food. Especially medical and nutrition for children

2. A serious anti-WMD joint effort to reduce WMD by US and Russia and prevent WMD terrorism across nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons. Jointly going after and reducing the odds of nuclear terrorism security as the profound risk to the world. Rick is involved with the Nuclear Threat Initiative which Warren Buffett funds and is chaired by former Senator Sam Nunn who was chairman of the armed services committee. This group already has high level Russian involvement so it's an easy place to collaborate in a high profile way.

...

3. Developing win win economic and investment initiatives that will be supported by both electorates.
- a visit by top US businesses to Russia to highlight existing US successes in Russia and joint future opportunities;
- joint RDIF fund with OPIC to support US investment in Russia to make US businesses competitive vs subsidized Chinese businesses in Russia
- Russian company builds a plant with RDIF financing to serve the US market in the US Midwest creating real jobs for a hard hit area with high unemployment. US production by foreign companies a focus of the new administration
  - -highlighting benefits of US Russia business cooperation through media

4. Having an honest and open and continual dialogue on differences and concerns
- resolving Ukraine crises through fulfillment of Minsk agreements and ensuring Ukraine fulfills its obligations
- working group between the State Department and Russian Ministry of Foreign affairs to address key differences

5. Ensuring there is proper communication and trust among all of the key people from each side
- a small group with 2-3 people from each side authorized to finalize an action plan for a major improvement in the US Russia relationship
- coordination across major agencies and government bodies to achieve tangible impact in the next 9-12 months
- well prepared meeting between the two leaders with several breakthroughs on key issues as per above.

[redacted]

COMMITTEE SENSITIVE – RUSSIA INVESTIGATION ONLY

[redacted]

(U) In an email discussion about the reconciliation plan, Dmitriev told Gerson, "This is FYI so that you have the whole picture. The 2 pager is supported from our side and you are the only one who has it from your side—as one of the creators :)" Gerson replied "Excellent. I understand and am on it."[4681] Asked if he thought Dmitriev had shared the list with anyone, Gerson said that Dmitriev referred to "his boss," which Gerson assumed was a reference to Putin.[4682]

(U) After receiving the updated plan from Dmitriev, Gerson instructed an assistant to convert the five-point plan on "potential areas of cooperation between the US and Russia" into a formal document.[4683] Gerson also added an introductory text: "Below are potential win-win steps for achieving a breakthrough in the relationship between the U.S. and Russia through respectful communication and partnership in critically important shared goals."[4684]

(U) Gerson said that he went to see Kushner at Kushner's office in New York the next day, January 18, 2017, as Kushner was getting ready to leave for the inauguration.[4685] Gerson gave a copy of the document to Kushner, and told him briefly about Dmitriev's background, including that Dmitriev had "connections," but did not recall mentioning that it had been approved by Putin. According to Gerson, Kushner did not know who Dmitriev was and only glanced at the document after Gerson had handed it to him.[4686] Gerson said Kushner then put the document in a file that was on his desk and said that he would "give it to the right people."[4687]

(U) On January 18, Gerson received two short calls from Dmitriev.[4688] The Committee was unable to determine whether these calls took place before or after Gerson delivered the document to Kushner, but given the timing, assesses they were almost certainly related to the plan. Gerson said that Dmitriev knew that Gerson had given the document to Kushner.[4689]

(U) Kushner described what he did with the document:

Rick kind of gave me something that he thought were his thoughts on U.S./Russia—Rick really wasn't involved in Russia, but he gave it to me. What I did . . . with that was, he gave me two copies. . . . I wasn't that involved with the

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[4681] [redacted]
[4682] (U) Gerson Tr., p. 132.
[4683] [redacted]
[4684] (U) *Ibid.* The two exchanged seven emails with drafts of the document.
[4685] (U) Gerson Tr., pp. 133–134.
[4686] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 134–135; *SCO Report*, Vol. I, p. 158; FBI, FD-302, Gerson 6/15/2018.
[4687] (U) Gerson Tr., p. 134 ("I never followed-up with him. He never told me who ended up looking at it, if anyone.").
[4688] (U) WhatsApp Audio metadata, Dmitriev to Gerson, January 18, 2017 (GERSON_00000124).
[4689] (U) Gerson Tr., pp. 135–136.

[redacted]

[redacted]

Russia file, so I gave one copy to Bannon and one copy to Rex Tillerson, who were kind of more involved in Russia than I was, and so and that was kind of the last of it.[4690]

(U) On January 19, 2017, Dmitriev sent Nader a copy of the document, telling him that it was "a view from our side that I discussed in my meetings on the islands with you and our friends. Please share with them—we believe this is a good foundation to start from."[4691]

(U) On January 26, 2017, Dmitriev informed Gerson that his "boss" had asked whether the Trump administration had any feedback regarding the proposal.[4692] Dmitriev said that he was facing pressure to begin meeting with U.S. officials.[4693] "We do not want to rush things and move at a comfortable speed. At the same time, my boss asked me to try to have the key US meetings in the next two weeks if possible."[4694] Dmitriev also informed Gerson that the two Presidents were to speak by phone that Saturday, and that the information was "very confidential."[4695]

(U) The same day, Dmitriev reached out to Nader emphasizing the need to continue trying to establish a back channel for communications between the United States and Russia. In a text message to Nader, Dmitriev said that he had seen his "boss" the day before, and that Putin had "emphasized that this is a great priority for us and that we need to build this communication channel to avoid bureaucracy."[4696] Two days later, Dmitriev wrote Nader asking if he could "confirm to my boss" that "your friends," an apparent reference to the Trump Administration, would use information contained in the document provided by Gerson to Kushner in the planned call between Trump and Putin.[4697] Nader responded, "Definitely paper was . . . submitted by Rick [Gerson] and me. They took it seriously!"[4698]

(U) Following the January 28 call between Trump and Putin, Dmitriev wrote to Nader informing him that, "the call went very well. My boss wants me to continue making some public statements that us [sic] Russia cooperation is good and important."[4699] Gerson also wrote to

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[4690] **(U)** Kushner Tr. II, pp 114–115.
[4691] **(U)** *SCO Report*, Vol. I, p. 158. Dmitriev's reference to the "meetings on the islands" is almost certainly about the Seychelles meetings with Erik Prince, described *infra*.
[4692] **(U)** *Ibid.* A probable reference to Putin, given Dmitriev's historical use of the word.
[4693] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[4694] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[4695] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[4696] **(U)** *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 159.
[4697] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[4698] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[4699] **(U)** *Ibid.*

[redacted]

[redacted]

Dmitriev following the call to comment on how well it went, and Dmitriev responded that their document "played an important role."[4700]

iii. (U) Seychelles Meetings

(U) In addition to using Gerson as a channel of communication, Dmitriev also made contact with individuals perceived to have significant influence in the incoming Trump administration, such as Erik Prince. On January 11, 2017, Prince met with Dmitriev in the Seychelles, where they discussed opportunities to improve the U.S.-Russia bilateral relationship under the incoming Trump administration. The meeting was brokered, in part, by Nader. Prince later relayed the substance of the meeting to Bannon.

(U) Several aspects of Prince's activities in this time period align closely with the Dmitriev outreach through Gerson described above. In particular, Gerson was also in touch with Bannon, Nader, and Dmitriev during the same time that Prince was in contact with them.[4701] Further, Dmitriev associated the five points on cooperation with discussions he had on "the islands," presumably a reference to the Seychelles.[4702] The Committee's ability to investigate these events, however, was significantly hampered by a lack of cooperation from Prince.[4703] In his only response to Committee requests for documents, Prince offered a brief and deceptive description of his meetings in the Seychelles.

> *On or around Jan 11, 2017 I traveled to the Seychelles to meet with some potential customers from the UAE for the logistics business of which I'm Chairman. After the meeting they mentioned a guy I should meet who was also in town to see them, a Kirill Dmitriev from Russia who ran some sort of hedge fund. I met him in the hotel bar and we chatted on topics ranging from oil and commodity prices to how much his country wished for resumption of a normal trade relationship with the USA. I remember telling him that if Franklin*

[4700] (U) *Ibid.* Nader and Gerson met with Kushner at the White House in the following months. During a meeting on February 15, 2017, Nader shared a "conspiracy" theory with Kushner and Bannon that foreign intelligence services in the United Kingdom had worked throughout the Transition and after inauguration with "the Deep State in the U.S." who were "trying to find stuff about [Trump]." Gerson Tr., pp. 84–86. According to Gerson, Kushner dismissed the theory, and Bannon did not react before he was quickly pulled into another meeting. Gerson said that the Steele dossier "wasn't specifically referred to" during the meeting. Nader had two subsequent meeting in the White House which Gerson facilitated, including in mid-April 2017 related to Qatar and Saudi Arabia and early May 2017 related to the UAE. *Ibid.*, pp. 90–92, 96.

[4701] (U) Gerson told the Committee that he never met or communicated with Prince. *Ibid.*, pp. 9–10.

[4702] (U) *SCO Report*, Vol. I, p. 158.

[4703] (U) On November 8, 2017, the Committee issued a subpoena to Erik Prince requesting from him documents related to the Committee's investigation. Prince responded on November 22, 2017, providing approximately 25 pages of material. Only the cover letter, described above, was relevant to his meetings in the Seychelles.

[redacted]

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Roosevelt could work with Joseph Stalin to defeat Nazi Fascism then certainly Donald Trump could work with Vladimir Putin to defeat Islamic Fascism. The meeting ended after a maximum of 30 minutes. I've had no communication or dealings with him or any of his colleagues before or after that encounter last January.[4704]

a. (U) Initial Contacts

(U) On January 3, 2017, Nader traveled to New York where he met multiple times with Prince.[4705] During the course of their discussions, Nader and Prince discussed Dmitriev, and Nader made clear to Prince that the Russians were interested in building relationships with the incoming Trump administration.[4706] Although Prince's written statement to the Committee described his meeting with Dmitriev as an unplanned encounter, during Prince's discussions with Nader in New York, Nader described Dmitriev's explicit request for Nader to introduce him to incoming administration officials.[4707] Nader then asked whether Prince would be willing to meet with Dmitriev.[4708] Prince replied that he would have to think about it and speak with Transition Team officials.[4709]

(U) After their dinner on January 3, Nader sent Prince a Wikipedia entry on Dmitriev to provide further background.[4710] Nader then sent a separate message to Dmitriev informing him that he had just met with "some key people within the family and inner circle," a reference to Prince.[4711] Nader told Dmitriev that he had spoken highly of Dmitriev to Prince, and said that Prince needed Dmitriev's bio.[4712] Dmitriev complied, sending Nader a two-page biography along with a list of positive quotes about Donald Trump that he had given to media outlets.[4713]

[4704] (U) Letter, Prince to SSCI, November 22, 2017. On March 25, 2019, the Committee served an additional subpoena requesting that Erik Prince produce documents and appear before the Committee. Prince's attorney responded on April 7, informing the Committee that Prince would not appear before the Committee, and that Prince was invoking his Fifth Amendment right against self-incrimination. Letter, Schwartz to SSCI, April 7, 2019.
[4705] (U) *SCO Report*, Vol. I, p. 151.
[4706] (U) *Ibid.*
[4707] (U) *Ibid.*
[4708] (U) *Ibid.*
[4709] (U) *Ibid.* In his testimony to the HPSCI, Prince insisted that he did not travel to the Seychelles for a meeting with somebody from Russia. "No, no, let me clarify. I didn't fly there to meet any Russian guy." Transcript of the Interview of Erik Prince, HPSCI, November 30, 2017, p. 52.
[4710] (U) *Ibid.*
[4711] (U) *Ibid.*
[4712] (U) *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 152
[4713] (U) *Ibid.*

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(U) The next morning, January 4, Nader forwarded Dmitriev's information as attachments to Prince.[4714] Prince opened the attachments while in Trump Tower that day talking with Transition officials and waiting to meet with Steve Bannon. Although Prince spent three hours at Trump Tower that day, he said that he could not remember whether he actually met with Bannon.[4715]

b. (U) Inviting Dmitriev

(U) Shortly thereafter, arrangements were made for Prince to meet with Dmitriev in the Seychelles.[4716]

[redacted]

(U) Prince booked his flight to the Seychelles on January 7, 2017.[4719] In his testimony to the HPSCI, Prince asserted that he had only gone to the Seychelles to discuss business with members of the UAE royal family.

> *I don't remember who called me. I think it was one of his schedulers. And just said, "His Highness would like to see you if you can come out to the Seychelles."*[4720]

(U) Nevertheless, on January 8, 2017, Nader, having apparent knowledge of Prince's plans to be in the Seychelles, informed Dmitriev that he had a "pleasant surprise" for him; specifically a meeting with a "special guest" from the "New Team," a reference to Prince.[4721] In a follow up message to Nader, Dmitriev sought assurances that a meeting with Prince was

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[4714] (U) *Ibid.*
[4715] (U) *Ibid.*
[4716] (U) *Ibid.*
[4717] [redacted]
[4718] (U) *Ibid.*
[4719] (U) *SCO Report*, Vol. I, p. 152.
[4720] (U) Transcript of the Interview of Erik Prince, HPSCI, November 30, 2017, p. 22.
[4721] (U) *SCO Report,* Vol. I, p. 152

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worthwhile.[4722] Nader assured Dmitriev that Prince held a position of influence with the incoming administration, writing that, "This guy [Prince] is designated by Steve [Bannon] to meet you! I know him and he is very very well connected and trusted by the New Team. His sister is now [Secretary] of Education."[4723]

[redacted]

(U) According to Gerson, at some point before the meeting, Dmitriev reached out to him to inquire about Prince:

> *He had mentioned Erik Prince and had asked me if I knew him or what I thought about him. He would ask me like a reference check on a bunch of people. He'd throw out names, maybe 15 names. What do you think of dut-dut-dut-dut, and I told him that I didn't know Erik Prince. I never met him. But I had heard good things about his sister, who had done work in school-choice reform. I don't remember if he had mentioned to me he was going to meet him or he had met him. But he did tell me that he was in contact with him.*[4726]

(U) According to Nader, Prince led him to believe that Bannon was aware of Prince's trip to meet with Dmitriev, and Nader understood from Prince that any information would be passed on to the Transition team.[4727] However, Bannon denied knowing about the meeting.[4728]

c. (U) Meetings Between Prince and Dmitriev

[4722] **(U)** *Ibid.*, Vol. I, pp. 152–153.
[4723] **(U)** *SCO Report*, Vol. I, p. 153.
[4724] [redacted]
[4725] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[4726] **(U)** Gerson Tr., pp. 63–64. In his interview, Gerson said that the conversation about Prince took place before Prince met Dmitriev in the Seychelles. However, Gerson was unable to confirm the timeline having deleted the WhatsApp messages in which he communicated with Dmitriev. *Ibid.*, p. 64. According to the *SCO Report*, this exchange took place on January 9, 2017; two days before Dmitriev and Prince first met. *SCO Report*, Vol. I, p. 157.
[4727] **(U)** *SCO Report*, Vol. I, p. 153.
[4728] **(U)** Bannon Tr., pp. 352–353.

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(U) The SCO determined that Prince met twice in the Seychelles with Dmitriev. Prince first met with Dmitriev on January 11, 2017, in Nader's villa at the Four Seasons Resort in Seychelles with Nader present, and that meeting lasted approximately 30-45 minutes.[4729] During the meeting, Prince criticized the Obama administration, and told Dmitriev that he looked forward to a new era of cooperation and conflict resolution.[4730] The topic of Russian interference in the 2016 election was not discussed.[4731]

(U) Prince and Dmitriev also discussed Bannon during the first meeting. Prince told Dmitriev that Bannon was effective in his role, if a bit unconventional.[4732] Prince also described his own role in providing policy papers to Bannon.[4733] Prince told Dmitriev that he would report the details of the meeting to Bannon, and if there was interest in having further discussions, either Bannon or someone from the Transition Team would follow up.[4734]

(U) There was a second meeting between Prince and Dmitriev. After returning to his hotel room, Prince learned that Russia was sending an aircraft carrier to Libya.[4735] Prince then called Nader and asked him to set up another meeting with Dmitriev.[4736] According to Nader, Prince told him that he had checked with associates in the United States, and needed to get a message to Dmitriev that Libya was "off the table."[4737] Nader wrote to Dmitriev informing him that Prince had "received an urgent message that he needs to convey to you immediately."[4738] They then made arrangements for the three of them to meet at the restaurant of the Four Seasons.[4739]

(U) At this second meeting, Prince conveyed to Dmitriev that the United States could not accept any Russian involvement in Libya because it would make the situation there worse.[4740] Despite having claimed to have spoken with associates in the United States and claiming to speak on behalf of the United States' position on Russia's involvement in Libya, Prince told the SCO that he was only making the comments as a former naval officer, and not in an official capacity.[4741]

[4729] (U) *SCO Report*, Vol. I, p. 153.
[4730] (U) *Ibid.*
[4731] (U) *Ibid.*
[4732] (U) *Ibid.*
[4733] (U) *Ibid.*
[4734] (U) *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 154.
[4735] (U) *Ibid.*
[4736] (U) *Ibid.*
[4737] (U) *Ibid.*
[4738] (U) *Ibid.*
[4739] (U) *Ibid.*
[4740] (U) *Ibid.*
[4741] (U) *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 155.

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(U) Hours later, Prince sent two text messages to Bannon.[4742] However, neither Bannon nor Prince had any messages on their phones prior to March 2017, despite records indicating that they had exchanged multiple messages.[4743]

d. (U) Post-Meeting Reactions

(U) Afterward, Dmitriev expressed his disappointment to Nader about the meetings. Dmitriev wanted an interlocutor with more seniority within the Transition Team.[4744] Further, according to the *SCO Report*, Dmitriev felt the conversations lacked substance, and found Prince's comments to be insulting.[4745]

(U) However, in a message to Gerson, Dmitriev reported that Bannon had asked Prince to meet with Dmitriev and that the meeting had been positive.[4746] Gerson has said that following the meeting, Dmitriev told him over text and during one of their phone calls[4747] that he had met with Prince.[4748] Dmitriev asked Gerson if Prince was someone he should work with in regards to reconciliation.[4749] Gerson shared the impression he got from Nader, which was that Prince overplayed connections for contracts.[4750] Dmitriev also asked about Betsy DeVos, Anthony Scaramucci,[4751] and Steve Schwarzmann, plus others whom Gerson did not know.[4752]

(U) Prince told the SCO that he reported to Bannon the details of his meeting with Dmitriev, including the message that Russia sought better relations with the incoming

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[4742] (U) *Ibid.*
[4743] (U) *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 155–56. Both Prince and Bannon claimed to the SCO that they did not know why the phones had no messages. *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 156.
[4744] (U) *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 155.
[4745] (U) *Ibid.*
[4746] (U) *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 158.
[4747] (U) Records show multiple communications between Gerson and Dmitriev on January 18 and January 19, 2017. WhatsApp Audio metadata, Dmitriev to Gerson, January 18–19, 2017 (GERSON_00000122–124) (showing eight calls, four of which indicate a connection of a minute or more).
[4748] (U) FBI, FD-302, Gerson 6/15/2018.
[4749] (U) *Ibid.*
[4750] (U) *Ibid.*
[4751] (U) According to Anthony Scaramucci, he and Dmitriev have a relationship that is tied to their involvement in the World Economic Forum, including several meetings in Davos. In December 2016, Scaramucci and Dmitriev spoke by phone about the possibility of RDIF bringing a group of Russian CEOs to the United States to discuss investments. During the call, Dmitriev made it clear that he was looking to increase business activity between the United States and Russia. In later conversations at Davos, Dmitriev raised the issue of sanctions and Crimea with Scaramucci, making the case that Crimea was not an "international situation." SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Anthony Scaramucci, October 29, 2018, pp. 69–70, 136–152.
[4752] (U) FBI, FD-302, Gerson 6/15/2018.

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administration.[4753] Prince met Bannon at Bannon's home after returning to the United States in mid-January 2017.[4754] Prince also believed he shared Dmitriev's contact information with Bannon.[4755] According to Prince, Bannon directed him not to follow up with Dmitriev.[4756] Prince interpreted the decision as a lack of interest on Bannon's part.[4757]

(U) Bannon, however, denied any discussion with Prince about these meetings.[4758] Bannon said he never had a conversation with Prince regarding Dmitriev, RDIF, or any meetings with Russians associated with Putin.[4759]

4. (U) Robert Foresman

(U) Robert Foresman is an American banking executive with experience in Russia. From his decades of work in Moscow, Foresman has longstanding ties to Russia and well-connected business executives inside Russia, including some individuals with direct ties to Putin. Foresman reached out to the Trump Campaign in approximately March 2016 to offer advice on Russia and convey that Anton Kobyakov, an advisor to Putin, wanted to invite Trump to the St. Petersburg International Economic Forum.[4760] Following the election, Foresman leveraged his extensive ties to senior businessmen, including by transmitting messages between the Transition Team and his Russian contacts, in order to persuade the Trump Transition Team to grant him a senior political appointment in the new administration.

(U) Among Foresman's associates with ties to the Kremlin are Kirill Dmitriev and Nord Stream CEO Mattias Warnig. Foresman first met Warnig in approximately 2001 and told the Committee that he had maintained a close friendship with Warnig since that time.[4761] Foresman described Warnig as someone who was "very close to President Putin."[4762] Foresman based this belief, in part, on his experiences working with Warnig in 2001 to set up "the first and most important private channel" between President George W. Bush and Putin.[4763]

i. (U) Foresman's Outreach to Trump Campaign

[4753] (U) *SCO Report*, Vol. I, pp. 155–156.
[4754] (U) *Ibid.*
[4755] (U) *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 156.
[4756] (U) *Ibid.*
[4757] (U) *Ibid.*
[4758] (U) Bannon Tr., pp. 352–53.
[4759] (U) *SCO Report*, Vol. I, p. 156.
[4760] (U) Kobyakov was an advisor to Putin and a member of the Roscongress Foundation, which organizes the forum. *See* Roscongress.org, Anton Kobyakov Biography.
[4761] (U) Foresman Tr., pp. 17–18.
[4762] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 18.
[4763] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 19–20.

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(U) On March 8, 2016, Foresman emailed an associate of Mark Burnett, a television executive and producer who had worked with Donald Trump in the past, to offer his assistance to Trump's presidential campaign.[4764] In his message, Foresman asked Burnett's associate to "remind him [Burnett] that I am ready to meet with Donald Trump and/or his foreign policy team at any time and to assist his campaign regarding Russia policy and more broadly."[4765] Burnett's associate replied, "Yes Mark is definitely aware and has put a call out to Trump."[4766] In response, Foresman said:

> *Good man, thank you. . . . And there's the small matter of the Kremlin inviting Trump to Russia and asking me to convey this :) And of course I thought immediately of Mark!*[4767]

(U) On March 14, 2016, Foresman's name and phone number ended up on a list of messages for Trump, which Graff emailed to Corey Lewandowski.[4768] Graff's email to Lewandowski said that Foresman was referred by Burnett, and was an "Extremely well connected banker with big ties to Russia."[4769] Keith Schiller, who was copied on the original email, forwarded it to Hope Hicks, asking her to print it for Trump.[4770]

(U) Foresman told the Committee that he understood from what Burnett told him that at some point Burnett had spoken "directly" with Trump and suggested that Foresman would be "a useful person to meet with."[4771] He said:

> *I don't have a vivid recollection now whether I said, Mark can you get me a meeting with President Trump, or whether Mark said, Hey, you should meet with Trump. I can't remember which one of those it was. . . .*
>
> *Mark had seen Candidate Trump [either on] the day-of, [or] before [the Florida primary] debate.*[4772] *And had said something to me along the lines of, I spoke*

[4764] **(U)** Email, Foresman to Rascoe, March 8, 2016 (RMF_SCI_00000036). Foresman had previously served as a fundraiser for Jeb Bush's Presidential campaign. Foresman Tr., p. 19.
[4765] **(U)** Email, Foresman to Rascoe, March 8, 2016 (RMF_SCI_00000036).
[4766] **(U)** Email, Rascoe to Foresman, March 8, 2016 (RMF_SCI_00000036).
[4767] **(U)** Email, Foresman to Rascoe, March 9, 2016 (RMF_SCI_00000036).
[4768] **(U)** Email, Graff to Lewandowski, March 14, 2016 (DJTFP00009944).
[4769] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[4770] **(U)** Email, Schiller to Hicks, March 14, 2016 (DJTFP00009944).
[4771] **(U)** Foresman Tr., p. 31.
[4772] **(U)** The Florida Republican Primary debate took place on March 10, 2016.

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to—I think he said that he spoke to Donald about you, and he's interested—he'd love to meet you and you should contact Rhona Graff.[4773]

(U) Approximately two weeks later, on March 31, 2016, following a phone conversation with Graff, Foresman emailed Graff to say that Burnett had spoken with Trump and recommended that he speak with Foresman.[4774] Foresman then informed Graff that he had "developed unique relationships at the highest levels in Russia." He went on to say that he had:

[P]layed a significant role behind the scenes in the crucial area of US-Russian relations. I initiated a private channel between Vladimir Putin and George W. Bush in early 2001[4775] *and remain actively involved in trying to "turn down the volume" between Washington and Moscow. I have been approached by senior Kremlin officials about Mr. Trump and would like to discuss this with Mr Trump. . . . I have some concrete things to propose which I would not want to put down in an unsecure email.*[4776]

(U) In testimony to the Committee, Foresman said that the reference to the "concrete things" he wanted to talk with Trump about was related to an invitation to the Saint Petersburg International Economic Forum.[4777] According to Foresman, he had been approached by a Presidential Advisor to Putin, Anton Kobyakov, asking Foresman:

Would I be able to get an invitation to [Trump] for the Saint Petersburg International Economic Forum in late May or June? And I said I suppose I probably can. I said I don't know President or Candidate Trump. I don't know his team, but I don't think it would be very hard for me to get something to him. So that [was] what I wanted to communicate.[4778]

(U) Foresman told the Committee that he sought a meeting with Trump, in part to share his overall views of Russia, but also to advise Trump not to attend the forum.[4779] According to

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[4773] **(U)** Foresman Tr., pp. 29–30, 32.
[4774] **(U)** Email, Foresman to Graff, March 31, 2016 (DJTFP00010473); Foresman Tr., p. 33.
[4775] **(U)** In his testimony to the Committee, Foresman described how, in January 2001, he and Matthias Warnig worked together to set up a private communication channel between President Bush and President Putin prior to the two presidents' first meeting in Ljubljana, Slovenia, in June 2001. These efforts are described in greater detail below.
[4776] **(U)** Email, Foresman to Graff, March 31, 2016 (DJTFP00010473).
[4777] **(U)** Foresman Tr., pp. 36, 48.
[4778] **(U)** *Ibid.*, pp. 35–36.
[4779] **(U)** *Ibid.*, pp. 38–39.

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Foresman, he did not think a presidential candidate should visit an adversarial country, especially having not yet secured the party's nomination.[4780]

(U) The meeting Foresman sought with Trump in spring 2016 never happened.[4781] In late July 2016, Foresman once again reached out to Graff after a journalist contacted him requesting a discussion on Trump's business dealing in Russia.[4782] Foresman again offered to meet with Trump or "any of his children" to discuss matters related to Russia.[4783] Although Graff responded that she remembered their conversation and offered to "revisit this with some of the newer members of our campaign team," Foresman did not meet with Trump or his Campaign at that time.[4784]

ii. (U) Post-Election Outreach to Transition Team

a. (U) Foresman Tries to Connect Peskov with the Transition

(U) On November 10, 2016, just two days after the election, Foresman was attending an event linked to the World Chess Championships, which were being held in New York.[4785] While attending the event, Foresman reintroduced himself to Dmitry Peskov, Putin's press secretary. Foresman said he suggested to Peskov that Peskov meet with his "counterpart" from the Trump Transition Team while in New York.[4786] Foresman said that Peskov "wasn't keen on the idea," but agreed to do so if the schedule permitted.[4787] Later that evening, Foresman sent an email to Peskov asking if Peskov could meet the following morning with Megyn Kelly of Fox News, who was seeking an interview with Putin.[4788]

(U) The next morning, Foresman reached out to Burnett, seeking help to put him in touch with the appropriate person in the incoming administration to meet with Peskov.[4789] After contacting the Transition Team, Burnett put Foresman in touch with Hope Hicks through a text message, telling Hicks:

[4780] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 39.
[4781] (U) Email, Foresman to Graff, July 27, 2016 (RMF_SCI_000039–40); Foresman Tr., p. 39.
[4782] (U) Email, Foresman to Graff, July 27, 2016 (RMF_SCI_000039).
[4783] (U) *Ibid.*
[4784] (U) Emails, Graff and Foresman, July 27–August 3, 2016 (RCF_SCI_000039); *see also* Email, Graff to S. Miller and J. Miller, August 4, 2016 (TRUMPORG_16_000151–000152); Foresman Tr., p. 54.
[4785] (U) Foresman Tr., p. 56. A UBS client, PhosAgro, a Russian chemical company, was sponsoring the World Chess Championships that year.
[4786] (U) *Ibid.*
[4787] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 56–57.
[4788] (U) Email, Foresman to Peskov, November 10, 2016 (RMF_SCI_00000002).
[4789] (U) Foresman Tr., pp. 58–59.

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Hope meet Bob Foresman. Bob is the most important banking figure in US / Russia relationships and is currently Vice Chairman of UBS. Bob wants to introduce you to Dimitry Peskov PRESS SECRETARY OF the Kremlin TODAY IN NYC. [4790]

(U) Foresman responded to Hicks that he would call her shortly.[4791] According to Foresman, after multiple calls between them, Hicks told him that the Department of State did not recommend that she speak with any foreign officials until after the inauguration.[4792] Foresman then passed this information on to Peskov, who indicated he did not know who Hicks was.[4793]

b. (U) Foresman is Introduced to the Transition Team

(U) On November 29, 2016, a colleague of Foresman's sent an email to Anthony Scaramucci, introducing Scaramucci to Foresman.[4794] Within a few minutes, Foresman responded, offering to meet with Scaramucci.[4795] Five days later, on December 4, 2016, Scaramucci responded, asking Foresman what position he had been thinking about in the upcoming administration.[4796] After some emails back and forth, they agreed to try and meet face-to-face at a breakfast they were both planning to attend on December 7.[4797]

(U) On December 6, prior to the breakfast, Jared Cohen, the President of Jigsaw and an advisor to the Executive Chairman of Alphabet Inc., sent a note to Kushner highly recommending Foresman for a policy position within the administration. Specifically, Cohen highlighted Foresman's knowledge of Russia and fluency in Russian, and noted that Foresman "has some of the best relationships in the Kremlin of any American I know."[4798] The next day, Kushner forwarded the recommendation to Transition Team officials, saying, "Maybe for

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[4790] (U) Text message, Burnett to Hicks and Foresman, November 11, 2016 (MB SEN-INTEL0000021). Despite his efforts to help Foresman get a job with the incoming administration, Burnett told the Committee that he did not really know Foresman that well, only that Foresman had been helpful in getting one of Burnett's shows on Russian TV and had credibility. "He was looking probably for a job interview, I have no idea how qualified, but to me seemed a really upstanding guy, with his heart in the right place on Christian issues to me, and asked for a referral." SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Mark Burnett, July 27, 2018, pp. 40, 44–45.

[4791] (U) Text message, Foresman to Burnett and Hicks, November 11, 2016 (MB SEN-INTEL0000021).

[4792] (U) Foresman Tr., pp. 60–65.

[4793] (U) Foresman Tr., p. 65.

[4794] (U) Email, DellaRusso to Scaramucci, Foresman, and Sullivan, November 29, 2016 (BF.AS.SSCI.112917000486–487). According to Scaramucci, he knew DellaRusso from a time when the two men worked together at Lehman Brothers in the mid-2000s. Scaramucci Tr., pp. 43–44.

[4795] (U) Email, Foresman to Scaramucci, November 29, 2016 (BF.AS.SSCI.112917000486).

[4796] (U) Email, Scaramucci to Foresman, December 4, 2016 (BF.AS.SSCI.112917000486).

[4797] (U) Emails, Foresman and Scaramucci, December 6–7, 2016 (BF.AS.SSCI.112917000488).

[4798] (U) Email, J. Cohen to Kushner, December 6, 2016 (BF.AS.SSCI.112917000462). According to Foresman, he was introduced to Jared Cohen through former U.S. Ambassador to Russia, Michael McFaul. Foresman Tr., p. 83.

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Ambassador?"[4799] Jim Donovan, one of the recipients of Kushner's message, forwarded the message on to three people, including Scaramucci, on the morning of December 7, prior to the scheduled 7:00 a.m. breakfast at which Scaramucci was to meet with Foresman.[4800] Foresman told the Committee that he did not have an opportunity to meet with Scaramucci at the breakfast, but they had met later that morning, and during an exchange of emails with Jared Cohen, Foresman wrote, "I met Anthony Scaramucci this morning and he confirmed my name is on some list."[4801]

(U) Also on December 6, Burnett texted Bannon to introduce him to Foresman. In his text, Burnett described Foresman as "connected at every level in Russian Government, Church and Business. He is ready to serve you. He will leave [his current job] to serve you."[4802] Bannon and Foresman exchanged texts in an attempt to set a time to meet, and did meet, although the specific time of the meeting is not clear from the records produced by Burnett or from Bannon's testimony.[4803] However, on December 8, Burnett texted Bannon saying, "Glad you met with Bob Foresman. He is a patriot. An evangelical and a genius." Bannon replied, "He is pretty amazing."[4804]

(U) According to Bannon, the meeting with Foresman lasted five to ten minutes, and the topic focused primarily on "Christianity in Russia and Eastern Europe, the re-evangelization of Europe."[4805] Talk then turned to the fact that Foresman was looking for an opportunity to join the administration in some unspecified capacity. According to Bannon, he then "turned him over to [National Security Advisor-designee Michael] Flynn and the guys."[4806]

(U) However, according to Foresman, the meeting was longer and more substantive. Foresman recalled that during the approximately 20-minute meeting, Bannon:

> *Asked me if I would be interested in being the deputy chief of mission in the American Embassy in Kiev. To which I replied, I don't think that would be commensurate with my qualifications. I don't think that would be a role that I*

[4799] **(U)** Email, Kushner to Dearborn, Donovan, et al., December 7, 2016 (BF.AS.SSCI.112917000462).
[4800] **(U)** Email, Donovan to Goldschmidt, Scaramucci, et al., December 7, 2016 (BF.AS.SSCI.112917000462).
[4801] **(U)** Foresman Tr., p. 82; Email, Foresman to J. Cohen, December 7, 2016 (RMF-SCI-00000053).
[4802] **(U)** Text Message, Burnett to Bannon and Foresman, December 6, 2016 (MB_SEN-INTEL0000024).
[4803] **(U)** Text Messages, Burnett, Foresman, and Bannon, December 6–8, 2016 (MB_SEN-INTEL0000024); Bannon Tr., pp. 327–328.
[4804] **(U)** Text Messages, Burnett and Bannon, December 8, 2016 (MB_SEN-INTEL0000024). In testimony to the Committee, Bannon claimed that he was less impressed with Foresman than his message indicated. Bannon Tr., pp. 327–328.
[4805] **(U)** Bannon Tr., pp. 327–328.
[4806] **(U)** *Ibid.*, pp. 328–329.

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would leave my current—I don't think that would be the best use of my talents, I said.

And I have a vague recollection . . . that we talked about foreign affairs. About Russia and Ukraine, I think was the topic. And he asked me toward the end of the meeting if . . . I could send him a memo by that evening.[4807]

(U) According to Foresman, Bannon was vague about the topic of the memo, so Foresman "wrote the memo as a combination of how I see Russia and what sort of role . . . should exist in our government to coordinate Russia policy."[4808]

(U) Bannon, however, denied having tasked Foresman with writing a memo, saying, "No. I'm sure this is Flynn."[4809]

iii. (U) Foresman Submits a First Russia Memo

(U) According to Foresman, he submitted the memo to Bannon's assistant the day after meeting with Bannon, likely December 9, 2016.[4810] That same day Foresman sent a follow-up email to Bannon's assistant asking if she could "check with Steve whether he would like to forward a copy of my memo to Gen Flynn. Also, any word on my meeting with the General per Steve's suggestion?"[4811]

(U) The memo described Foresman's perception that Russian relations had shifted from "alarming to hopeful" following Trump's election.[4812] It described Russian relations with the Obama administration as presenting "a greater risk of catastrophic direct conflict with Russia [not faced since] the early 1980s."[4813] He then offered advice for structuring the National Security Council so that Russia was a main focus of the council.[4814] This included the creation of a Russia-specific Deputy National Security Advisor (NSA) position that would ideally be occupied by an individual so described:

[4807] **(U)** Foresman Tr., pp. 88–89, 101. Foresman did not submit the memo until the following day.
[4808] **(U)** *Ibid.*, p. 90.
[4809] **(U)** Bannon Tr., p. 331.
[4810] **(U)** Foresman Tr., p. 97.
[4811] **(U)** Text message, Foresman to Preate, December 9, 2016 (RMF-SCI-00000443).
[4812] **(U)** Email, Foresman to MacFarquhar, December 14, 2016 (RMF-SCI-00000121–125). Foresman sent a copy of the memo to an acquaintance because of "a striking resemblance" between it and an article published in the *National Interest* shortly thereafter. *Ibid.*
[4813] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[4814] **(U)** *Ibid.*

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Deputy NSA for International Economics, if the person's background is consistent with this. . . . [A person who is] deeply expert in Russia and fluent in Russian. . . . Many, even most, of Putin's inner circle are in the private sector, and speak and understand the language of the private sector, including making deals. The person coordinating Russia policy in the NSC should have a deep knowledge of the private sector not only in general, but in the Russian context.[4815]

iv. (U) Foresman Meets with Flynn

(U) According to Foresman, after submitting the requested memo, he met with Flynn and K.T. McFarland, Flynn's eventual deputy on the NSC, in Flynn's office in Trump tower.[4816] According to McFarland, she did not know Foresman before the meeting, but took it at the request of somebody on the Transition Team.[4817] McFarland said that Foresman primarily spoke about his interest in being Ambassador to Russia; however, she did not find that he had the same level of qualifications as others who were being considered at the time.[4818] Contrary to McFarland's recollection, Foresman told the Committee that he had not been interested in being named the Ambassador to Russia and that discussion of his role did not come up.[4819]

(U) Although McFarland said she did not remember Flynn being present for most of the meeting, Foresman recalled primarily talking to Flynn.[4820] While he did not remember discussion of a possible role for him in the incoming administration, Foresman said that he gave Flynn and McFarland his memo on Russia and possibly a document related to a Ukrainian peace proposal Foresman had previously worked on in 2016, and that the rest of the discussion dealt with U.S. foreign policy related to China, Europe, Iran and ISIS.[4821] During the meeting, Flynn asked Foresman whether Ambassador Kislyak was a worthwhile interlocutor for the United States to get messages to Putin.[4822] Foresman replied that Kislyak was not the best resource for those purposes because, "my understanding is that the Foreign Minister Lavrov doesn't have a direct access to Putin. And that the ambassador to America wouldn't be likely to."[4823]

(U) At the end of the meeting, when Foresman was on his way out, he mentioned to Flynn that he was headed to Moscow in the near future and would be meeting with "some

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[4815] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[4816] **(U)** Foresman Tr., p. 97.
[4817] **(U)** SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Kathleen Troia ("K.T.") McFarland, March 8, 2018, p. 76.
[4818] **(U)** *Ibid.*, pp. 76–81.
[4819] **(U)** Foresman Tr., pp. 102, 179.
[4820] **(U)** McFarland Tr., p. 80; Foresman Tr., pp. 102–103.
[4821] **(U)** Foresman Tr., pp. 102–103.
[4822] **(U)** *Ibid.*, pp. 105–106.
[4823] **(U)** *Ibid.*, p. 106.

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influential people" who were "close to President Putin."[4824] Foresman asked if Flynn had a message to convey from the incoming administration.[4825] Flynn replied, "you can convey that on behalf of the President-elect and myself, we genuinely hope for improved relations between our two countries."[4826]

v. (U) Foresman's Trip to Moscow

(U) On December 8, Foresman received an email from Nikolai Tsekhomsky, who was at the time the First Deputy Chairman of VEB.[4827] Prior to that, Tsekhomsky worked at Barclays in Russia from 2009-2012, overlapping with Foresman during that time.[4828] The email said, "Dear Bob! How are you? I need your help. Could you give me a call: [redacted] Nikolai."[4829] Foresman had his assistant in Moscow arrange the logistics for the call, which took place on December 9.[4830]

(U) During the call, Tsekhomsky informed Foresman that he (Tsekhomsky) was traveling to New York the following week with VEB CEO Sergey Gorkov for meetings with the U.S. financial sector, and that Gorkov would be reporting back to Putin.[4831]

(U) Following the call, Foresman informed his Moscow-based assistant that he had agreed to meet with Tsekhomsky and Gorkov. He also informed his assistant that the meeting was scheduled to take place the following Monday, December 12, and told the assistant that it was a "[t]op priority."[4832]

(U) Foresman, Tsekhomsky, and Gorkov met shortly after Foresman landed in Moscow.[4833] According to Foresman, the timing of the meeting worked out because the Russians delayed their initial travel for a day, although Foresman did not know why.[4834] During the meeting, Foresman "conveyed to Sergey that General Flynn had asked me to convey a message to President Putin."[4835] After sharing Flynn's message about wanting better relations

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[4824] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 103, 106–107.
[4825] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 103.
[4826] (U) *Ibid.*
[4827] (U) Email, Tsekhomsky to Foresman, December 8, 2016 (RMF-SCI-00000079).
[4828] (U) Foresman Tr., p. 116.
[4829] (U) Email, Tsekhomsky to Foresman, December 8, 2016 (RMF-SCI-00000079).
[4830] (U) Emails, Foresman and Ilyina, December 8–9, 2016 (RMF-SCI-00000080–89).
[4831] (U) Foresman Tr., pp. 117–121. For more details about the call and Gorkov's trip, *see infra* Vol. 5, Sec. III.K.2.iv.
[4832] (U) Email, Foresman to Ilyina, December 9, 2016 (RMF-SCI-00000101).
[4833] (U) Foresman Tr., pp. 121–122.
[4834] (U) Foresman Tr., p. 122.
[4835] (U) Foresman Tr., pp. 123–124.

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between the United States and Russia, Gorkov told Foresman that he would pass the message along to Putin.[4836]

vi. (U) Foresman Meets with Allen Vine and Mattias Warnig; Receives a Second Memo

(U) On December 14, Foresman met with Allen Vine, who left Merrill Lynch in March 2006 to lead Nafta Moskova, an investment firm owned by Russian oligarch Suleiman Kerimov.[4837] Vine is an American, and has been described in the press as the "right-hand man" of Kerimov, a Russian financier and member of the Russian Federation Council who was sanctioned in April 2018.[4838] Foresman understood Vine and Kerimov were affiliated, had offices in the same building, and that Vine worked for or with Kerimov, but Foresman had not done "due diligence" on their relationship.[4839] According to the sanctions designation, Kerimov has allegedly engaged in money laundering activity and tax fraud, for which he was arrested and briefly detained in France.[4840]

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[4836] (U) Foresman Tr., pp. 124. For additional details about the conversation regarding a "new era" in bilateral relations between the United States and Russia, *see infra* Vol. 5, Sec. III.K.2.iii.
[4837] (U) Email, Ilyina to Foresman, December 12, 2016 (RMF-SCI-00000115) (transmitting schedule); "Russian Banks Lure Talent With Bigger Bonuses," *The New York Times (Dealbook)*, August 16, 2006.
[4838] (U) Catherine Belton, "Sulaiman Kerimov, the secret oligarch," *Financial Times*, February 10, 2012. Kerimov was sanctioned in response to the nerve agent attack on Sergei Skripal and his daughter in England. Treasury, "Treasury Designates Russian Oligarchs, Officials, and Entities in Response to Worldwide Malign Activity," April 6, 2018; Andrew Higgins, et al., "Meet the 7 Russian Oligarchs Hit by the New Russia Sanctions," *The New York Times*, April 6, 2018.
[4839] (U) Foresman Tr., p. 28.
[4840] (U) Specifically, Kerimov "is alleged to have brought hundreds of millions of euros into France – transporting as much as 20 million euros at a time in suitcases, in addition to conducting more conventional funds transfers – without reporting the money to French tax authorities. Kerimov allegedly launders the funds through the purchase of villas." Kerimov has also been accused of failing to pay 400 million euros in taxes related to those villas. Treasury, "Treasury Designates Russian Oligarchs, Officials, and Entities in Response to Worldwide Malign Activity," April 6, 2018.
[4841] [redacted]

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(U) Foresman described Vine as somebody who was "aware that I had put my hand up," and somebody who was close to Jared Cohen, who had previously recommended Foresman to Kushner.[4844] According to Foresman:

> *He would have—I believe I would have made him aware of the fact that I had been in Trump Tower by that point. That I had met with General Flynn. That things were progressing. And he—he helped to draft a memo—he gave me his thoughts on the future direction of U.S./Russia relations, and . . . that he was hoping that I would either absorb, if I were to be in the Administration, or that I would share as part of my briefings with General Flynn when I returned.*[4845]

(U) At the meeting, Vine gave Foresman a memo about U.S.-Russia relations that Vine wanted Foresman to pass along to the incoming administration.[4846] According to Foresman, Vine had originally planned to pass the note to somebody else in order to pass it to Scaramucci, but after learning that Foresman also had a relationship with Scaramucci and had other connections to the Trump team, Vine decided to use Foresman as the conduit.[4847]

(U) That evening, Foresman had dinner with Mattias Warnig, with whom he had worked to establish an unofficial communication channel between the United States and Russian officials in the early days of the George W. Bush administration.[4848] In testimony to the Committee, Foresman described how, in 2001, he said to Mattias Warnig:

> *Wouldn't it be interesting if we were to set up a private channel between the new American President and the new Russian President? And a week later—so I had*

[4842] (U) *Ibid.*
[4843] (U) *Ibid.*
[4844] (U) Foresman Tr., p. 137.
[4845] (U) *Ibid.*
[4846] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 138.
[4847] (U) *Ibid.*
[4848] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 19, 145.

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basically forgotten about it—a week later he came into my office and he said: Remember our conversation? I'm ready.[4849]

(U) After that, the two set up a series of meetings between three Senators close to the Bush family in advance of President Bush's first meeting with Putin.[4850] In his first meeting with Flynn, Foresman mentioned this "private channel" he had established for the Bush administration in order to "sort of credentialize [him]self."[4851]

(U) During his dinner with Warnig that evening, Foresman passed along Flynn's message to Putin: that the incoming administration hoped to have improved relations with Russia.[4852] Foresman told the Committee that Warnig later "indicated" that he had indeed passed the message along to Putin.[4853] "I think he might have said something like, Ditto from President Putin."[4854]

(U) At the dinner, they also discussed who would be the best interlocutor for Flynn, as the incoming National Security Advisor.[4855] Although Vine had previously told Foresman that Yuri Ushakov was retiring and would no longer hold a position of influence with Putin, Warnig strongly disagreed, and told Foresman that Ushakov should be Flynn's point of contact with the Russian government.[4856] Foresman assumed that Warnig's insistence that Ushakov was not retiring indicated that the information came from Putin.[4857]

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[4849] **(U)** *Ibid.*, p. 19.
[4850] **(U)** *Ibid.*, pp. 18–21.
[4851] **(U)** *Ibid.*, p. 108.
[4852] **(U)** *Ibid.*, p. 145.
[4853] **(U)** *Ibid.*, p. 146.
[4854] **(U)** *Ibid.*, p. 164.
[4855] **(U)** *Ibid.*, p. 146–147.
[4856] **(U)** *Ibid.*, p. 145.
[4857] **(U)** *Ibid.*, pp. 145–147.

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- (U) U.S. Secretary of State Tillerson met with Putin in Moscow the following day, April 12, 2017.[4860]

(U) After meeting with Warnig and returning to the United States, Foresman rewrote Vine's memo, and substituted some of his own judgments for those contained in the version given to him by Vine, including information from Warnig.[4861]

(U) As revised, the memo offered an assessment of U.S.-Russia relations as they stood at the time, and offered advice on how the United States should attempt to improve bilateral cooperation with Russia.[4862] Several passages in the memo claimed to offer insight into the thoughts and strategic goals of Putin.[4863]

(U) When he received the memo from Vine, Foresman did not tell him that he planned to rewrite it. It was Foresman's assessment that Vine believed the memo would be passed directly to the Trump Transition Team.[4864] One passage that Foresman made clear to the Committee that he had changed was the first paragraph of the memo, where he substituted the information provided to him by Warnig regarding who in the Russian government would be the most appropriate interlocutor for Flynn: Yuri Ushakov, Putin's foreign policy aide.[4865] Ambassador Kislyak had given Jared Kushner a similar recommendation a month earlier.[4866]

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[4860] (U) Department of State, "Secretary Tillerson's Visit to Moscow Marks an Important Moment in the Relationship," April 12, 2017.
[4861] (U) Foresman Tr., pp. 138–139, 142–143.
[4862] (U) Memorandum, Foresman to Flynn (RMF-SCI-00003004–3005).
[4863] (U) *Ibid.*
[4864] (U) Foresman Tr., pp. 140–141.
[4865] (U) Foresman Tr., pp. 139, 141.
[4866] (U) Email, Berkowitz to Kushner, December 12, 2016 (NSSCI00000017).

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(U) Although the memo originated with Vine, who works for Russian oligarch Suleiman Kerimov and asked it to be delivered to the Transition Team, and included additional information from Warnig, Foresman insisted that the memo he eventually gave to the Transition Team was one that he "wasn't asked by Russians to give. [The Vine memo] was something that I, in the end, used as a basis for a memo that I had wanted to write about a briefing about U.S./Russia stuff. And I don't know that anybody ever read it actually."[4867]

(U) Foresman did not retain a copy of the memo he received from Vine and he retained only a photograph of the memo he passed to the Transition, which he produced to the Committee upon request.[4868] However, the Committee obtained a hard copy of Foresman's memo as delivered to Flynn, depicted below, from Sarah Flaherty, who worked for Flynn and McFarland during the Transition[4869]:

[4867] **(U)** Foresman Tr., pp. 138–139.
[4868] **(U)** Foresman Tr., pp. 143–144; *see* Memorandum, Foresman to Flynn (RMF-SCI-00003004–3005).
[4869] **(U)** Memorandum, Foresman to Flynn (Flaherty Production).

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--VP's appointed contact person for GF (when GF feels it appropriate, before or after inauguration) is Yuri Ushakov, VP's top foreign policy aide (former ambassador to US). Had been rumors that Ushakov would be "retiring" into a comfortable ambassadorship somewhere but that now appears on hold and he is VP's trusted person for US dialogue for foreseeable future. Contact can be made via official channel – Ambassador Kislyak in DC.

--VP has a sober view of the situation. He is prepared to downplay short-term tactical objectives in return for progress on long-term issues that are strategic to both the RF and US:

-Islamic radicalism

-China

-Iran

-the integrity of the European Union [Don't misinterpret affinity toward "pro-Russia" political leaders within the EU as a desire to destabilize the EU; Russia's security could be severely impacted by an unstable Europe]

-the structural weakening of the RF that endangers the long-term integrity of the RF by making vulnerable (1) the Far East, and (2) Central Asia and Tatarstan

--VP is profoundly disconcerted *not* by the fact of US policies against the RF since 1992, but by the fact that:

-these policies have hurt in multiple ways both the RF *and* the West, and

-the very economic and social values that the West thinks it is attempting to protect will be fundamentally compromised for generations if RF is weakened to a point that it cannot protect its structural integrity and regional power

--No newly elected leader in modern history has taken on so many, such complex issues at once, both domestically and globally, as DJT. Limited political capital should be used on issues that have (1) fundamental security and economic consequences for the US, and can have (2) broad domestic *popular and legislative support*: the domestic agenda; China; Iran; islamic radicalism. Re the latter, islamic radicalism, VP believes that the RF and US can together largely eradicate the threat, whereas the Iranian threat is more complex and the US should not overestimate the RF's influence over Iran or the dangers Iran could present to the RF's security.

--For the US, the issues involving the RF (1) do not present intractable security concerns, and (2) do not have fundamental economic consequences

-VP appreciates that the new administration is unlikely to have sufficient domestic popular and legislative support to *substantively* progress these issues in the near term. For example [this example does not come from VP], removing sanctions via executive order too soon could risk similar or even more stringent sanctions being codified as law by Congress;

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-there is also limited maneuvering space for RF leadership to make concessions on these issues in a *public* way;

-a significant movement of the RF toward the US will be feasible only once such rapprochement has meaningful popular and legislative support in the US, as otherwise it could be limited to intentions of one administration (but would give further impetus to consolidation of strategic adversaries).

-therefore, spending significant political capital on issues involving the RF too soon could yield disproportionally small results and detract from progress on issues that are strategic for both the RF and the US.

--Focus the public discourse and political capital on areas that are strategic to the US to consolidate popular and legislative support, achieve tangible results and build political capital.

--there is an extraordinarily high level of goodwill toward DJT among the leadership and population of the RF and much hope and excitement, but also caution as people remember the positive start of US-RF relations in Obama's first year (but they clearly see DJT as being very different from Obama)

--Engage as soon as possible through quiet channels: Security; Economic (bi-lateral commercial dialogue similar to the Evans/Abraham/Gref/Usufov format in Bush 43rd's first term); Government to Government (Pence-Medvedev)

vii. (U) Foresman Reconnects with Flynn

(U) On Wednesday, December 14, 2016, an aide to Flynn reached out to Foresman asking to arrange a call between the two men the following Friday.[4870] Foresman responded, suggesting that the two of them conduct their call over WhatsApp for security, telling the aide, "I, too, was going to request a call with General Flynn as I have an important message to convey to him."[4871] The phone call eventually took place on December 16, but according to Foresman, Flynn had little to say other than to ask that the two stay in touch.[4872]

> *I got an email out of the blue—surprisingly—pleasantly surprised—from his assistant saying General Flynn would like to have a phone call with you . . . . I*

[4870] (U) Email, Atencio to Foresman, December 14, 2016 (RMF-SCI-00000027).
[4871] (U) Email, Foresman to Atencio, December 14, 2016 (RMF-SCI-00000026).
[4872] (U) Foresman Tr., p. 151.

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thought this was an important call. And it was an odd sort of nothing-burger. I said hello, and he said, Bob, Mike Flynn here. I said: Oh, general. He said: I'm Mike. How you doing? I'm good Yeah, I'm in Moscow just finishing up and actually you doing well? Yeah, great. So, let's stay in touch. Yeah. Exactly. I said, Oh, Yeah, No, Yeah, Great. [L]et's meet when I'm back. And, Okay, take care. So it was strange, I have to say. It was strange.[4873]

(U) On January 5, 2017, Foresman reached out to Flaherty to request a meeting with Flynn.[4874] In the email, Foresman wrote that he was:

[R]equesting a 15 min[ute] in person meeting . . . to brief him on what I was asked to convey by the highest level in Moscow. General Flynn called me when I was in Moscow, as you recall, and we agreed that I should brief him in person. . . . I assure you that these will be 15 min[utes] well spent. These are not mundane issues. I am not a foreign policy analyst seeking to share my worldview with the General; I am operating on the ground and have been asked to convey something directly to him, after I conveyed to the relevant party what the General asked me to convey.[4875]

(U) Foresman offered to draft a memo and deliver it to Trump Tower, if a meeting or phone call was not possible.[4876] He also offered to meet with K.T. McFarland.[4877]

(U) In his interview with the Committee, Foresman said that the information he was referencing was the information shared with him about Ushakov being the best point of contact for Flynn in the Russian government.[4878] He also intended to give Flynn and McFarland a copy of the memo he had adapted from Vine's.[4879]

(U) Later that day, Foresman and Flynn met for approximately 45 minutes.[4880] Although Foresman recalls Flynn doing most of the talking, describing his views on strategic global

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[4873] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[4874] **(U)** Email, Foresman to Flaherty, January 5, 2017 (RMF-SCI-00000015). Foresman had an initial interaction with Flynn's assistant, who put him in touch with Flaherty, and who also asked Foresman if "the information you have" could be communicated by email. Email, Atencio to Foresman, January 5, 2017 (RMF-SCI-00000030).
[4875] **(U)** Email, Foresman to Flaherty, January 5, 2017 (RMF-SCI-00000015).
[4876] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[4877] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[4878] **(U)** Foresman Tr., pp. 164–165.
[4879] **(U)** *Ibid.*, pp. 164–166.
[4880] **(U)** Text message, Foresman to J. Cohen, January 6, 2017 (RMF-SCI-00000419); Foresman Tr., pp. 169–170.

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affairs, Foresman presented his memo to Flynn[4881] and made a point to verbally highlight the fact that Flynn should deal with Ushakov, if he wanted to have a direct channel to Putin:

> *And I confirmed to him that I have it from someone who had heard directly from Putin—someone that I absolutely trust and is credentialized—that Yuri Ushakov, basically the equivalent of the National Security Advisor, the presidential advisor on foreign policy, despite rumors of retirement, whatever, that he is the guy that would be . . . I remember saying, would be your counterparty, whether before or after inauguration, as you wish. . . . And that I don't have a recollection of him having heard that name, Ushakov, but I put it in the email—I'm sorry—I put it in the memo, but I verbally emphasized that point, unlike the other points, which I didn't verbalize.*[4882]

(U) The Foresman memo made its way from Flynn to Sarah Flaherty, with a sticky note addressed to K.T. McFarland reading, "Re: Russia. For your review [and] discussion," which Flaherty retained until she produced it to the Committee.[4883] The Committee was unable to determine if Flynn, McFarland or any other members of the Transition Team reviewed the substance of the document.

(U) According to Foresman, by mid-January 2017, he felt his efforts were "losing steam," and that some Trump affiliates like Bannon and Flynn had stopped being responsive.[4884] He ultimately lost interest himself in joining the administration.[4885]

(U) While Foresman's efforts to serve in the Trump administration seemed sincere, it is also clear that his Russian contacts, including some with direct links to Putin, considered him a potential conduit to the Trump Transition and possibly the administration, if he were to secure a position. However, the Committee lacked sufficient information to determine whether the Russian government specifically directed these contacts to use Foresman as such a channel.

5. (U) Michael Flynn

(U) Lieutenant General Michael Flynn joined the Trump Campaign in 2016 as a surrogate and advisor on national security issues. Following the 2016 election, he accepted an offer to become Trump's first National Security Advisor, and continued advising the Transition

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[4881] **(U)** Foresman Tr., 170–173.
[4882] **(U)** Foresman Tr., pp. 172–173.
[4883] **(U)** *See* Memorandum, Foresman to Flynn (Flaherty Production).
[4884] **(U)** Foresman Tr., p. 183.
[4885] **(U)** *Ibid.*, pp. 184–185.

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Team on national security hires prior to the inauguration. Flynn later became President Trump's National Security Advisor.

(U) In 2014, Flynn had retired from military service following a two-year stint as the Director of the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA), which capped a 33-year career in the United States Army. At the time he joined the Campaign, Flynn had a relationship with Russian officials that he had nurtured from his time in the military. Flynn treated Russian officials collegially, and asked the Russian Government to take official actions that the Transition Team viewed as advantageous to its foreign policy goals, even when they conflicted with Obama administration policy.

(U) Flynn's relationship with Russian officials dated to the later years of his military service, when he served as the DIA Director. After his 2014 retirement, he appeared on RT, a Russian state-directed television channel. Before joining the Trump Campaign, Flynn accepted more than $45,000 in speaking fees for appearing at the RT gala in Russia. After joining the Transition Team, Flynn communicated several times with the Russian Embassy, in order to convey the foreign policy goals of the incoming Trump administration, including in relation to sanctions. These communications would also come to be a matter Flynn later lied about in interviews with the FBI.

(U) The Committee sought an in-person interview with Flynn, but he declined, asserting his Fifth Amendment rights.[4886] However, Flynn Intel Group, Inc., having no such Fifth Amendment protections, did produce documents to the Committee.

i. (U) Flynn's Connections to Russia

(U) The first records of Flynn's ties to Russia date to 2013. In June 2013, Flynn traveled to Moscow at the invitation of then-Major General Igor Sergun,[4887] Russia's chief of military intelligence, or GRU.[4888] Flynn, then the director of DIA, met with GRU officials on a trip that Ambassador Kislyak allegedly also helped to arrange and coordinate.[4889] Flynn has claimed that he was the first DIA Director to be invited to the headquarters of the GRU.[4890] While there, Flynn briefed the GRU staff and presented a professional development class on leadership.[4891]

[4886] (U) Letter, Kelner, et al. to SSCI, May 12, 2017.
[4887] (U) FBI, FD-302, Flynn 1/24/2017.
[4888] (U) Peter Zwack, "Death of the GRU Commander," *Defense One*, February 1, 2016. Sergun was promoted to Colonel General shortly before his death on January 3, 2016. *Ibid.*
[4889] (U) FBI, FD-302, Flynn 1/24/2017; Greg Miller, et al., "Flynn's swift downfall: From a phone call in the Dominican Republic to a forced resignation at the White House," *The Washington Post*, February 14, 2017.
[4890] (U) FBI, FD-302, Flynn 1/24/2017.
[4891] (U) Dana Priest, "Trump Adviser Michael T. Flynn on his dinner with Putin and why Russia Today is just like CNN," *The Washington Post*, August 15, 2016.

[redacted]

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[redacted] According to one former U.S. military official, "Flynn thought he developed some rapport with the GRU chief."[4892] [redacted]

[redacted]

(U) On April 30, 2014, Flynn announced his retirement from DIA, and he retired from military service on August 7, 2014.[4899] Flynn requested information on his post-retirement ethics guidelines. On October 8, 2014, DIA sent a letter to Flynn which outlined his emolument restrictions.[4900] Among the restrictions was a requirement that Flynn receive advance authorization before receiving compensation from a foreign government:

> *The Emoluments Clause of the U.S. Constitution [in part, as interpreted by the Department of Justice Office of Legal Counsel]* ***prohibits receipt of consulting fees, gifts, travel expenses, honoraria, or salary by all retired military personnel, officer and enlisted, regular and reserve, from a foreign government unless congressional consent is first obtained.***[4901]

[4892] (U) Greg Miller, et al., "National security advisor Flynn discussed sanctions with Russian ambassador, despite denials, officials say," *The Washington Post*, February 9, 2017.
[4893] (U) Peter Zwack, "Death of the GRU Commander," *Defense One*, February 1, 2016.
[4894] [redacted]
[4895] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 29.
[4896] (U) *Ibid.*
[4897] (U) Treasury, "Treasury Sanctions Russian Officials, Members Of The Russian Leadership's Inner Circle And An Entity For Involvement In The Situation In Ukraine," May 20, 2014.
[4898] [redacted]
[4899] (U) Greg Miller and Adam Goldman, "Head of Pentagon Intelligence agency forced out, officials say," *The Washington Post*, April 30, 2014; Nicholas Schmidle, "Michael Flynn, General Chaos," *The New Yorker*, February 18, 2017.
[4900] (U) Letter, Kapnisi to Chaffetz and Cummings, April 7, 2017 (available at oversight.house.gov); Letter, DIA to Flynn, October 8, 2014.
[4901] (U) Letter, DIA to Flynn, October 8, 2014 (emphasis in the original). The Committee is not suggesting here that Flynn's activity violated the Emoluments Clause.

[redacted]

[redacted]

(U) In January 2015, Flynn signed a contract with Leading Authorities, a speakers' bureau, which promoted his expertise in leadership, cyber, and terrorism.[4902]

(U) On July 31, 2015, Flynn was paid $11,250 by the U.S. subsidiary of Russian cybersecurity firm Kaspersky Lab and $11,250 by Russian Charter Cargo airline Volga-Dnepr Airlines. The payments were for two speeches, to be given on August 19 and October 20, 2015.[4903]

(U) In August 2015, Flynn first met Trump. According to press accounts, the meeting lasted approximately 90 minutes.[4904]

(U) Later that month, in an interview with *Der Spiegel*, Flynn called for the United States to cooperate with Russia in the Middle East.[4905] On October 5, 2015, Flynn appeared on RT to discuss international efforts against ISIS. In the interview, Flynn repeatedly criticized the United States' approach to dealing with ISIS, saying that there was no coherent strategy, and noted that Russia had been pursuing ISIS, while suggesting that Russia and the United States work together to confront ISIS.[4906]

ii. (U) Flynn Attends the December 2015 RT Dinner

(U) Immediately following Flynn's October 5 interview with RT, a Washington, D.C.-based representative of RT reached out to Flynn's son about a speaking engagement for Flynn at RT's tenth-anniversary celebration, stating that she had "discussed with [the] General an opportunity for him to visit Moscow this coming December as a guest of honor of RT's conference that will mark the 10th anniversary of our news broadcast" and that Flynn "looked very interested in it and asked me to check with you [on] his plans for December."[4907] Flynn's

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[4902] (U) Nicholas Schmidle, "Michael Flynn, General Chaos," *The New Yorker*, February 18, 2017.
[4903] (U) *See* Agreement for Talent Services, Leading Authorities Inc. and M. T. Flynn, July 30, 2015 (FLYNN_SSCI_00007621–7623) (Kaspersky Government Security Solutions); Agreement for Talent Services, Leading Authorities Inc. and M. T. Flynn, July 30, 2015 (FLYNN_SSCI_00007624–7627) (Volga-Dnepr Airlines). In a letter to Defense Secretary James Mattis, House Oversight and Government Reform Ranking Member Elijah Cummings inquired whether these undisclosed payments violated DOD's prohibitions on retired military personnel receiving payments or gifts from foreign governments. Letter, Cummings to Mattis, March 16, 2017; *see* Rosalind Helderman and Tom Hamburger, "Trump adviser Flynn paid by multiple Russia-related entities, new records show," *The Washington Post*, March 16, 2017.
[4904] (U) Dana Priest, "Trump Adviser Michael T. Flynn on his dinner with Putin and why Russia Today is just like CNN," *The Washington Post*, August 15, 2016; Nicholas Schmidle, "Michael Flynn, General Chaos," *The New Yorker*, February 18, 2017.
[4905] (U) Matthias Gebauer and Holger Stark, "Ex-US Intelligence Chief on Islamic State's Rise 'We Were Too Dumb,'" *Der Spiegel*, November 29, 2015.
[4906] (U) YouTube, https://youtu.be/P4f5m28pmOM.
[4907] (U) Email, Volokhonovich to M. G. Flynn, October 5, 2015 (FLYNN_SSCI_00004737).

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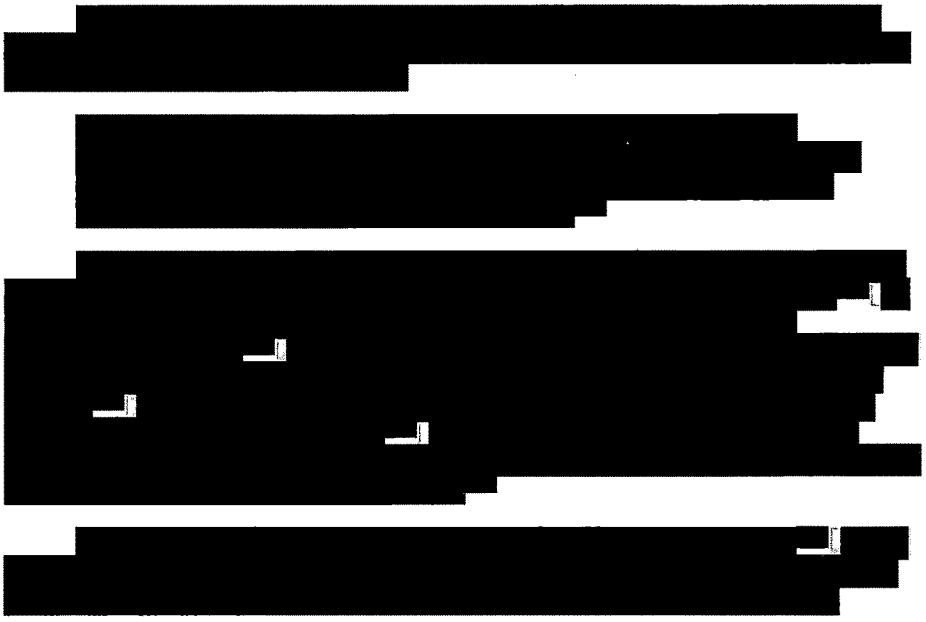
[redacted]

son confirmed that Flynn was interested and directed RT to Flynn's speakers bureau.[4908] Shortly thereafter, RT began working with Flynn's speakers bureau to secure his presence.[4909] Flynn signed the contract to speak at the RT event on November 11, 2015.[4910] On December 1, RT announced Flynn's participation.[4911]



[4908] (U) Emails, M. G. Flynn, Volokhonovich, and Owenby, October 5–13, 2015 (FLYNN_SSCI_00004737–4741).
[4909] (U) *See, e.g.*, Emails, M. G. Flynn, Volokhonovich, and Owenby, October 19–November 6, 2015 (FLYNN_SSCI_00000408–412).
[4910] (U) Email, M. G. Flynn to Owenby, November 11, 2015 (FLYNN_SSCI_00000482–484) (attaching signed contract).
[4911] (U) Nicholas Schmidle, "Michael Flynn, General Chaos," *The New Yorker*, February 18, 2017.
[4912] (U) Email, [redacted], November 27, 2015 (DIA Production).
[4913] (U) Email, M. G. Flynn to [redacted] November 18, 2015 (FLYNN_SSCI_00000559).
[4914] (U) Email, [redacted] to M. G. Flynn, November 18, 2015 (FLYNN_SSCI_00000571).
[4915] (U) Email, M. G. Flynn to [redacted] December 2, 2015 (FLYNN_SSCI_00000571).
[4916] [redacted]
[4917] (U) Email, M. G. Flynn to [redacted] December 2, 2015 (FLYNN_SSCI_00000572). [redacted]
[4918] (U) Email, [redacted], December 7, 2015 (DIA Production); Email, [redacted], December 8, 2015 (DIA Production).

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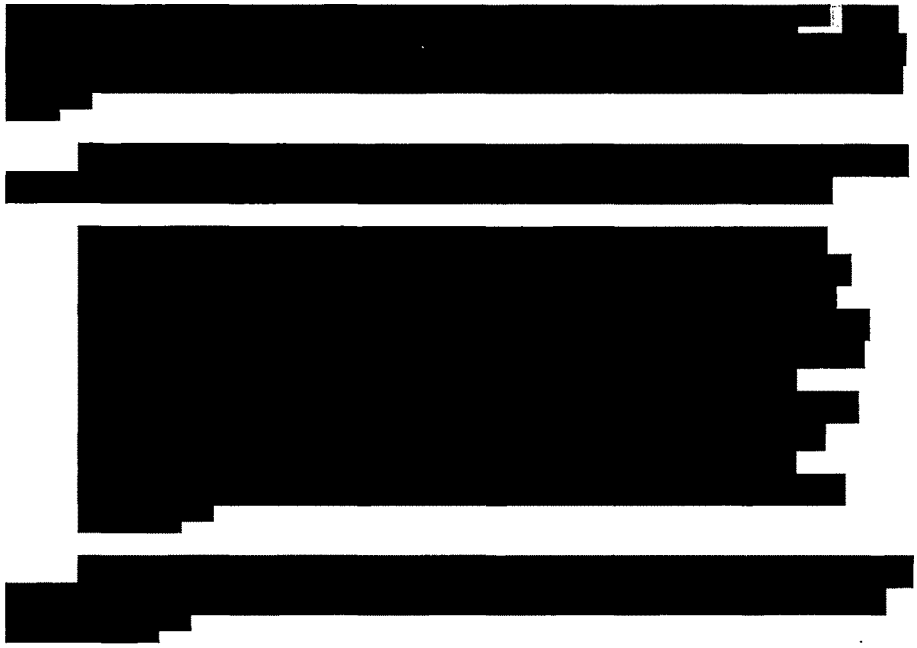

(U) Flynn traveled to Moscow from December 8–11, 2015, and on December 10, he spoke at the RT tenth–anniversary gala.[4923] He was accompanied on the trip by Michael Flynn Jr.[4924] During the ceremony, Flynn sat with 10 people at the head table, including President Putin and the Kremlin's top leadership. Two of the Russian attendees at the table were under U.S. sanctions at the time for their role in Russia's annexation of Crimea: Sergey Ivanov (then

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[4919] (U) SSCI Memorandum, "DIA Documents on LTG Michael Flynn," May 26, 2017.
[4920] (U) *Ibid.*
[4921] (U) Email, LaPan to McClintock, December 8, 2015 (DIA Production).
[4922] (U) Email, LaPan to Ketter, December 9, 2015 (DIA Production).
[4923] (U) Agenda, Michael Flynn: RT TV – America – 10th Anniversary Conference (FLYNN_SSCI_00000583–586); Natasha Bertrand, "The timeline of Trump's ties with Russia lines up with allegations of conspiracy and misconduct," *Business Insider*, February 11, 2017.
[4924] (U) Michael Isikoff, "Moscow paid $45,000 for Flynn's 2015 talk, documents show," *Yahoo News*, March 16, 2017.

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Putin's Chief of Staff), and Alexey Gromov (Putin's Deputy Chief of Staff).[4925] Dmitry Peskov (Putin's spokesman) was also at the table, and when President Putin got up to speak, Flynn sat next to Margarita Simonyan, RT's Editor-in-Chief.[4926] Other attendees at the gala included Jill Stein,[4927] other senior RT officials, Brooklyn Nets owner Mikhail Prokhorov, and the last Communist Party ruler of the U.S.S.R., Mikhail Gorbachev.[4928] Flynn said in an interview that he did not talk to Putin personally, and that he found it "a great learning opportunity" and that one of the things he learned was that "Putin has no respect for United States leadership."[4929]

(U) Flynn was paid $45,386 (Flynn received $33,750 with $11,250 going to the speaker's bureau) for speaking at the event.[4930] RT paid for business class travel and accommodations for Flynn and his son at the luxury Metropol hotel.[4931]

[redacted] On January 3, 2016, GRU chief Sergun died of reported heart attack.[4932] Flynn reached out to Kislyak to express his condolences on Sergun's death.[4933] [redacted]

[4925] **(U)** Treasury, "Treasury Sanctions Russian Officials, Members Of The Russian Leadership's Inner Circle And An Entity For Involvement In The Situation In Ukraine," May 20, 2014; March 20, 2014; Robert Windrem, "Guess Who Came to Dinner With Flynn and Putin," *NBC NEWS*, April 16, 2017.
[4926] **(U)** Robert Windrem, "Guess Who Came to Dinner With Flynn and Putin," *NBC NEWS*, April 16, 2017.
[4927] **(U)** For more information on Jill Stein, *see infra* Vol. 5, Sec. III.L.4.
[4928] **(U)** *See, e.g.,* Dana Priest, "Trump Adviser Michael T. Flynn on his dinner with Putin and why Russia Today is just like CNN," *The Washington Post*, August 15, 2016;
[4929] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[4930] **(U)** Agreement for Talent Services, Leading Authorities Inc. and M. T. Flynn, November 11, 2015 (FLYNN_SSCI_00000483–484); Financial records, Leading Authorities Inc., available at oversight.house.gov. Receipts show that Flynn received a payment of $33,750, while his representatives at Leading Authorities Inc. received $11,250 in commission.
[4931] **(U)** Agreement for Talent Services, Leading Authorities Inc. and M. T. Flynn, November 11, 2015 (FLYNN_SSCI_00000483–484); Rosalind Helderman and Tom Hamburger, "Trump adviser Flynn paid by multiple Russia-related entities, new records show," *The Washington Post*, March 16, 2017.
[4932] **(U)** Ivan Nechepurenko, "Igor D. Sergun, Chief of Russian Military Intelligence, Dies at 58," *The New York Times*, January 5, 2016.
[4933] [redacted] FBI, FD-302, Flynn 1/24/2017.
[4934] [redacted]
[4935] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[4936] **(U)** *Ibid.*

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[redacted] Flynn's former lawyer has acknowledged that Flynn "[de-]briefed the DIA extensively regarding the RT speaking event trip both before and after the trip."[4937] [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

iii. (U) Other Flynn Lobbying Activities

[4937] (U) Tom LoBianco and Manu Raju, "House oversight committee: Flynn might have broken the law," *CNN*, April 25, 2017.

[4938] [redacted]

[4940] [redacted]

[4941] [redacted]

[4942] (U) *Ibid.*

[4943] (U) SSCI Memorandum, "DIA Documents on LTG Michael Flynn," May 26, 2017.

[4944] (U) *Ibid.*

[4945] (U) *Ibid.*

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(U) On August 9, 2016, Flynn and the Flynn Intel Group signed a contract with Inovo BV, a Dutch company, for $600,000 over 90 days, allegedly to run an influence campaign aimed at discrediting Fethullah Gulen.[4946] In September 2016, Flynn filed lobbying paperwork disclosing that he would be lobbying on behalf of a client named Inovo BV.[4947] On March 7, 2017, Flynn submitted a Supplemental Statement pursuant to the Foreign Agents Registration Act clarifying that, while Inovo BV was ostensibly a Dutch company, Flynn's work for the company was primarily to advance the interests of Turkey:

> *Because of the subject matter of Flynn Intel Group's work for Inovo BV, which focused on Mr. Fethullah Gulen, whose extradition is sought by the Government of Turkey, the engagement could be construed to have principally benefitted the Republic of Turkey. To eliminate any potential doubt, the Flynn Intel Group therefore is electing to file a registration under FARA, in lieu of its prior [Lobbying Disclosure Act] registration.*[4948]

(U) Flynn Intel Group would earn $530,000 from the contract.[4949] Later reports would link Inovo to Dmitri "David" Zaikin, a Soviet-born former executive in Russian energy and mining companies.[4950]

(U) On September 19, 2016, Flynn attended a meeting in New York, where Kamil Alptekin (Inovo BV's owner) introduced Flynn to Turkish government officials.[4951] One of the Turkish officials at the meeting was allegedly Turkey President Tayyip Erdogan's son-in-law.

[4946] (U) Fethullah Gulen is a Turkish Islamic leader and the head of the Gulen movement. The Gulen movement has been outlawed in Turkey and labelled an "armed terrorist group." Although once allied with Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan, the two eventually split, and Erdogan accused Gulen (without evidence) of leading an attempted coup against Erdogan's government in 2016. Gulen is currently living in the United States. Ceylan Yeginsu, "Turkey Issues a Warrant for Fehtullah Gulen, Cleric Accused of Coup," *The New York Times*, August 4, 2016.

[4947] (U) On September 15, 2016, the Flynn Intel Group filed lobbying paperwork with Congress that only mentioned Inovo BV, but did not clarify that the purpose of the lobbying was for the benefit of the Government of Turkey. Lobbying Registration Pursuant to the Lobbying Disclosure Act of 1995, Flynn Intel Group Inc., September 15, 2016.

[4948] (U) Letter, Kelner to Hunt, March 7, 2017, filed with DOJ NSD/FARA Registration Unit; Registration Statement Pursuant to the Foreign Agents Registration Act of 1938, Flynn Intel Group, Inc., March 7, 2016.

[4949] (U) Supplemental Statement Pursuant to the Foreign Agents Registration Act of 1938, Flynn Intel Group, Inc., March 7, 2017.

[4950] (U) Isaac Arnsdorf, "Flynn's Turkish lobbying linked to Russia," *Politico*, April 25, 2017.

[4951] (U) Supplemental Statement Pursuant to the Foreign Agents Registration Act of 1938, Flynn Intel Group, Inc., March 7, 2017; Nathan Layne, "Exclusive: While advising Trump in 2016, ex-CIA chief proposed plan to discredit Turkish cleric," *Reuters*, October 26, 2017.

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[redacted]

The group reportedly discussed kidnapping Gulen to remove him to Turkey, according to a person briefed on the meeting.[4952]

(U) On election day, November 8, 2016, Flynn wrote an op-ed in *The Hill* newspaper in support of Turkey and urging Gulen's extradition.[4953] Flynn did not disclose that he was under contract with a Dutch company backed by Turkish business interests in the opinion piece.

iv. (U) Flynn's Activities During the Transition

(U) According to press reports, in late November 2016, Marshall Billingslea, who headed the national security team for the Trump Transition team in Washington, met with Obama administration officials in the Situation Room at the White House. In that meeting, Billingslea asked for the CIA profile of Kislyak.[4954] This account was confirmed to the Committee by former Obama administration officials.

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[redacted] On December 2, 2016, Russian Embassy officer Sergey Kuznetsov emailed Flynn to thank him for responding to the Russian Embassy meeting request and for seeing

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[4952] (U) Isaac Arnsdorf, "Flynn's Turkish lobbying linked to Russia," *Politico*, April 25, 2017; James V. Grimaldi, et al., "Ex-CIA Director: Mike Flynn and Turkish Officials Discussed Removal of Erdogan Foe From U.S.," *The Wall Street Journal*, March 24, 2017.
[4953] (U) Michael T. Flynn, "Our ally Turkey is in crisis and needs our support," *The Hill*, November 8, 2016.
[4954] (U) Greg Miller and Adam Entous, "Flynn was warned by Trump Transition officials about contacts with Russian ambassador," *The Washington Post*, May 5, 2017.
[4955] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Susan Rice, July 21, 2017, p. 64.
[4956] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 64–65.

[redacted]

[redacted]

Kislyak in New York.[4957] Kuznetsov then asked Flynn if he could meet with Kislyak in Washington, D.C. for lunch or dinner at the ambassador's residence.[4958] A few days later, on December 6, 2016, Kuznetsov emailed Flynn to request a follow-up conversation with Kislyak on the matters discussed in New York.[4959] Kuznetsov also asked Flynn for a direct telephone number.[4960] [redacted] Later that night, Flynn emailed Kuznetsov, saying, "Yes," and "I tried to call multiple times. Your voicemail is not set up. I will try tomorrow."[4963]

[redacted] Kuznetsov responded to Flynn's email saying, "Thank you. Ambassador was on a meeting last night and couldn't pick up the phone."[4968] Kuznetsov then sent Flynn a second email saying, "if [Kislyak] doesn't pick up the cell phone you can try the office phone."[4969] Kuznetsov then sent Flynn a third email that said, "Ambassador just told me that you actually had a talk last night. He asked me to stay in touch with you to determine the time windows for conversation, as agreed. Looking forward to your reply."[4970]

[4957] (U) Email, Kuznetsov to Flynn, December 2, 2016 (FLYNN_SSCI_00000381). That meeting is discussed *infra* Vol. 5, Sec. III.K.2.ii.
[4958] (U) *Ibid.*
[4959] (U) Email, Kuznetsov to Flynn, December 6, 2016 (TFA0018358).
[4960] (U) *Ibid.*
[4961] [redacted]
[4962] (U) *Ibid.*
[4963] (U) Emails, Flynn to Kuznetsov, December 6, 2016 (TFA0018358).
[4964] [redacted]
[4965] (U) *Ibid.*
[4966] (U) *Ibid.*
[4967] (U) *Ibid.*
[4968] (U) Email, Kuznetsov to Flynn, December 7, 2016 (TFA0018358).
[4969] (U) Email, Kuznetsov to Flynn, December 7, 2016 (TFA0018411).
[4970] (U) Email, Kuznetsov to Flynn, December 7, 2016 (TFA0018410).

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[redacted] On December 20, 2016, Flynn called the Russian Embassy to talk with Kislyak [redacted].[4971] [redacted] Flynn said that he had wanted to express his condolences about the assassination of the Russian Ambassador to Ankara.[4972] [redacted][4973]

[redacted]

(U) According to Flynn, he exchanged holiday greetings via text message with Kislyak on December 25, 2016. Flynn also said that the two had traded phone calls he described as limited to condolences over the assassination of Russia's ambassador to Turkey, the downing of a Russian aircraft, and discussions about setting up a phone call between Putin and Trump after the inauguration.[4976]

v. (U) Israel UNSCR Vote

(U) After Egypt submitted a United Nations Security Council resolution criticizing Israel's construction of settlements in Palestinian territories, Trump and his Transition Team engaged in a coordinated effort to try and stop the measure, including extensive outreach to the Russian Government. The effort was unsuccessful, but caused confusion among Security Council member nations because they did not know with whom they should be dealing with regard to American diplomacy; a lame-duck administration, or the incoming one.[4977]

[4971] (U) Verizon toll records, Flynn, December 22, 2016 (FLYNN_SSCI_0000004[redacted]

[redacted]

[4974] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 35.
[4975] (U) *Ibid.*
[4976] (U) FBI, FD-302, Flynn 1/24/2017; Text Messages, Flynn and Flaherty, January 13, 2017 (SF_SSCI000006–9); *see also* Greg Miller, et al., "Flynn's swift downfall: From a phone call in the Dominican Republic to a forced resignation at the White House," *The Washington Post*, February 14, 2017.
[4977] (U) In an interview with the Committee, Samantha Power, the United States Ambassador to the United Nations at the time, said that, "It was very disconcerting and really as a citizen I urge it never to happen again that you put foreign governments in a position where they don't know—report they are forum-shopping between a current President and a future President, because that's what started to happen. . . . But more than that, policies were being introduced through the back door and piecemeal and without being properly developed, at a time that was just confusing our friends. It felt like a very unstable period, because unity of command is essential." SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Samantha Power, July 28, 2017, pp. 58–59.

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(U) On December 21, 2016, Egypt introduced a resolution to the United Nations Security Council calling for the cessation of Israeli settlements in Palestinian territory, and reaffirming that the settlements already constructed by Israel had "no legal validity, [and constitute] a flagrant violation under international law and a major obstacle to the achievement of the two-State solution."[4978] The Security Council planned a vote for the next day, December 22, 2016. Trump took to Twitter and Facebook to voice his opposition to the measure, and the members of his Transition Team likewise began planning to try and either delay or stop the vote, or to convince another country to veto the resolution.[4979]

(U) Asked about a phone call he made to Flynn regarding the resolution on the morning of December 22, Kushner told the Committee:

> *I remember during that time we were very focused on the U.N. resolution. . . . I remember being on one of the planes and thinking that Egypt had pulled the resolution, which we thought was a good thing. It was a disaster of a resolution. And so we probably were talking about that. . . . I remember we were trying to figure out if we should reach out to Russia or who should reach out to Russia. But like I said, we didn't know who to coordinate with that could actually be effective on it, which again, hopefully, goes to show that we did not collude with them during the campaign. So we didn't know who to call.*[4980]

(U) According to Kushner, he assigned both foreign policy and senior leadership of the Transition Team to work the phones to try and convince other countries to oppose the resolution.

> *I remember I was talking to Flynn. I was talking to Nikki Haley. I was talking to Rex Tillerson. I was talking to Reince Priebus. I was talking to Steve Bannon. And we were all making phone calls trying to do everything we could. But keep in mind, again, we were a little disorganized and we also were trying to figure out how to stop something without having the context to really properly do it. So we were just trying to figure it out as quickly as we could.*[4981]

[4978] **(U)** United Nations Security Council Resolution 2334, adopted December 23, 2016.
[4979] **(U)** Twitter, @realDonaldTrump, December 22, 2016; Facebook post, Donald Trump, December 22, 2016; *SCO Report*, Vol. I, p. 168; Kate O'Keefe and Farnaz Fassihi, "Inside the Trump Team's Push on Israel Vote That Mike Flynn Lied About," *The Wall Street Journal*, January 5, 2018.
[4980] **(U)** Kushner Tr. II, p. 144; *see* Verizon toll records, Flynn, December 22, 2016 (FLYNN SSCI 00000042).
[4981] **(U)** *Ibid.*, p. 145.

[redacted]

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[redacted] Following Kushner's call, and at his direction, Flynn then contacted Kislyak's office and asked to speak with the ambassador.[4982] [redacted]

(U) About nine minutes after talking with Kushner, Flynn reached Kislyak on his (Kislyak's) cell phone.[4986] The conversation focused on two topics: informing the Ambassador of the incoming administration's opposition to the resolution, and requesting that Russia intervene and veto the resolution.[4987]

(U) Also on December 22, Trump contacted Egyptian President Abdel Fatteh al-Sisi to discuss the resolution with him.[4988]

[redacted] On December 23, Flynn contacted Kislyak's office agai[redacted]

[redacted]

[4982] **(U)** Verizon toll records, Flynn, December 22, 2016 (FLYNN SSCI 00000042); Statement of Offense, *United States v. Michael T. Flynn*, No. 1:17-cr-232 (D.D.C. December 1, 2017) ("*Flynn* Statement of Offense").
[4983] **(U)** [redacted] Verizon toll records, Flynn, December 22, 2016 (FLYNN_SSCI_00000042).
[4984] [redacted]
[4985] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[4986] **(U)** Verizon toll records, Flynn, December 22, 2016 (FLYNN_SSCI_00000042).
[4987] **(U)** *Flynn* Statement of Offense ¶ 4(c).
[4988] **(U)** *SCO Report*, Vol. I, p. 168.
[4989] **(U)** Verizon toll records, Flynn, December 23, 2016 (FLYNN_SSCI_00000043); [redacted]
[4990] [redacted]
[4991] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[4992] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[4993] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[4994] **(U)** *Ibid.*

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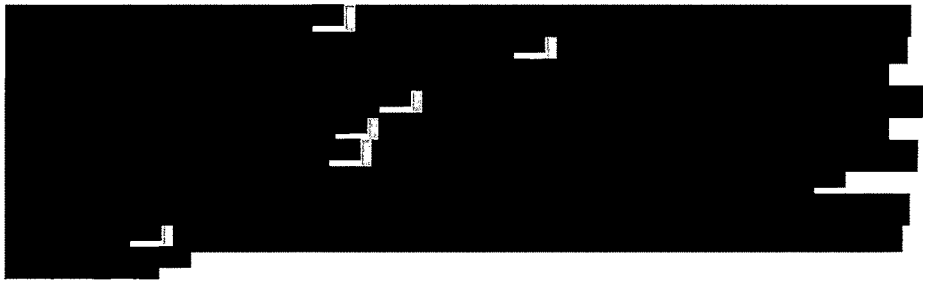

(U) On December 23, following a call between Trump and Egyptian President al-Sisi, Egypt agreed to seek a delay in a vote on the resolution. Explaining Egypt's decision, an al-Sisi spokesman said that Egyptian President al-Sisi had spoken with Trump, and agreed to wait to call for a vote until Trump had been sworn in:

> *During the call, they discussed regional affairs and developments in the Middle East, and in that context the draft resolution in front of the Security Council on Israeli settlement. . . . The presidents agreed on the importance of affording the new US administration the full chance to deal with all dimensions of the Palestinian case with a view of achieving a full and final settlement.*[5003]

(U) In spite of the efforts made by the Transition Team, on December 23, 2016, Malaysia, New Zealand, Senegal, and Venezuela resurrected the resolution and sought a vote.[5004] The Transition Team continued to try and convince Security Council members to oppose the resolution, including at least two calls that day from Flynn to Kislyak.[5005] Ultimately, Flynn was

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[4995] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[4996] **(U)** *Ibid.*, pp. 36–37.
[4997] **(U)** *Ibid.*, p. 37.
[4998] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[4999] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[5000] **(U)** *Ibid.*; *Flynn* Statement of Offense ¶ 4.
[5001] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[5002] **(U)** *Ibid.*, pp. 35–37. According to FBI records of Flynn's January 24, 2017 interview with the FBI, "The interviewing agents asked Flynn if he made any request of Kislyak to vote in a particular way or take any action. Flynn stated that he did not. . . . The interviewing agents asked Flynn if he made any comment to Kislyak about voting in a certain manner, or slowing down the vote, or if Kislyak described any Russian response to a request by Flynn. Flynn answered, 'No.'" FBI, FD-302, Flynn 1/24/2017.
[5003] **(U)** "Egypt: Trump convinced Sisi to withdraw UN resolution," *Al Jazeera*, December 23, 2016.
[5004] **(U)** Somini Sengupta and Rick Gladstone, "Rebuffing Israel, U.S. Allows Censure Over Settlements," *New York Times*, December 23, 2016.
[5005] **(U)** Verizon toll records, Flynn, December 23 (FLYNN_SSCI_00000043–44).

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[redacted]

informed by Kislyak that Russia would support the resolution, and not veto it.[5006] The resolution passed 14-0 that day, with the United States abstaining.[5007] After passage of the resolution, Trump expressed his disapproval, and signaled that his administration would take a different approach to the United Nations.[5008]

vi. (U) U.S. Sanctions Against Russia

(U) On December 28, 2016, President Obama signed an executive order imposing sanctions on nine Russian individuals and entities as a result of Russia's interference in the 2016 presidential election.[5009] Although the sanctions would not be announced until the following day, media outlets began reporting that the sanctions were forthcoming. That day Kislyak tried to reach Flynn by text, and asked Flynn to call him.[5010] Flynn was on vacation at the time in the Dominican Republic and said he did not receive the text until 24 hours later.[5011] The Russian Embassy attempted to call him the next morning, but Flynn did not answer the call.[5012]

(U) Flynn and McFarland spoke by phone that day, discussing whether the Obama administration had political motives in levying sanctions, and whether it was part of an effort to discredit Trump's victory. Flynn mentioned that he planned to call Kislyak, but McFarland thought it would be a routine call.[5013]

(U) In the meantime, the Russian Foreign Ministry released a tweet[5014] and a statement that included a denial of Russian involvement in the 2016 presidential election, misinformation about the hacking of election infrastructure in the state of Georgia, and indicating that Russia planned to respond in-kind to U.S. actions:

[5006] (U) *Flynn* Statement of Offense ¶ 4(d).
[5007] (U) United Nations Security Council Resolution 2334, adopted December 23, 2016.
[5008] (U) Tweets, @realDonaldTrump, December 23, 24, 26, and 28, 2016.
[5009] (U) Executive Order 13757, "Taking Additional Steps to Address the National Emergency with Respect to Significant Malicious Cyber-Enabled Activities," December 28, 2016.
[5010] (U) FBI, FD-302, Flynn 1/24/2017. According to the *SCO Report*, Kislyak texted Flynn, "can you kindly call me back at your convenience." *SCO Report*, Vol. I, p. 169.
[5011] (U) *SCO Report*, Vol. I, p. 169; FBI, FD-302, Flynn 1/24/2017; Greg Miller, et al., "Flynn's swift downfall: From a phone call in the Dominican Republic to a forced resignation at the White House," *The Washington Post*, February 14, 2017.
[5012] (U) *SCO Report*, Vol. I, p. 169.
[5013] (U) FBI, FD-302, McFarland 12/22/2017. McFarland also conveyed the general topic of the call with the Committee, but based on conversations with the White House, refused to discuss any details in order to permit the White House an opportunity to assert executive privilege during the Transition. McFarland Tr., pp. 162–165, 170. Phone records reflect a 43-minute call from Flynn to McFarland. Verizon toll records, Flynn, December 28, 2016 (FLYNN_SSCI_0000052); Verizon toll records, Simmons, December 28, 2016 (KTMF_SSCI_00000141). McFarland has said that she learned of the sanctions from the press and was not notified ahead of time. *Ibid.*
[5014] (U) Tweet, @RusEmbUSA, December 29, 2016.

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Frankly speaking, we are tired of lies about Russian hackers that continue to be spread in the United States from the very top. The Obama administration launched this misinformation half a year ago in a bid to play up to the required nominee at the November presidential election and, having failed to achieve the desired effect, has been trying to justify its failure by taking it out with a vengeance on Russian-US relations.

However, the truth about the White House-orchestrated provocation is bound to surface sooner or later. In fact, this is already happening. On December 8, US media quoted Georgia's Secretary of State Brian Kemp as saying that the local authorities tracked down the origin of a hacker attack on his voter registration database after the election. The attack was traced to an IP address of the Department of Homeland Security. This was followed by an attempt to quickly cover up this information by a flood of new anti-Russian accusations that did not contain a single piece of evidence.

***We can only add that if Washington takes new hostile steps, it will receive an answer. This applies to any actions against Russian diplomatic missions in the United States, which will immediately backfire at US diplomats in Russia.** The Obama administration probably does not care at all about the future of bilateral relations, but history will hardly forgive it for this après-nous-le-deluge attitude.*[5015]

(U) The following day, December 29, the Obama administration announced the sanctions, and expelled and declared *persona non grata* 35 Russian officials. The administration also closed two Russian diplomatic compounds in the United States.[5016]

(U) That afternoon, Transition Team officials began discussing amongst themselves how the sanctions would impact the incoming administration's relationship with Russia.[5017] During this time, McFarland's assistant, Sarah Flaherty, texted Flynn a link to a *New York Times* article discussing the sanctions.[5018] McFarland also tried to call Flynn, but did not reach him.[5019] McFarland then discussed the sanctions with Bannon, who assessed that the sanctions would

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[5015] **(U)** Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, "Comment by Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Maria Zakharova on new threats of sanctions from the United States," Mid.ru, December 28, 2016 (emphasis added).
[5016] **(U)** White House, "Statement by the President on Actions in Response to Russian Malicious Cyber Activity and Harassment," December 29, 2016; *SCO Report*, Vol. I, pp. 168–169; Missy Ryan, et al., "Obama administration announces measures to punish Russia of 2016 election interference," *The Washington Post*, December 29, 2016.
[5017] **(U)** *SCO Report*, Vol. I, p. 169.
[5018] **(U)** Text Message, Flaherty to Flynn, December 29, 2016 (SF-SSCI-000001).
[5019] **(U)** *SCO Report*, Vol. I, p. 170.

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prevent the Trump administration from improving relations with Russia, and would lead to a retaliatory and possibly escalatory response from Russia.[5020]

(U) According to McFarland, Bannon also indicated he was aware that Flynn planned to call Kislyak.[5021] However, in testimony to the Committee, Bannon said he did not recall knowing about Flynn's plans to call Kislyak.[5022]

(U) McFarland told the SCO that she believed that she told both Bannon and Priebus that Flynn was scheduled to talk with Kislyak that night.[5023] Later that afternoon, Flynn texted Sarah Flaherty, asking if she had "Time for a call???"[5024] Flaherty responded that McFarland was talking with another Transition Team member, after which Flynn to responded, "Tit for tat w[ith] Russia [is] not good. Russian [Ambassador is] reaching out to me today."[5025]

(U) Flynn delayed his conversation with the Ambassador until he had an opportunity to speak to the Transition Team.[5026] He eventually spoke with McFarland at around 4:00 p.m., discussing with her what message he should share with the Russian Ambassador.[5027] McFarland and Flynn spoke generally about their concerns about Russian aggression. The discussion included the impact of the sanctions on the incoming Trump administration's foreign policy goals, and the desire that Russia not escalate the situation through counter sanctions and exile of U.S. diplomats.[5028] They agreed that Flynn should pass that message along in hopes of avoiding an escalating confrontation.[5029] Flynn told McFarland he would "feel out" Kislyak on sanctions to see if sanctions would derail the possibility of a new relationship between the United States and Russia. McFarland does not remember if she relayed her conversation with Bannon to Flynn. McFarland wanted Flynn to report back on the next call with Kislyak.[5030]

[5020] (U) McFarland Tr., p. 212; *SCO Report*, Vol. I, pp. 169–170; FBI, FD-302, McFarland 12/22/2017.
[5021] (U) FBI, FD-302, McFarland 12/22/2017.
[5022] (U) Bannon Tr., p. 414.
[5023] (U) *SCO Report*, Vol. I, p. 170.
[5024] (U) Text Message, Flaherty to Flynn, December 29, 2016 (SF-SSCI-000001).
[5025] (U) Text Message, Flynn to Flaherty, December 29, 2016 (SF-SSCI-000001).
[5026] (U) *SCO Report*, Vol. I, p. 170.
[5027] (U) *Ibid.* Flynn and McFarland traded several calls, and connected once for seven minutes and once for 28 minutes. *See* Verizon toll records, Flynn, December 29, 2016 (FLYNN_SSCI_0000052); Verizon toll records, Simmons, December 29, 2016 (KTMF_SSCI_00000141).
[5028] (U) *SCO Report*, Vol. I, p. 170; McFarland Tr., pp. 181–183. In her testimony to the Committee, McFarland said that, "I'm not sure that the word 'sanctions' was used, but the implication was sanctions." McFarland Tr., pp. 182–183.
[5029] (U) *SCO Report*, Vol. I, p. 170.
[5030] (U) FBI, FD-302, McFarland 12/22/2017.

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(U) Meanwhile, throughout the day, the Russian Embassy in the United States continued to threaten retaliation in a series of tweets.[5031]

(U) On December 29, 2016, after speaking with McFarland, Flynn called Kislyak and discussed multiple issues, including the sanctions. As to sanctions, Flynn asked that Russia not escalate the situation, and to instead respond in a reciprocal manner in order to avoid a "tit for tat."[5032]

(U) McFarland had notified several Transition Team members about Flynn's planned call with Kislyak. She first emailed several Transition Team officials to inform them that "Gen Flynn is talking to [the] Russian ambassador this evening."[5033] She later briefed Trump, along with multiple senior Transition Team officials, including Bannon, Priebus, and Sean Spicer.[5034] During the meeting, Trump asked whether Russia interfered with the 2016 election, and McFarland said that it had.[5035] In discussing the sanctions, McFarland informed Trump that Russia's response to the sanctions would be an indicator of the type of relationship Russia wanted to have with the incoming administration.[5036] McFarland also recalled that at the end of the meeting, it might have been mentioned that Flynn was going to speak to Kislyak that evening.[5037]

(U) At 6:08 p.m., after the Kislyak call and Trump's briefing had taken place, Flynn called McFarland to tell her that he had talked to the Russian Ambassador, informing McFarland

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[5031] (U) Tweets, @RusEmbUSA, December 29, 2016.

[5032] (U) *SCO Report*, Vol. I, p. 171. According to FBI notes of their January 24, 2017 interview of Flynn: "The interviewing agents asked Flynn if he recalled any conversation with Kislyak surrounding the expulsion of Russian diplomats or closing of Russian properties in response to Russian hacking activities surrounding the election. Flynn stated that he did not. Flynn reiterated his conversation was about the Putin/Trump [video teleconference] and the 'Astana thing' [a counterterrorism conference to be held in Kazakhstan in January 2017.] Flynn noted he was not aware of the then-upcoming actions. . . . The interviewing agents asked Flynn if he recalled any conversation with Kislyak in which the expulsions were discussed, where Flynn might have encouraged Kislyak not to escalate the situation, to keep the Russian response reciprocal, or not to engage in a 'tit-for-tat.' Flynn responded, 'Not really. I don't remember. It wasn't, 'Don't do anything.'" FBI, FD-302, Flynn 2/15/2017. Flynn conveyed a similar set of topics by email to Transition officials the following day, but not mentioning sanctions. *See* Email, Flaherty to McFarland, Kushner, S. Miller, Bannon, Priebus, Flynn, and Kellogg, December 30, 2016 (NSSCI00000114) (forwarding email from Flynn). Flynn added that he knew Kislyak from "previous engagements" and that he and Kushner had met with Kislyak the prior month in Trump Tower. *Ibid.*

[5033] (U) *SCO Report*, Vol. I, p. 171.

[5034] (U) McFarland Tr., p. 60; *SCO Report*, Vol. I, p. 171.

[5035] (U) *SCO Report*, Vol. I, p. 171.

[5036] (U) *Ibid.*

[5037] (U) *Ibid.* Despite being in the room for this discussion, Spicer repeatedly told the press that the issue of sanctions was not raised by Flynn in his conversation with Kislyak. Glenn Kessler, "The fall of Michael Flynn: A timeline," *The Washington Post*, February 15, 2017.

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that "I think we are going to be ok."[5038] McFarland recalled that Flynn told her that the Russian response to the sanctions would not be escalatory because they wanted a good relationship with the incoming Trump administration.[5039]

(U) Nonetheless, Russia's public threats of retaliation against the United States continued throughout the evening of December 29,[5040] and continued until December 30, 2016, when, at 5:32 a.m. Washington time, Russia's Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov released a statement saying:

> *The US administration announced a new series of sanctions against the Russian Federation yesterday without providing any facts or other evidence.*
>
> *We will definitely respond to these actions. Reciprocity is a basic tenet of international diplomacy and international relations. Therefore, the Russian Foreign Ministry and colleagues from other agencies have submitted a proposal to the President of Russia to declare "persona non grata" 31 diplomats from the US Embassy in Moscow and four diplomats from the US Consulate General in St Petersburg. Furthermore, we have proposed shutting down the US dacha (recreation facility) in Serebryanny Bor and the US Embassy warehouse on Dorozhnaya Street. We hope these proposals will be considered as a priority.*[5041]

(U) However, two hours later, President Putin released a statement reversing that decision. Putin's statement made clear that steps against U.S. interests would not be taken, and that Russia planned to wait until the incoming Trump administration took office to try and restore relations with the United States.[5042]

> *We regard the recent unfriendly steps taken by the outgoing US administration as provocative and aimed at further weakening the Russia-US relationship. This runs contrary to the fundamental interests of both the Russian and American people. Considering the global security responsibilities of Russia and the United States, this is also damaging to international relations as a whole.*

[5038] (U) FBI, FD-302, McFarland 12/22/2017; Verizon toll records, Flynn, December 29 (FLYNN SSCI 00000052); Verizon toll records, McFarland, December 29 (KTMF SSCI_00000141).
[5039] (U) *SCO Report*, Vol. I, p. 172.
[5040] (U) Tweets, @RusEmbUSA, December 29, 2016.
[5041] (U) Mid.ru, "Comment by Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov on recent US sanctions and the expulsion of Russian diplomats, Moscow, December 30, 2016," Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, December 30, 2016.
[5042] (U) Tweet, @mfa_russia, December 30, 2016.

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As it proceeds from international practice, Russia has reasons to respond in kind. Although we have the right to retaliate, we will not resort to irresponsible 'kitchen' diplomacy but will plan our further steps to restore Russian-US relations based on the policies of the Trump Administration.

The diplomats who are returning to Russia will spend the New Year's holidays with their families and friends. We will not create any problems for US diplomats. We will not expel anyone. We will not prevent their families and children from using their traditional leisure sites during the New Year's holidays.[5043]

(U) Later that day, Trump tweeted his approval of Putin's decision, saying, "Great move on delay (by V. Putin)—I always knew he was very smart!"[5044]

(U) On December 31, Kislyak called Flynn to credit Flynn with avoiding a reciprocal response from Russia. Kislyak said that Flynn's request that Russia not respond in kind had been passed to senior Russian officials, and they had decided not to take action at the time.[5045]

(U) That same day, in a phone call, McFarland told Flynn that she was surprised by Putin's non-escalation after the sanctions, and told Flynn that the "four amigos" (i.e., Admiral Rogers, Director Brennan, Director Comey, and Director Clapper) would be briefing Trump on Russia. Flynn commented that Russia wanted a better relationship with the United States, and that the relationship was back on track.[5046] Flynn commented that the four properties seized by the United States from Russia could have been platforms for spying.[5047]

(U) In an interview with the FBI, McFarland initially said that Flynn did not tell her anything about his December 31 call with Kislyak. However, she later corrected her statement to say that Flynn did talk to her about Kislyak and told her that the "relationship is back on track" and that they had a good call; Flynn seemed to think that his phone call had made a difference.[5048]

vii. (U) Scrutiny of Flynn's Ties to Russia

[5043] **(U)** Kremlin.ru, "Statement by the President of Russia," President of Russia, December 30, 2016.
[5044] **(U)** Tweet, @realDonaldTrump, December 30, 2016.
[5045] **(U)** Despite this backchannel diplomacy, in July 2017, Russia would expel hundreds of U.S. diplomatic personnel, and close two U.S. facilities in Russia.
[5046] **(U)** *SCO Report*, Vol. I, p. 172.
[5047] **(U)** FBI, FD-302, McFarland 12/22/2017.
[5048] **(U)** *Ibid.*

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(U) Flynn's relationship with Russian leaders continued to face scrutiny by both the press and the U.S. Government. His lack of candor in addressing questions about his communications with Russian officials led to his short tenure as National Security Advisor, and his eventual guilty plea in December 2017 to making false statements to the FBI.

(U) On January 22, 2017, Vice-President Mike Pence swore Flynn in as the National Security Advisor.[5049] Two days later, on January 24, 2016, the FBI interviewed Flynn about his contacts with foreign officials during his time with the Transition.[5050] During that voluntary interview, Flynn provided false statements about his interactions with Russia:

> *During the interview, FLYNN falsely stated that he did not ask Russia's Ambassador to the United States ("Russian Ambassador") to refrain from escalating the situation in response to sanctions that the United States had imposed against Russia. FLYNN also falsely stated that he did not remember a follow-up conversation in which the Russian Ambassador stated that Russia had chosen to moderate its response to those sanctions as a result of FLYNN's request. . . .*
>
> *FLYNN also made additional false statements about calls he made to Russia and several other countries regarding a resolution submitted by Egypt to the United Nations Security Council on December 21, 2016. Specifically, FLYNN falsely stated that he only asked the countries' positions on the vote, and that he did not request that any of the countries take a particular action on the resolution. FLYNN also falsely stated that the Russian Ambassador never described to him Russia's response to FLYNN's request regarding the resolution.*[5051]

(U) Knowing that Flynn continued to lie to White House officials and now the FBI about his contacts with foreign officials, Acting Attorney General Sally Yates informed White House Counsel Don McGahn on January 26, 2017, that Flynn's lack of honesty about his interactions with Russian officials put Flynn at risk of compromise by Russia.[5052]

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[5049] **(U)** David Nakamura, "Trump, Pence preside over East Room ceremony to swear in senior staff," *The Washington Post*, January 22, 2017.
[5050] **(U)** *Flynn* Statement of Offense.
[5051] **(U)** *Ibid.*, pp. 3–4.
[5052] **(U)** Adam Entous, et al., "Justice Department warned White House that Flynn could be vulnerable to Russian blackmail, officials say," *The Washington Post*, February 13, 2017. Yates was fired on January 30, 2017, from her role as Acting Attorney General for refusing to defend the President's executive order on refugees. Evan Perez and Jeremy Diamond, "Trump Fires acting AG after she declines to defend travel ban," *CNN*, January 31, 2017.

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(U) On February 9, 2017, *The Washington Post* reported that the transcript of Flynn's calls showed that he had discussed sanctions, in spite of the repeated denials by Flynn and White House officials.[5056] While Flynn initially denied that he had discussed sanctions in an interview with *The Washington Post*, he later amended his position, indicating through a spokesman that "while he had no recollection of discussing sanctions, he couldn't be certain that the topic never came up."[5057] In the same article, Ambassador Kislyak suggested that he had been in contact with Flynn since before the election, but declined to answer any questions about the subjects they discussed.[5058]

(U) On February 13, 2017, Senior Counselor to the President Kellyanne Conway said during a television appearance that the President maintained "full confidence" in Flynn.[5059] That same day, Flynn phoned a reporter for the *Daily Caller* to say the President "expressed confidence" in him and urged him to "go out and talk more."[5060] Flynn said he did not violate the law, and that "[i]f I did, believe me, the FBI would be down my throat, my clearances would be pulled. . . . There were no lines crossed."[5061] However, later that day, *The Washington Post* broke the story of Yates's January 26, 2017, warning to the White House that Flynn was potentially compromised by Russia.[5062] Later that night, Flynn submitted his resignation letter,

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[5053] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Sally Caroline Yates, August 15, 2017, p. 49. Yates defined compromise as, "whether or not the Russians have information that they could use as leverage over you to get you to do things they want you to do or to prevent you from doing things they don't want you to do." *Ibid.*

[5054] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 52–56.

[5055] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Closed Hearing, Testimony of James Comey, June 8, 2017, p. 26.

[5056] (U) Greg Miller, et al., "National security advisor Flynn discussed sanctions with Russian ambassador, despite denials, officials say," *The Washington Post*, February 9, 2017.

[5057] (U) *Ibid.*

[5058] (U) *Ibid.*

[5059] (U) Steve Kornacki, "Conway: Flynn has 'full confidence' of Trump," *MSNBC*, February 13, 2017.

[5060] (U) Richard Pollock, "EXCLUSIVE: In Final Interview, Defiant Flynn Insists He Crossed No Lines, Leakers Must Be Prosecuted," *The Daily Caller*, February 14, 2017.

[5061] (U) *Ibid.*

[5062] (U) Adam Entous, et al., "Justice Department warned White House that Flynn could be vulnerable to Russian blackmail, officials say," *The Washington Post*, February 13, 2017.

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saying he "inadvertently briefed the Vice President Elect . . . with incomplete information regarding my phone calls with the Russian Ambassador."[5063]

(U) In February and June 2017, former FBI Director Comey told the Committee that there had been a counterintelligence investigation into Flynn that he (Comey) had been close to closing, until information about the phone calls to Kislyak came to light.[5064]

> *We had a case open on Mike Flynn starting in the summertime [2016], a counterintelligence case. I was about to close it in late December because we had found nothing, after extensively looking, about any contacts between Flynn and the Russians, except the ones you've seen in the media. He went and gave a speech for RT and when he was director of DIA he went and did a meeting at the GRU. Our folks had looked hard and had found nothing. I was about to close the Flynn case when these calls were brought to our attention. This obviously gave us a reason to try to understand, is there something about him that we're missing.*

(U) On May 17, 2017, Deputy Attorney General Rosenstein issued an order appointing a Special Counsel to investigate issues related to Russian interference in the 2016 presidential election.[5065] On August 17, 2017, in his capacity as then Acting Attorney General, Rosenstein sent the Special Counsel a memo clarifying the scope of the investigation.[5066] In that memo, Rosenstein noted that Mueller had the authority to investigate the following:

> *Allegations that Michael Flynn:*
>
> - *Committed a crime or crimes by engaging in conversations with Russian government officials during the period of the Trump transition;*
> - *Committed a crime or crimes by making false statements to the FBI when interviewed about his contacts with the Russian government;*
> - *Committed a crime or crimes by failing to report foreign contacts and income on a Form SF-86 that he completed in anticipation of his being selected to serve as the National Security Advisor to President Trump;*

[5063] **(U)** "Read Michael T Flynn's resignation letter," *CNN*, February 14, 2017
[5064] **(U)** SSCI Transcript of the Closed Hearing, Testimony of James Comey, February 17, 2017, p. 46; SSCI Transcript of the Closed Hearing, Testimony of James Comey, June 8, 2017, p. 34.
[5065] **(U)** Memorandum, "Re: The Scope of Investigation and Definition of Authority," Rod Rosenstein, August 2, 2017
[5066] **(U)** *Ibid.*

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- *Committed a crime or crimes by acting as an unregistered agent for the government of Turkey.*[5067]

(U) On December 1, 2017, Flynn pleaded guilty to providing false statements to the FBI, and providing false information and omissions on his registration with the Justice Department as an agent of a foreign government in March 2017.[5068]

[5067] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[5068] **(U)** *Flynn* Statement of Offense.

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L. (U) Other Incidents and Persons of Interest

1. (U) Peter W. Smith

i. (U) Introduction and Findings

(U) Several efforts by individuals connected to the Trump Campaign to locate and obtain "missing" emails[5069] belonging to Hillary Clinton took place during the 2016 presidential election. One of these efforts was initiated by Peter W. Smith, a now-deceased businessman and Republican operative, while another involved Barbara Ledeen, a Republican Senate staffer whose husband had co-authored a book with Lieutenant General Michael Flynn. Smith told associates that his effort involved meetings with Russian hackers who claimed to have access to the emails. The Committee examined Smith's initiative,[5070] any potential relationship to Russian election interference, and its connections to the Trump Campaign. The Committee was hampered in these efforts by its inability to interview Smith, who committed suicide on May 14, 2017, and Flynn, who was in touch with Smith but asserted his Fifth Amendment rights.[5071]

(U) The Committee found that Smith's activities were known to some Campaign officials, including Flynn and Sam Clovis, and connected to the Campaign's focus on obtaining Clinton's "missing" emails. Although Smith claimed he had been in touch with Russian hackers who had located these materials (and also sought to connect with WikiLeaks), the Committee did not identify evidence to corroborate Smith's claims that he had access to any Clinton emails or communicated successfully with Russian hackers or WikiLeaks about his initiative.

ii. (U) Efforts to Find the "Missing" Emails

(U) During the summer of 2016, following the Democratic National Convention and the July 22 WikiLeaks release of DNC documents, Trump renewed attention on Clinton's emails. Within the Campaign, Trump expressed frustration that the emails had not been located.[5072] Trump repeatedly asked individuals affiliated with the Campaign, including Flynn, to find the

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[5069] (U) The "missing" Clinton emails were used as a short-hand reference to emails maintained on Hillary Clinton's personal server that were deleted and not produced in response to subpoenas because deemed personal and non-responsive.

[5070] (U) The Committee did not delve into Ledeen's activities, but encountered information concerning Ledeen when pertinent to Smith's activities, as noted *infra*. In addition, the Committee did not investigate activity by Flynn's son, Michael G. Flynn, who was also in contact with Smith about Smith's effort.

[5071] (U) The Committee received a limited document production from Smith's estate, along with a copy of his computer's hard drive. Productions from other witnesses, in particular individuals who worked with Smith on his email initiative and had relevant copies of his communications, helped to supplement that information.

[5072] (U) *SCO Report*, Vol. I, p. 62.

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emails. Flynn said he could "use his intelligence sources" to obtain them, and Flynn reached out to multiple people based on that directive, including both Smith and Ledeen.[5073] Trump also publicized his interest. On July 27, 2016, in reference to deleted Clinton server emails, Trump proclaimed: "Russia, if you're listening, I hope you're able to find the 30,000 emails that are missing. I think you would be mightily rewarded by our press"; approximately five hours later, GRU hackers began spearphishing private email accounts at Clinton's personal office for the first time.[5074]

(U) Smith's initiative relating to Clinton's missing emails began to take shape approximately one month later, in late August 2016. On August 28, 2016, according to the SCO, Smith sent an email with the subject "Sec. Clinton's unsecured private email server" to various recipients, including Sam Clovis. The email stated that Smith was "[J]ust finishing two days of sensitive meetings here in DC with involved groups to poke and probe on the above. It is clear that the Clinton's home-based, unprotected server was hacked with ease by both State-related players, and private mercenaries. Parties with varying interests, are circling to release ahead of the election."[5075]

(U) On August 31, Smith sent a fundraising email to multiple recipients from his ProtonMail account.[5076] The subject line was "2016 Political Reconnaissance," and the email described Smith's formation of a corporate entity to obtain the Clinton emails[5077]:

[5073] (U) FBI, FD-302, Gates 4/10/2018; *SCO Report*, Vol. I, p. 62. Smith and Flynn first met in November and December 2015, when they, along with their respective business associates, began discussing cybersecurity business initiatives. *See* Email, Lee to Smith and Flynn, November 21, 2015 (SSCI-2017-4309-000766) (introducing Smith and Flynn by email); SSCI Transcript of the Interview with John Szobocsan Tr., p. 20. On November 25, Smith and Szobocsan met with Flynn, Flynn's son (Michael G. Flynn), and Flynn's partner, Bijan Kian, at the Army-Navy Club. Szobocsan Tr., pp. 43–46; *see* Email, Smith to M. G. Flynn, November 23, 2015 (FLYNN- SSCI- 00007680) (arranging meeting). Two weeks later, on December 7, Smith followed up with a conference call with Kian, Flynn, Spillane, and Szobocsan. *See* Email, Smith to Flynn, M. G. Flynn, Kian, Szobocsan, and Spillane, December 3, 2015 (SSCI-2017-4309-000785) (arranging December 7 call); Szobocsan, Tr. p. 47. Although these discussions did not appear to materialize in a deal, it appears Smith and Flynn stayed in contact.

[5074] (U) *SCO Report*, Vol. I, p. 49.

[5075] (U) *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 63. The Committee did not obtain this email.

[5076] (U) ProtonMail advertises itself as a Switzerland-based end-to-end encrypted email service.

[5077] (U) Email, Smith to Smith, August 31, 2016 (Szobocsan Production).

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COMMITTEE SENSITIVE – RUSSIA INVESTIGATION ONLY

Subject: 2016 Political Reconnaissance

From: Ptrsih (ptrsih@protonmail.ch)

To: ptrsih@protonmail.ch;

Date: Wednesday, August 31, 2016 9:45 AM

All,

In the 2012 campaign cycle we formed a Delaware Limited Liability Company (Political Campaign Analytics, LLC). In the 2016 cycle, we have a similar structure to conduct political reconnaissance which involves research relating to certain relevant public affairs topics. The entity formed for this purpose is KSL 2016, LLC ("KSL"). Similar to our effort in 2012, this entity will raise and spend $250,000, principally in $10,000 individual contributions, several of which have been committed.

The primary 2016 focus is to conduct research regarding the status of issues which are positive to the Republican nominee, and are negative to the Democratic nominee. Primary focus on the latter has been to determine when the emails which Sec. Clinton had on her personal server and deleted will emerge from sources which managed to capture those, because of the nature of the server itself and the failure of the server to be protected.

(U) The fundraising email referenced several steps Smith had already taken as part of his initiative, which included "daily conference calls with about a dozen individuals and organizations with interest in learning of third parties which had access to these emails, and of their plans for disclosure and distribution."[5078] Contemporaneous emails from John Szobocsan indicate that this activity included "several early morning conference calls with Flynn's son and a group of nebulous individuals across the globe on issues relating to DT,"[5079] referring to Trump.

(U) Smith also described holding four meetings in Virginia on August 27 and 28 with individuals who claimed to have access to the emails and were interested in selling their information.[5080] Smith's email suggested that he believed that the emails had been found and was willing to pay for them if the documents could be authenticated.[5081] The email also mentioned a connection between these individuals and Russia[5082].

[5078] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[5079] **(U)** Email, Szobocsan to Bear, August 24, 2016 (Szobocsan Production).
[5080] **(U)** Email, Smith to Smith, August 31, 2016 (Szobocsan Production).
[5081] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[5082] **(U)** *Ibid.*

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Our activities in this regard commenced on August 25, and have involved daily conference calls with about a dozen individuals and organizations with interest in learning of third parties which had access to these emails, and of their plans for disclosure and distribution. On the weekend of August 27-28, KSL organized four meetings in Virginia with such parties who claim to have access, and separate meetings with the parties were conducted. Our conclusion is that this access was made by more than these groups, all of whom are non-state players. The parties having the access are motivated by the desire to receive compensation. We stated that our desire was not to purchase such, and specifically avoided any discussion of sums that such parties may seek, and made clear that we were not a source of compensation to them.

Our advice to these parties was that they needed to demonstrate that they indeed did have access, and that the emails that they have were not altered or have any deletions been made. Despite this, the parties seek to remain engaged, and we plan subsequent contact to verify authenticity, as if such could be demonstrated, then the market would exist for them. These parties have ties and affiliations to Russia, and have concerns about their safety.

Between now and September 30, we plan similar reconnaissance extending to China through a meeting we will have in Los Angeles tied to a defense contractor facility there. Our current plan is to follow up the Virginia meetings with a trip to Moscow.

(U) John Szobocsan, a business associate of Smith's, recalled a meeting that Smith reported having with "nervous acting students he thought were from Russia" and who Smith said "were concerned about Putin"; Szobocsan understood that these were "hackers."[5083] In an August 26 email, Szobocsan wrote that "PWS will be near DC tomorrow and Sunday allegedly reviewing some WikiLeaks related documents."[5084] According to Szobocsan, the alleged documents were not in WikiLeaks's possession yet; rather, Smith wanted to retrieve the documents from the hackers and then provide them to WikiLeaks.[5085] In another contemporaneous email, after noting that "nothing worthwhile" had come from Smith's D.C. trip, Szobocsan referenced Flynn's son's involvement in the purported meetings.[5086]

(U) Szobocsan told the Committee that he did not attend the August meetings Smith referenced in his fundraising email, and only heard about them from Smith at the last minute.[5087] In emails to a third person shortly after Smith returned, Szobocsan wrote "Doesn't seem as

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[5083] **(U)** Szobocsan Tr., pp. 136–37.
[5084] **(U)** Email, Szobocsan to Bear, August 26, 2016 (Szobocsan Production). Szobocsan continued: "If these are really unreleased documents, would a i2 data entry project be worthwhile? I'm sure we can get the funds from the group."
[5085] **(U)** Szobocsan Tr., pp. 144–45.
[5086] **(U)** Emails, Szobocsan and Bear, August 30, 2016 (Szobocsan Production) ("Involving Flynn's son this time."). In their correspondence, both Szobocsan and his interlocutor expressed skepticism toward Smith's endeavor.
[5087] **(U)** Szobocsan Tr., pp. 107–108. Safron had no awareness of any of these meetings either. Safron Tr., pp. 119–120.

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anything worthwhile came from the trip."[5088] In statements to the Committee, he claimed to be skeptical of what Smith told him:

> *I get the call in the morning: I'm not going to be in the office; I'm going to be gone; I'm in Washington. He comes back, he tells me he had this meeting in this hotel. It was like really clandestine. He's trying to make it up, and all these things.*
>
> *He goes out and he said that they were meeting in separate rooms and they were looking about getting these Clinton emails that these hackers had recovered. And one of them he thought might have been a Russian group, with like Russian students, but they were real fearful of Putin and all this stuff, that they might get caught; and another group, and all these things.*[5089]

(U) In a follow-up email on September 6, Smith announced the formation of a new corporate entity to channel his initiative, KLS Research, LLC ("KLS"),[5090] and provided wiring instructions for donations. Smith also suggested that he had obtained possession of two sample Clinton emails and had retained a law firm to review them:

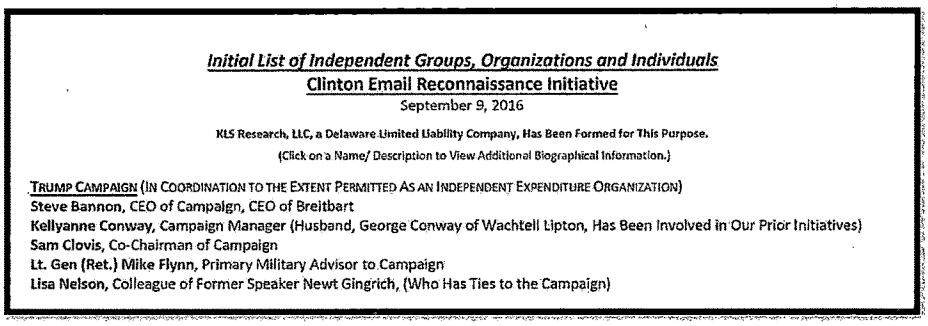
> *We have engaged the e-discovery team of a prominent DC law firm to work over the Labor Day weekend to "Test Match" two separate email files captured from the Clinton private server by two different third parties. The purpose is to insure the integrity of the data by random check points in same locations of each file as we determine that nothing has been "added" or "left out."*[5091]

(U) Smith distributed a summary document for the KLS effort, captioned the "Clinton Email Reconnaissance Initiative."[5092] The document listed individuals and groups purportedly affiliated with the effort, including people employed by or associated with the Trump Campaign:

[5088] **(U)** Email, Szobocsan to Bear, August 30, 2016 (Szobocsan Production).
[5089] **(U)** Szobocsan Tr., pp. 107–108.
[5090] **(U)** Although the entity Smith formed was formally registered as "KLS Research, LLC," Smith also occasionally referred to the name of this entity as "KSL." Szobocsan assisted with the corporate registration. On September 2, Szobocsan received an email confirmation with a Certificate of Good Standing for KLS Research, LLC from Delaware, certifying that the company was formed on September 2, 2016. *See* Email, Aunet to Szobocsan, September 2, 2016 (Szobocsan Production).
[5091] **(U)** Email, Smith to Smith, September 5, 2016 (Szobocsan Production). Financial records produced to the Committee by Szobocsan suggested that Smith's fundraising was not very successful, although the Committee did not independently verify that information. *See* "TNT Account Flows," KLS Research LLC (Szobocsan Production) (documenting alleged financial transactions for KLS financial accounts).
[5092] **(U)** *See* Smith, Szobocsan, Safron, "Initial List of Independent Groups, Organizations and Individuals, Clinton Email Reconnaissance Initiative," September 9, 2016 (Smith Production).

[redacted]

[redacted]



Initial List of Independent Groups, Organizations and Individuals
Clinton Email Reconnaissance Initiative
September 9, 2016

KLS Research, LLC, a Delaware Limited Liability Company, Has Been Formed for This Purpose.
(Click on a Name/ Description to View Additional Biographical Information.)

TRUMP CAMPAIGN (IN COORDINATION TO THE EXTENT PERMITTED AS AN INDEPENDENT EXPENDITURE ORGANIZATION)
Steve Bannon, CEO of Campaign, CEO of Breitbart
Kellyanne Conway, Campaign Manager (Husband, George Conway of Wachtell Lipton, Has Been Involved in Our Prior Initiatives)
Sam Clovis, Co-Chairman of Campaign
Lt. Gen (Ret.) Mike Flynn, Primary Military Advisor to Campaign
Lisa Nelson, Colleague of Former Speaker Newt Gingrich, (Who Has Ties to the Campaign)

Smith attached this summary document in follow-up fundraising solicitations to several individuals.[5093] In one September 20, 2016 email, Smith also claimed that "The Kushner Group is behind the initiative."[5094]

(U) Smith presented himself to others as a political "operator,"[5095] and the Committee found evidence that Smith communicated with some individuals associated with the Trump Campaign, including about his email initiative. In addition to the August 28 email that was sent to Sam Clovis and others, Smith wrote on September 6, 2016, to David Bossie, who had just been named the deputy Trump Campaign manager[5096]:

> *Congratulations . . . for your continued frontline work on the search for the missing/deleted Clinton emails. We have our own initiative on this that I would like to discuss with you by phone, as we believe these were taken from the totally unsecured clintonmail account by numerous parties, several of whom we have contacted.*[5097]

[5093] (U) *See, e.g.*, Email, Smith to Ryan, September 22, 2016 (Szobocsan Production) (attaching a "one-page summary of the Clinton Email Reconnaissance Initiative" and "two back-up pages on relevant articles and parties who are providing assistance to us").
[5094] (U) Email, Smith to Elliot and Szobocsan, September 20, 2016 (Szobocsan Production). Safron was not aware of any actual connections to the Kushners, Safron Tr., p. 165, and the Committee found none.
[5095] (U) Safron Tr., p. 24.
[5096] (U) *See, e.g.*, Robert Costa, "Trump enlists veteran operative David Bossie as deputy campaign manager," *The Washington Post*, September 1, 2016.
[5097] (U) Email, Smith to Bossie, September 6, 2016 (Szobocsan Production). It is not clear if Bossie responded. Smith also reached out to Sam Clovis about other issues. Email, Smith to Clovis, September 16, 2016 (Szobocsan Production).

[redacted]

[redacted]

(U) In mid-September, 2016, Smith also reconnected with Barbara Ledeen,[5098] a Senate staffer who had reached out to Smith in December 2015 to ask for funding for a similar Clinton email effort.[5099] Although Smith had declined to get involved in Ledeen's project at that time,[5100] a mutual acquaintance recommended that Smith get in touch with Ledeen, who "approached [her] months ago about having someone who could access emails quite thoroughly."[5101] Ledeen responded to Smith's outreach:

> *Saw the very interesting note below and was wondering if you had some more detailed reports or memos or other data you could share because we have come a long way in our efforts since we last visited. I think that if we had a chance to review what the UK folks surfaced, we could contribute on our side and give you an update on new findings. We would need as much technical discussion as possible so we could marry it against the new data we have found and then could share it back to you "your eyes only."*[5102]

(U) Shortly thereafter, on September 15, Ledeen signed a non-disclosure agreement with KLS.[5103] That day, Ledeen also emailed Flynn to tell him that "[t]he email project is mostly funded," likely in reference to her parallel effort to locate the Clinton emails.[5104]

(U) Smith tried to recruit a number of cybersecurity professionals to assist the effort. One of these was Matt Tait, a cybersecurity researcher who Smith contacted in September

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[5098] (U) Email, Smith to Nelson, September 13, 2016 (Szobocsan Production).

[5099] (U) In her December 2015 communications with Smith, Ledeen had described an unnamed person who "can get the emails which 1. were classified and 2. were purloined by our enemies." Email, Ledeen to Smith, December 3, 2015 (Szobocsan Production). Ledeen had also shared a 25-page proposal describing, in part, a "Multi-Phase Email Recovery Approach" to find the Clinton emails.

[5100] (U) Szobocsan, who in December 2015 met in person with Ledeen and her business partner, Don Berlin, about their proposal, recalled: "[T]here was really nothing of substance there. They were kind of like: Just give us a pile of money and we'll go out there and look for Clinton's emails. The whole prospect was: Let's go out there. We knew she had an unsecure email server, probably picked up by some intelligence agency someplace, and this could be in the deep and dark web." Szobocsan Tr., p. 59. On December 16, 2015, Smith wrote to Ledeen: "gave it a very hard look, but we do not feel this is a viable alternative for us to support." Email, Smith to Ledeen, December 16, 2015 (Szobocsan Production).

[5101] (U) Email, Nelson to Smith, September 13, 2016 (Szobocsan Production).

[5102] (U) Email, Ledeen to Smith, Nelson, Szobocsan, September 15, 2016 (Szobocsan Production).

[5103] (U) Email, Szobocsan to Smith, September 15, 2016 (Szobocsan Production) (attaching "KLS-Barbara Ledeen Mutual NDA 20160915").

[5104] (U) Email, Ledeen to Flynn, September 15, 2016 (FLYNN_SSCI_00015867). Flynn may have received the proposal from Ledeen directly in June 2016, judging from an email he sent to Ledeen. Email, Flynn to Ledeen, June 16, 2016 (FLYNN_SSCI_00009821–9822) ("[P]lease tell Don, I received and was able to download the file . . . amazing! I'll speak more off line with you about it this evening or tomorrow.").

[redacted]

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2016.[5105] Tait assumed the request was in relation to the DNC emails previously released by WikiLeaks, not the Clinton server emails.[5106] During a phone call on September 5, Smith touted his political connections, including with people who were in the Trump Campaign, like Flynn.[5107] Tait recalled that Smith was interested in the Clinton server emails, and then Smith "dropped this bombshell":

> *[H]e was in contact with someone who was a dark web specialist, who was in contact with someone who had these emails; that these emails had been hacked from Hillary Clinton. There was this person on the dark web who wanted to expose them, but just wanted money in exchange for doing them. He didn't want to give them up for free.*[5108]

(U) Smith wanted Tait to help him validate the purported Clinton emails. Smith was very explicit that he wanted the emails before the election to help the GOP candidates, including on lower down tickets.[5109] During a subsequent call on September 12, Smith explained that he had received a sample from a credible source through a "dark web specialist."[5110] Tait had not signed an NDA provided by Smith, so Smith did not give him the emails and their conversation was limited to discussing some of the technical attributes of the Clinton server.[5111] Tait made it clear that his view was that if the hackers were likely Russians, they would be acting in the best interests of Russia, and warned: "this is a fire, you will get burnt."[5112] But Tait got the impression that Smith did not care who was selling the emails; Smith just wanted access to them.[5113] Smith followed up with further emails to Tait indicating he believed the Clinton emails

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[5105] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Matt Tait, October 6, 2017, p. 7; Email, Smith to Tait, September 4, 2016 (TAIT000001) (stating in relevant part: "As a firm we have interests in cyberspace investments, and individually in the election process (from the political right) especially in its heavy internet overlay. We find your posts to be the most informative, insightful and comprehensive available, and would most welcome the chance to chat with you by phone on how we could collaborate with you.").

[5106] (U) Tait Tr., p. 9.

[5107] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 10; *see* Email, Smith to Tait, September 6, 2016 (TAIT000003) ("As I mentioned on the call, I will want to connect you with Michael G. Flynn, who is Gen. Mike Flynn's son, and serves as his Chief of Staff, after the election.").

[5108] (U) Tait Tr., pp. 16–17.

[5109] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 23.

[5110] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 34.

[5111] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 30–33. This was reflected in a follow-up email from Smith to Tait. Email, Smith to Tait, September 13, 2016 (TAIT000036–37) ("We know of at least four groups that claim access to the content of this email account, and there are countless others.").

[5112] (U) Tait Tr., pp. 30–33.

[5113] (U) *Ibid.*

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had been placed on the dark web, potentially by Russian actors.[5114] Tait declined to participate in Smith's effort.[5115]

(U) Nevertheless, based on his conviction that the Clinton emails were on the dark web, Smith worked with others to develop an approach to locate them. This involved creating a list of terms and phrases that he believed could be used to search the dark web. Smith distributed the list, including to Ledeen and others.[5116] Smith had assistance from Erik York, a former IBM consultant,[5117] and Royal O'Brien, CEO of a video game streaming company.[5118]

(U) Smith claimed to be working with a Washington, D.C., law firm to help authenticate Clinton emails he claimed to have located. Two lawyers were identified on Smith's summary initiative documents, and Safron believed it was "possible" that Smith had retained one of them, [redacted] to assist with that task.[5119] However, the Committee could not determine that Smith had successfully located hacked emails that had been deleted from Clinton's email server or that this testing occurred. Separately, Ledeen obtained financial backing from Erik Prince to test Clinton emails that she had located; Prince provided Ledeen with a technical advisor who, according to Prince, determined that the emails were not authentic.[5120]

(U) In October, Smith began to focus on the WikiLeaks releases of Podesta emails and tried to leverage the WikiLeaks documents for his initiative. Smith "batch downloaded" the WikiLeaks documents every time they came out[5121] and expressed an interest in connecting with Assange.[5122] In an email dated October 6, 2016, Szobocsan described a purported WikiLeaks "distribution arrangement" in correspondence with Charles Johnson—a political operative who had arranged a meeting between Assange and then-Congressman Dana Rohrabacher[5123]—but disclaimed having viewed any of the documents:

[5114] (U) Email, Smith to Tait et al., September 17, 2016 (TAIT000038) ("As soon seen, certain Russian students put all their material (following their scholarship grants on Thursday) via TOR onto the deep/dark web."); Email, Smith to Tait, September 19, 2016 (TAIT000040) ("The 'missing' Hillary emails have been re-inserted into the dark/deep web. I look forward to discussing with you how this was done, and what is next."); Email, Smith to Tait, September 22, 2016 (TAIT000049) ("[W]e would welcome the opportunity to talk with you by phone about how these could be accessed by the media and other parties with interest in them. It has come to our attention that more than the one party referred to here has placed the same or similar files in the Deep Web.").

[5115] (U) Tait Tr., p. 39.

[5116] (U) *See, e.g.*, Email, Szobocsan to Ledeen, Smith, and Safron, October 4, 2016 (Szobocsan Production) (attaching "keywords document").

[5117] (U) *See, e.g.*, Email, York to Szobocsan, Smith, and Safron, October 7, 2016 (Szobocsan Production).

[5118] (U) *See, e.g.*, Email, O'Brien to Smith, November 1, 2016 (Szobocsan Production).

[5119] (U) Safron Tr., pp. 143–144.

[5120] (U) *SCO Report*, Vol. I, p. 64.

[5121] (U) Safron Tr., p. 135.

[5122] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 133–134.

[5123] (U) *See infra* Vol. 5, Sec. III.B.

[redacted]

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We have not seen the content. This is all done by third parties. We believe the emails are accurate but are unable to definitely confirm such.

The distribution arrangements involve a sharing with Wikileaks, who would then release them. The second means of distribution is to identify these emails through key phrase/sentence identifiers in the dark and deep web.[5124]

(U) On October 10, Smith sent a new email solicitation to "supporters and prospective supporters" with updates about the WikiLeaks documents and requesting additional funding.[5125] In November 7, 2016, Smith mentioned by email a "contact I had with one of its [WikiLeaks] legal team members."[5126]

(U) Smith also kept Flynn and Clovis in the loop. On October 10, he forwarded Flynn's son the update on his initiative and the WikiLeaks materials.[5127] On October 15, he updated Flynn, Flynn's son, Barbara Ledeen, and Sam Clovis[5128]:

> We were fortunate enough to have had the Clinton-related emails which came to our attention from several separate sources placed in WikiLeaks hands, which we are certain they had from countless other parties. In a few week period we identified a handful of individuals that had obtained access to the unprotected Clinton emails. All were relatively inexperienced persons looking for notoriety. This is similar to the novice level hackers groups who with ease accessed the commercial email accounts of senior national security figures.

(U) Some recipients of Smith's updates appeared to believe Smith had been successful. On October 24, after Smith sent another email about WikiLeaks, he received a response from Charles Johnson threatening that "Steve," likely a reference to Bannon, would sue him for the documents[5129]:

[5124] (U) Email, Szobocsan to Johnson, October 6, 2016 (Szobocsan Production).
[5125] (U) Email, Smith to Smith, October 10, 2016 (SSCI-2017-4309-001415).
[5126] (U) Email, Smith to Braden, November 7, 2016 (Szobocsan Production). The Committee did not identify the communication Smith was referring to, but did obtain a subsequent email that Smith sent to Barry Pollack, an attorney for Julian Assange, in January 2017.
[5127] (U) Email, Smith to M. G. Flynn, October 11, 2016 (Szobocsan Production) ("WikiLeaks Clinton-Related Email Release and Disinformation About Secretary Clinton's Health").
[5128] (U) Email, Smith to Flynn, M. G. Flynn, Ledeen, and Clovis, October 15, 2016 (FLYNN_SSCI_00013940).
[5129] (U) Email, Johnson to Smith, October 24, 2016 (SSCI-2017-4309-001350).

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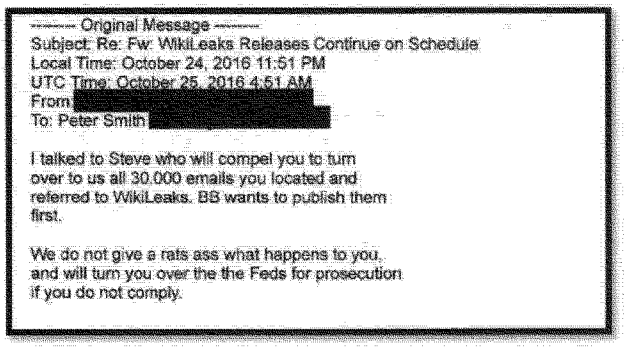

-------- Original Message --------
Subject: Re: Fw: WikiLeaks Releases Continue on Schedule
Local Time: October 24, 2016 11:51 PM
UTC Time: October 25, 2016 4:51 AM
From [redacted]
To: Peter Smith [redacted]

I talked to Steve who will compel you to turn over to us all 30,000 emails you located and referred to WikiLeaks. BS wants to publish them first.

We do not give a rats ass what happens to you, and will turn you over the the Feds for prosecution if you do not comply.

(U) The Committee examined whether Smith had in fact obtained any non-public information through his initiatives. Its review of Smith's hard drive produced two documents released by WikiLeaks that Smith had obtained and which showed file creation dates of October 2, 2016, dates that predated the public release of these documents by Julian Assange.[5130] These documents were not otherwise available on the public internet at that time, which raised the possibility that Smith had in fact obtained hacked Clinton emails in advance. The Committee identified these documents for the SCO for forensic review, which then established that the file creation date did not reflect when the files were downloaded to Smith's computer. Rather, the SCO determined: "Smith used an older Apple operating system that would have preserved that October 2, 2016 creation date when it was downloaded by Smith (no matter what day it was in fact downloaded by Smith)." Instead, the file creation date on these documents appears to be "when WikiLeaks staged the document for release."[5131] As a result, the Committee found no evidence that Smith obtained any of the WikiLeaks materials in advance of their public release or any of the "missing" Clinton emails.

2. (U) The Alfa Bank Server Story

i. (U) Introduction and Findings

(U) In July 2016, a group of "prominent computer scientists" identified unusual internet activity connecting two servers registered to Alfa Bank, a Russian financial institution, with an

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[5130] (U) Both documents were attachments to Podesta emails that WikiLeaks later released. *See SCO Report*, Vol. I, p. 64.
[5131] (U) *Ibid.*

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email domain associated with the Trump Organization.[5132] The unusual internet activity reflected thousands of Domain Name System queries—commonly referred to as a "DNS lookup"—for an email domain used by the Trump Organization and originating from those two Alfa Bank servers. Public reporting in October 2016 suggested the possibility that this activity reflected the existence of communications between the two organizations.[5133] That suggestion was denied by both entities, but their alternative explanations were not consistent.

(U) The Committee spoke with Trump Organization IT staff about its understanding of and response to the activity and also considered the results of an FBI investigation. Based on the FBI's assessment, the Committee did not find that the DNS activity reflected the existence of substantive or covert communications between Alfa Bank and Trump Organization personnel. However, the Committee also could not positively determine an intent or purpose that would explain the unusual activity.

ii. (U) The DNS Connection Between the Trump Organization and AlfaBank Servers

(U) Moscow-based Alfa Bank is part of the Alfa Group consortium and, as of 2017, was the largest private bank in Russia based on total assets, total equity and deposit and loan portfolios. As of 2017, the bank's top four majority shareholders were Mikhail Fridman, German Khan, Aleksey Kusmichev, and Petr Aven[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[5132] (U) According to public reporting in 2018, following disclosure of the Russian hack of the DNC, the computer scientists began searching for evidence that Russian hackers might also have infiltrated Republican-affiliated organizations and identified this activity through that process. *See, e.g.*, Dexter Filkins, "Was There a Connection Between a Russian Bank and the Trump Campaign?" *The New Yorker*, October 8, 2018. The computer scientists were not identified publicly by name.

[5133] (U) *See, e.g.*, Franklin Foer, "Was a Trump Server Communicating With Russia," *Slate*, October 31, 2016.

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[5135] (U) *Ibid.*

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(U) According to logs and documents purporting to reflect analysis by computer scientists, along with public reporting about the DNS lookups, during the 90-day period between June 17, 2016 and September 14, 2016, two servers registered to Alfa Bank (IP addresses 217.12.96.15 and 217.12.97.15) conducted DNS lookups of the domain "mail1.trump-email.com" a total of 2,817 times.[5137] An additional 729 DNS lookups were conducted by a third server registered to Spectrum Health, based in Michigan.[5138] Of the total number of DNS lookups of the Trump Organization server, approximately 99.8% originated with these three servers during that three-month period, as reflected below[5139]:

DNS-Lookups-For-mail1.trump-email.com-Through-9-14.txt

```
1422|AS15632|217.12.96.15|217.12.96.0/23|JSC "Alfa-Bank"|Moscow|Moskva|Russian
Federation|RU
1395|AS15632|217.12.97.15|217.12.96.0/23|JSC "Alfa-Bank"|Moscow|Moskva|Russian
Federation|RU
729|AS30710|167.73.110.8|167.73.96.0/20|Spectrum Health|Grand Rapids|Michigan|US|US
2|AS3061|74.118.76.182|74.118.72.0/21|Peer to Peer|Rehoboth|Rhode Island|US|US
1|AS40715|71.5.34.5|71.5.34.0/24|DataCenter.BZ, LLC|Worthington|Ohio|US|US
1|AS32491|64.98.42.242|64.98.32.0/20|Tucows.com Co.|Toronto|Ontario|CA|CA
1|AS32392|98.130.1.253|98.130.0.0/15|Ecommerce Corporation|Columbus|Ohio|US|US
1|AS22611|205.134.252.154|205.134.252.0/24|InMotion Hosting|Los
Angeles|California|US|US
1|AS16509|54.206.26.93|54.206.0.0/17|Amazon.com, Inc.|Seattle|New South Wales|US|AU
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(U) Generally speaking, a DNS lookup is used by internet-connected devices to translate a human-readable domain into the corresponding Internet Protocol (IP) address that the device

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[5136] (U) *Ibid.*

[5137] (U) The Committee reviewed logs and analytical documents describing this activity, but did not independently assess their validity or authenticity. They are described here for background purposes only, and are consistent with the contemporaneous public reporting. The Committee was provided with these logs and documents in response to a document request. *See* DNS-Lookups-For-mail1.trump-email.com-Through-9-14.txt (PERKINSCOIE-SSCI-0000140); "White Paper #1 – Auditable v3," (PERKINSCOIE-SSCI-0000126–131). They also appear to be publicly available. *See, e.g.*, ljean.com/NetworkData.php (providing links to text files containing logs and analysis); ljean.com/NetworkRecords/Log-Of-DNS-Lookups-For-mail1.trump-email.com-851.txt (text file of DNS lookups for mail1.trump-email.com); ljean.com/NetworkRecords/DNS-Lookups-For-mail1.trump-email.com-Through-9-14.txt (text file compiling number of lookups based on requesting IP address).

[5138] (U) *See* DNS-Lookups-For-mail1.trump-email.com-Through-9-14.txt (PERKINSCOIE-SSCI-0000140).

[5139] (U) *Ibid.*

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uses for communicating.[5140] DNS lookups of a particular domain can suggest the existence of corresponding Internet communications to that domain, but they are not conclusive. One possible explanation for this activity was that someone was using the Alfa Bank servers to communicate (or try to communicate) with the Trump Organization.

(U) When press inquiries relating to this information began in September of 2016, the Trump Organization tasked Jae Cho, its corporate IT director, with identifying any potential Alfa Bank connection.[5141] The Committee interviewed Cho about his investigation and conclusions.

(U) According to Cho, at the time of the suspicious activity, the domain mail1.trump-email.com belonged to the Trump Organization's email marketing company, Cendyn Hospitality Marketing.[5142] Cho learned from Cendyn that the trump-email.com domain was originally created for Trump Hotels email marketing sometime between 2009 and 2011[5143] and the domain had been used as recently as November 2015 for Trump Hotel marketing emails.[5144] At some point prior to September 29, 2016, the domain registration was transferred from Cendyn to the Trump Organization; internal emails suggested it may have occurred on September 23, 2016, around the time the press began inquiring, although Cho could not identify any specific date with certainty.[5145] According to Cho, the Trump domain had been used to send mass marketing emails, but not to receive email.[5146]

(U) Cho looked up the IP addresses belonging to the two Alfa Bank servers. Based on a port scan of one server's IP address on October 1, 2016, Cho found that it was not configured as an email or web server: "It only had port 53 open, which is a port for DNS lookup."[5147] From

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[5140] (U) This is sometimes referred to as a "forward" DNS lookup. DNS lookups can also be used to determine a domain based on an IP address, which are referred to as "reverse" DNS lookups.
[5141] (U) The tasking occurred after the Trump Organization began receiving press inquiries about the DNS lookups. SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Jae Cho, February 15, 2018, p. 7.
[5142] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 12.
[5143] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 13.
[5144] (U) Email, Trump Hotels to Spectrum Health, November 25, 2015 (TRUMPORG_6_001619–1622) (containing header information identifying mail1.trump-email.com); Email, McMullin to LaDolcetta and Deyo, November 25, 2015 (TRUMPORG_6_001627) ("The email header provided is a valid email that was sent out for a Trump marketing campaign on behalf of Trump Hotel Collection. The campaign was sent out to 930,427 email addresses. . . . The email sent to Spectrum Health was sent out from a 3rd party external mail server that is used for marketing purposes.").
[5145] (U) Cho Tr., pp. 37–46; Email, McMullin to LaDolcetta, Deyo, Cho and Cohen, September 29, 2016 (TRUMPORG_6_001447) ("I can verify that the domain has been transferred into Trump's Go Daddy account – Cendyn is no longer the registrar."); Email, LaDolcetta to McMullin, Hicks, & Cho, cc: E. Trump, September 30, 2016 (DJTFP00018140).
[5146] (U) Cho Tr., pp. 14, 31.
[5147] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 17–18; *see* Email, Cho to Miller and Hicks, bcc: LaDolcetta, Martin, E. Trump, September 30, 2016 (TRUMPORG_6_001474–1475) (screenshot of port scan of IP address 217.12.96.15 using mxtoolbox).

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this, he inferred that both of the Alfa Bank servers were configured as DNS servers, and therefore could not have been used to transmit email communications to the Trump domain.[5148] Cho did not explain if he also conducted a port scan of the other Alfa Bank IP address, or how he determined that the configuration on October 1, 2016 would have been the same as the server's configuration during the time period in question.

(U) Cho did not recall conducting a system-wide review of the Trump Organization network to determine if there were any connections from the Trump Organization side with any of the Alfa Bank servers.[5149] Instead, he looked up the public IP addresses for two separate Alfa Bank email servers he had identified, which he then provided to Cendyn to check if Cendyn could identify communications involving those servers.[5150] In response, Cendyn found six messages to Alfa Bank recipients from clients using one of its email applications, but stated that these communications were not connected to the Trump Organization.[5151] Cendyn identified these as emails sent by existing banking or hotel customers of Cendyn through a meeting management application to an Alfa Bank email address.[5152] Cho did not locate any substantive communications between the Trump Organization and the two Alfa Bank servers and did not pursue further investigation of the DNS activity.[5153]

(U) Cendyn did not explain how the unusual DNS lookup activity might relate to those emails and did not filter its records to find information like the DNS logs at issue.[5154] Nonetheless, based on Cendyn's findings, Cho concluded that the rough "correlation" between these emails and the DNS logs might explain how the press had "put these together as some kind of activity between Alfa Bank and Cendyn, which happened to have one of their host names with our Trump name in it, 'Trump-email.com.'"[5155] The Committee did not engage Cendyn on this matter.

(U) Unprompted, the Committee also received two letters, dated March 16 and July 20, 2018, from an attorney representing Alfa Bank conveying the findings of internal investigations into the unusual DNS activity. The letters represented that Alfa Bank had retained Mandiant, a

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[5148] (U) Cho Tr., pp. 16–18.
[5149] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 19–20.
[5150] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 18–19, 21; *see* Email, Cho to McMullin, LaDolcetta, and Cardena, September 30, 2016 (DJTFP00018534).
[5151] (U) *See* Email, McMullin to Cho and LaDolcetta, October 4, 2016 (DJTFP00018533–18534) ("We did find a total of 6 messages to recipients of Alpa-Bank [sic] that were sent out of our applications. Cendyn does use internal SMTP servers for our various applications and are not dedicate [sic] to specific clients.").
[5152] (U) According to Cendyn, emails were sent on March 15, June 22, June 28, August 2, and August 15. *Ibid.*
[5153] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 24–25, 30–31.
[5154] (U) Email, McMullin to LaDolcetta, October 5, 2016 (DJTFP00018919) ("The logs [of A record lookups] do not contain the details to allow us to filter out the requests on a per domain basis.").
[5155] (U) Cho Tr., p. 31.

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cyber incident response firm, to conduct an internal investigation based on the DNS logs and had found no evidence of substantive communications between Alfa Bank and the Trump Organization.[5156] However, one letter noted that Alfa Bank had "continue[d] to receive unsolicited marketing emails from an address allegedly affiliated with the Trump Organization," which it did not identify.[5157] As to the cause of the DNS activity, that letter posited Mandiant's "working hypothesis is that the activity was caused by a marketing or spam campaign directed at Alfa Bank employees by a marketing server affiliated with the Trump Organization."[5158]

[redacted] The Committee has no reason to dispute those determinations.

3. (U) Changes to the RNC's Platform

i. (U) Introduction and Findings

(U) The Committee investigated whether or not changes to the RNC's platform were the result of any Russian attempts to interfere with or otherwise influence the platform. Media speculation surrounding this issue stemmed from an incident involving a Republican delegate named Diana Denman and Trump Campaign staffer J.D. Gordon. Denman, a member of the

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[5156] **(U)** *See* Letter, Dinh to Burr and Warner, March 16, 2018; Letter, Dinh to Burr and Warner, July 20, 2018.
[5157] **(U)** Letter, Dinh to Burr and Warner, March 16, 2018.
[5158] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[5159] [redacted]
[5160] **(U)** *Ibid.*

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Platform Committee, proposed an amendment to provide "lethal defensive assistance" to Ukraine. After Trump Campaign staffers intervened, Denman's language was modified to "appropriate assistance" before delegates adopted the amendment.

(U) After interviewing Denman, Gordon, and all of the individuals directly involved in the matter, the Committee found that the changes to the RNC's platform with respect to arming Ukraine were not the result of Russian interference, nor were they a coordinated attempt by the Trump Campaign to "weaken" the platform on Ukraine.

ii. (U) Before Platform Week

a. (U) Denman's involvement on the Platform Committee

(U) Diana Denman first became involved in Republican politics and foreign affairs during her tenure as Vice Chairman of the Republican Party of Texas, and continued in her role as a delegate for the Reagan Campaign in 1984.[5161] Denman described herself to the Committee as "very supportive of the freedom fighters and those who were involved in the eighties in El Salvador and Nicaragua."[5162] In addition to her involvement in Latin America, Denman also traveled to Eastern Europe in 1989 and witnessed the first free elections in Ukraine on a trip with the International Republican Institute (IRI).[5163]

(U) Between her role as a Reagan delegate in the 1980s and the 2016 election cycle, Denman stayed involved with foreign affairs through her service on two boards at the Department of Defense: the Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services and the Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation, which supports a bipartisan exchange with military leadership in Latin American countries.[5164]

(U) Denman started in the 2016 election cycle as a delegate for Senator Ted Cruz at the Texas state party level, and she was later chosen as a Texas delegate to the Republican National Convention.[5165] After securing a delegate spot, Denman asked to be assigned to the Platform Committee; specifically, she wanted to be on the subcommittee handling military and national security issues.[5166]

b. (U) Denman's Draft Amendment

[5161] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Diana Denman, December 4, 2017, pp. 4–5.
[5162] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 7.
[5163] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 8.
[5164] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 6.
[5165] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 5.
[5166] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 5–7.

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(U) After being assigned to the Platform Committee, Denman began to receive emails from delegates on other committees requesting her support for their amendments to the Republican platform.[5167] On July 8, 2016, Denman began an email exchange with Ilan Berman, of the American Foreign Policy Council, to discuss language for her own platform amendment on Ukraine.[5168] Herman Pirchner, Jr., President of the American Foreign Policy Council, also provided input to Denman's amendment.[5169] Denman told the Committee that she was motivated to draft something on Ukraine because:

> *[L]ooking back to my involvement in Latin America, Central America, the only country that I could identify . . . that had . . . their borders encroached and crossed by another country was the Ukraine. So it seemed to me that that was something that I might address because of the support that America gave during the eighties to other countries that were invaded by a neighbor.*[5170]

(U) Denman felt strongly that her amendment should provide for "lethal defensive assistance" to Ukraine because of her experiences in Latin America and her understanding of current weapons technologies:

> *When I was down in El Salvador and Nicaragua, I saw the weapons used against the freedom fighters, and they had their hearts in their hands and their beliefs for their country. But when I saw first-hand what was being used against them . . . I wondered how they would ever prevail for their own countries . . . . And . . .in reading now . . . the high level of weapons today being produced by other countries in the world, that goes into my thinking of what they're able—what the two sides are up against.*[5171]

(U) Once her draft amendment was finalized, Denman emailed her language to all of the other delegates on her subcommittee.[5172] She also submitted language for an amendment related to the Monroe Doctrine.[5173] She brought a paper copy of her amendment to the Platform Committee meeting in Cleveland on July 11, 2016.[5174]

[5167] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 9.
[5168] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 10–11. *See also* Emails, Berman, Pirchner, and Denman, July 8, 2016 (DENMAN000001–2); Emails, Potapenko, Berman, Pirchner, and Denman, July 8, 2016 (DENMAN000140–142).
[5169] (U) Denman Tr., p. 12.
[5170] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 10.
[5171] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 24–25.
[5172] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 16.
[5173] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 13.
[5174] (U) *Ibid.*

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iii. (U) Platform Week

a. (U) The Amendment Process

(U) The week before the Republican National Convention in Cleveland, the delegates selected for the Platform Committee met to discuss and finalize the Republican platform.[5175] The Platform Committee was divided into subcommittees of interest, one of which covered national security.[5176]

(U) There were three entities involved in overseeing the Platform Committee and subcommittee process: RNC officials (chairs or co-chairs of the subcommittees), Trump Campaign officials, and the delegates themselves.[5177] The Trump Campaign staff involved in the national security subcommittee were John Mashburn, Trump Campaign Policy Director; Rick Dearborn, Trump Campaign staff; J.D. Gordon, Director for the Trump Campaign's National Security Advisory Committee; and Matt Miller, National Director of Veterans for Trump.[5178] Mashburn acted as the senior-most advisor and gave the other Campaign staff instructions regarding how to handle any issues in the subcommittee meetings.[5179] Gordon and Miller were stationed in the national security subcommittee room to monitor the process.[5180]

(U) Mashburn told staff that he believed that, in 2012, the Romney campaign had "gotten really really involved in the writing of the platform planks, and it had caused a lot of problems with a lot of delegates."[5181] His goal was to avoid that mistake and to let the delegates write the platform as they wished.[5182] Three or four weeks prior to the draft platform coming from the RNC, Mashburn spoke with Dearborn and then, later, with Manafort, about his views that the Campaign staffers at the convention should not insert themselves in the delegates' drafting processes.[5183] Mashburn told the Committee that Manafort agreed with him that the Campaign "should only get involved if it's something directly contrary to where the candidate has a stated position."[5184] Mashburn seems to have delivered those instructions successfully, at

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[5175] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Matt Miller, December 20, 2017, pp. 9, 12.
[5176] (U) Gordon Tr., p. 14; M. Miller Tr., p. 13.
[5177] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with John Mashburn, February 5, 2018, pp. 102–104.
[5178] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 97–98.
[5179] (U) *Ibid.*
[5180] (U) Gordon Tr., pp. 12, 14; M. Miller Tr., p. 11.
[5181] (U) Mashburn Tr., p. 94.
[5182] (U) *Ibid.*
[5183] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 95.
[5184] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 95–96.

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least at first, to Dearborn and Gordon.[5185] However, Miller could not recall any guidance he was given about platform discussions or amendments prior to the platform committee meeting.[5186]

(U) Miller and Gordon asked to preview amendments to the platform the evening prior to the breakout sessions for each interest group.[5187] Miller did not see the amendments, but Gordon reviewed them and submitted them to Mashburn.[5188]

b. (U) Deriving Candidate Trump's Views on Ukraine

(U) Prior to the Platform Committee meeting on July 11, 2016, Trump Campaign advisors did not have a clear view of Trump's position on Ukraine beyond comments he made in speeches and one comment at the March 31, 2016, meeting of his National Security Advisory Committee (NSAC). Gordon was present for both the NSAC meeting in March 2016 and the Platform Committee meeting.[5189]

(U) Mashburn told the Committee that "the candidate had never taken a position about assistance to Ukraine, lethal assistance . . . humanitarian assistance. He had said stuff about Russia, Crimea, the Ukraine . . . but he had never said anything about the type of military assistance or humanitarian assistance we could provide."[5190]

(U) J.D. Gordon told the Committee that he had "a little bit of visibility" about Trump's views from the March 2016 NSAC meeting at the Old Post Office.[5191] At that meeting, according to Gordon, Trump mentioned "that he didn't want a World War III over Ukraine. But he had also been saying that on the campaign trail."[5192]

(U) When asked whether he was aware of the Campaign's position on aid to Ukraine prior to the convention, Dearborn responded "not really at the time going into the convention. It may have been listed in one of the speeches that he had. He gave a ton of speeches, so I wasn't

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[5185] (U) Gordon said: "The process was for all of the six subcommittee sessions to review the platform and submit amendments, the process was that if there was anything that was very different than Mr. Trump's policy statements and view, we should let the co-chairman know, so the co-chairman can have a robust debate." Gordon Tr., p. 14. Dearborn understood the instructions to the Campaign staffers in each subcommittee room to be "monitor what happens in the subcommittee . . . make sure that what we've been saying and where we are on the issues tracks and just monitor it." Dearborn Tr., pp. 123–125.
[5186] (U) M. Miller Tr., p. 9.
[5187] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 13.
[5188] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 13–14.
[5189] (U) Gordon Tr., pp. 14, 26–28.
[5190] (U) Mashburn Tr., p. 100.
[5191] (U) Gordon Tr., p. 26.
[5192] (U) *Ibid.*

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up on every single one."[5193] Matt Miller, a Trump Campaign staffer also in the platform committee room with Gordon, told the Committee that he "did not find out until later, in reading some press accounts . . . that it [the language regarding lethal assistance] did not match what candidate Trump had said at the time. It went further than what candidate Trump had said about Russia and the Ukraine."[5194]

(U) Both Mashburn and Gordon expressed to the Committee that the Republican party's position on whether or not to arm Ukraine was not unified at the time. Gordon believed "it was debatable within Republican circles whether to arm the Ukraine or not."[5195] Mashburn told the Committee that "there were people in the House that wanted 'lethal assistance.' Then there was the distinction between offensive and defensive assistance. So there was a split among Republicans on that issue before we ever got there."[5196]

c. (U) The Denman Amendment in Subcommittee

(U) Inside the subcommittee room, there was a long conference table with platform committee Chairman Steve Yates and Vice Chairman Ron Rabin at one end of a long rectangular table, Denman at the opposite end, and delegates along either side.[5197] Miller and Gordon sat a side table with an attorney from Jones Day (counsel to the Campaign), who served as a parliamentarian, according to Miller.[5198] Miller recalled that prior to the Denman amendment, the subcommittee had "debates on trans-gender [people] serving in the military, LBGTQ issues, and there were votes on that," along with two other amendments that Miller had himself drafted.[5199]

(U) There was significant media discussion about changes to the language of Denman's amendment.[5200] According to Denman and Gordon, Denman's original amendment text called for "lethal defensive weapons" in Ukraine.[5201] After the subcommittee meeting and the Platform Committee meeting, the language was changed to "appropriate assistance."[5202]

[5193] (U) Dearborn Tr., p. 125.
[5194] (U) M. Miller Tr., p. 17.
[5195] (U) Gordon Tr., p. 28.
[5196] (U) Mashburn Tr., p. 100.
[5197] (U) M. Miller Tr., pp. 10–11. In addition, during his interview with the Committee, Miller drew the layout of the platform committee room. *Ibid.*, p. 10, Exhibit 1.
[5198] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 11.
[5199] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 15.
[5200] (U) *See* Josh Rogin, "Trump Campaign Guts GOP's anti-Russia stance on Ukraine," *The Washington Post*, July 18, 2016; *see also* Brian Naylor, "How the Trump Campaign Weakened The Republican Platform on Aid to Ukraine," *NPR*, August 6, 2016.
[5201] (U) Denman Tr., pp. 14, 22–23; *see also* Gordon Tr., p. 16.
[5202] (U) Gordon Tr., p. 16.

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(U) Some of the details of Denman's recollection of events vary significantly from the Campaign staffers who the Committee interviewed, but all parties agree on the following: Denman submitted her original amendment to the Platform Committee delegates; the amendment came up in the subcommittee; J.D. Gordon asked the subcommittee Chairman to table Denman's amendment because he thought the language contradicted Trump's position on Ukraine; J.D. Gordon called Campaign advisers for assistance; and the language was eventually modified and voted out of the subcommittee. Denman did not recall re-raising the issue, but Miller recalled that the following day Denman attempted to vote the original language out of the full platform committee, and the vote failed.[5203]

d. (U) Gordon's Concerns with the Language

(U) Gordon's role was to raise concerns if any amendments contradicted the candidate's stated positions. Given his understanding of Trump's stated position on Ukraine, such as it was, "Diana Denman's amendment had those three words [lethal defensive assistance], which I viewed as problematic because that would result, if adopted as it was, in a major policy difference than Mr. Trump."[5204] Gordon told the Committee that "Mr. Trump had stated publicly and privately that he didn't want World War III over Ukraine and he wanted better relations with Russia. So arming Ukraine is inconsistent with that view."[5205]

(U) Gordon called Mashburn and Dearborn "so they had a chance to discuss it and make sure they could pose an objection if they wanted to"[5206]; he also asked Miller to speak with either Steve Yates, the subcommittee Chairman, or Rob Rabin, the Vice Chairman, "and basically ask them to table the amendment, and we could work with Ms. Denman to get something that wasn't as . . . restrictive."[5207] This interference in the subcommittee process was precisely what Mashburn had hoped to avoid.[5208] Campaign staff who were interviewed by the Committee could not remember if any other amendments were tabled, but there were no other amendments that Gordon asked Miller to approach Yates or Rabin about.[5209]

(U) Gordon told the Committee that he discussed his concerns about Trump's views on Ukraine and Denman's amendment language with Dearborn and Mashburn and "they understood

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[5203] (U) Denman Tr., pp. 29–30; *see also* M. Miller Tr., pp. 19, 31.
[5204] (U) Gordon Tr., p. 14.
[5205] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 14–15.
[5206] (U) Gordon Tr., p. 17; Mashburn Tr., pp. 101–103.
[5207] (U) M. Miller Tr., pp. 15–16.
[5208] (U) Mashburn Tr., pp. 99–104. Mashburn stated that "J.D. didn't do what we told him" because Gordon had tabled the Amendment and negotiated new language, rather than first contacting Mashburn and Dearborn for advice or allowing the delegates to proceed on their own. *Ibid.*
[5209] (U) M. Miller Tr., p. 23.

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Mr. Trump's views. It wasn't a secret he felt the way he did."[5210] Dearborn also recalled that Gordon "said that [Ms. Denman's Ukraine amendment] may be different from what our position was in some speech that was given by the then-candidate, now nominee."[5211] Both Mashburn and Dearborn relied on Gordon's interpretation of Trump's policy and the amendment text. Dearborn said that he had not even reviewed the amendment's text at the time of his discussions with Gordon.[5212]

e. (U) Denman/Gordon exchanges

(U) Denman told the Committee that after she read her plank in the national security subcommittee during the morning of July 11, 2016, Gordon and Miller left their seats to speak with Yates and Rabin.[5213] Yates and Rabin then asked Denman for a copy of her amendment.[5214] Then Gordon and Miller returned to their seats, and the subcommittee proceeded to consider other amendments.[5215] Denman was confused about why her plank was not being considered and approached Gordon and Miller, neither of whom she recognized; both men explained that they were there on behalf of the Trump Campaign, and Miller reminded Denman that he had called her prior to the convention to offer assistance.[5216]

(U) Denman did agree to table her amendment "for the time being" at the request of Gordon and Miller.[5217] Denman's understanding was that "there was a voice agreement that it would be handed over [to the Trump Campaign staffers and the subcommittee leadership] . . . that they would refine it and work with it."[5218] Miller's account of the interaction comports with Denman's, as he told the Committee, "We got her agreement to change it to 'appropriate means,' and it was voted on in committee and passed. Then the next day I think she tried to insert 'lethal' again in the full committee and it was voted down again. So the language that appears [in the platform] is 'appropriate.'"[5219]

(U) During the July 11 session, Denman raised her hand to ask about the status of her amendment, at which point there was "some discussion and a suggestion that other wording

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[5210] (U) Gordon Tr., p. 17.
[5211] (U) Dearborn Tr., pp. 125–126.
[5212] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 126.
[5213] (U) Denman Tr., pp. 14–15.
[5214] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 16.
[5215] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 17.
[5216] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 17–18.
[5217] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 32.
[5218] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 40.
[5219] (U) M. Miller Tr., p. 19. A memorandum drafted by Dearborn for Manafort to describe the "tick tock" of events also supports that Denman offered the Amendment in the full committee on July 12, 2016, and the Amendment was voted down. Memorandum, Dearborn to Manafort, August 1, 2016 (DJTFP00004698).

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should be put in."[5220] During that discussion, Denman approached Gordon at the side table, who she recalled being on a cellular phone.[5221] Denman told the Committee that Gordon told her he had to clear the language with "New York" but that she didn't believe him.[5222] Denman told the Committee that she pressed Gordon on who he was speaking to and he told her three times that he was speaking to "Mr. Trump."[5223]

(U) Gordon disputes this account, and told the Committee that he was "talking to my policy colleagues" and that he never told Denman that he was speaking to Trump.[5224] Gordon further told the Committee that he never spoke to Manafort or Trump about the subcommittee discussions while they were happening.[5225]

(U) Mashburn and Miller were present that day and do not have any recollection of Gordon calling anyone in New York or speaking with Trump.[5226] In fact, Mashburn told the Committee that "if I had every one of the people in each of these subcommittees calling New York for advice and skipping me and Rick [Dearborn], me and Rick [Dearborn] would have been fired for not doing our job supervising what was going on."[5227] Mashburn also testified that Campaign staff did not escalate a single platform issue to New York during the entire subcommittee day.[5228]

(U) Denman told the Committee that she "felt that it was better to be sure" the Ukraine language remained in the platform at all—"that it not be dropped"—so she agreed to the change in language from "lethal defensive assistance" to "appropriate assistance."[5229] The final Republican platform reflected this change.

iv. (U) Media coverage of the platform issue

(U) Denman never spoke with Miller, Gordon, Mashburn, or Dearborn about the amendment after the vote.[5230] However, after the committee vote, during the convention, and after the convention ended, the Campaign received press inquiries about what happened.[5231] On

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[5220] (U) Denman Tr., p. 19.
[5221] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 20.
[5222] (U) *Ibid.*
[5223] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 21.
[5224] (U) Gordon Tr., p. 18.
[5225] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 19.
[5226] (U) Mashburn Tr., pp. 101–102, 128; M. Miller Tr., p. 22.
[5227] (U) Mashburn Tr., p. 128.
[5228] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 129.
[5229] (U) Denman Tr., p. 19.
[5230] (U) M. Miller Tr., p. 26; Denman Tr. p. 36; Mashburn Tr., p. 142.
[5231] (U) M. Miller Tr., p. 33.

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July 18, 2016, *The Washington Post* published an opinion column chronicling the change in amendment language; on August 6, 2016, NPR published its own account of the amendment changes on its website.[5232]

(U) During a July 31, 2016, segment on *Meet the Press*, Chuck Todd asked Paul Manafort "how much influence" Manafort had in what Todd characterized as "something in the Republican Party platform that essentially changed the Republican Party's views when it comes to Ukraine."[5233] Manafort told Todd: "I had none. In fact, I didn't even hear of it until after our convention was over."[5234] Later in the interview, Todd clarified with Manafort, "so nobody in the Trump Campaign wanted that change in the platform?"[5235] Manafort responded: "No one, zero."[5236]

(U) The Committee did not speak with Manafort about the Platform Committee, but Manafort's statement on *Meet the Press* that he was not involved in the change is corroborated by documents the Committee received. J.D. Gordon participated at the platform week as part of the Campaign and asked for the amendment to be tabled, but other witness testimony and document production indicates that Manafort did not have any awareness of "Campaign" involvement until the day after his *Meet the Press* interview.[5237] Manafort emailed Dearborn on August 1, 2016, with the subject line "Ukraine," asking "did you find out what happen? [sic] I need to understand the precise tick tock and how it happened."[5238] Dearborn responded to Manafort attaching a memo with the "tick tock," writing "I can attest to the fact that neither you, Gates or anyone else on the campaign knew of these events other than those listed above [Gordon, Mashburn, Miller, Brian Jack, and Dearborn]."[5239] When the Committee asked Dearborn about his use of the word "attest," he did not know why he chose that word or phrased the email that way, as it looked to be reassuring Manafort that Manafort did not have prior knowledge.[5240] However, Dearborn's language makes sense when viewed through the context that Manafort was following up on press inquiries and wanted to be sure that he had the story

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[5232] (U) Josh Rogin, "Trump Campaign Guts GOP's anti-Russia stance on Ukraine," *The Washington Post*, July 18, 2016; Brian Naylor, "How the Trump Campaign Weakened The Republican Platform on Aid to Ukraine," *NPR*, August 6, 2016.
[5233] (U) "Transcript of *Meet the Press*," *NBC*, July 31, 2016.
[5234] (U) *Ibid.*
[5235] (U) *Ibid.*
[5236] (U) *Ibid.*
[5237] (U) On August 1, 2016, Manafort requested a "tick-tock" of the events from the subcommittee, which J.D. Gordon provided to Rick Dearborn, and which Dearborn eventually provided to Manafort, and which the Committee received as part of a voluntary document production. *See* Email, Dearborn to Manafort and Gates, August 1, 2016 (DJTFP00004696–4698) (attaching a timeline of events); Dearborn Tr., p. 127.
[5238] (U) Email, Manafort to Dearborn, August 1, 2016 (DJTFP00004696).
[5239] (U) Email, Dearborn to Manafort, August 1, 2016 (DJTFP00004696).
[5240] (U) Dearborn Tr., pp. 129–134.

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straight, since Manafort had been questioned about the subject on national television less than 24 hours before his email to Dearborn.

(U) Based on the Committee's interviews with Campaign staff at the event, Manafort was never a participant in any discussions related to tabling or editing Denman's Amendment.[5241] Further, the Committee found that the changes to the Denman Amendment were the result of Gordon deriving a foreign policy position from Trump's limited public remarks, not the result of any foreign interference or undue influence.

4. (U) Russia's Efforts to Support Third Party Candidates

i. (U) Introduction and Findings

(U) Russia's attempts to influence the 2016 U.S. election sought to sow discord, to create doubt in democracy, and to expand social divisions. Historically, Russia has accomplished this by supporting third party candidates in an attempt to drive a national political conversation to potentially more extreme points of view. The Committee notes that "support" in this context does not indicate that the supported candidates are necessarily witting as to why Russia or Russian organizations are promoting their campaigns.

(U) The Committee found that RT took an interest in Dr. Jill Stein's candidacy for U.S. president as an alternative third party candidate, culminating in her attendance at the RT anniversary dinner in Moscow, which was also attended by Lt. Gen. Flynn and Russian President Vladimir Putin. Because of her attendance at the RT dinner, and her interactions with several Russian government officials while a candidate for president, the Committee sought to interview Stein and understand how the Russian government may have viewed her campaign as a potential vector to influence the U.S. election. After many months of negotiation, the Stein campaign produced documents to the Committee, and Stein participated in a voluntary interview with the Committee.

(U) The Committee thanks Dr. Stein for her cooperation with the Committee's inquiry. This section's focus on her campaign's interactions with Russian officials and Russian organizations should not be read as meaningful in any way except that Dr. Stein agreed to cooperate with the Committee's inquiry while some other Americans present at the RT anniversary dinner did not.[5242]

[5241] (U) *See, e.g.*, Gordon Tr., p. 19.

[5242] (U) Flynn declined to speak with the Committee on multiple occasions, invoking his Fifth Amendment rights against self-incrimination. The Committee did speak to William Stevens, a career foreign service officer who served as spokesman for Embassy Moscow from August 2014 until August 2016. Stevens, whose official duties required him to engage with Russian media, attended the December 15, 2015, *RT* Dinner in his official capacity.

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ii. (U) Jill Stein and RT/RT America

(U) The IC has described RT as the Kremlin's "principal international propaganda outlet" and as actively collaborating with entities such as Wikileaks.[5243] In the United States, RT operates as RT America TV, the English-language channel of RT America, which the Russian government created and financed.[5244] RT America is an important messaging tool for the Kremlin.[5245] The IC assesses that "RT America has positioned itself as a domestic US channel and has deliberately sought to obscure any legal ties to the Russian government."[5246] On December 11, 2017, RTTV America, Inc. registered as a foreign agent under the Foreign Agents Registration Act (FARA).[5247] Several corporate entities related to other pro-Kremlin media sources, including Sputnik, RIA Novosti, and RIA Global LLC, registered soon thereafter.[5248]

(U) Part of RT's efforts to impugn the U.S. democratic process involve its support for third-party candidates and pushing messaging that "the US two-party system does not represent the views of at least one-third of the population and is a 'sham.'"[5249] The content of RT's coverage of Stein, and other candidates, is consistent with this messaging.

(U) Dr. Jill Stein has been involved in Green Party politics since 2002.[5250] Stein first entered politics through Physicians for Social Responsibility (PSR); as part of PSR, Stein was involved in advocating against nuclear testing.[5251] After her work with PSR in Massachusetts, the Green Party approached Stein and, in her words, asked her to "keep doing what you're doing but call it a race for governor [of Massachusetts,] and reach a broader group of people."[5252] Stein

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The Committee appreciates his insights into this and other matters. *See generally* Stevens Tr.; *see also* Emails, Stevens and Kavalec, December 12, 2016 (CDP-2017-00011F-000267).

[5243] (U) *Declassified ICA*, p. 3.

[5244] (U) *Ibid.*, Annex A, p. 6.

[5245] (U) *Ibid.*

[5246] (U) *Ibid.*

[5247] (U) *See, e.g.*, Registration Statement Pursuant to the Foreign Agents Registration Act of 1938, RTTV America, Inc., December 11, 2017. RTTV America's registration states that "the registrant does not agree that it is acting/acted as an agent of a foreign principal, but it is registering because DOJ has taken the position that the contractual relationship with ANO-TV Novosti falls under the registration obligations of FARA." *Ibid.*

[5248] (U) *See, e.g.*, Registration Statement Pursuant to the Foreign Agents Registration Act of 1938, RIA Global, LLC, February 16, 2018.

[5249] (U) *Declassified ICA*, Annex A, p. 6.

[5250] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Jill Stein, December 19, 2018, pp. 5–8.

[5251] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 5–6, 11.

[5252] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 7. Stein's opponents were eventual winner Senator Mitt Romney and Shannon O'Brien.

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described her campaigns as "a form of citizen participation."[5253] In both 2012 and 2016, Stein ran for president as the Green Party's nominee.[5254]

a. (U) Jill Stein's relationship with RT

(U) During both the 2012 and 2016 campaigns, Stein was interviewed on RT programs and believed the amount of coverage RT provided to third party campaigns was the same during both election cycles.[5255] According to Stein, RT covers third party campaigns regularly and had done so "as long as I have been aware of them."[5256] Stein explained that RT requests for her to cover an event or interview generally went through Stein's press staff, and she did not have "special relationships" herself with RT producers.[5257]

(U) During the 2012 presidential election campaign, RT hosted the Green Party debate.[5258] During the 2016 campaign, there was a Green Party debate on RT, though Stein clarified that it "wasn't *the* Green Party presidential debate" but was instead a small "debate" that was part of one of RT's regular programs, called "Watching the Hawks."[5259] Stein explained that this "was a relatively small production" compared to the 2012 debate hosted on RT.[5260]

(U) Stein recalled that during the 2012 and 2016 election cycles, she did not think twice about media requests from RT, because she "was happy to get [her] message out through any media source . . . [she] was just really glad when anyone would cover us."[5261] When asked about her understanding of the relationship between RT and the Russian government, Stein responded that during the 2016 election:

> *I just assumed that they had some kind of relationship with the Russian government and now my understanding is that they are probably state media, though they go through some nonprofit. Whatever, you know. Is their structure any different from Voice of America? Or BBC? I can't tell you.*[5262]

[5253] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 8.
[5254] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 8–9; *see also* Jill2016.com, "About Jill."
[5255] (U) Stein Tr., pp. 14–15.
[5256] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 14.
[5257] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 16.
[5258] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 73–74.
[5259] (U) *Ibid.*
[5260] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 74.
[5261] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 18.
[5262] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 19.

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(U) Stein told the Committee that the relationship between RT and the Russian government was not a cause of concern for her during the 2016 election cycle,[5263] and stated that she doubted there was "formal Russian support for my candidacy."[5264] Stein attributed this belief to RT's coverage of Gary Johnson, another third party candidate, and her own past policy statements, such as her past criticism of a Russia's bombing campaign in Syria and her advocacy for shifting money from military spending toward a transformative climate program.[5265] Though several RT employees expressed personal support for Stein through emails, Stein viewed these emails as routine interactions and not as official support of her candidacy.[5266]

b. (U) September 5, 2015 RT Gala in New York City

(U) In September 2015, Stein was invited to attend a gala in New York City celebrating RT's tenth anniversary.[5267] Stein described the event as "a reception where people stood around and I mostly talked to my colleagues from the peace community, who are also guests on RT."[5268] Stein recalled seeing Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov at the event, where Lavrov gave a speech.[5269] Stein sought out Lavrov in order to engage him in a discussion on nuclear weapons. Stein recalled that her exchange with Lavrov was brief and that Lavrov "was not optimistic that nuclear weapons discussions could be resumed."[5270] Stein told the Committee that the encounter lasted around a minute, and she did not think that Lavrov recognized her.[5271] After the event, Stein posted a photograph on her Facebook page of herself and Lavrov at the event, writing "Dr. Stein and Russian Foreign Minister Lavrov were introduced and had a good discussion."[5272] Stein did not recall any other interactions with Russian government officials at the event, but she did attempt to set up follow-up meetings with Russian officials.[5273]

c. (U) Attempt to meet with Putin and Lavrov

(U) Following the September RT Gala event in New York City, Stein was invited to attend RT's anniversary gala in Moscow in December 2015.[5274] Prior to this trip, Stein recalled

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[5263] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 22, 27–28.
[5264] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 22.
[5265] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 23.
[5266] (U) *Ibid.* John Mecham, a senior news editor at RTAmerica, wrote in a text message to Stein's press staff: "I feel like I've been part of the campaign :)" and "You guys have been good friends of RT when others have not." Text messages, Mecham and [Stein press staff], November 4, 2016 (JSTEIN-002-0000056).
[5267] (U) Stein Tr., pp. 24, 28–29.
[5268] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 28–29.
[5269] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 29–31.
[5270] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 29.
[5271] (U) *Ibid.*
[5272] (U) Facebook post, Jill Stein, September 30, 2015 (JSTEIN-001-00000018).
[5273] (U) Stein Tr., pp. 29–30, 59.
[5274] (U) Email, Volokhonovich to Stein, October 14, 2015 (JSTEIN-001-00000140).

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attempting to set up meetings with both Putin and Lavrov.[5275] On October 28, 2015, Stein communicated with Nadia Ivanova, an employee at RT TV, about setting up meetings with Russian politicians and representatives from the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA).[5276] Ivanova told Stein that RT was engaged in negotiations to set up government meetings for Stein during her trip.[5277]

(U) Stein told the Committee that her motive for seeking these meetings with Russian government officials was that "my campaign said 'go to the top. Ask to meet with Putin.' Why not? So, Putin. Lavrov. They badly needed to hear what I have to say [about disarmament]."[5278] On November 9, 2015, Stein again requested a meeting with Putin or Lavrov, suggesting that "a direct meeting with President Putin will allow us to open a second track dialogue that will facilitate greater understanding by the American people of the actual situation involving Russia and the enormous potential and constructive cooperation between our nations."[5279]

(U) Although Stein told the Committee that she did not understand RT to be state media at the time, she exclusively asked RT to set up meetings with Russian officials.[5280] Stein stated that she "wanted to explore" whether RT could set the meetings up "regardless of whether they could or not" because it was a matter of "shooting for the top."[5281] Stein explained that she did not go through the Russian embassy to set up meetings with Russian officials because she did not have any contacts at the Russian embassy and did not know who else to contact, apart from RT.[5282] RT officials never told Stein she needed to go through the embassy, or refused her requests; their back-and-forth with Stein's campaign amounted to asking her to put her requests in writing "as a matter of protocol."[5283]

(U) Eventually, Stein was told that a meeting with Putin and Lavrov would be unlikely.[5284] Ivanova, however, stated that Stein would "be able to see and talk with our President at the gala dinner after our conference (we will seat you at the same table)."[5285] Ivanova also offered meetings with Alexey Pushkov, the Head of the Foreign Affairs Committee

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[5275] (U) Stein Tr., p. 59.
[5276] (U) *Ibid.;* Email, Ivanova to Stein, October 28, 2015 (JSTEIN-001-00000141–142). In an email, Ivanova wrote: "We are currently working on meeting organization options with Russian politicians and representatives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, that you could meet with during your visit to Moscow. Could you please let me know when you will be able to confirm your visit, so that we can proceed further with these negotiations."
[5277] (U) Email, Ivanova to Stein, October 28, 2015 (JSTEIN-001-00000141–142).
[5278] (U) Stein Tr., p. 59.
[5279] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 62; Email, Stein to Ivanova, November 9, 2015 (JSTEIN-001-00000146).
[5280] (U) Stein Tr., p. 61.
[5281] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 64–65.
[5282] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 65.
[5283] (U) *Ibid.*
[5284] (U) Email, Ivanova to Stein, November 13, 2015 (JSTEIN-001-000000148).
[5285] (U) *Ibid.*; Stein Tr., p. 51.

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in the State Duma, and Konstantin Kosachev, the Chairman of the Federation Council Committee on International Affairs, instead.[5286]

d. (U) December RT Dinner in Moscow

(U) In December 2015, RT organized and offered to pay for Stein's travel to Russia to attend the RT Anniversary Gala.[5287] Stein's attendance at this dinner has been widely reported by the press, including by publishing a photograph of Stein sitting next to Putin at the dinner.[5288]

(U) On December 9, 2015, Stein flew to Moscow to attend the RT Anniversary Gala.[5289] However, Stein paid for all of her own expenses and was reimbursed by her campaign because "it was very important that we [the campaign] were not going to be accepting money from a foreign entity of any sort, let alone something connected with a foreign government."[5290] Stein also was not paid to participate on any panels at the event.[5291]

(U) After arriving on December 9, 2015, Stein and her communications director went to the hotel to rest.[5292] Stein told the Committee that she never felt surveilled or followed during her time in Russia.[5293]

(U) On December 10, 2015, Stein attended a full day of panels and conferences before attending the dinner and gala that evening.[5294] Stein participated in a panel with Cyril Svoboda, the former Deputy Prime Minister of the Czech Republic; Willy Wimmer, the former Vice President of the Organization for Security and Economic Cooperation in Europe; and Ken Livingstone, the former mayor of London.[5295] RT provided a topic for Stein's panel:

[5286] (U) Email, Ivanova to Stein, November 13, 2015 (JSTEIN-001-000000148); *see also* Stein Tr., pp. 65–67. Stein did eventually meet with Pushkov during her trip to Moscow, as described below. For more on Kosachev, *see infra* Vol. 5, Sec. III.C.5.i.a.

[5287] (U) Emails, Ivanova and [Stein staff members], November 9–19, 2015 (JSTEIN-001-00000150–152) (regarding the campaign paying for Stein's expenses, rather than accepting complimentary accommodations from RT).

[5288] (U) *See, e.g.*, Robert Windrem, "Guess Who Came to Dinner with Flynn and Putin," *NBC News*, April 18, 2017.

[5289] (U) Stein Tr., p. 39; Email, Ivanova to [Stein staff member], December 7, 2015 (JSTEIN-001-00000179–180) (attaching Stein's Moscow trip itinerary).

[5290] (U) Stein Tr., p. 37; *see also* Emails, Ivanova and [Stein staff members], November 9–19, 2015 (JSTEIN-001-00000150–152).

[5291] (U) Stein Tr., p. 38; Emails, Ivanova and [Stein staff members], November 9–19, 2015 (JSTEIN-001-00000150–152).

[5292] (U) Stein Tr., p. 39.

[5293] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 45–46, 56–57, 70–71.

[5294] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 40.

[5295] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 40–41

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"Frenemies: defining foes and allies in proxy politics."[5296] Stein felt that the topic provided her an opportunity to "reiterate [her] campaign platform on foreign policy, particularly with regard to war, and war in the Middle East."[5297] Stein recalled seeing Flynn at points throughout the day prior to the dinner, but she told the Committee that she did not have any substantive conversations with him.[5298] Stein's explained that her focus throughout much of the day was on interacting with the international news media, attending some of the panels, and networking.[5299] Stein left the conference in the evening to go back to the hotel and get ready for the dinner.[5300]

(U) Prior to the seated dinner, there was a cocktail reception where Stein recalled socializing with Jesse Ventura and his wife and networking with "the peace community."[5301] At the dinner, Stein was seated next to Willy Wimmer, who had been on her panel that morning, and Flynn.[5302] Despite being seated at his table, Stein stated that she only spoke briefly with Flynn because Flynn "seemed completely disinterested" in Stein's discussion of a "peace offensive in the Middle East."[5303] Stein found it strange that Flynn would be at the gathering.[5304]

(U) Later in the evening, somewhere between five and thirty minutes prior to Putin's speech, additional dinner guests arrived at Stein's table: President Putin; President Putin's Press Secretary, Dimitry Peskov; President Putin's Deputy Chief of Staff Alexey Gromov; and President Putin's then-Chief of Staff Sergey Ivanov.[5305] Margarita Simonyan, the Editor-in-Chief of RT, was also seated between Flynn and Putin.[5306] Stein said she was surprised to be at the head table seated with Putin, despite Ivanova's previous statement to Stein via email that Stein would be seated with Putin.[5307] During the dinner, Stein recalled that she did not speak directly with Putin, though she did remember Putin shook hands with those seated around the table.[5308] Stein recalled that Simonyan introduced Putin, who gave his remarks, and departed

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[5296] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 41–42; *see also* RT, "10 Years on Air" International Conference Booklet (JSTEIN-001-00000041).
[5297] (U) Stein Tr., p. 42.
[5298] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 42–43.
[5299] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 43–44.
[5300] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 44.
[5301] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 46–47.
[5302] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 47–48. Stein described Wimmer as "the only person within earshot who spoke English" though President Putin's Press Secretary Dimitry Peskov, who also speaks English, was seated on the other side of Stein. *See ibid.* Stein said that she did not know Peskov spoke English, and that she originally thought he was a bodyguard for President Putin. *See ibid.*, pp. 47–48, 52.
[5303] (U) Stein Tr., p. 49.
[5304] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 48.
[5305] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 47–51; *see also ibid.*, Exhibit A (photograph of Stein's table at the *RT* Anniversary Gala in Moscow).
[5306] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 51.
[5307] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 50–51; *see also* Email, Ivanova to Stein, November 13, 2015 (JSTEIN-001-000000148).
[5308] (U) Stein Tr., pp. 49–50.

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shortly thereafter along with Peskov, Gromov, and Ivanov.[5309] Stein's earpiece did not work, so she did not know what Putin said until the following day.[5310] Stein did not witness any communications or interactions between Flynn and Putin.[5311] After Putin's departure, Stein and her communications director left the dinner and went back to the hotel.[5312]

(U) On December 11, 2015, Stein sent her followers a newsletter, entitled "My encounter with Putin and other news," which recounted the prior evening's events.[5313] Stein claimed in her newsletter that Putin's comments about agreeing with politicians from other countries on "many issues" referred to her panel from December 10, 2015.[5314] However, Stein explained that this was her own theory after reading a translation of Putin's remarks and not the result of any direct suggestion of this by Putin.[5315] That same day, Stein also met with Pushkov at a restaurant over coffee, for about an hour.[5316] Stein characterized Pushkov's affect during the meeting as "polite interest."[5317] Stein was told that Kosachev could not attend.[5318] After her meeting with Pushkov, Stein texted Nadia Ivanova from RT, asking for contact information for Pushkov's assistant.[5319] Stein characterized this as routine follow-up to "leave a door open after making contacts."[5320] Stein never received nor initiated any additional follow-up to her meetings in Moscow.[5321]

(U) Later on December 11, 2015, Stein participated in an excursion to the Kremlin organized by RT, which she described as a bus tour with the other guests at the conference which Stein used as an opportunity to network with other attendees.[5322] That evening, Stein attended a theater event and a dinner event with other members of the group.[5323] On December 13, 2015, Stein returned home.[5324]

[5309] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 51–53.
[5310] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 49.
[5311] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 53.
[5312] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 55–56.
[5313] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 57; *see also* Newsletter, "My encounter with Putin and other news from Russia," December 18, 2015 (JSTEIN-001-00000027).
[5314] (U) Stein Tr., pp. 57–58.
[5315] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 58.
[5316] (U) Stein Tr., pp. 66–67.
[5317] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 66.
[5318] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 67.
[5319] (U) *Ibid.*; Text Messages, Stein and Ivanova, December 13–14, 2015 (JSTEIN_001_00000128).
[5320] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 68.
[5321] (U) *Ibid.*
[5322] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 69.
[5323] (U) *Ibid.*
[5324] (U) *See* Email, [Stein staff member] to Ivanova, November 30, 2015 (JSTEIN-001-00000062–63) (attaching visa and flight information).

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(U) Following the conference, Stein continued to receive media outreach from, and regularly appear on, RT, including when RT broadcast Periscope coverage of Stein's reactions to the Trump/Clinton debates during the 2016 election cycle.[5325] During the 2016 election cycle, Stein also had contact with Julian Assange, who was a speaker at the Green Party convention in August 2016.[5326] Stein stated that all of her communications with Assange were related to preparing him for interviews at the Green Party events.[5327] Stein told the Committee that she never gained any non-public knowledge about Wikileaks releases during the 2016 election cycle.[5328]

[5325] **(U)** *Ibid.*, pp. 76–77.
[5326] **(U)** *Ibid.*, pp. 86–87.
[5327] **(U)** *Ibid.*, pp. 86–88.
[5328] **(U)** *Ibid.*, pp. 87–89. For more on WikiLeaks, *see infra* Vol. 5, Sec. III.B.6.

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IV. (U) EXECUTIVE BRANCH INVESTIGATIONS

(U) In the summer of 2016, the U.S. Intelligence Community (IC) began collecting and analyzing information related to potential Russian interference in the upcoming U.S. elections. The IC obtained intelligence information that indicated the Russian government, at Putin's direction, was seeking to interfere in the U.S. presidential election. As a result, the IC began a small, highly compartmented effort to understand the full scope of this activity.[5329] The FBI's Cyber Division had already opened a separate investigation into Russian-government sponsored cyber intrusions into the Democratic National Committee (DNC) based on Russian intelligence services' cyber intrusions in the summer of 2015 and again in early 2016. Cyber Division's investigation related to the DNC breach resulted in a series of interactions between the FBI and the DNC, which are described in detail below.

[redacted] Shortly after WikiLeaks released thousands of documents stolen by Russian hackers from the DNC,[5330] the [redacted] government provided information related to a potential Russian influence operation targeting the U.S. election. That information suggested that the Russian government had made an offer to the Trump Campaign to assist the Campaign with the anonymous release of information harmful to Hillary Clinton's electoral chances.[5331] Based on this information, and with the context of the Russian hacking investigation, FBI's Counterintelligence Division initiated a full counterintelligence investigation on July 31, 2016, "to determine whether individual(s) associated with the Trump campaign are witting of and/or coordinating activities with the Government of Russia."[5332] This umbrella investigation was codenamed Crossfire Hurricane.

[redacted] FBI provided a basic counterintelligence briefing[5333] to Trump and two members of his Campaign staff on August 17, 2016.[5334] An FBI agent delivered this briefing at the outset of a larger intelligence briefing the ODNI traditionally offers to both candidates at the

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[5329] (U) *See infra* Vol. 4.
[5330] (U) *See infra* Vol. 5, Sec. III.B.
[5331] (U) FBI, FD-1057, "Dissemination of Investigation Opening," July 31, 2016.
[5332] (U) *Ibid.*
[5333] [redacted] The FBI's notes suggest that the same counterintelligence briefing was offered to the Clinton Campaign. However, the Committee did not verify with DNC officials, campaign staff, or the FBI that Clinton or her senior staff received this briefing.
[5334] [redacted] FBI "Documentation of Counterintelligence and Security Briefing to the Republican Candidate for President Donald J. Trump, New Jersey Governor Chris Christie, and General (retired) Michael Flynn," Dated August 30, 2016.

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SECRET level after the conventions.[5335] Flynn was one of Trump's two advisors in attendance.[5336]

[redacted] The Committee was able to review the talking points FBI used at the briefing[5337] and the memo[5338] the agent wrote to record the briefing afterward. Both reflect a cursory overview by FBI focused on encouraging awareness of counterintelligence issues. The briefing provided basic facts about foreign adversary intelligence operations and encouraged the campaign to use adequate communications security. For example, it cautioned that Trump and his staff were a target for foreign HUMINT, SIGINT, and cyber operations, and it said that intelligence officers from foreign countries could pose as diplomats or use non-official cover to approach those close to the candidate.[5339]

[redacted] The briefing discussed Russia as a U.S. adversary with a robust intelligence presence. It did not provide any specific warnings to the Campaign regarding the allegations FBI was pursuing in Crossfire Hurricane.[5340] According to the Agent's record of the encounter, FBI told Trump and his staff that "[Foreign intelligence services] will send their IOs in diplomatic cover, business NOCs, as well as sources they have developed around you to elicit information and gain assessments on you."[5341] The agent's notes do not refer to FBI's suspicions about Page, Papadopoulos, Manafort, or Flynn's contacts with Russian officials.[5342]

[redacted] Shortly after opening Crossfire Hurricane, FBI's Counterintelligence Division opened counterintelligence investigations on four separate U.S. persons under this umbrella investigation: George Papadopoulos (Crossfire Typhoon), Carter Page (Crossfire Dragon), Paul

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[5335] (U) *Ibid.*
[5336] (U) *Ibid.*
[5337] (U) *Ibid.*
[5338] (U) *Ibid.*
[5339] (U) *Ibid.*
[5340] (U) *Ibid.*
[5341] (U) *Ibid.*
[5342] [redacted]

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Manafort (Crossfire Fury), and Michael Flynn (Crossfire Razor).[5343] Subsequent to the original cases, the FBI opened a number of other cases on both U.S. persons and foreign nationals related to these investigations, including on [redacted], then-Attorney General Jeffrey Sessions ([redacted]), and President Donald Trump ([redacted]).

(U) The FBI, as part of its investigation into Russian interference, successfully obtained a warrant to conduct Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act (FISA)-authorized surveillance against Page.[5344] The initial FISA application was approved on October 21, 2016, after Page had left his role as an advisor to the Trump Campaign. The Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court reauthorized surveillance three times, but authorization ultimately expired on September 22, 2017. In its application and renewals seeking FISA authorities, the FBI and the Department of Justice relied heavily—but not solely—on information provided by Christopher Steele, a former [redacted] officer and FBI confidential human source.[5345] Steele's information and the FBI's response to Steele's information is described in detail below.

[redacted] In May 2017, Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein appointed Robert Mueller III as Special Counsel to investigate Russian interference in the 2016 U.S. election. Two memoranda provide the clearest articulation of the scope of the Special Counsel's Office (SCO) investigation. First, an August 2, 2017, memorandum from Rosenstein to Mueller authorized SCO to conduct investigations related to Carter Page, Paul Manafort, George Papadopoulos, Michael Flynn, and [redacted].[5346] Second, an October 20, 2017, memorandum from Associate Deputy Attorney General Scott Schools to Rosenstein clarified that SCO had the authority to pursue certain additional, related investigations.[5347] These additional investigations included Michael Cohen, Rick Gates, [redacted], [redacted],

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[5343] (U) At the time FBI's Counterintelligence Division opened a counterintelligence case on Manafort, the FBI's Criminal Investigative Division had an existing criminal investigation into Manafort that related to Manafort's past work in Ukraine. This investigation was handled by the FBI's Washington Field Office. *See* L. Page Tr., pp. 38, 53. Separately, the New York Field Office had opened a counterintelligence "contact" investigation on Page in April 2016, but limited investigative activity took place. *See DOJ OIG FISA Report*, p. 64. Both investigations were eventually transferred to the Crossfire Hurricane team.

[5344] (U) FISA orders are intelligence gathering tools, and as such, the government must submit a sworn statement explaining the basis for its belief that the target is an agent of a foreign power and that the facilities—phone numbers, email addresses, and the like—that the government proposes to surveil are used by that foreign power. *See* 50 U.S.C. § 1804.

[5345] (U) The Committee reviewed the FISA applications filed with the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court and a limited set of underlying materials related to those applications. As described by the Department of Justice's Office of the Inspector General (OIG), these applications relied on erroneous information and included a number of omissions and inaccuracies. *See DOJ OIG FISA Report.*

[5346] (U) Memorandum from Deputy Attorney General Rod J. Rosenstein to Robert S. Mueller, III, August 2, 2017.

[5347] (U) Memorandum from Associate Deputy Attorney General Scott Schools to Deputy Attorney General Rod J. Rosenstein, October 20, 2017.

[redacted]

[redacted]

Roger Stone, and [redacted][5348] In addition to those individuals, the memorandum specified links from primary targets to secondary targets approved for investigation. These included specific secondary targets related to Paul Manafort, Michael Flynn, Michael Cohen, and [redacted].[5349] The SCO's mandate, however, did not expressly retain a priority on counterintelligence matters.

[redacted] Shortly after its creation, SCO was reassigned a number of open FBI case files related to SCO's mandate. These case files included existing FBI investigations of [redacted] Carter Page; George Papadopoulos; Michael Flynn; [redacted]; Paul Manafort; [redacted]; [redacted]; Crossfire Hurricane (umbrella investigation); and [redacted].[5350]

(U) Over the course of its investigation, the SCO successfully secured numerous criminal indictments and convictions. This included indictments of Russian nationals associated with a Russian government-sponsored social media campaign and GRU personnel who hacked into the DNC and other related targets.[5351] It also secured convictions of Paul Manafort and Rick Gates for activity stemming from their work in Ukraine, as well as numerous other convictions related to conduct which criminally misled or obstructed investigations into Russian election interference.[5352] This latter category included convictions of Roger Stone, Michael Cohen, and Michael Flynn.[5353] These criminal cases, prosecuted while under immense public and political scrutiny, brought to light significant criminal conduct.

(U) While criminal prosecutions are a vital tool in upholding our Nation's laws, protecting our democratic system from foreign interference is a broader national security mission that must be appropriately balanced with the pursuit of criminal prosecutions. It is the Committee's view that this balance was not achieved. Russian interference with the U.S. electoral process was inherently a counterintelligence matter and one not well-suited to criminal prosecutions. As a result, the Committee found that some of the counterintelligence aspects of the FBI's original Crossfire Hurricane investigation were crowded out by the SCO's effort to identify, charge, and prosecute crimes. In other cases, nascent counterintelligence efforts by FBI were subsumed by SCO, and were neither fully pursued nor returned to FBI until SCO's conclusion almost two years later. Because the SCO's investigation was ultimately a criminal

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[5348] (U) *Ibid.*
[5349] (U) *Ibid.*
[5350] (U) Enclosure to FBI September 5, 2019, Letter to Chairman Richard Burr.
[5351] (U) *SCO Report*, Appendix D.
[5352] (U) *Ibid.*
[5353] (U) *Ibid.*

[redacted]

[redacted]

inquiry, it did not fully address the depth and complexity of Russian interference in the 2016 election, an effort that this Committee has itself undertaken.

A. (U) The DNC Hack and FBI's Response

1. (U) Introduction and Findings

[redacted].[5354] Beginning in July 2015 and continuing until at least October 2016, at least one [redacted] Russian intelligence services compromised the DNC's computer networks.[5355] The DNC hack presented a novel scenario for the IC and federal law enforcement: political entities had been hacked before, but never before had a nation-state actor hacked a private political party in the United States, exfiltrated information, and then weaponized that information through public leaks. The scenario was further complicated by the fact that the DNC was a private political party with significant public presence, and the FBI was also looking at the domestic effects of a foreign threat during a U.S. presidential campaign.

(U) [redacted], the DNC was hesitant to engage with the Bureau on the matter of the political organization's being under attack by a foreign country's intelligence services, owing to resonant tensions stemming from the FBI's investigation into Hillary Clinton's email servers.[5356] Further complicating matters, the DNC's IT staff did not understand the nature of the threat it faced, despite multiple entreaties from an FBI agent at the Washington Field Office. The Committee investigated allegations that the FBI did not properly escalate its concerns about the DNC hack and that the DNC did not fully cooperate with the FBI. The Committee found that communication on both sides was inadequate, further confusing an already complex situation.

(U) The Committee appreciated the voluntary cooperation it received from the individuals associated with the DNC, as well as from former FBI officials now in the private sector. The DNC and its counsel were extremely accommodating in allowing the Committee to access potentially privileged materials, and provided staff with copies of incident response

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[5354] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Jim Trainor, December 8, 2017, p. 6. Jim Trainor is a 20-year veteran of the FBI who was the Assistant Director of the FBI Cyber Division from June 2013 until September 16, 2016. During his interview with the Committee, Trainor provided [redacted]

[5355] (U) *Declassified ICA*; *Netyksho* indictment, ¶ 32

[5356] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with [redacted], May 14, 2018, pp. 21–25.

[redacted]

[redacted]

reports prepared by the DNC's cybersecurity vendor, CrowdStrike.[5357] Several Hillary for America (HFA) Campaign staffers, including Clinton Campaign Manager Robby Mook and Clinton Campaign Chairman John Podesta, also submitted to voluntary staff interviews, which provided limited insights into the DNC hack but did provide helpful information in other areas of the Committee's inquiry.[5358]

(U) After conducting witness interviews and reviewing documents from the IC and third parties, the Committee found the FBI lacked an appropriate process to escalate their warnings of the DNC hack within the DNC and that the FBI's victim-driven response paradigm hindered its ability to investigate the hack with the necessary urgency.

2. (U) FBI's Role Responding to Nation-State Cyber Attacks on Private Entities

i. (U) The IC's Division of Labor for Cybersecurity

(U) Within the U.S. Government, the FBI, [redacted] and Department of Homeland Security (DHS) have different but complementary roles related to cyber incident response. [redacted], has insights into foreign adversary activity, and is often one of the first to know that a foreign intelligence service has attempted to compromise, or has successfully compromised, a victim network. [redacted] will then pass that notification to FBI, which engages with the victim, and DHS sometimes provides additional services to assist in remediation or ongoing engagement with the IC.[5359]

[redacted] Because information about an attack can come from [redacted] or even a foreign partner, FBI must first work with [redacted] or [redacted] to protect their equities before sharing information with the victim.[5360] Jim Trainor, Former Assistant Director of the Cyber Division at FBI, described the Bureau as "always the one that's more forward-leaning" about sharing information with victim entities because FBI agents are "the ones on the hook to try to provide the notification."[5361] Once FBI receives permission to share threat indicators, field office agents will contact the victim entity.[5362] FBI agents use [redacted] to "have complete visibility on . . . victim notifications."[5363] Trainor noted that the best scenario is for agents to do "a lot of outreach" in their area of responsibility, so that when an incident occurs,

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[5357] (U) As is common practice with incident response, Crowdstrike was hired through the DNC's private counsel, Perkins Coie LLP.
[5358] (U) In general, HFA's production to the Committee was limited, given that the Campaign had a mandatory 30-day automatic age-off processes for its staff email accounts.
[5359] (U) Trainor Tr., p. 21.
[5360] (U) *Ibid.*
[5361] (U) *Ibid.*
[5362] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 22.
[5363] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 18–19.

[redacted]

[redacted]

the FBI is dealing with "victims [who] have a relationship and a confidence and a trust . . . [who know] who the agent is, who the cyber squad is."[5364] The FBI has [redacted] cyber squads, and victim notifications are [redacted] a portion of a cyber squad's investigative work. When dealing with a larger cyber attack, the FBI [redacted]

(U) When asked whether the FBI triages its victim notifications, Trainor described [redacted] As an example of the Trainor hypothesized that if Russian actors breached (as a hypothetical example) Yahoo!, the FBI would [redacted]

3. (U) FBI's Role: The Victim-Driven Response

(U) Instead of treating hacked entities as crime scenes, where the FBI can collect evidence as needed, the FBI treats hacked entities as victims, [redacted]. Washington Field Office Assistant Special Agent in Charge (ASAC) [redacted] told the Committee that it is "very typical" in the "majority of cyber cases" that after the FBI approaches a potential victim about a cyber intrusion, "we may never hear from them again."[5368] [redacted] testified that the FBI [redacted] and that even in those cases "it's quite a bit of a struggle…as the entity decides what level of cooperation they're going to provide."[5369]

(U) As a first step, FBI agents [redacted], the FBI's case record system, to access contact information that may already exist for the victim.[5370] If there is no contact information, agents will call the organization and convey: [redacted]

[5364] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 19.
[5365] (U) [redacted] Tr., p. 8.
[5366] (U) Trainor Tr., pp. 22–23. "Doxing" is the practice of leaking stolen documents from a compromised victim's files.
[5367] (U) Trainor Tr., p. 22.
[5368] (U) [redacted] Tr., p. 13.
[5369] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 14–15.
[5370] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 11.

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted] Agents [redacted] are entrusted to convey an appropriate sense of urgency.[5372] After engaging with the victim entity, the FBI [redacted], working side by side" and [redacted]"[5373] But the FBI is "not there to rebuild the network and remediate the network" following a cyber incident; generally, a victim organization will hire a third-party cybersecurity vendor to complete that process.[5374]

(U) One consequence of the victim-driven response is that victims who do cooperate do so at their own pace. [redacted] recognized that "every organization . . . [has] valid reasons why they don't want the FBI in their building, on their computer systems."[5375] Put simply: "half the time, the entity we're calling just doesn't want to deal with us."[5376]

(U) As of May 2018, there was no formal policy within the FBI for escalating notifications up the chain of command at a victim entity.[5377] [redacted] testified that "if an organization decides that they have it [under control] or they don't want to do it, I don't think we typically will escalate it much further . . . [redacted][5378]

(U) There are reasons why, to date, the FBI does not compel victims to cooperate. The FBI needs the victim organization's help to investigate the crime because the victim knows its own systems best, so forcing cooperation could potentially alienate the very people whose help the FBI needs. Additionally, the FBI recognizes that using compulsory process to force cooperation would be adding hassle to the hacked entity, which has already been the victim of a crime.

(U) When asked about using compulsory process to force victims to cooperate, Trainor admitted that the FBI could "get a grand jury subpoena to compel them. . . . But that's a little challenging."[5379] Even with compulsory process, Trainor told staff that "FBI doesn't know the network as well as the DNC or any other victim. It becomes very complicated . . . that's the collaborative part of being on scene together. So . . . we're not going to get that even with a grand jury subpoena."[5380] Trainor's opinion was that compulsory process should be a last resort

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[5371] (U) *Ibid.*
[5372] (U) Trainor Tr., pp. 17–19.
[5373] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 23–24.
[5374] (U) *Ibid.*
[5375] (U) [redacted] Tr., p. 14.
[5376] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 21.
[5377] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 28–29.
[5378] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 28–29.
[5379] (U) Trainor Tr., pp. 33–34. The Committee notes that search warrants might also be available.
[5380] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 36–37.

[redacted]

[redacted]

because "it would have a serious chilling effect with companies wanting to work with us" and so it should only be used [redacted].[5381]

4. (U) Private Cybersecurity Vendors

(U) Typically, after the FBI notifies a victim organization, the organization will hire outside counsel who can then bring in a cybersecurity firm to address the intrusion and recommend remediation.[5382] Depending on how the cybersecurity firm is retained, and how outside counsel and the victim organization want to work, the cybersecurity firm's work product—including the technical details related to the intrusion and attribution theories—could be covered under the privileged umbrella of attorney work product.[5383] Many victim organizations are wary of publicly announcing cyber intrusions because of negative media attention and perceived reputational harm. This creates a tension as the cybersecurity community and law enforcement are better equipped to defend against cyber attacks when more information is shared.[5384]

(U) Trainor described the ideal incident response cooperation as when "the internal staff . . . the third party vendor, and . . . the FBI [are] working side by side, [redacted]."[5385] Trainor used the Sony hack[5386] as a real-life example of an "optimal" situation where FBI agents [redacted] in order to speed up the review of technical data that could lead" to attribution.[5387]

[5381] [redacted] *Ibid.*, p. 39. [redacted]

[5382] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 24.

[5383] (U) [redacted] victim organizations often need the expertise of both a cybersecurity vendor and a cybersecurity law firm to guide them through cooperating with the FBI, navigating various regulatory requirements, and dealing with any data privacy issues that may arise during an intrusion.

[5384] (U) [redacted] Some vendors mitigate this by inputting threat indicators into a collective defense mechanism for their clients, or by participating in organizations like the Cyber Threat Alliance. But, there is currently no requirement that cybersecurity vendors report new indicators from every cyber intrusion into any collective repository.

[5385] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 35.

[5386] (U) *See, e.g.*, Andrea Peterson, "The Sony Pictures Hack, Explained," *The Washington Post,* December 18, 2014.

[5387] (U) Trainor Tr., p. 36.

[redacted]

[redacted]

i. (U) The DNC Hack: A Case Study in the FBI Victim Notification Process

(U) The FBI agents and headquarters personnel working the DNC case were frustrated by the lack of responsiveness at the DNC, while witnesses from the DNC repeatedly told the Committee that they did not think the FBI appropriately conveyed the threat picture. FBI personnel told the Committee that they were [redacted] from the DNC would have [redacted]"[5388] Trainor asked the Committee to "just imagine the FBI having the Washington Field Office giving a grand jury subpoena to the DNC."[5389] Yet DNC witnesses repeatedly told the Committee that there was no "alarm bell" from the FBI, and DNC staff believed that the FBI received everything it needed from CrowdStrike and the DNC.[5390]

[redacted] None of the Committee's witnesses expected that the compromise of the DNC's network would lead to the exfiltration and exposure of the DNC's emails and information.[5391] At the time of the compromise, FBI saw the [redacted] behavior on the DNC network "as very consistent" with past [redacted] behavior, that it was [redacted] Trainor told the Committee that although he was familiar with the [redacted] doxing practices, he did not assume that was a possibility with the DNC hack because the FBI [redacted]"[5393]

[redacted] In reviewing staff interviews, [redacted], and witness document production, the Committee gained insights into the challenges facing both the DNC and the FBI in confronting a new kind of attack on America's democracy. The uniquely political nature of the DNC as an organization and the FBI's approach towards victims of cyber attacks led to miscommunications and missed opportunities to thwart, or eradicate, the Russian cyber actors from the DNC systems. The below timeline conveys the Committee's understanding of the DNC hack, the FBI's response, and how the FBI, CrowdStrike, and the DNC worked together during this historic attack.

[5388] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 37.
[5389] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 34.
[5390] (U) Wasserman Schultz Tr., pp. 8, 23, 32-24; Brazile Tr., pp. 18, 86.
[5391] [redacted] However, Wasserman Schultz told the Committee that she was concerned, based on her political experiences, that: [redacted] She did not raise these concerns with CrowdStrike or DNC counsel at the time of the intrusion. SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Debbie Wasserman Schultz, October 2, 2017, p. 19.
[5392] (U) Trainor Tr., p. 29.
[5393] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 55.

[redacted]

[redacted]

5. (U) Summary of Events

(U) Prior to the multiple [redacted] GRU intrusions into the DNC, the DNC networks were protected by a firewall, spam filters, an IT directory that managed password rotation, the Windows Defender system, and two-factor authentication on the VPN system.[5394] The DNC trained new staff on computer use; part of that training included simulating phishing attacks and senior employees received a high-level cybersecurity briefing from a third-party vendor.[5395] DNC CEO Amy Dacey told the Committee that cybersecurity was "a priority" for both her and DNC Chair Debbie Wasserman Schultz.[5396] The DNC had also hired a third-party vendor to conduct penetration testing on the DNC's publicly available assets.[5397] The DNC contracted with The MIS Department, Inc. (MIS) to provide some IT services. Yared Tamene, a contractor for MIS and the DNC's IT Director, was responsible for IT and network security, and he reported to Andrew Brown, the Technology Director, who in turn reported to both DNC COO Lindsey Reynolds and DNC CEO Amy Dacey.[5398]

[redacted] From August 2015 until early May 2016, the FBI attempted to assist the DNC in recognizing and responding to Russian intrusions into the DNC network.[5400]

(U) Despite multiple conversations with the FBI in 2015 and early 2016, Tamene told the Committee that the first indication he had "of confirmed foreign actors on our network, meaning unauthorized access to the network," was April 28, 2016.[5401] In May 2016, the DNC hired CrowdStrike, a third-party cybersecurity vendor, to respond to what they by then understood to be a foreign nation-state attacking their network.[5402] On June 12, 2016, the DNC completed remediation related to the incident and transitioned to new systems.[5403] On June 14, 2016, the DNC approached and cooperated with the *The Washington Post* to publish an article announcing that the Russian intelligence services had hacked the DNC.[5404]

[5394] (U) Tamene Tr., p. 18.
[5395] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 18; SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Amy Dacey, September 20, 2017, p. 14.
[5396] (U) Dacey Tr., p. 14.
[5397] (U) Tamene Tr., p. 18; Brown Tr., p. 13.
[5398] (U) Tamene Tr., pp. 4–5; Brown Tr., pp. 5–7.
[5399] (U) [redacted] Tr., pp. 5–6; Trainor Tr., p. 6.
[5400] (U) *See* [redacted] Tr., pp. 5, 44; Tamene Tr., pp. 10, 53.
[5401] (U) Tamene Tr., p. 9.
[5402] (U) [redacted] Tr., p. 44.
[5403] (U) Tamene Tr., p. 58.
[5404] (U) Ellen Nakashima, "Russian government hackers penetrated DNC, stole opposition research on Trump," *The Washington Post*, June 14, 2016.

[redacted]

[redacted]

(U) In the June 14, 2016 *The Washington Post* article, CrowdStrike's CTO Dmitri Alperovitch associated one threat actor, dubbed "Fancy Bear," with the GRU and associated another threat actor, dubbed "Cozy Bear," with the FSB. The following day, Alperovitch published an article on CrowdStrike's blog associating Fancy Bear with the GRU, but allowing that Cozy Bear could have been either the SVR or the FSB.[5405] Through the remainder of the summer and fall of 2016, emails obtained from the DNC hack were published by online GRU personas DCLeaks and Guccifer 2.0, as well as WikiLeaks.[5406] In September 2016, the DNC's cloud environment, hosted by Amazon Web Services (AWS), was the victim of another intrusion attempt, detected by CrowdStrike.[5407]

(U) On October 7, 2016, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and the Office of the Director of National Intelligence (ODNI) released a public statement that the IC was "confident that the Russian Government directed the recent compromise of e-mails from US persons and institutions, including from US political organizations."[5408]

6. (U) Detailed Timeline

(U) April 2015

[redacted] In April 2015, the FBI's Washington Field Office (WFO) hosted a threat awareness briefing in Washington, D.C. to advise industry, think tanks, and universities about the increased risk of cyber attacks during the spring and summer timeframe.[5409] During April 2015, the FBI engaged with a university on the west coast and one think tank in Washington, D.C. to alert them that their infrastructure had been compromised by [redacted] cyber actors.[5410] The [redacted] actors were using U.S. infrastructure in an attempt to conceal the true origins of their attacks and blend in to normal internet traffic.[5411] FBI's WFO engaged with both victims and

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[5405] [redacted] Dmitri Alperovitch, "Bears in the Midst: Intrusion into the Democratic National Committee," CrowdStrike, June 15, 2016. [redacted]

[5406] (U) *See infra* Vol. 5, Sec. III.B.
[5407] (U) Tamene Tr., p. 62.
[5408] (U) ODNI and DHS, "Joint Statement from the Department of Homeland Security and the Office of the Director of National Intelligence on Election Security," October 7, 2016.
[5409] (U) Trainor Tr., pp. 13–14.
[5410] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 8–10.
[5411] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 9.

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted][5412]

(U) **August 2015**

[redacted] On August 3, 2015, [redacted] FBI Special Agent (SA) [redacted] was the FBI's main point of contact for the DNC notification process.[5414] Both Trainor and [redacted] characterized the initial DNC notification as one of approximately [redacted] priority victim notifications from the larger pool of [redacted][5415]

[redacted] On August 6, 2015, [redacted] received approval from [redacted] to share information related to the incident and to notify the potential victims.[5416] [redacted] one of [redacted] agents on his squad, was responsible for notifying the [redacted] prioritized, potential victims.[5417] Trainor told the Committee that the notifications would have conveyed: "you very well may have been compromised, you may have been a victim . . . that you've received a spear phishing email."[5418] [redacted] testified that in this particular case, the [redacted] allowed FBI to share [redacted] IP addresses with victims to help them search for nefarious activity on their networks.[5419]

(U) On August 6, 2015, [redacted] called Tamene, the DNC's IT Director, and passed along the [redacted] IP addresses.[5420] On that same phone call, [redacted] but he did suggest that Tamene look up public reporting on the cyber actors mini-DUKE and mini-DIONIS.[5421][5422] Tamene told the Committee that on that

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[5412] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 8–13.
[5413] (U) [redacted] Tr., p. 5; Trainor Tr., p. 6; Brown Tr., p. 27.
[5414] (U) [redacted] Tr., p. 6. The FBI did not make [redacted] available for a Committee interview; the Committee interviewed [redacted] supervisors and other FBI personnel instead.
[5415] (U) [redacted] Tr., p. 6; [redacted] Tr., p. 8; Trainor Tr., p. 25.
[5416] (U) [redacted] Tr., p. 6.
[5417] [redacted] Tr., p. 15. The Committee notes that in late summer 2015, the FBI's Cyber Division accounted for [redacted] of FBI resources—as a comparison, the Counterterrorism Division accounted for [redacted] of the FBI's resources. FBI had [redacted] agents in Cyber, split between headquarters and the field offices. Trainor Tr., p. 26.
[5418] (U) *Ibid.*
[5419] (U) [redacted] Tr., p. 7.
[5420] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 11–12.
[5421] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 12.
[5422] (U) In general, both Tamene's testimony and the FBI's timeline of the interactions indicate that there were three phone calls from the FBI to the DNC in the fall of 2015. [redacted] created a contemporaneous timeline that the Committee was able to view. Tamene's testimony of the timing and content of the calls was reliant on his memory.

[redacted]

first phone call, which he remembered happening in September of 2015, [redacted] reached him through the DNC switchboard and told him that the FBI thought "there may be some activity that is nefarious" and provided the outgoing IP address.[5423] Tamene said that [redacted] also gave him [redacted] the FBI in case the DNC systems were compromised.[5424]

(U) After speaking with [redacted] Tamene called DNC Technology Director Andrew Brown and went through the DNC firewall logs with his assistant engineer.[5425] No one on the DNC's IT staff saw anything to substantiate [redacted] concerns.[5426] Brown told the Committee that "there was no indication like: Hey, the FBI is ringing a fire bell; we think you're getting hacked."[5427] Brown said he did raise the FBI's outreach with Dacey in his biweekly meeting, but he "didn't flag for her any direct actions" related to the FBI call.[5428] [redacted] FBI did not hear from the DNC after [redacted] initial call.[5429]

(U) CrowdStrike would eventually report that COZYBEAR had been sitting on the DNC's email server since the summer of 2015.[5430] According to their report, after gaining access to an individual DNC staffer's computer through a spearphishing campaign, COZYBEAR actors moved laterally through the DNC's system and gained access to the email server.[5431]

(U) December 2015

[redacted] On December 24, 2015, [redacted] FBI that it continued to see [redacted] efforts against the DNC.[5432] On December 28, 2015, [redacted] again contacted Tamene and told him that the DNC may have been compromised. He provided the same IP addresses, but included another indicator that he thought might help the DNC find the bad actors.[5433] [redacted]

Tamene recalled two conversations with [redacted] not one. Tamene remembers that [redacted] called him approximately a month after the initial phone call, and that that second conversation is when [redacted] told Tamene that the "actor is probably an entity called 'DUKES.'" Tamene Tr., pp. 10–13. At the time of [redacted] outreach, open source reporting was widely available on the internet linking "Dukes" to sophisticated Russian cyber actors.

[5423] (U) Tamene Tr., pp. 10–11.
[5424] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 12.
[5425] (U) *Ibid.*
[5426] (U) *Ibid.*
[5427] (U) Brown Tr., p. 15.
[5428] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 19.
[5429] (U) [redacted] Tr., p. 17.
[5430] (U) Brown Tr., p. 27.
[5431] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 49.
[5432] (U) [redacted] Tr., p. 17.
[5433] (U) [redacted] Tr., p. 17. Tamene remembers this second phone call as happening approximately a month after the initial notification, so in October 2015, not December, but DNC Technology Director Andrew Brown remembered that it was a December engagement. Tamene Tr., p. 13; Brown Tr., p. 16.

[redacted]

characterized this second notification as a slight escalation because "there was still a persistent presence, at least through attempts."[5434] [redacted] again received no follow-up information from Tamene or anyone else at the DNC after his December 28, 2015, outreach.[5435]

(U) Brown told the Committee that the DNC searched again and did not find any of the indicators [redacted] had passed to them.[5436] Brown again told Dacey about the interaction with the FBI, characterizing his response as: "we're treating it seriously and we're dealing with it."[5437] The DNC had purchased a new firewall in late December 2015 and Tamene's team was "in the process of putting it in as sort of transparent to the existing firewall" to ensure better logging capabilities.[5438] During this timeframe, the DNC also purchased Splunk, a tool that aggregates and enables quicker searching of logs.[5439]

(U) January 2016

(U) After two weeks following the second notification without any word from Tamene, [redacted] that Tamene might not be the appropriate contact within the DNC.[5440] On January 12, 2016, [redacted] called the DNC switchboard and asked to speak to the person [redacted].[5441] Again, [redacted] was directed to Tamene.[5442] On January 15, 2016, [redacted] called Tamene to check in, and Tamene told [redacted] that he would search the DNC systems and get back to the FBI.[5443] Tamene told the Committee that, prior to April 2016, "there was no sense of urgency" to [redacted] notifications.[5444] Yet both Trainor and [redacted] testified that [redacted] would have conveyed a sense of urgency.[5445] Tamene also told the Committee that he had no awareness of [redacted] ever asking to speak to his supervisor or attempting to escalate the conversation within the DNC.[5446]

(U) Trainor told the Committee that he "first became aware of the challenges associated with the DNC . . . [the] lack of cooperation, lack of response, the fact that the exfil was going

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[5434] (U) [redacted] Tr., p. 18.
[5435] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 19.
[5436] (U) Brown Tr., p. 16.
[5437] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 19–21.
[5438] (U) Tamene Tr., p. 17.
[5439] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 27.
[5440] (U) [redacted] Tr., p. 19.
[5441] (U) *Ibid.*
[5442] (U) *Ibid.*
[5443] (U) [redacted] Tr., p. 23.
[5444] (U) Tamene Tr., p. 28.
[5445] (U) Trainor Tr., p. 16.
[5446] (U) Tamene Tr., p. 28.

[redacted]

[redacted]

on" in January 2016. [5447] Around this time, Trainor said the FBI Section Chief escalated the matter to a more senior level within the DNC.[5448] Trainor was confident that "it got raised beyond a working level and got raised within the DNC . . . the bottom line is they were able, from what I understand, were able to convince them [the DNC]."[5449] The Committee notes the conflicting testimony, but could not find any record of any FBI attempts to raise the profile of their warnings during this time period. ASAC [redacted] told the Committee that [redacted] had [redacted] in the DNC IT staff's technical abilities, and that, during early 2016, [redacted] "was comfortable he was dealing with people that actually understood the consequences of what was happening and how to remediate it."[5450]

(U) February 2016

(U) On February 8, 2016, [redacted] still had not heard back from Tamene, so [redacted] left a voicemail telling Tamene that he wanted to meet to provide Tamene with some additional threat intelligence.[5451] The next day, [redacted] spoke with Tamene by telephone and they set up an in-person meeting for February 10, 2016, so that [redacted] could provide Tamene with additional information.[5452]

(U) On February 10, 2016, [redacted] Tamene, and Suraj Gaur, another DNC IT staffer, met at a coffee shop in Sterling, VA.[5453] The FBI provided the DNC IT staff with additional threat information, including [redacted].[5454] Tamene recalled that at this meeting, [redacted] provided him with [redacted] indicating nefarious activity, including [redacted].[5455] Tamene told [redacted] that he would review the DNC's logs for the indicators that [redacted] provided.[5456] For Tamene, [redacted] he realized that the DNC's logging capabilities did not go back far enough to catch the activity [redacted] described.[5457]

[5447] **(U)** Trainor Tr., p. 31. Trainor told the Committee that, during the December-January timeframe, he "start[ed] to hear, either from my staff or maybe even from the seventh floor at headquarters, whether it's the Deputy or the EAD or somebody, that the DNC may not be taking this as seriously." *Ibid.*, p. 47.
[5448] **(U)** *Ibid.*
[5449] **(U)** *Ibid.*, pp. 48, 50.
[5450] **(U)** [redacted] Tr., p. 26.
[5451] **(U)** *Ibid.*, p. 24.
[5452] **(U)** Tamene recalled that this in-person meeting with [redacted] was in late January 2016, not February. Tamene Tr., p. 14. *See also* [redacted] Tr., p. 24.
[5453] **(U)** *Ibid.*, pp. 24-25.
[5454] **(U)** *Ibid.*, p. 25.
[5455] **(U)** Tamene Tr., p. 16.
[5456] **(U)** [redacted] Tr., p. 25.
[5457] **(U)** Tamene Tr., p. 16.

[redacted]

[redacted]

(U) Tamene told the Committee that he remembered [redacted] telling him at this meeting that the FBI "believes these to be Russian state actors, Russian state-sponsored actors."[5458] Tamene relayed [redacted] statement about the foreign actors to Brown, and they both agreed that the DNC should continue to increase its logging capabilities.[5459] [redacted] also suggested that Tamene run a script [redacted], which could discover nefarious activity.[5460] Tamene was nervous about [redacted] on the network if the environment was compromised, so he and his team tried to figure out ways to [redacted] without alerting the malicious actors.[5461]

(U) Tamene told the Committee that, after their meeting, he told [redacted] by email or text message that the logs did not go back far enough and that the DNC had not found anything yet, but that they were still working on [redacted].[5462] He also told [redacted] that the DNC had purchased Splunk, a tool to aid its investigation, and had extended its logging capabilities.[5463]

(U) On February 18, 2016, a week after their first meeting, the FBI's [redacted] called Tamene and again requested the log files. On February 26, 2016, [redacted].[5464] Two days later, on February 29, 2016, FBI sent [redacted], to Tamene, Gaur, and a third member of the DNC's contract IT staff, Alberto Enrique.[5465]

(U) Tamene recalled that sometime in February, [redacted] called to invite him to an FBI tabletop exercise on April 5, 2016.[5466]

(U) March 2016

[5458] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 32–33.
[5459] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 32.
[5460] (U) *Ibid.* WMI is Windows Management Infrastructure, a Microsoft tool that allows system administrators to access and audit system management information across an enterprise's networks. *See* Microsoft.com, Microsoft Windows Dev Center, "About WMI." Because WMI works across the entire system, attackers sometimes use it to "create an initial foothold on a system." *See* Timothy Parsi and Evan Pena, "WMI vs. WMI: Monitoring for Malicious Activity," Fireeye.com, August 18, 2016. Running a WMI Bindings Script could enable a system administrator to see an adversary manipulating the WMI system.
[5461] (U) Tamene Tr., p. 32.
[5462] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 29.
[5463] (U) *Ibid.*
[5464] (U) [redacted] Tr., p. 27.
[5465] (U) *Ibid.*
[5466] (U) Tamene Tr., p. 29.

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(U) On March 1, 2016, Suraj Gaur responded to [redacted] and reported that the DNC had not found any malicious traffic but that they would increase their logging capability.[5467] On March 24, 2016, FBI identified additional spearphishing activity at the DNC. The next day, FBI passed indicators of that activity to the DNC, [redacted].[5468]

(U) April 2016

(U) On April 5, 2016, the FBI [redacted]."[5469] Tamene participated in the [redacted] included discussion of response options for victims of spear phishing campaigns.[5470] Tamene did not know the exercise [redacted] told the Committee that the FBI [redacted].[5471] Brown described [redacted] "generic: [covering] what do you do if you have an incident and what are some of the ways you can interact with [the FBI]."[5472]

(U) Tamene thought the exercise was helpful because it helped him understand how to leverage the Splunk program and because it confirmed, for him, that he was "moving in the right direction" with the DNC's cybersecurity posture.[5473] Tamene remembered that the FBI asked for the DNC's logs on April 10, 2016. Tamene started collecting the log information and asked Andrew Brown and DNC COO Lindsey Reynolds for permission to share the logs.[5474]

(U) On April 15, 2016, the FBI notified the DNC [redacted] that it was still seeing signs of compromise, and provided additional [redacted] for the DNC to use.[5475] The FBI also made another request for the DNC's logs.[5476][5477] Brown described this request for logs as a shift in the FBI engagement, telling the Committee that "all of a sudden the FBI asked us to send them

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[5467] (U) [redacted] Tr., p. 30.
[5468] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 31–32. FBI also saw some spearphishing attempts directed at the HFA Campaign; it also notified HFA on March 25, 2016.
[5469] (U) [redacted] Tr., p. 33; Tamene Tr., p. 29.
[5470] (U) [redacted] Tr., p. 33.
[5471] (U) [redacted] Tr., pp. 33–34.
[5472] (U) Brown Tr., p. 16.
[5473] (U) Tamene Tr., p. 30.
[5474] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 33.
[5475] (U) [redacted] Tr., p. 36.
[5476] (U) Tamene indicated to the Committee that in addition to his engagement with Agent [redacted] he also received one or two emails about spear phishing from Agent [redacted] colleague, Agent [redacted] during the March-April 2016 timeframe. Tamene Tr., p. 55.
[5477] (U) [redacted] Tr., p. 36.

[redacted]

[redacted]

logs," which was a "new request."[5478] At that point, the FBI had been requesting logs for almost two months.

(U) Three days later, on April 18, 2016, Tamene told [redacted] that the DNC was going to install and configure a new firewall; he also relayed that, so far, the [redacted] had not yielded any results.[5479] On that same day, FBI learned that a second Russian cyber actor, FANCYBEAR, was also operating within the DNC network.[5480] On April 19, 2016, the FBI again provided additional information to the DNC and again asked for the logs—the second request in two days, and the fifth request for logs cumulatively.[5481]

(U) Tamene told the Committee that the repeated requests for logs did not "seem like an escalation" to him, and that "Agent [redacted] never used alarming language."[5482]

(U) The FBI repeatedly asked for the logs in an attempt to help the DNC because [redacted] o the point where DNC could search its own logs for those same indicators.[5483] ASAC [redacted] told the Committee that the DNC had enough information to find the nefarious activity, but that "it was going to take them a lot longer and a lot more manpower to do it."[5484] After the fifth request for the logs, Tamene told the FBI that Brown would have to approve the request for any logs.[5485] Tamene told [redacted] that Brown was aware of the compromise and that he had briefed Lindsey Reynolds, the DNC's chief operating officer.[5486] On April 20, 2016, [redacted] sent Tamene and Gaur an [redacted].[5487]

(U) The following day, Tamene told [redacted] he did not have authorization to share the logs.[5488] On April 25, 2016, the FBI [redacted] the DNC's general counsel to request a meeting.[5489] The next day, on April 26, 2016, [redacted] called Michael Sussman, a partner at the law firm of Perkins Coie and the DNC's external cybersecurity counsel.[5490] Sussmann told [redacted] that

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[5478] (U) Brown Tr., p. 18; Brown Tr., p. 23.
[5479] (U) [redacted] Tr., p. 36.
[5480] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 47.
[5481] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 40.
[5482] (U) Tamene Tr., p. 37.
[5483] (U) [redacted] Tr., pp. 39–40.
[5484] (U) *Ibid.*
[5485] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 41.
[5486] (U) *Ibid.*
[5487] (U) *Ibid.*
[5488] (U) *Ibid.*
[5489] (U) *Ibid.*
[5490] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 42

[redacted]

[redacted]

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[redacted] should engage with Tamene and that Sussman would encourage Tamene to cooperate with the FBI.[5491] On April 27, 2016, Sussman and Tamene called [redacted] and told him they were planning to meet with Dacey on April 28, 2016. Sussmann relayed that he expected Dacey to approve sending the FBI the logs.[5492]

(U) On April 28, 2016, Tamene discovered APT-28, or FANCYBEAR, on the DNC's networks—eight months after the FBI first contacted the DNC. Despite his earlier conversations with [redacted] about APT-29, or COZYBEAR, Tamene described the discovery of FANCYBEAR as "the first indication that I had of confirmed foreign actors on our network."[5493]

(U) Tamene saw that a utility server that the DNC used to manage adding users to the domain had been compromised.[5494] On that domain server, the DNC used a program called [redacted] to manage passwords.[5495] [redacted] had two-factor authentication, but the IT team received an alert that an IP address was trying to log into the [redacted] account by guessing the password.[5496] After examining the [redacted] accesses, Tamene and his team could see that there were nefarious [redacted] access attempts that Tamene described as "irrefutable" indicators of compromise.[5497]

(U) In addition to the [redacted] activity, Tamene and his team also found a "process that [they] didn't recognize" running on the utility server.[5498] Tamene told the Committee that FANCYBEAR was running processes at system-level privileges, which could have given them access to "potentially everything . . . they could delete things, they could copy things, they could exfiltrate things."[5499] Brown told the Committee that "they were kind of at the heart of the network at that point, by the time we saw them getting administrative passwords."[5500]

(U) On April 29, 2016, after confirming the GRU/FANCYBEAR activity, when he "knew for sure" that the DNC was compromised, Tamene called Brown, and then Reynolds, to obtain permission to reach out to the FBI.[5501] Brown separately called Dacey and Reynolds to alert them to the problem, but could not reach Dacey.[5502] Dacey told the Committee that she

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[5491] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 43
[5492] (U) *Ibid.*
[5493] (U) Tamene Tr., p. 9.
[5494] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 42.
[5495] (U) *Ibid.*
[5496] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 43.
[5497] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 43; Brown Tr., p. 9.
[5498] (U) Tamene Tr., p. 43.
[5499] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 45–46.
[5500] (U) Brown Tr., p. 14.
[5501] (U) Tamene Tr., p. 37.
[5502] (U) Brown 10.

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[redacted]

received a call Friday evening from Reynolds explaining that "the IT team . . . had noticed unusual activity on our system and they said that they thought that a breach had occurred and it was not something they had seen before and they were concerned about it and needed help to figure out what was going on."[5503] Dacey immediately called Sussmann.[5504] Tamene and the DNC team, including counsel, "spent several hours on the phone thinking through what [their] options were."[5505] That same day—11 weeks after the FBI's first request— Tamene sent [redacted] an email stating that the DNC IT department had permission to provide the logs, and subsequently provided the logs to the FBI.[5506]

(U) Tamene told the Committee that he texted [redacted] on the night of April 29 and said "we have evidence that we're compromised; I have the logs ready for you; let me know what you can do."[5507] [redacted] responded by text and told Tamene "if you need us to help you next week, let me know. I see that you sent us the logs. Thank you."[5508] Tamene told the Committee, "the tone here still wasn't 'fire drill' or 'evacuate.' It wasn't that. It was never that. Even after we had confirmed a compromise…there was no sense of urgency from him [SA [redacted]."[5509] Tamene attributed [redacted] relative calm to the fact that he was a "cool customer" or that he had not seen the activity Tamene had seen.[5510] Tamene was nervous to attempt any remediation on his own because he did not want to "show [his] hand to the adversary, who may have full control of [the] network."[5511]

(U) On Saturday, April 30, 2016, Sussmann emailed CrowdStrike President Shawn Henry to discuss a potential incident; on a phone call later that afternoon, Sussmann told Henry that "somebody at the DNC had seen some activity" and that there had been "prior communications . . . with the FBI," and that Sussmann wanted CrowdStrike's help.[5512] Later that day, Dacey, Reynolds, Brown, Tamene, Perkins Coie attorneys, and CrowdStrike employees Shawn Henry and Chris Scott had a phone call to discuss incident response options.[5513]

(U) May 2016

[5503] (U) Dacey Tr., p. 5.
[5504] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 6.
[5505] (U) Tamene Tr., pp. 9–10; Dacey Tr., p. 6.
[5506] (U) [redacted] Tr., p. 43; Brown Tr., p. 23.
[5507] (U) Tamene Tr., p. 37.
[5508] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 38.
[5509] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 40.
[5510] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 40–41.
[5511] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 39.
[5512] (U) Henry Tr., pp. 39–40.
[5513] (U) Tamene Tr., pp. 38–39; Brown Tr., p. 10. Henry doesn't remember this phone call with the DNC but Brown, Tamene, and Dacey all recalled that CrowdStrike participated in this call.

[redacted]

[redacted]

(U) On May 1, 2016, Sussmann, Henry, and one or two CrowdStrike employees discussed more information about the breach and started the paperwork for the DNC to retain CrowdStrike.[5514] Dacey called Congresswoman and then-DNC Chair Debbie Wasserman Shultz that Saturday to let her know "that there was a concern, that we had a problem that they thought was significant in the system and we needed more information, so that we had brought on CrowdStrike to help."[5515]

(U) Dacey told the Committee that one of the reasons she chose CrowdStrike was because of Henry's former FBI career, and that the DNC "encouraged [CrowdStrike] to talk directly to the FBI and that we wanted them to be coordinating and working with them once we knew about the breach."[5516] That weekend, Tamene and his team wiped their computers and began using a newly created Gmail account to communicate about the incident.[5517]

(U) On May 2, 2016, CrowdStrike incident responder Robert Johnston called Tamene to discuss communication and security protocols.[5518] Johnston also gave Tamene a list of technical assets he needed from Tamene, [redacted].[5519] Johnston gave Tamene one of CrowdStrike's Falcon sensors, a tool which detects nefarious activity presently occurring in the environment.[5520] Later on, the DNC IT team also installed CrowdStrike's Falcon Forensic Collector, which detects historical suspicious activity.[5521] Tamene told CrowdStrike about his earlier conversation with Agent [redacted] about [redacted], and CrowdStrike helped Tamene to [redacted] to figure out what was going on."[5522] Henry recalled that during that initial week, CrowdStrike deployed 200 sensor devices on the DNC network.[5523] CrowdStrike did not do an assessment of the DNC's defenses at the time of the attack because their focus was responding to the active intrusion.[5524] At the end of the investigation, the DNC

[5514] (U) Henry Tr., pp. 40–41.
[5515] (U) Dacey Tr., p. 7. Wasserman Schultz remembered that Dacey came to speak with her on "April 20-something" and told Wasserman Schultz that there were two Russian spy agencies on the DNC's network. Wasserman Schultz Tr., pp. 4–5. Based on Dacey's testimony and CrowdStrike's timeline of when it discovered the second actor, it seems likely that either Dacey and the Chair had multiple conversations relaying this information, or that the only conversation occurred in May, as Dacey remembered.
[5516] (U) Dacey Tr., p. 15.
[5517] (U) Tamene Tr., p. 47.
[5518] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 47.
[5519] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 48.
[5520] (U) *Ibid.*
[5521] (U) *Ibid.*
[5522] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 48–49.
[5523] (U) Henry Tr., p. 41.
[5524] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 48.

[redacted]

[redacted]

discovered that 37 of 700 hosts on the DNC's network were compromised, including a domain controller.[5525]

(U) During this same time period, SA [redacted] and Tamene had technical conversations [redacted].[5526] Tamene recalled that he had spoken with [redacted] on May 2, 2016, to let him know that CrowdStrike was working on the incident response.[5527] On May 3, 2016, Agent [redacted] notified Tamene of some areas where the FBI had [redacted] and asked the DNC to do further investigation on its systems.[5528] [redacted].[5529] FBI notes show that on May 3, 2016, Robert Johnston, of CrowdStrike, reached out to the FBI to tell them that the DNC had retained CrowdStrike for the incident response.[5530]

(U) During the first week of May, Tamene worked with CrowdStrike and participated in daily calls with Brown, Reynolds, Dacey, CrowdStrike, and Graham Wilson of Perkins Coie.[5531] Tamene told the Committee that he spoke with Agent [redacted] after CrowdStrike was retained to confirm that [redacted] was "getting the information he need[ed] from CrowdStrike."[5532] When pressed about what exactly was shared with the FBI, Tamene told the Committee that he did not "know for a fact exactly what CrowdStrike gave Agent [redacted] but that "every time that the FBI asked the DNC, the DNC cooperated."[5533] Tamene told the Committee that he believed that, during the incident response phase, he "passed the baton" to CrowdStrike to deal with the FBI.[5534]

(U) Within a few days, CrowdStrike's sensors relayed that one threat actor, COZYBEAR, "had compromised certain email accounts. . . . Voice over IP servers . . . servers related to internal text messaging, [and] text messages in the environment . . . they had apparently been collecting intelligence going back to July of 2015."[5535] By mid-May,

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[5525] (U) Tamene Tr., p. 77.
[5526] (U) [redacted] Tr., p. 44.
[5527] (U) Tamene Tr., p. 53.
[5528] (U) [redacted] Tr., p. 44.
[5529] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 44.
[5530] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 54 ([redacted] referred to notes during his interview).
[5531] (U) Tamene Tr., p. 50.
[5532] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 53.
[5533] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 54.
[5534] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 56.
[5535] (U) Henry Tr., pp. 50–52.

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CrowdStrike "recognized that FANCYBEAR . . . had been in the environment as early as April 18th [2016]."[5536] Henry characterized the compromise of the network as "widespread."[5537]

(U) Dacey told the Committee that "within a week after" bringing on CrowdStrike, Michael Sussmann called to tell her that CrowdStrike had identified one of the perpetrators of the attack as FANCYBEAR, "a state-sponsored foreign entity, Russian in nature."[5538] During this same conversation, Sussmann told Dacey that FANCYBEAR had been "interested in the research files at the DNC" and that they "had exfiltrated a few files from the system" related to Trump research."[5539] A short time after her conversation with Sussmann, CrowdStrike alerted Dacey that they had found a second actor—COZYBEAR—that had been in the system for a longer time, and "seemed to be [redacted]."[5540] CrowdStrike told Dacey that "there was no indication" that COZYBEAR and FANCYBEAR had known of the other's presence on the system.[5541]

(U) At some point during the remediation process, the DNC IT staff did see one indicator of potential exfiltration. According to Tamene, "it looked like someone took a bunch of files, zipped them, and then charred them to be a bunch of other files so that they can be small, 5-meg uploads out of that system."[5542] Tamene told the Committee that the folder in the file share was called "Trump.zip."[5543] Henry testified that CrowdStrike was "able to see some exfiltration and the types of files that had been touched" but not the content of those files.[5544]

(U) In mid-May, Tamene met with vendors as MIS, not as DNC IT staff, about obtaining new email systems and preparing the new technical infrastructure for remediation.[5545] CrowdStrike and the DNC IT staff determined that June 10, 2016, would be the day when the DNC switched to new systems.[5546]

(U) The Committee notes there is discrepancy in witness testimony regarding how communicative CrowdStrike was with the FBI during the incident response phase. On May 20, 2016, Agent [redacted] contacted Tamene for an update on the incident response; Tamene told

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[5536] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 58.
[5537] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 52.
[5538] (U) Dacey 9.
[5539] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 10. The Committee appreciated the DNC's cooperative approach to sharing information that may have properly been protected by the attorney-client privilege.
[5540] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 11.
[5541] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 11.
[5542] (U) Tamene Tr., pp. 58–59.
[5543] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 58.
[5544] (U) Henry Tr., p. 60.
[5545] (U) Tamene Tr., p. 56.
[5546] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 57.

[redacted]

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[redacted] there had been some developments but that Tamene was unsure what he was authorized to share with the FBI.[5547] On May 26, 2016, [redacted] reached out to Tamene again, and Tamene told [redacted] he was authorized to share some information with the FBI, but did not actually share any additional information on that call. On May 31, 2016, [redacted] called Tamene again.[5548] During this call, [redacted] asked for an update and provided [redacted].[5549] Henry told the Committee that one of CrowdStrike's consultants spoke with [redacted] in May after the Falcon sensors were deployed.[5550] [redacted] timeline only includes one CrowdStrike call in May: the initial May 3, 2016 call from Robert Johnston to alert the FBI that CrowdStrike was working on the incident response.

(U) June 2016

(U) On June 10, 2016, the DNC had an all-staff meeting and asked its personnel to return their laptops and devices to the IT staff.[5551] Brown told the Committee: "most people thought they were getting fired. But we had to maintain operational secrecy…we didn't want to tip our hand to the intruders that we knew they were there."[5552] From June 10, 2016, to June 12, 2016, the DNC IT staff and CrowdStrike unplugged all of the old, potentially compromised systems, and worked to re-image devices and hardware for the new systems.[5553] DNC IT staffers used [redacted].[5554] The new network had security "baked in," [redacted].[5555]

(U) On June 13, 2016, Agent [redacted] contacted Tamene [redacted] to ask for an update on the incident response.[5556] Later that day, Sussmann and Henry called then-FBI Assistant Director for Cyber Jim Trainor to tell him that the DNC hack was going to be made public.[5557] On June 14, 2016, the DNC told the FBI that the workstations had been re-imaged and compromised servers were remediated.[5558] That afternoon, immediately prior to the release of an article in *The Washington Post*, Wasserman Shultz held a call with DNC officers, including Donna Brazile, to tell them that the DNC had been hacked by a foreign entity and that

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[5547] (U) [redacted] Tr., p. 48.
[5548] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 48–49.
[5549] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 49.
[5550] (U) Henry Tr., p. 70.
[5551] (U) Brown Tr., p. 26.
[5552] (U) *Ibid.*
[5553] (U) Tamene Tr., p. 57; Brown Tr., pp. 26–27.
[5554] (U) Tamene Tr., p. 57.
[5555] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 59.
[5556] (U) [redacted] Tr., p. 49.
[5557] (U) Henry Tr., pp. 68–72.
[5558] (U) [redacted] Tr., p. 49.

[redacted]

[redacted]

remediation was underway.[5559] Brazile remembered that the call occurred about five minutes prior to the *Post* story breaking.[5560] On the evening of June 14, 2016, *The Washington Post* published an article about the DNC hack, with quotes from DNC staff, Sussmann, and CrowdStrike employees.[5561]

(U) On June 15, 2016, Alperovitch published excerpts from CrowdStrike's analysis of the FANCYBEAR and COZYBEAR intrusions on CrowdStrike's blog.[5562] Later that day, after reading CrowdStrike's blog post, the FBI reached out to the DNC to ask for copies of the malware that CrowdStrike had collected.[5563]

(U) That same day, the GRU online persona Guccifer 2.0 made its first public appearance on a newly created website where it released "just a few docs from many thousands . . . I extracted when hacking into DNC's network."[5564] The initial Guccifer 2.0 blog release included the DNC's Trump research file.[5565] The Guccifer 2.0 persona's Twitter account became operational on June 20, 2016.[5566]

(U) As Brown remembers it, a day or two after *The Washington Post* story, "all of a sudden this Guccifer 2.0 persona pops up purporting to be the person, the individual, he claimed, who hacked into the DNC systems and started releasing files that had been purportedly stolen from the DNC."[5567] Brown told the Committee that there was "definitely an effort to review the materials that were being released by Guccifer . . . [by the] folks on the DNC research team and our legal counsel."[5568] CrowdStrike coordinated with the DNC to look at timelines of what had been exfiltrated.[5569]

[5559] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Donna Brazile, January 22, 2018, p. 17.
[5560] (U) *Ibid.*
[5561] (U) Ellen Nakashima, "Russian government hackers penetrated DNC, stole opposition research on Trump," *The Washington Post,* June 14, 2016.
[5562] (U) Dmitri Alperovitch, "Bears in the Midst: Intrusion into the Democratic National Committee," CrowdStrike, June 15, 2016.
[5563] (U) [redacted] Tr., p. 50. Through CrowdStrike's investigation, the FBI learned that the DCCC had also been compromised. The FBI worked with the DCCC to remediate the issues and found the DCCC to be cooperative. Trainor 89–93.
[5564] (U) David Sanger, et al., "Tracing Guccifer 2.0's Many Tentacles in the 2016 Election," *The New York Times,* July 15, 2018. For more on the GRU's use of Guccifer 2.0 for its hack-and-leak campaign, *see infra* Vol. 5, Sec. III.B.
[5565] (U) *Ibid.*
[5566] (U) *Ibid.*
[5567] (U) Brown Tr., p. 31.
[5568] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 32.
[5569] (U) Henry Tr., p. 93.

[redacted]

[redacted]

(U) Henry told the Committee that Guccifer's claim of sole responsibility for the DNC hack was "very interesting . . . as an investigator . . . [as] an attempt just to refocus blame and throw investigators off the track."[5570] Henry told the Committee that "operationalizing the intelligence" through leaks "was a major change in the stakes . . . Collection of intelligence and espionage is acceptable. The actioning of intelligence to have some type of an operational impact [was] . . . kind of a new paradigm."[5571]

(U) On June 16, 2016, FBI personnel (including AD Trainor, Cyber Division Unit Chief [redacted], Section Chief [redacted] DNC CEO Amy Dacey, CrowdStrike President Shawn Henry, CrowdStrike employee Robert Johnston, and Michael Sussmann from Perkins Coie met to discuss how CrowdStrike and the FBI would work together going forward and any outstanding requests from the FBI.[5572] Henry characterized the collaboration as "absolutely" a "two-way street," stating that the FBI and CrowdStrike had "[redacted]" throughout the investigation.[5573]

(U) Wasserman Schultz told the Committee that she "was never told that the FBI had any interest in or requested access to [the DNC] servers."[5574] In fact, Wasserman Schultz said that she understood that the DNC cooperated with the FBI through the transition to the new servers, and that "if there was a request, we most definitely would have provided access to our servers."[5575] Wasserman Schultz told the Committee that she believed her imperative as Chair was to "address the intrusions and make sure that whatever information the FBI would have needed, that they got it."[5576]

(U) Trainor recalled that Henry and Sussmann had expressed frustration that the FBI had not notified the DNC of the FANCYBEAR and COZYBEAR intrusions earlier.[5577] But, as Trainor pointed out to Henry and Sussmann, the FBI had notified the DNC quickly and repeatedly about the FANCYBEAR intrusions in March-April of 2016.[5578] Trainor remembered describing the FBI's ideal cooperation scenario at this meeting, and he recalled that the DNC

[5570] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 91.
[5571] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 91–92.
[5572] (U) Dacey Tr., p. 22, [redacted] Tr., p. 52, Trainor Tr., p. 56.
[5573] (U) Henry Tr., p. 69.
[5574] (U) Wasserman Shultz Tr., p. 23.
[5575] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 23.
[5576] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 25.
[5577] (U) Trainor Tr., p. 59.
[5578] (U) *Ibid.*

[redacted]

[redacted]

response was: "we'll give you everything you need."[5579] Subsequently, Trainor had "several conversations with the law firm nearly every day from there on out."[5580]

(U) On June 17, 2016, the day after the meeting at FBI Headquarters, Agent [redacted] reached out to Tamene asking for [redacted]; Tamene said he would ask for authorization to give [redacted] the information.[5581] Despite the initial meeting, and the fact that the DNC "[redacted] the DNC ultimately relayed to Trainor that it would give the FBI access to [redacted].[5582]

(U) On June 20, 2016, CrowdStrike reached out to the FBI, and provided some of the indicators [redacted] had requested.[5583] CrowdStrike still had not provided the FBI with forensic images nor an unredacted copy of their report.[5584] Around this time, Trainor spoke to John Carlin, then-Assistant Attorney General of the National Security Division, about a grand jury subpoena in the DNC matter.[5585] Ultimately, Trainor believed that [redacted] was unnecessary because he "was able to get the DNC to cooperate to some degree or level that was satisfactory and allowed [the FBI] to pursue the investigation."[5586] Trainor told the Committee that he was not aware of any situation during his tenure in the Cyber Division where the FBI ever used [redacted] to secure victim cooperation.[5587]

(U) July 2016

(U) On July 22, 2016, WikiLeaks began releasing emails captured from the DNC hack.[5588] Although Donna Brazile's emails were among those publicly released, she said that she never received any official victim notification prior to or subsequent to those releases.[5589]

(U) On July 24, 2016, immediately prior to the start of the Democratic National Convention, Wasserman Schultz resigned as DNC Chair and Donna Brazile became Interim

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[5579] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 57, 60.
[5580] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 57. During one of those calls, Trainor offered to brief the DNC, DCCC, RNC, and the Clinton Campaign at the classified level. *Ibid.* Trainor cannot remember if a classified threat briefing was offered to the Trump Campaign.
[5581] (U) [redacted] Tr., p. 52.
[5582] (U) Trainor Tr., p. 61.
[5583] (U) [redacted] Tr., p. 53.
[5584] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 53.
[5585] (U) Trainor Tr., pp. 24, 41.
[5586] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 40.
[5587] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 41.
[5588] (U) Tom Hamburger, Karen Tumulty, "WikiLeaks releases thousands of documents about Clinton and internal deliberations," *The Washington Post*, July 22, 2016.
[5589] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 32.

[redacted]

[redacted]

Chair.[5590] At around 1:00 p.m. that day, after speaking with Wasserman Schultz, Brazile ran into Mark Elias in the Logan Hotel lobby in Philadelphia.[5591] Elias told Brazile details of the hack, including background on the Russian actors and background on CrowdStrike, and he also told Brazile about the work Sussmann had been doing for the DNC.[5592] Elias also told Brazile that 127 of her emails had been released.[5593] Brazile asked Elias to have Sussmann set up a briefing from the FBI.[5594]

(U) In July, as additional material purportedly from the DNC was being released, Johnston called Tamene to ask for help in substantiating that some of the leaked emails were legitimate DNC emails. Specifically, Johnston wanted to know where emails that were older than the DNC retention policy were stored.[5595] As leaked emails were published, the DNC IT staff saw phishing attempts on staff's personal email accounts "or doxing from details that were released publicly through Wikileaks . . . there was a lot of activity targeting DNC staff."[5596] According to DNC IT Director Brown, activity targeting DNC staff was reported to the FBI on an ongoing basis.[5597]

(U) August 2016

(U) Brazile told the Committee that as Interim Chair in August, her "total focus" was cybersecurity.[5598] Brazile wanted to ensure that the DNC was making appropriate notifications to donors and staff whose personally identifiable information (PII) had been compromised, since she herself had PII compromised and had not been notified.[5599] Brazile also reviewed invoices at the DNC and discovered that the DNC had "recreated everything the FBI wanted . . . at a cost of over $65,000."[5600]

[redacted] On August 2, 2016, the FBI asked CrowdStrike for additional information but "they [CrowdStrike] insisted DNC legal be involved so . . . that [didn't go] very far."[5601]

[5590] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 5–6.
[5591] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 37.
[5592] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 38.
[5593] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 38, 42.
[5594] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 39.
[5595] (U) Tamene Tr., p. 61.
[5596] (U) Brown Tr., p. 47.
[5597] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 47.
[5598] (U) Brazile Tr., p. 67.
[5599] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 67.
[5600] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 90.
[5601] (U) [redacted] Tr., p. 55.

[redacted]

[redacted]

(U) In early August, DHS reached out to Andrew Brown to provide assistance to the DNC.[5602] Brown directed DHS to contact Sussmann.[5603] Brazile's response to additional aid from DHS was "let's get some help. We need help."[5604] On or about August 5, 2016, Brazile attended President Obama's birthday party at the White House. During the party, both National Security Adviser Susan Rice and Attorney General Eric Holder told Brazile that the DNC needed to cooperate with the FBI.[5605]

(U) On August 11, 2016, Brazile received a briefing at the FBI, which DNC Director of Transition Tom McMahon and DNC officers Henry Munoz and Ray Buckley also attended, along with Sussmann and Henry.[5606] At that briefing, AD Trainor and Cyber Division personnel walked through the Russia cyber threat.[5607] Brazile told the Committee that she thought the briefing was "professional" and "thorough" and that she believed it was her "duty as an American citizen" the direct the DNC to cooperate.[5608] Brazile said that the FBI never raised any issue with the DNC's cooperation during the briefing.[5609] Brazile told the Committee that when she left the FBI she "wanted to go straight to the Pentagon" because she felt like the DNC hack "was a major attack on our country."[5610]

(U) After meeting with the FBI, Brazile organized the DNC's Cyber Security Task Force, a group of about 30 volunteers from Silicon Valley, to conduct penetration testing, security assessments, and ongoing cybersecurity support for the DNC.[5611] Tamene told the Committee that the Task Force included the Chief Information Security Officer (CISO) of Google, the former CISO of Facebook, and employees from Lyft, Uber, and Coinbase, among others.[5612]

(U) On August 31, 2016, more than two months after AD Trainor met with senior DNC officials at FBI Headquarters, the FBI received a draft of CrowdStrike's report that ASAC [redacted] described as "heavily redacted."[5613] Trainor became frustrated and he told the Committee that

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[5602] (U) Brazile Tr., p. 81. Brazile recalled this as occurring on either August 4, 2016, or August 6, 2016.
[5603] (U) Brown Tr., p. 44.
[5604] (U) Brazile Tr., p. 82.
[5605] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 73.
[5606] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 69.
[5607] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 70.
[5608] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 79.
[5609] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 81.
[5610] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 80.
[5611] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 91.
[5612] (U) Tamene Tr., p. 63.
[5613] (U) [redacted] Tr., p. 55.

[redacted]

[redacted]

when he finally received a copy of CrowdStrike's report, he doubted its completeness because he knew that outside counsel had reviewed it.[5614]

(U) September 2016

(U) On or about September 21, 2016, Robert Johnston of CrowdStrike called Tamene to alert him to nefarious activity on the DNC's Amazon Web Services (AWS) cloud account.[5615] The intrusion involved an actor using a compromised access key to look at the assets in AWS and determine what type of equipment the DNC had.[5616] CrowdStrike's Falcon sensors triggered an alert on the DNC's Command Hub, which helped the IT team find a September 2, 2016 log indicating [redacted] After discovering that the AWS activity started September 2, 2016, DNC IT staff, CrowdStrike, Amazon Support staff, and the DNC's Cyber Security Task Force worked together to remediate the incident.[5619] Tamene told the Committee that CrowdStrike was coordinating with the FBI about the intrusion, but he himself never spoke with Agent [redacted] or anyone from the FBI during this remediation.[5620] Brown told the Committee that the DNC had "worked with law enforcement around" the AWS incident; but, when asked about whether the FBI was involved, he said he did not know "the specifics of how law enforcement was involved at that point."[5621]

(U) October 2016

(U) Henry told the Committee that "the FBI provided a request [for forensic images] to the DNC through Perkins Coie" and that Perkins Coie told CrowdStrike to "give the FBI what you have access to, what you can."[5622] Henry recalled that CrowdStrike provided the FBI with forensic images, a copy of their report, and a USB with some malware on it.[5623]

(U) Brown, Tamene, Dacey, and Wasserman Schultz all told the Committee that the DNC cooperated with the FBI as much as possible. Brown said: "we gave the FBI everything they ever asked for. I'm not aware of any decision ever being made to deny a request that the

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[5614] (U) Trainor Tr., pp. 61, 63.
[5615] (U) Tamene Tr., p. 62; Brown Tr., p. 35.
[5616] (U) Tamene Tr., p. 66.
[5617] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 66–67.
[5618] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 69–70.
[5619] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 62–63.
[5620] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 64–65.
[5621] (U) Brown Tr., pp. 36–37.
[5622] (U) Henry Tr., p. 83.
[5623] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 83–86.

[redacted]

[redacted]

FBI made for something."[5624] With respect to the confusion about whether or not the FBI had gotten direct access to the DNC's servers, Brown told the Committee that "a lot of the servers were actually virtual servers" and that the DNC had taken and [redacted] of all of the running servers.[5625] Brown told the Committee that [redacted], as far as I'm aware. And that was the level of access that was requested."[5626] According to ASAC [redacted] on October 13, 2016, CrowdStrike sent the FBI a bill for $4,000 for the forensic images that FBI requested.[5627]

(U) In October 2016, DHS briefed DNC and RNC staff on DHS's Election Day activities, making both organizations aware that DHS was working with the states to secure voting infrastructure.[5628] Throughout October, the DNC IT staff continued to see intrusion attempts on their network.[5629] Brazile told the Committee that the DNC kept the FBI aware of each attempted intrusion.[5630] After each attempted intrusion, Brazile had a notification process whereby the DNC would alert the DCCC, the DGSC, the DGA, HFA, and the RNC.[5631] Brazile herself would notify the RNC.[5632] Brazile told the Committee that the last attempted intrusion she was aware of took place on October 26, 2016.[5633]

7. (U) Conclusions

(U) In many ways, the DNC hack was a novel scenario, fraught with confusion and miscommunication, inherently enmeshed in the domestic political space that FBI traditionally avoids. But in other ways, the DNC hack played out like a typical FBI cyber case—a victim reticent to cooperate with the FBI, a victim who subsequently hires a third-party cybersecurity vendor through counsel, potentially limiting the FBI's access and insights. While the Committee understands that the FBI operates with limited resources and currently follows a victim-driven model when responding to cyber threats, it is clear to the Committee that the FBI could have, and should have, escalated its messages within the DNC much sooner than it did. The FBI complained about lack of access to the DNC servers and the refereeing of information by Perkins

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[5624] (U) Brown Tr., p. 34.
[5625] (U) *Ibid.*
[5626] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 35. The Committee notes that using forensic images of compromised systems is standard protocol in cyber investigations, because it removes the chance that information on the compromised systems could be altered or deleted by mistake.
[5627] (U) [redacted] Tr., p. 55.
[5628] (U) Brazile Tr., pp. 122–123.
[5629] (U) Tamene Tr., p. 72.
[5630] (U) Brazile Tr., p. 93.
[5631] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 97.
[5632] (U) *Ibid.*
[5633] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 99–100.

[redacted]

[redacted]

Coie, but ultimately it did not pursue compulsory process, and witnesses admitted that the FBI did eventually get what it needed.

i. (U) Escalation

[redacted] By the time the DNC retained CrowdStrike in May 2016, the FBI had identified two active cyber intrusions on the DNC's network—FANCYBEAR and COZYBEAR—both of which are associated with the Russian intelligence services.[5634] As Trainor told the Committee: "they had a real mess on their hands."[5635] Trainor, a 20-year veteran of the FBI who spent the last third of his career on cyber issues, could not think of any other FBI investigation where the [redacted].[5636] As Henry put it, "the Russians are probably the most sophisticated foreign adversaries that we have seen in terms of their tactics . . . their stealthiness, and their creativity."[5637]

(U) But the FBI did not treat the initial intrusion into the DNC like the mismatch it was: sophisticated foreign adversary versus nonprofit. When asked why the FBI did not just escalate the situation at the DNC, [redacted] ASAC [redacted] told the Committee that he wanted to protect [redacted] equities. But when pressed about whether the FBI ever discussed finding a cleared person at the DNC to receive a defensive briefing, [redacted] said he did not know whether those conversations had taken place.[5638] The FBI could have engaged with the DNC Chair, a sitting member of Congress, with a classified briefing, but they continued to engage the DNC's IT staff, despite the futility of those efforts over a period of months.[5639]

(U) DNC IT staffers suggested that more urgent warnings could have helped mitigate the threat sooner, and they contrasted the FBI's efforts during the 2016 cycle to the 2008 cycle.[5640] As Brown told the Committee: "the DNC had been targeted by Chinese APTs in 2008…[and] law enforcement had come to the office and met with the Chairman to tell them: we think you're under attack . . . that was not the level of outreach we were getting from the FBI in the fall of 2015."[5641]

[5634] (U) [redacted] Tr., p. 48.
[5635] (U) Trainor Tr., p. 51.
[5636] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 55.
[5637] (U) Henry Tr., p. 37.
[5638] (U) [redacted] Tr., p. 35.
[5639] (U) Wasserman Schultz Tr., pp. 32–33.
[5640] (U) *See, e.g.*, Tamene Tr. p. 80 ("it would have been better if people higher up than me were talking about these things."); Brown Tr. p. 23 ("I would think that if the FBI had reason to believe that they thought we were actually compromised and that the actors were an APT-type of actor, that they would have given us a little more information, a little more urgency on that notification.").
[5641] (U) Brown Tr., p. 22.

[redacted]

[redacted]

(U) During an all-members brief to Congress about the Intelligence Community Assessment (ICA) in January of 2017, Congresswoman Wasserman Schultz confronted then-FBI Director Comey about the lack of engagement with DNC leadership during the hack.[5642] During that exchange, Director Comey defended the FBI and said they had properly engaged and that the Congresswoman should have a follow-up meeting with the FBI.[5643] Wasserman Schultz then met with the FBI, which she told the Committee "confirmed . . . that they didn't do anything proactive to go up the chain of command in the DNC to ensure that we would know about their concerns that a Russian spy agency was on our network."[5644]

ii. (U) Engagement with CrowdStrike/Obtaining Necessary Investigative Materials

(U) The biggest miscommunication between the DNC, CrowdStrike, and the FBI was the extent to which FBI received or did not receive the materials it needed for its ongoing investigations in a timely manner.

(U) DNC witnesses and CrowdStrike's Shawn Henry indicated that the FBI received all of the materials it asked for, and that the FBI never complained about the DNC's cooperation to Wasserman Schultz or Brazile.

(U) Henry told the Committee that CrowdStrike "had more than 100 exchanges back and forth with the FBI," including FBI field offices, from May 2016 until September 2017.[5645] But Trainor characterized the DNC's cooperation as "moderate" overall, and lamented that getting materials from CrowdStrike and the DNC was "slow and laborious in many respects."[5646] Trainor testified that the manner in which the FBI received information from CrowdStrike—in a report reviewed by counsel—was not his preference. As Trainor told the Committee: "having that information [raw data about the computer intrusion] collected, fully viewed by an attorney, scrubbed, sent over to the FBI in a stripped-down version three weeks later is not optimal."[5647]

(U) Trainor told the Committee that while it was common for victims to retain cybersecurity vendors, it was uncommon to have "everything thoroughly reviewed and vetted [by outside counsel] before being shared."[5648] Trainor told the Committee that Perkins Coie

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[5642] (U) Wasserman Schultz Tr., p. 51.
[5643] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 53.
[5644] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 56.
[5645] (U) Henry Tr., pp. 67–68.
[5646] (U) Trainor Tr., pp. 45, 65.
[5647] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 35.
[5648] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 63–65.

[redacted]

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asked the FBI for a list of forensic images and other technical information that the FBI wanted, and the FBI gave Perkins Coie that list.[5649] Ultimately, the FBI got what it needed, including the forensic images from CrowdStrike.

(U) As Trainor told the Committee, [redacted]. Not only does the victim entity know the system best, but multiple personnel on-site allows for skill gaps to be addressed and for expertise to be appropriately marshaled to meet the threat. Further, the use of a cybersecurity vendor and cybersecurity counsel as potential filters for information creates the impression—true or not—that the organization is not being fully transparent with the FBI. Despite what FBI felt was delayed or filtered cooperation, [redacted] given political sensitivities and the lack of any precedent for doing so.

[5649] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 66, 69.

[redacted]

[redacted]

B. (U) The Steele Dossier: Its Origins and Handling

1. (U) Introduction and Findings

(U) In the summer and fall of 2016, a set of memos that came to be known as the Steele dossier ("dossier")[5650] circulated among limited circles in Washington and played a role in spurring Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), Congressional, and private investigations related to Russian interference in the 2016 elections. These memos, compiled by [redacted] Christopher Steele, alleged cooperation between Russian government officials and Trump Campaign officials, Trump Organization employees, and Trump himself, as well as information regarding Hillary Clinton, Russian cybercrime, and other topics. Nearly four years after Steele delivered the first of these memos, many of the dossier's specific allegations about the activities of individuals are uncorroborated.

(U) The Committee did not seek to prove or disprove the assertions in the dossier. Instead, the Committee explored Steele's methodology, explored the information available on Steele's subsources, examined how the FBI handled Steele as a source, and sought to understand how the FBI investigated the assertions in Steele's reporting.

(U) The Committee found that the tradecraft reflected in the dossier is generally poor relative to IC standards; the Department of Justice (DOJ) Office of the Inspector General (OIG)[5651] and many who the Committee spoke with at the FBI also found serious fault with Steele's tradecraft. For example, FBI and DOJ OIG investigations discovered that Steele's sources were sometimes several steps removed from the information they provided, and Steele did not adequately convey that separation in the memos. Further, some information Steele logically would have known did not appear in the documents for unclear reasons, and the Committee found several opportunities for interested parties to insert disinformation. The

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[5650] (U) This report refers frequently to a collection of memos Christopher Steele produced in the summer and fall of 2016 as "the dossier." This term encompasses 20 memos—17 of them have been publicly released, and the Committee received three additional memos from FBI, which FBI had received from Steele. Rather than repeatedly refer to a particular memo written by Steele by its date and number, the Committee discusses the collection of memos as the dossier. The Committee notes that the memos that make up the dossier appear less polished than reports that Orbis Intelligence produced for its corporate clients and shared with the Department of State. Two of the additional memos the FBI provided the Committee did not originate with Steele: FBI got them from Steele, Steele got them from Jonathan Winer, who got them from Sydney Blumenthal, who got them from Cody Shearer, a freelance journalist. Shearer had compiled them as source notes for an eventual story. The Committee does not refer to those additional two memos as part of the larger Steele dossier. *See infra* Vol. 5, Sec. IV.B.4.viii.

[5651] (U) The DOJ OIG conducted three investigations cited in this Report: the *DOJ OIG FISA Report*; "Audit of the Federal Bureau of Investigation's Management of its Confidential Human Source Validation Processes," November 2019; and "A Review of Various Actions by the Federal Bureau of Investigation and Department of Justice in Advance of the 2016 Election, Appendix One," June 2018.

[redacted]

[redacted]

Committee was unable to establish a clear picture of the access and credibility of Steele's subsource network due to Steele's unwillingness to talk to the Committee, other than through written questions.

(U) The Committee found that, within the FBI, the dossier was given a veneer of credibility by lax procedures and layered misunderstandings. Before corroborating the information in the dossier, FBI cited that information in a FISA application. After a summary of the uncorroborated information was later appended to the ICA, the FBI also briefed it to the President, President-elect, and Gang of Eight, while noting that it was unverified.[5652] That high-level attention likely prompted the press to publish the dossier memos in January 2017.

(U) The dossier's creation was rooted in the end of the 2016 primary season. As Trump emerged as the Republican front-runner, Fusion GPS cofounder Glenn Simpson reached out to Democratic Party contacts to offer opposition research on Donald Trump, building on the research he had begun for a different client the year before. Fusion GPS is a consulting firm that claims to conduct in-depth research, largely focused on public records. Simpson had frequently worked on Russia-related issues in the past and represented different clients with different interests, including sometimes working for Russian oligarchs and sometimes against them.

(U) The Democratic National Committee (DNC) and the Hillary for America Campaign ("Clinton Campaign") worked through a law firm, Perkins Coie, to obtain opposition research, in part to preserve attorney-client privilege claims over the information.[5653] Perkins Coie, with Mark Elias acting as the main intermediary, hired Fusion GPS. Under that contract, Fusion GPS provided previously completed research and offered to continue to pursue several lines of inquiry: the outsourcing of Trump brand products overseas; Trump's taxes; and Trump Organization's overseas business projects, bankruptcies, casino issues, and alleged associations with organized crime. Simpson told the Committee that it was Fusion GPS's idea to pursue overseas ties—that research was not directed by Perkins Coie, the DNC, or the Clinton Campaign.

(U) Fusion GPS sought to go beyond the public records research it had already completed on Trump. It subcontracted with Steele's Orbis Business Intelligence (Orbis) in June 2016 to conduct research overseas, specifically in Russia. Steele turned to one main subsource in particular, who reached out to a subsource network in Russia and Europe in early June to collect

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[5652] (U) The FBI briefed the Gang of Eight the summary of the Steele material that was included in the ICA on the morning of January 6, 2017.

[5653] (U) Perkins Coie is a law firm that has long provided legal services for both the DNC and Clinton Campaign. Marc Elias served as the primary Perkins Coie intermediary. Brazile Tr., pp. 114, 128, 154–155.

[redacted]

[redacted]

information on Trump's past dealings in Russia. Steele first debriefed the main subsource[5654] on June 16, 2016, but he continued to gather additional information through the fall.

(U) Steele delivered his first memo to Simpson on June 24, 2016, several days after *The Washington Post* published a report describing a Russian government hack into the DNC network. By mid-December, the dossier numbered 20 memos in total, spanning a wide range of topics and including Russian attempts to gather *kompromat* on Donald Trump and Hillary Clinton, ties between the Russian government and Trump-affiliated individuals, and reactions of both the Trump team and Moscow to press reporting on the hack of the DNC.[5655] It is unclear how many of these memos Perkins Coie actually briefed to the DNC or Clinton Campaign; senior staff at the Campaign organizations did not recall much of the information in the dossier being discussed.

(U) At the beginning of July, Steele reached out to FBI Special Agent [redacted], who had been Steele's handler for earlier FBI engagements, including Steele's provision of leads for FBI's investigation into the Fédération International de Football Association (FIFA). Steele expressed concern about information he had received and sought to urgently inform FBI. On July 5, 2016, [redacted] traveled to [redacted] to meet with Steele and review his information.

(U) [redacted] considered Steele a credible source, and therefore [redacted] did not want to discount the reporting, despite its sensational nature. [redacted] worked to get Steele's first memo in the hands of the relevant division within the FBI. By the end of August, [redacted] received a point of contact in Counterintelligence Division who would receive the documents, but the Crossfire Hurricane team at FBI—responsible for investigating ties between the Trump Campaign and Russia—did not receive the documents until mid-September.

(U) In late July 2016, Steele met with another contact in the U.S. Government to communicate his concerns about Donald Trump, Russia, and the election. Steele and Bruce Ohr, then Associate Deputy Attorney General at the Department of Justice, who had known Steele in a professional capacity since 2007, met for breakfast in Washington, D.C. Steele conveyed his deep concern about Russian activities and told Ohr he had given his information to FBI.

[5654] (U) Steele refers to his sources and subsources in a variety of ways. FBI refers to Steele often as a source, dropping others in Steele's source network to subsources and sub-subsources. This report refers to Steele as an FBI "source," to Steele's "main subsource," and to other "subsources" and "sub-subsources." For more on Steele's source network, *see infra* Vol. 5, Sec. IV.B.4.i.

[5655] (U) It remains unclear to what extent the Trump Campaign's members were aware of the dossier's existence, up until the President-elect received a briefing from Intelligence Community leaders in early January, 2017, and the dossier was published shortly thereafter.

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[redacted] By early October, FBI's Crossfire Hurricane team in the Counterintelligence Division had reviewed several of Steele's memos and [redacted] related notes. As the team evaluated this information, it did not have an adequate understanding of Steele's reporting history. Steele's reputation as a productive FBI confidential human source and [redacted] led to the FBI treating the memos as credible before they were corroborated, and FBI's vetting process for Steele himself was not sufficiently rigorous or thorough.

(U) The Crossfire Hurricane team requested a face-to-face meeting with Steele, which took place on October 3, 2016. The team attempted to learn more about Steele's subsource network, but Steele was unwilling to share details. The parties walked out of that meeting with widely varying views of Steele's obligations to the FBI.

(U) Steele briefed two people at Department of State on his work on the dossier. In September, Steele showed the dossier to Jonathan Winer, another long-time contact, then serving at the Department of State as Special Envoy to Libya.[5656] Winer's background was in countering international money laundering and organized crime, and he had done occasional private sector work for, and against, Russian oligarchs. Winer knew Steele because they shared a community of interest on Russian oligarchs and organized crime. Then, in mid-October, Steele met with Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Europe and Eurasian Affairs Kathy Kavalec, conveying to her an overview of the allegations in the still-growing dossier. The Committee found that Department of State personnel granted the dossier credence in part based on Steele's past reports on Ukrainian political dynamics, which he during the past several years had shared with the Bureau of Europe and Eurasian Affairs.

[redacted] FBI submitted an application to the FISA court to surveil Carter Page. [redacted] The FISA application and renewals were approved but later became the subject of an investigation by the DOJ OIG, which found "multiple instances in which factual assertions relied upon in the first FISA application were inaccurate, incomplete, or unsupported by appropriate documentation."[5659]

[5656] (U) By 2016, Winer and Steele had known each other for nearly a decade, and the two would pass each other business leads occasionally. Winer Tr., pp. 11, 13. Winer told the Committee that he did not disclose to security officers at Department of State his ongoing relationship with Steele. Winer Tr. II, p. 25.

[5657] (U) For more information about Carter Page, *see infra* Vol. 5, Sec. III.F.

[5658] (U) The Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court approves information collection under Title 1 for a period of 90 days; then the burden is on FBI to prove that continued surveillance is necessary and fruitful. FISC Rules of Procedure, Rule 16.

[5659] (U) *DOJ OIG FISA Report*, p. viii.

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(U) Simpson and Steele briefed major media outlets during September and October on the main findings from the dossier. Simpson was not expecting the reporters to write only based on these briefings, but he wanted to prompt them to ask questions of government officials, in particular of FBI officials. At the time, Steele was generally frustrated with the FBI's perceived slowness in responding to the allegations, and [redacted] said Steele was specifically frustrated that then-Director Comey on October 28, 2016, had reopened the investigation into then-candidate Hillary Clinton's emails. That frustration prompted Simpson and Steele to renew briefings for press outlets on the allegations in the dossier and encourage them to ask questions of the FBI about whether they were investigating Donald Trump. On October 31, 2016, *Mother Jones* was the first to publish an article summarizing the contents of Steele's memos and discussing Steele's background, though not naming him. *Mother Jones* was the only organization that published the story at that time.

(U) FBI officials, shocked by the article and viewing it as a confidential human source divulging information to the press, followed normal practice and terminated the relationship with Steele. Steele, for his part, had seen no obligation to keep the dossier information confidential.

(U) After the election, still seeking to prompt U.S. Government attention on the allegations in the dossier, Steele asked his friend and occasional business associate Sir Andrew Wood[5660] to alert Senator John McCain and McCain's staffer, David Kramer, to the existence of the dossier at a conference in Halifax, Canada, in mid-November. On November 28, Kramer flew to London to meet with Steele and review the dossier. Kramer soon after received copies of the memos from Simpson and passed them to Senator McCain. Over the next month, Kramer showed the memos to journalists and other contacts in and out of government in Washington, D.C.[5661]

[redacted]

[5660] (U) Wood was the British Ambassador to Russia from 1995-2000 and also served in Russia from 1964-1966 and 1979-1982. Chathamhouse.org, "Sir Andrew Wood, Associate Fellow." Since his retirement from the British Foreign Service he has served as an independent consultant, including to a Russian investment fund called Renaissance Capital. Sophie Brodie, "Renaissance Capital hires former Moscow Ambassador," *Financial News London*, February 5, 2003.

[5661] (U) *See infra* Vol. 5, Sec. IV.B.6.

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(U) While FBI had formally ended its relationship with Steele in early November, Steele continued conversations with ADAG Ohr well into 2017. Ohr believed FBI was supportive of his interactions with Steele. By mid-November 2016, FBI began formally debriefing Ohr on his interactions with Steele, at one point asking Ohr to ask Steele to provide additional information to FBI. The DOJ OIG expressed qualms about this arrangement and found that several in the FBI considered it unorthodox.

(U) Aside from the FISA application and its renewals, the dossier information also appeared in summary form as an annex to the ICA, over some author objections. The annex noted that there was "limited corroboration" of the dossier summary information. In early December, President Obama tasked the IC with a comprehensive assessment of Russia's involvement in the 2016 election. FBI—particularly Deputy Director Andy McCabe—requested that the dossier information be included in the assessment, pointing to the President's request for comprehensiveness. CIA analysts pushed back on FBI's request, seeing the memos as uncorroborated and questioning the sourcing. All three primary author agencies eventually compromised on summarizing the allegations in an annex to the assessment. In early January, a principal-level team from ODNI, CIA, FBI, and NSA briefed a highly compartmented version of the full assessment to the President, the President-elect, and the Gang of Eight. Then-FBI Director Comey briefed Trump one-on-one on the contents of the annex.[5662]

(U) On January 10, 2017, *BuzzFeed* published the contents of the dossier, noting that the claims were unverified, and citing a *CNN* story that the IC had briefed a summary of the information to President Obama and President-Elect Trump. The next day, *The Wall Street Journal* named Steele as the author. Over the following months, several of those mentioned in the dossier's memos denied the allegations, with one, Aleksej Gubarev, a Russian technology executive, filing an unsuccessful defamation lawsuit against *BuzzFeed*.

(U) In May 2017, the SCO was established, ending FBI's attempts to corroborate information in the dossier. In the end, few allegations were definitively corroborated, and SCO said its own leads and research overtook work to verify Steele's findings.

i. (U) Obstacles to the Committee's Investigation

(U) The Committee attempted several times, over the course of three years, to interview Steele about his work, at a time and location of his choosing, with whatever security precautions he requested. Several interlocutors purported to represent Steele's interests to the Committee, including Adam Waldman, one of Russian oligarch Oleg Deripaska's attorneys[5663]; Dan Jones, a

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[5662] (U) *DOJ OIG FISA Report*, pp. 179-182. For detailed information on the assessment, *see infra* Vol. 4.

[5663] (U) Waldman Tr., pp. 175-185. Starting in approximately September 2008, Adam Waldman began representing Deripaska in the United States. Short-Form Registration Statement pursuant to the Foreign Agents Registration Act

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[redacted]

former staffer on the Committee[5664]; and Steele's attorney, Robert Weinberg. Steele repeatedly refused a meeting, but provided one tranche of written answers to Committee questions on August 16, 2018.[5665]

(U) A further restriction on the Committee's investigative efforts was the centralization of information regarding the dossier within the SCO and the SCO's decision not to share that information with the Committee. FBI had begun efforts to corroborate accusations within the dossier in the fall of 2016, an effort that progressed slowly through the winter and into the spring of 2017. When the SCO began work in May 2017, however, all those efforts ceased at FBI. After that point, the Committee has limited insights into how or whether SCO pursued the dossier at all. SCO did not share the results of any further inquiries, to the extent any were undertaken, with the Committee. Special Agent in Charge David Archey briefed the Committee in July 2019 on the SCO's investigative process and information management:

> *We [the SCO] were aware of the Steele dossier, obviously. We were aware of some of the efforts that went into its verification . . . we did not include Steele dossier reporting in the report. . . . [T]hose allegations go to the heart of things that were in our mandate—but we believed our own investigation. The information that we collected would have superseded it, and been something we would have relied on more, and that's why you see what we did in the report and not the Steele dossier in the report.*[5666]

Archey declined to provide further information on whether FBI or SCO attempted to verify information in the dossier, although he noted that the SCO did not draw on the dossier to support its conclusions.[5667]

(U) Finally, the Committee repeatedly asked the FBI for several additional pieces of information regarding its relationship with Steele and his subsource network. First, the

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of 1938, Registration No. 5934, May 8, 2009. Waldman remained registered under FARA until April 2018. Supplemental Statement pursuant to the Foreign Agents Registration Act of 1938, Registration No. 5934, May 31, 2018.

[5664] (U) Dan Jones told the Committee that "Steele did ask me to assist him in communicating with some parties." When asked who, Jones replied "The Senate Intelligence Committee. . . . At least in the case that I'm thinking of, the Senate Intelligence Committee reached out to me." Jones went on to explain that in referring to "the Committee," he meant the Minority Staff Director, with the consent of the Staff Director. Steele's attorney later told the Committee that Jones did not have the authority to speak for Steele. Jones served as a Professional Staff Member on the Committee from 2007 until 2015. SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Dan Jones, March 26, 2018, p. 27.

[5665] (U) The Committee submitted written questions to Christopher Steele in May 2018. He responded in August 2018 with 17 pages of answers. *See* Written Responses, Steele, August 16, 2018.

[5666] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with David Archey, July 15, 2019, p. 86.

[5667] (U) *Ibid.*

[redacted]

[redacted]

Committee asked FBI to provide additional information on Steele's contributions to the FIFA investigation, including whether his leads implicated Russians, in particular associates of Oleg Deripaska. An answer to this question would have helped the Committee identify separation or alignment of the interests of Steele and Deripaska. The Committee also asked FBI to update and clarify its assessment of Steele's subsource network, including its identification of a particular person as Steele's main subsource. The FBI did not answer these requests.

2. (U) Examining the Steele Dossier's Creation and Sourcing

i. (U) Background on Steele

(U) In the run up to the dossier's creation, in the spring of 2016, Steele had a reputation among his associates for providing generally dependable reporting on issues regarding Ukraine, Russia, and countries in the region. In particular, he had a reputation within the FBI for providing valuable reporting regarding the FIFA scandal[5668] and among several at the Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs at the Department of State for providing information on Ukraine that they regarded as largely credible. However, the Committee found information that calls into question the accuracy of Steele's reporting.

a. (U) Steele's professional background

[redacted] Open source information described him as serving in Moscow in the early 1990s under diplomatic cover, then running the Russia desk at BSIS headquarters.[5670] [redacted]

(U) David Kramer conveyed the following on Steele's credentials:

Based on what Sir Andrew told me and then based on my direct interaction with Steele, he's someone who had extensive background in the Russia area itself, had served there for a few years back in the nineties, then left and set up his own

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[5668] (U) In May 2015, the U.S. indicted 14 current and former FIFA officials and associates on corruption charges, following an FBI investigation. *See* "FIFA Corruption Crisis: Key Questions Answered," *BBC*, December 21, 2015.

[5669] [redacted]

[5670] (U) Jane Mayer, "Christopher Steele, the Man Behind the Trump dossier," *The New Yorker*, March 5, 2018.

[5671] [redacted] McCabe Tr., pp. 77–79. [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

consulting company. And from what I gather, it seemed like he had impressive credentials; and we seemed in sync in terms of our analysis or interpretation of what was happening in Russia.[5672]

[redacted] Steele [redacted][5673] and founded Orbis Business Intelligence (Orbis).

(U) No witnesses claimed Steele had any orientation toward a U.S. political party. Winer, speaking as a long-time acquaintance of Steele's, said, "He's not political in partisan terms. It's not what he is about, in my opinion, at all. If he has any politics, it's about Putin, as in knowing what he is and not liking what he's done domestically and internationally."[5674] Kramer said "[Steele] felt that the relationship between the UK and the United States was unique; he valued it more than anything, and he felt that, as America's closest ally, that he had an obligation to bring [the dossier memos] to the attention of the right people and for it to be taken seriously."[5675]

[redacted] The Committee notes that Steele made an assertion during his debriefings with FBI and to the DOJ OIG about his relationship with [redacted]

(U) Steele told the DOJ OIG that he was "'favorably disposed' toward the Trump family before he began his research because he had visited a Trump family member at Trump Tower and 'been friendly' with [the family member] for some years. He described their relationship as 'personal' and said that he once gifted a family tartan from Scotland to the family member."[5677] The Committee did not obtain further information about Steele's claim of a friendship with [redacted].

[5672] **(U)** Kramer Tr., pp. 7–8. Wood told *The Guardian* in January 2017 that he believed Steele was a "very competent professional operator," and "I do not think he would make things up. I don't think he would necessarily always draw the correct judgment but that's not the same thing at all." Luke Harding and Alice Ross, "Sir Andrew Wood, former UK-Moscow ambassador, consulted on Trump dossier," *The Guardian*, January 13, 2017.

[5673] [redacted]

[5674] **(U)** SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Jonathan Winer, July 10, 2017, p. 38.

[5675] **(U)** Kramer Tr., p. 29.

[5676] [redacted]

[5677] **(U)** *DOJ OIG FISA Report*, pp. 96–97 (brackets in original). The report did not specify which family member. The Committee notes Steele is likely referring, again, to [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

b. (U) Work with FBI

[redacted] Steele's relationship with FBI began in the spring of 2010, when Bruce Ohr, who was then responsible for the transnational organized crime program for DOJ, introduced [redacted] to Steele.[5678] At that meeting, [redacted] sought to determine whether Steele or his firm had information that might be useful to FBI.[5679]

> *He was as he described a Russian expert, had worked over there for a number of years. That was his wheelhouse . . . he had a source network, a sub-source network, still active, which was his means of obtaining information. I did not at that time ask to determine who these [sub]sources were or what they did. But based on Bruce's recommendation, based on my conversation with him, and recognizing him as a professional, I assumed that the source network was for real, was solid.*[5680]

(U) [redacted] described two elements of Steele's motivation for working with FBI:

> *He had two motivations at the time when we first met to try and engage with us. One was he had this type of information regarding high-level Russian criminal activity, but* [redacted] *the law enforcement services within London were not interested in it.*[5681] *So he viewed us, the FBI, as a place where this information could rest, where possibly we could do something with it.*[5682]

(U) According to [redacted] Steele's other motivation was financial.[5683] [redacted] said the total amount Steele was paid over the course of his work with FBI, unrelated to the dossier, was between $95,000 and $96,000.[5684]

(U) Steele's relationship with FBI started slowly and picked up significantly with collaboration around the FIFA investigation. [redacted] indicated that, at the beginning of the relationship between Steele and the FBI, in the 2010 timeframe, Steele would send an occasional report on "an oligarch or some kind of an activity that was going on." FBI was not paying him

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[5678] (U) [redacted] Tr., p. 6.
[5679] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 8.
[5680] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 8–9.
[5681] (U) [redacted] later explained that, while he does not know why British authorities were not interested, he surmises it was because "at the time England . . . was in a restructuring of their law enforcement and intelligence services. They had a serious resource issue." *Ibid.*, p. 12.
[5682] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 8.
[5683] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 9.
[5684] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 24.

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for these reports.[5685] The relationship deepened surrounding the FIFA investigation in 2011.[5686] [redacted] told the DOJ OIG that "minimally corroborated"—the description used in the FBI's Human Source Vetting Report on Steele—was consistent with his understanding of the entire collection of Steele's reporting to the FBI.[5687]

(U) [redacted] said that FBI officially named Steele as a Confidential Human Source in October 2013, in part because FBI wanted to compensate Steele for his assistance with the FIFA investigation. There was never a contract or a regular payment, although the formality of the relationship between the FBI and Steele was a subject of disagreement between the two parties.[5688] [redacted] told the Committee that FBI agents instructed Steele he was not allowed to disclose his work with the FBI.[5689] [redacted] said FBI looked for any derogatory information about Steele and his business in their databases, advised the [redacted] of the arrangement, and told Steele's former [redacted][5690] None of those steps resulted in concerning information. Steele became a confidential human source (CHS) for the FBI in 2013 and remained one until November 2016.[5691]

3. (U) The Dossier's Origins

i. (U) Before Steele's Dossier: Simpson's Preliminary Opposition Research into Trump

(U) The dossier, and Steele's activities, were entirely constructed under the umbrella of a contract with the DNC and Clinton Campaign, but Fusion GPS's opposition research into Donald Trump began months earlier, during the Republican primaries. In the fall of 2015, Fusion GPS signed a contract with Paul Singer and the *Washington Free Beacon,* in which Fusion GPS would conduct research on Trump's business dealings.[5692] While he began the research project generally neutral on Trump, Simpson said:

> *I didn't know anything about Trump in the beginning and had no opinion of him. . . . Over the course of whatever it was, six or seven months, I did develop—I made some judgments about this person and his character and integrity, and I felt by*

[5685] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 13.
[5686] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 15.
[5687] (U) *DOJ OIG FISA Report*, p. 266.
[5688] (U) [redacted] Tr., p. 23; *see also DOJ OIG FISA Report*, p. 92.
[5689] (U) [redacted] Tr., p. 25.
[5690] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 33.
[5691] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 24.
[5692] (U) Fusion GPS invoice, October 20, 2015 (WFB_SSCI_0000004); Simpson Tr., pp. 15–16.

[redacted]

[redacted]

the spring that he was not suitable to be the President of the United States and that he did not have those kind of qualifications or character.[5693]

(U) Simpson said as the primaries progressed, work for the *Washington Free Beacon* "sort of trailed off."[5694] Simpson stated, "I just remember it becoming increasingly obvious that Donald Trump was going to be the nominee, and it became increasingly obvious to me that Republicans opposed to Donald Trump would have no need for my services soon."[5695] However, Simpson had six months of research done, and he found the subject interesting. He said:

At that point, this other opportunity came along to continue to look at these issues. And I was also, of course, intellectually interested in continuing the work. And so we took on a new client. But our old client and our new client basically had the same interest and the same concerns.[5696]

ii. (U) DNC and Clinton Campaign Seek Opposition Research on Trump

(U) Fusion GPS approached their eventual new clients to offer research on Trump.[5697] In their recent book, *Crime in Progress,* Simpson and Fritsch report that the morning of March 1, 2016, "knowing a Trump nomination was now all but inevitable" and that the *Washington Free Beacon* clients would likely end their contract with Fusion GPS, Fritsch sent an email to a senior figure in the Democratic Party establishment. The subject line was "Trump," and the email read "Ok he has to be stopped. We have done the most on him." The contact immediately responded "Yes. Let's talk."[5698] While Simpson says he "wasn't a big fan of the Clintons," there was soon "unanimity" on "the need to do what they could to keep Trump out of the White House."[5699]

(U) Elias, the primary interlocutor between Perkins Coie and the Clinton Campaign, represented to the Committee that he believes he hired Fusion GPS in March or April of 2016

[5693] (U) Simpson Tr., pp. 50–51.
[5694] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 42–43.
[5695] (U) *Ibid.*
[5696] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 51.
[5697] (U) *Crime in Progress*, p. 54. Simpson would not answer whether Perkins Coie had been a client before and said he could not remember clearly who had reached out to whom first about Trump research. Simpson Tr., p. 56. However, in their book, Simpson and Fritch clearly state they offered their services to Perkins Coie. *Crime in Progress*, pp. 55–57. Fritsch and Simpson published this book two years after Simpson's interview with the Committee. Given Simpson's unwillingness to share many details during that interview, the Committee cites this book to fill in gaps, much as the Committee cites press reporting, in full awareness that neither is considered testimony or bound by laws regarding lying to Congress. The Committee cites the book not to confirm the veracity of the information, but to point out Simpson's purported view of the situation and the discrepancy between Simpson's willingness to share information with Congress and the detail included in the book.
[5698] (U) *Crime in Progress*, p. 54.
[5699] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 55; Simpson Tr., p. 51.

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after Fusion GPS reached out to partners at Perkins Coie, but said at the time there was no Russia focus to the information provided.[5700] Simpson and Fritsch said in their book they sat down with Elias on April 20 to discuss the business arrangement. Elias told the two of them that the Clinton Campaign wanted to understand how Trump had managed to recover from a string of bankruptcies that should have ruined him: "Where did his money come from, how much did he really have, and who helped him?"[5701]

(U) Simpson understood the ultimate client for the research to be the DNC and the Clinton Campaign.[5702] However, for the purpose of the contract, Perkins Coie was the signatory. Simpson said the contract was a "general services agreement." The contract is between "LC," which is the corporate name of Fusion GPS, and Perkins Coie.[5703] The two parties likely finalized the contract sometime in May 2016.[5704] Elias told Fusion GPS to report only to him, so Fusion GPS's communications could be solely with a lawyer and thus covered by attorney-client privilege, where the clients, in this case, were the DNC and the Clinton Campaign.[5705]

iii. (U) DNC and Clinton Campaign Leadership Awareness of the Contract

(U) Leadership at the DNC and Clinton Campaign were unaware—or at most marginally aware—that Perkins Coie had hired Fusion GPS. John Podesta, the Chairman of the Clinton Campaign, told the Committee that he had no reason to believe that anyone on the Clinton Campaign had any contact with Steele or Fusion GPS.[5706] He said "I have no first-hand knowledge about that." When the Committee asked if Podesta had second-hand knowledge of Fusion GPS's work with Steele or work on the dossier, Podesta said:

> *I never saw a document that looks anything like the dossier. We were getting information coming in. Some of it was coming in from press inquiries. I don't know how they got that information. So there's a kind of web of connection that may have been fed by some of the stories that have been most sensational that are now associated with the dossier or circulating in the press. Where those came from, whether they originated with Fusion or other places, I don't know.*[5707]

[5700] **(U)** Attorney Proffer, Elias, May 21, 2018.
[5701] **(U)** *Crime in Progress*, p. 57.
[5702] **(U)** Simpson Tr., p. 58.
[5703] **(U)** *Ibid.*, p. 60.
[5704] **(U)** *Crime in Progress*, p. 59.
[5705] **(U)** *Ibid.*, p. 55.
[5706] **(U)** SSCI Transcript of the First Interview with John Podesta, September 18, 2017, p. 42. The Committee notes that Elias was representing Podesta at the interview. Elias did not raise his role hiring Fusion GPS or his direct knowledge of these matters. Podesta also acknowledged that he knew Glenn Simpson while the latter was working at *The Wall Street Journal*. *Ibid.*, p. 42.
[5707] **(U)** *Ibid.*, p.44.

[redacted]

[redacted]

Podesta later said that, in his role as Campaign Chair, he would not necessarily have known whether the Clinton Campaign contracted with Fusion GPS.[5708] DNC and Clinton Campaign officials seemed to not know where the information was originating. Podesta told the Committee that "I didn't know who Chris Steele was until after the election. And . . . I was unaware of the contents of [the dossier] until *BuzzFeed*, obviously, published it."[5709] He also told the Committee that he had "no knowledge of who paid [Simpson] to contract with Steele."[5710]

(U) Donna Brazile, who served as the Interim Chair of the DNC from late July 2016 until February of 2017, said that she was unaware of Steele's activities. On November 4, 2016, she received press inquiries asking if she knew "MI-6 was on our payroll."[5711] Brazile sent a text message to Elias, because she knew "the lawyers always sign off on contracts."[5712] According to Brazile, Elias called her and said "You don't need to know." Brazile told the Committee: "And you know what? I let it go."[5713] Brazile further told the Committee that she was not aware during her time as Interim Chair that any funding was used for opposition research.[5714] She also made clear that if she had known about Steele's work, she would have passed it to FBI.[5715]

(U) Elias, the main interlocutor for Perkins Coie to the Clinton Campaign, represented to the Committee through counsel that he had independent authority to authorize expenditures on research. He had consulted with Clinton Campaign Manager Robby Mook about outside hires but only at a "high level." Elias did not share the identity of the person or entity retained.[5716] While he was authorized to sign off on sub-vendors for Fusion GPS, Elias did not recall being told about Steele or Orbis, and he was unaware that Steele was providing non-public information gathered by human sources.[5717] Elias then became aware of Steele in June or July 2016, although the context of that awareness is unclear.[5718]

(U) Steele in his written responses to the Committee said that he became aware of Perkins Coie in August and met Elias in September.[5719] [redacted] remembered Steele saying that he

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[5708] (U) *Ibid.*, p.47.
[5709] (U) *Ibid.*, p.41.
[5710] (U) *Ibid.*, p.43.
[5711] (U) Brazile Tr., p. 124.
[5712] (U) Brazile told the Committee that her text to Elias said "MI-6 on our payroll? Need to know." *Ibid.*, p. 126.
[5713] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 127. For more on "I let it go," *see ibid.*, p. 134.
[5714] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 137, 140.
[5715] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 147.
[5716] (U) Attorney Proffer, Elias, May 21, 2018.
[5717] (U) *Ibid.*
[5718] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 3.
[5719] (U) Written Responses, Steele, August 16, 2018.

[redacted]

[redacted]

was working for a law firm—name unspecified—when they met in early July.[5720] Steele told the DOJ OIG that by late July 2016, he had met with Simpson and "an attorney" from Perkins Coie.[5721]

(U) Simpson implied in his interview with the Committee—but would not state outright—that Perkins Coie knew he had hired a subcontractor, along with pursuing other overseas lines of inquiry.[5722] In his book, Simpson said that Elias "had never even heard of Steele. While Elias was aware that Fusion had engaged someone outside the United States to gather information on Trump's ties to Russia, he did not ask who it was or what the person's credentials were."[5723]

(U) Elias represented that the charges associated with Fusion GPS were around $60,000 per month, unevenly split between the Clinton Campaign and the DNC, including the $10,000 per-month fee paid to Perkins Coie.[5724]

(U) The Committee was unable to fully establish how much of the Steele information was actually transferred to the DNC and the Clinton Campaign. As a general practice, Fusion GPS passed research back to Elias weekly, sending both original source materials and summary documents.[5725] Simpson would not say whether or when he gave the memos to Perkins Coie.[5726] Elias, through counsel, did not provide details on what information he provided to the DNC or the Clinton Campaign, citing attorney-client privilege. His attorneys conveyed that he provided "advice on communications strategies and the information from Fusion when warranted. Such information was infrequent, provided orally, and given to both the Clinton Campaign and the DNC."[5727]

(U) Robby Mook told the Committee that counsel starting in the summer had briefed him, Podesta, Clinton Campaign Communications Director Jen Palmieri, Jake Sullivan, and Glenn Caplan (a communications staffer) on "pieces of the reporting" in the dossier.[5728] The briefings were oral, generally, but Mook remembered one paper memo that counsel distributed then retrieved at the end of the meeting.[5729] Palmieri told the Committee she never saw the dossier during the campaign, but she also recalled the Elias briefings: "I don't recall the term

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[5720] (U) [redacted] Tr., p. 38.
[5721] (U) *DOJ OIG FISA Report*, p. 96.
[5722] (U) Simpson Tr., p. 100.
[5723] (U) *Crime in Progress*, p. 80.
[5724] (U) Attorney Proffer, Elias, May 21, 2018.
[5725] (U) *Ibid.*
[5726] (U) Simpson Tr., p. 114.
[5727] (U) Attorney Proffer, Elias, May 21, 2018.
[5728] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Robby Mook, January 26, 2018, p. 27.
[5729] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 28–29.

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'dossier' being used. He had reports. Some of the things . . . that I know are in the dossier. Some of the things that I have read are in the dossier I had heard about from Marc, including the famous encounter at the hotel."[5730] Congresswoman Debbie Wasserman Schultz told the Committee she had no awareness of the dossier, Steele, or Simpson, until the dossier and those names appeared in the press.[5731]

(U) The Committee also asked Mook whether he found the briefings by Elias to be alarming enough to warrant sharing the information with law enforcement. Mook said "No, I don't recall ever feeling like we had sufficient evidence to go to law enforcement with anything."[5732]

(U) Simpson told the Committee that the research contract with Perkins Coie was generally open-ended, as most of his contracts are. He said that Fusion GPS does not let clients define the research; rather, Fusion GPS demands the flexibility to pursue whatever research they wish.[5733] Further, Simpson said he often has some freedom to use the information he collects in ways separate from the contract. Simpson said the report belongs to the client, but the information is public, and Simpson indicated he could do as he wanted with it.[5734]

(U) For this project, Fusion GPS pursued several lines of inquiry: outsourcing of Trump brand products, taxes, overseas projects, bankruptcies, casino issues, and associations with organized crime.[5735] During their initial meeting, Simpson and Fritsch briefed Elias on Trump links to Russia. They said, "This angle was all new to Elias, and he loved it."[5736] Simpson said it was Fusion GPS's idea to pursue overseas ties:

> *We weren't pursuing ties between the Russian government and the Trump campaign. . . . We were interested in Donald Trump's business trips to Russia, much as we were interested in his other trips elsewhere. . . . It was just kind of my general assumption that he couldn't get a deal done over there because of all the corruption, and that there might be some [Foreign Corrupt Practices Act] issues*

[5730] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Jennifer Palmieri, February 9, 2018, pp. 37–38.
[5731] (U) Wasserman Schultz Tr., pp. 54–55.
[5732] (U) Mook Tr., p. 48.
[5733] (U) Simpson Tr., p. 18.
[5734] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 19–20. Simpson told the Committee that it is rare he works with a presidential campaign, generally because his services are expensive. "Every few years, if the market is there we'll do a presidential campaign. Generally speaking, our price structure prices us out of the campaigns and elections market except for in presidential years." *Ibid.*, pp. 8-9.
[5735] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 58.
[5736] (U) *Crime in Progress*, pp. 58–59.

[redacted]

[redacted]

that were lurking in all of this. So that's kind of the way I ended up retaining Chris Steele.[5737]

iv. (U) Fusion GPS Contract with Steele

(U) Simpson hired Steele in May or June of 2016.[5738] Simpson told the Committee that "By the time we got to June, or actually probably May, and I realized I was going to have resources to explore some of these issues further. . . . I realized that we were getting close to exhausting the open source. . . . So I decided that it was time for some human intelligence."[5739]

(U) Through networking, Fusion GPS often hired experts from around the globe on specific topic areas.[5740] Simpson said, "A big part of our work is in fact talent spotting and finding people who are reliable. It's something that journalists develop a skill and experience in doing. The term 'reliable sources' is out there for a reason. So it's one of those habits that you develop in a lifetime of journalism, figuring out who's telling you the truth and who's reliable."[5741] Simpson assessed that Steele was among the best at research inside Russia.[5742] Simpson recalled that he met Steele after they were introduced by a mutual friend, possibly Alex Yearsley, in approximately 2009. Simpson recalled that he and Steele we were "in touch intermittently over a period of I guess six or seven years."[5743]

(U) [redacted] told the Committee "There are other people who do the same thing Chris does. Why Simpson went to him and not somebody else, I have absolutely no idea."[5744] Simpson hired Orbis—as opposed to a US-based firm, for example—because they had worked together successfully in the past and he was impressed with the work, according to David Kramer.[5745] Kramer also thought Simpson and Steele had worked together on the FIFA investigation.[5746] To the best of Simpson's recollection, he had not hired Steele before on Russia issues.[5747]

[5737] (U) Simpson Tr., pp. 64–65.
[5738] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 42.
[5739] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 98.
[5740] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 10.
[5741] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 11–12.
[5742] (U) Simpson Tr., p. 92; Kramer Tr., p. 10. Winer thought perhaps he had introduced Simpson and Steele, but he was not sure. Winer Tr., p. 67. Simpson and Steele met in the spring or summer of 2009. Simpson Tr., pp. 78–79. ("It was a pretty casual relationship for a long time. He would come to Washington and look me up and we would talk about oligarchs and kleptocrats and Putin, and I would do the same when I was in London. We tried to help each other develop business, corporate clients, the usual thing. Over time we did give each other subcontracts.")
[5743] (U) Simpson Tr., pp. 68–69, 78.
[5744] (U) [redacted] Tr., p. 71.
[5745] (U) Kramer Tr., p. 10.
[5746] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 22.
[5747] (U) Simpson Tr., p. 115.

[redacted]

[redacted]

(U) [redacted] told the Committee that his understanding of the tasking from Simpson to Steele was "Find out about Donald Trump's business ties in Russia." The Committee saw no indication that information Steele gleaned about Clinton was also part of the tasking.[5748] The initial contract between Fusion GPS and Orbis was for one month. Fusion GPS paid a flat rate; Simpson remembered between $20,000 and $30,000 per month. Fusion GPS ultimately paid Orbis about $160,000, according to Simpson and documents provided to the Committee.[5749]

(U) Fusion GPS's work for Perkins Coie ended on Election Day.[5750] Steele's final memorandum was completed on December 13, 2016. No one paid for it.[5751]

v. (U) Steele Creates the Reports that Become the Dossier

[redacted] In early June 2016, under the contract with Fusion GPS, Steele reached out to his existing subsource network and a small number of new subsources for any information on Donald Trump's business interests.[5752] [redacted] On June 20, he issued the first of the dossier memos.

(U) Several witnesses conveyed that Steele was deeply disturbed by the reports. Judging from the testimony of Simpson, [redacted] and Winer, Steele interpreted the information he received as *kompromat* on Trump—a way for Moscow to influence, or even blackmail, a presidential candidate. Simpson recalled that Steele immediately expressed concern that the information reflected a "major security problem; this is a national security issue for [the United States]."[5754] Steele said he was obligated to report the perceived *kompromat* to some authority.[5755] Simpson did not object, but also did not advocate for it. He deferred to Steele's judgment.[5756] Simpson said he was not sure who he would tell, even if they were obligated to report it:

[5748] (U) [redacted] Tr., p. 73.
[5749] (U) Simpson Tr., pp. 157–159; Bean LLC, statement of account August 2016 (CLMSSCI000012); Bean LLC, statement of account October 2016 (CLMSSCI000017); Bean LLC, statement of account November 2016 (CLMSSCI000021); Bean LLC, statement of account January 2017 (CLMSSCI000025). Fusion GPS's production to the Committee shows $162,139.84 paid to Orbis, including a payment in January 2017 for $53,970. Simpson did not know the reason for the January payment, but speculated it was closing out the account. Simpson Tr., p. 159.
[5750] (U) Simpson Tr., p. 155.
[5751] (U) Written Responses, Steele, August 16, 2018; *see also* Simpson Tr., pp. 155-156.
[5752] (U) Written Responses, Steele, August 16, 2018; *see also* Simpson Tr., p. 70.
[5753] [redacted]
[5754] (U) Simpson Tr., p. 113.
[5755] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 116.
[5756] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 117.

[redacted]

[redacted]

I'm working for a political campaign and there are rules at the Justice Department about getting involved in political campaigns, and it's a stupid thing to do to try to sort of get a law enforcement investigation of the other side. It's just dumb.[5757]

(U) Simpson was unspecific with the Committee about his client's awareness of Steele's interactions with FBI on this issue. He said, "I can tell you that I did not ask my client whether we could [report it], and my client didn't direct me to do this. At the time it was done, my client was not aware it was being done."[5758] Simpson in his book said that he and his business partner decided not to tell Elias that Steele was sharing information with the FBI.[5759] Elias represented to the Committee through his attorneys that he did not authorize or direct Fusion GPS to provide any information to any U.S. law enforcement or intelligence organizations.[5760]

(U) Simpson told the Committee that the first memorandum was couriered hard copy to Fusion GPS's Washington, D.C. offices, sometime near June 20.[5761] Simpson read the information in the context of the Russian hack of DNC systems,[5762] which had been published in *The Washington Post* on June 14.[5763] He described his initial reaction to the first Steele report:

It wasn't like I was at that point harboring some suspicion that there was some connection between the Russian government and the Trump campaign. To the contrary. We weren't looking for information about sexual activities and we weren't looking for Kremlin KGB conspiracies. . . .

I guess a lot of other people would have thrown it in the trash maybe because it seemed like it was too crazy to believe. But I had worked with Chris for a long time and I had exposure to Russian influence operations from covering that at the Journal. So I didn't throw it in the trash, and I was concerned at that point it

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[5757] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 117.
[5758] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 119.
[5759] (U) *Crime in Progress*, p. 80.
[5760] (U) Attorney Proffer, Elias, May 21, 2018.
[5761] (U) Simpson Tr., p. 112. In his book, however, Simpson wrote that Steele did not want to send the package via email, and a human courier was "expensive and time consuming and carried its own risks. So Steele called FedEx." The package did not show up on June 23, when it was due to arrive, because two FedEx delivery attempts failed. Simpson finally received the report on or around June 24. *Crime in Progress*, p. 75.
[5762] (U) *Crime in Progress*, p. 75. It is unclear whether Simpson knew about the hack of the DNC servers before *The Washington Post* article: "The moment was already fraught. Not long before, Fusion had learned that the Democratic National Committee's computer systems had been thoroughly breached by Russian hackers in March 2016, a fact later reported by the Washington Post on June 14, 2016."
[5763] (U) Ellen Nakashima, "Russian government hackers penetrated DNC, stole opposition research on Trump," *The Washington Post*, June 14, 2016.

[redacted]

[redacted]

might be true. And my client had just been hacked and told by the FBI that it was the Russian government.[5764]

4. (U) Examining the Dossier's Sources and Tradecraft

(U) Steele defined his subsources in two categories: first, "confidential service providers or external 'associates' of Orbis BI and tasked and debriefed by us directly." The Committee assesses that the main subsource is one of these "associates." The FBI refers to the same person or group of people as "agent handler." The second category are people "who typically have direct access to the intelligence, are tasked and debriefed by [an associate] and who are typically unaware of Orbis BI or the identity of the ultimate client and are not paid for information."[5765] The Committee refers to this category as sub-subsources. Steele told the FBI on October 3, 2016:

[redacted]

Steele said his associates, who the Committee refers to as subsources, met their sub-subsources face-to-face, and also said that some sub-subsources transmitted information to the subsources by "encrypted electronic communications systems," but "such exchanges . . . were restricted as a rule to interactions outside Russia and the CIS." Some subsources, or associates, were paid on a fixed monthly retainer, others were not, and "none were financially incentivized to obtain any particular information." According to Steele, his sub-subsources were not paid and were not aware that their information was being passed to Orbis or Fusion GPS.[5767]

(U) [redacted] placed Steele's subsource network generally in the larger picture of Russian organized crime and government:

The Russian and Eurasian environment in terms of criminal activity, you have true organized crime members, the guys with the gulag tattoos. You have businessmen, some of the wealthiest businessmen in the world... You have politicians. And from over there, it's all like this [indicating intertwining]... So if he's got a source network that is tapped into whatever level or strata that I just

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[5764] (U) Simpson Tr., pp. 65–67.
[5765] (U) Written Responses, Steele, August 16, 2018.
[5766] [redacted]
[5767] (U) Written Responses, Steele, August 16, 2018.

[redacted]

[redacted]

described over there, it's going to touch –and it did—different aspects of that realm.[5768]

i. (U) Questions on the Credibility of Steele's Source Network

a. (U) Steele's Confidence in His Source Network and Product

(U) Steele repeatedly expressed confidence in his subsources to a number of Committee witnesses while withholding the subsources' identities, in line with the practice of professional intelligence services. Steele further told the Committee in his written responses to questions that "We judged *all* of our [sub-subsources] were 'credible.'"[5769] [redacted] said:

> *He had confidence in his sources and his source network. [These allegations were] so outlandish, and I told him, I said: you've got to be kidding me. People are going to look at me when I send this back like: Get out of here. He had complete confidence in his sources is what I can say.*[5770]

(U) Simpson said he was less concerned about who the sub-subsources were than their credibility and access to the information. "At the end level it's: Who's this person closest to in Moscow? Does he work in Sechin's office? Is she sleeping with so-and-so? . . . you want to know is that person in a position to know what they're saying."[5771] Simpson also emphasized his concern that a leak of a subsource's or sub-subsource's identity could be fatal.

(U) David Kramer said that, regarding the dossier, "I think he felt quite confident overall about it. I do think that there were some pieces in there he felt that were on firmer ground than others." Kramer cited the entry in the dossier about an alleged Michael Cohen trip to Prague as one example: "it could have been in Prague, it could have been outside of Prague. He also thought there was a possibility it could have been in Budapest. . . [but Steele] never backed off the idea that Cohen was in Europe."[5772]

(U) On one of the central allegations in the intelligence collected by Steele, that Russia had compromising information on then-candidate Trump, Kramer also conveyed Steele's level of confidence: "I had the impression that he was fairly confident about it. Did he think it was ironclad? I didn't have that impression. He did tell me that he had also heard that there was

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[5768] (U) [redacted] Tr., pp. 11-12.
[5769] (U) Written Responses, Steele, August 16, 2018. Emphasis is Steele's.
[5770] (U) [redacted] Tr., p. 89.
[5771] (U) Simpson Tr., p. 103.
[5772] (U) Kramer Tr., p. 31.

[redacted]

[redacted]

video of a second hotel scene, from St. Petersburg, that was not put in the memos. But I don't know the level of confidence he had in that."[5773]

(U) Simpson drew from his own experience as a journalist to qualify the support for the memos, stating the memos did not meet journalistic standards for publication:

> *What I would liken it to in a journalistic category is my notes. You go out and you do a bunch of interviews and you talk to ten people . . . and like I said, seven of them seem to be telling the truth, but have trouble getting the facts straight, and then there's three liars . . . if it was a finished Wall Street Journal story, we would delete the crackpots and the people who just can't keep track of whatever, and [Steele] may have done some of that. But it wasn't the kind of finished report you would give a client in ordinary circumstances.*[5774]

(U) When the Committee asked if he had ever attempted to independently verify Steele's work, Simpson said "I guess I'd put it in a kind of negative context, which is I never had an occasion where his work proved to not be reliable."[5775] Simpson continued:

> *When we got these memos, we would do all kinds of public record work and things in my office to figure out whether what people were telling Chris was plausible and credible. Does this person really exist? Was he in this place at the time that he said that they were?*[5776]

That research produced nothing conclusively contradictory. According to Simpson: "Nothing that I have seen disproves anything in the dossier. Which isn't to say I think it's all true. I don't think Chris thinks it's all true, either. But there's a difference between things being fake or a hoax or a fraud or a lie and things being incorrect."[5777]

b. (U) Limited Insight into Subsources' Identity and Access

[5773] **(U)** *Ibid.*, pp. 34–35.
[5774] **(U)** Simpson Tr., pp. 106–107. Simpson later said the British style of intelligence collection is more journalistic. For example, he said, "When I write a newspaper article for the Washington Post about the plane crash, I put ten people in who saw the plane crash and some people say the left engine was on fire, and other say it was the right . . . I'm a journalist, so I don't have to figure out who is right." *Ibid.*, p. 110.
[5775] **(U)** *Ibid.*, p. 93.
[5776] **(U)** *Ibid.*, p. 96.
[5777] **(U)** *Ibid.*, p. 171.

[redacted]

[redacted]

(U) Most recipients of Steele's memos had very little information on the quality of the subsource network and took Steele at his word that they were credible.[5778] Simpson, for example, did not know the identities of Steele's subsource network. He said, "Chris is very guarded about this stuff. So I don't have any names."[5779] [redacted] said he never talked to Steele about how he vetted his source network. "From the criminal side, we weren't concerned about the identities of his [sub]sources. From the counterintelligence side, that's the first thing they need to know: who are the sources? Who's that chain? . . . For [Criminal Division] it's more about the lead information."[5780] [redacted] further said that at that time FBI did not know where Steele was getting his information, nor did it know specifics on how or whether Steele paid his subsources or how the subsource network transmitted the information to Steele.[5781] [redacted] also did not know whether Steele knew the identities of all those in his subsource network.[5782] Throughout their relationship, Ohr had never had specifics about Steele's subsource network and did not ask, but said the reporting generally seemed good and credible.[5783] Ohr told the Committee, "[Steele's reports] seemed to be information that was coming from a person who was knowledgeable about the situations that they were describing."[5784]

(U) One of the people who knew the most about Steele's subsource network is David Kramer, from a conversation he had with Steele in the latter's dining room in late November, 2016. Kramer said, "I was shown a list [redacted][5785] and [redacted] He verified to the Committee that those people would have had appropriate access to provide the information.[5788] Steele had confidence his sub-subsources were good: "I think he felt they were diverse enough and senior enough to have known various elements of what he had been told. So I think he felt that it lent credibility to what he was reporting."[5789]

[5778] (U) One clear lesson from the U.S. Intelligence Community's experience in lead up to the 2003 Iraq war was that intelligence analysts and consumers of intelligence need to know key details about a source, such as their access to the information, reporting history, and motivation for providing information, if not their identity. *See* SSCI, "Report of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence on the U.S. Intelligence Community's Prewar Intelligence Assessments on Iraq," July 9, 2004, p. 26.
[5779] (U) Simpson Tr., pp. 100–102.
[5780] (U) [redacted] Tr., p. 45.
[5781] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 18–19.
[5782] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 20.
[5783] (U) B. Ohr Tr., p. 24.
[5784] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 28.
[5785] (U) Kramer Tr., pp. 14, 26.
[5786] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 18
[5787] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 26–27.
[5788] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 39.
[5789] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 17.

[redacted]

[redacted]

(U) Kramer told the Committee that Steele knew the identities of his sub-subsources but, "He was not in a position to be in touch directly with these individuals. It was through an intermediary."[5790] According to the DOJ OIG: "Steele did not have good insight into how many degrees of separation existed between the Primary Sub-source's sub sources and the persons quoted in the reporting, and that it could have been multiple layers of hearsay upon hearsay."[5791] Kramer did not know the name of that main subsource.[5792] Kramer further said that the intermediary, or main subsource was "somebody [Steele] had full confidence in and had worked with before."[5793] Kramer did not pass on to anyone—including the FBI or the Committee—the names of the subsources or sub-subsources.[5794]

(U) Steele conveyed very little to the Committee on how he vetted his sources. He wrote that he had known his main subsources for a number of years and that "all came to us recommended by professional contacts who knew them and whose judgement we had reason to trust." Steele wrote that the main subsources had a "good track record," reporting on Russia issues using their subsource networks before the dossier project began. Steele also told the Committee that "validation was based on an assessment of their access and motivation and especially on their previous reporting track record. Reporting was assessed in terms of its consistency with intelligence obtained from other" public and non-public sources.[5795] The generality of these responses made them difficult for the Committee to evaluate, but the Committee found some information that called into question the rigor and thoroughness of this process.

[redacted]

(U) Steele's written responses to the Committee's questions did not include much information on the access of his subsource network. He wrote that none of the main subsources were new, however, he used a small number of new sub-subsources for this project. He said that

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[5790] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 15-16.
[5791] (U) *DOJ OIG FISA Report*, p. 190.
[5792] (U) Kramer Tr., p. 16.
[5793] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 17; A clear lesson from the 2003 Iraq War experience was that depending too heavily on one or two sources can create the possibility for misinformation to become accepted as fact.
[5794] (U) Kramer Tr., pp. 19–20.
[5795] (U) Written Responses, Steele, August 16, 2018.
[5796] [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

most subsources were "established, with solid reporting track records on other sensitive Russia/CIS issues."[5797]

[redacted] The person FBI identified as the main subsource presented a less rigorous representation than did Steele, telling the FBI that "he/she did not view his/her contacts as a network of sources, but rather as friends with whom he/she has conversations about current events and government relations."[5798] [redacted]

[redacted] The Committee has limited information on the geographical distribution of the subsource network. While Simpson told the Committee he did not know the identities of the people in the network, he knew some were "Russians who don't live in Russia but talk to people in Russia and can go there." Others were "people who live in Russia and have connections to the Government."[5800] Steele described the geographic arrangement as follows: "Most of the work, though not all, was conducted in Europe where the majority of our [sub-subsources] were based."[5801] [redacted]

[redacted] By FBI's estimation, about half of the information in the dossier came from or through this person.[5803] [redacted]

ii. (U) Parsing the Dossier's Subsources

[5797] (U) Written Responses, Steele, August 16, 2018. For U.S. intelligence, "established" is a term of art that reflects a record of reliable reporting. Steele's written responses suggest that he used the term in generally the same way.
[5798] (U) *DOJ OIG FISA Report*, p. 188, fn. 334.
[5799] (U) SSCI Memorandum, "FBI Briefing on Steele 'Dossier' Sourcing," February 15, 2018.
[5800] (U) Simpson Tr., pp. 102–103.
[5801] (U) Written Responses, Steele, August 16, 2018.
[5802] (U) SSCI Memorandum, "FBI Briefing on Steele 'Dossier' Sourcing," February 15, 2018. The Committee notes that Priestap was so concerned about protecting the identity of the source that he would not allow his briefing to be transcribed.
[5803] (U) *Ibid.*
[5804] (U) *Ibid.*
[5805] (U) *See infra* Vol. 5, Sec. VII.

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted] Despite limited direct information from Steele and the main subsource, the Committee endeavored to determine the access and credibility of Steele's subsource network. Staff drew from FBI's debriefs of Steele [redacted], the subsource descriptions in the dossier, Simpson's book, the notes of Department of State officials, the findings of the DOJ OIG,[5806] [redacted], to compare descriptions of sources.

(U) Western intelligence services have established as standard practice the importance of communicating clearly to a reader any uncertainty about a source's access to information. Intelligence collectors convey some context about the identity and access of the original source, so analysts and consumers can make an informed evaluation of the credibility of the information. Instead of following this best practice, Steele's descriptions are inconsistent and not completely transparent about the steps through which the information passed from the origin to Steele, making it difficult for the reader to discern how close Steele was to the information. Some of this lack of clarity may have been intentional, for source protection purposes, but it makes it extremely difficult to evaluate the credibility of Steele's information. For example:

- [redacted] Report 80, the first of the dossier memos, completed on June 20, 2016, cites a "former top level Russian intelligence officer." [redacted] This is distant access, meaning that there were several people between Steele and the source of his information.[5808] Without knowing more about the relationship between [redacted] an intelligence analyst would not use this kind of information without corroboration, because the credibility of such distant reporting is difficult to assess.

[redacted]

[5806] (U) The Committee notes that the DOJ OIG included in its report a long discussion of source descriptions and Steele's problematic blending of analysis and reported assertions of fact. *Ibid.*, p. 189–193.

[5807] [redacted]

[5808] [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted] Further, that named sub-subsource, who provided the information about the Page-Sechin meeting, had connections to Russian intelligence [redacted] These source descriptions give an unclear picture of whether this was one source or several, and it is not clear whether the FBI, Steele, and Steele's main subsource were in agreement about who the named sub-subsource was.

- **(U)** Steele describes a set of sub-subsources in his reports that have similar—yet slightly different—descriptions. It is difficult to determine if this is a single stream of reporting or many different sub-subsources supporting each other's information. Understanding this is critically important for evaluating the credibility of a body of reporting.

[redacted] Separately, Steele also cites a "senior Kremlin official,"[5812] a "Kremlin insider,"[5813] and a "senior member of the PA"[5814] regarding meetings between Carter Page and Divyekin, along with other subjects. Some of the reporting coming from these sub-subsources matches the reporting [redacted] a different description than all those above.[5815]

[redacted]

[5810] **(U)** *DOJ OIG FISA Report*, p. 189–190, footnote 339.
[5811] [redacted]
[5812] **(U)** Steele Dossier, "Company Intelligence Report 2016/080," June 20, 2016; Steele Dossier, "Company Intelligence Report 2016/101," August 10, 2016.
[5813] **(U)** Steele Dossier, "Company Intelligence Report 2016/134," Ocotber 18, 2016; Steele Dossier, "Company Intelligence Report 2016/135," October 19, 2016.
[5814] **(U)** Steele Dossier, "Company Intelligence Report 2016/111," September 14, 2016.
[5815] **(U)** SSCI Memorandum, "FBI Briefing on Steele 'Dossier' Sourcing," February 15, 2018.

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

(U) The DOJ OIG report stated that another of Steele's subsources, in discussions with the FBI in August 2017, said that his/her reports in the dossier had been "exaggerated" and that he/she "did not recognize anything as originating specifically from him/her." The main source, on the other hand, said that this subsource was "one of the key sources" for the dossier, in particular allegations about Michael Cohen and Prague and the same meetings between Page and Divyekin, discussed directly above.[5817] The Inspector General report further says that the subsource may have been attempting to minimize his/her role.

[redacted]

- [redacted] In the first of Steele's reports, Source D describes events at the Ritz Carlton Moscow and is described as "a close associate of Trump who had organized and managed his recent tips to Moscow." [redacted] The Committee has no

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[5816] (U) *DOJ OIG FISA Report*, p. 246.

[5817] [redacted] revealed in early June 2017, among other things, personal and business ties between the sub-source and Steele's main Sub-source; contacts between the sub-source and an individual in the Russian Presidential Administration in June/July 2016; [redacted] and the subsource voicing strong support for candidate Clinton in the 2016 U.S. elections.").

[5818] (U) The Committee saw no credible information that [redacted] had a role with the Trump Campaign. [redacted] The Committee assesses the RACC is almost certainly not a legitimate organization.

[5819] (U) SSCI Memorandum, "FBI Briefing on Steele 'Dossier' Sourcing," February 15, 2018.

[redacted]

[redacted]

reason to believe [redacted] would have insight into the alleged activity at the Ritz through his ties with the Trump Campaign.

[redacted]

- (U) The main subsource told FBI that a staff member at the Ritz Carlton said there were "stories concerning Trump's alleged sexual activities, not that the activities themselves had been confirmed by the staff member as stated in Report 80," according to the DOJ OIG.[5821]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[5820] (U) *Ibid.*
[5821] (U) *DOJ OIG FISA Report*, p. 190, footnote 341.
[5822] [redacted]
[5823] (U) *DOJ OIG FISA Report*, p. 193, footnote 345 ("The Primary Sub-source told WFO Agent 1 that he/she found a YouTube video of the sub-source speaking and that it sounded like the person on the telephone call.").
[5824] (U) SSCI Memorandum, "FBI Briefing on Steele 'Dossier' Sourcing," February 15, 2018. Carter Page told the Committee that he never met Paul Manafort. Page Tr., p. 214.

[redacted]

[redacted]

(U) Regarding Millian's self-described access to Trump Campaign officials, Millian had limited interactions with at least two people connected to the Trump Campaign during 2016, and Rick Gates, former Deputy Campaign Chairman, told the FBI that Millian appeared on a special access list for the Trump Campaign. The Campaign had a "Friends and Family" list for people attending campaign events. Each of the Trump children would submit names to the list, as would close friends and staff of immediate family members. Rhona Graff—Trump's trusted, long-time assistant—was the keeper of the list. Gates had no insight into who might have added Millian but said Cohen would have had the opportunity to add Millian to the list.[5825]

(U) The earliest contact the Committee is aware of between Millian and the Campaign is an email on March 15, 2016, when Millian emailed Michael Cohen at his Trump Organization address and offered to serve on the Trump Campaign's foreign policy team.[5826] Cohen appears to have dismissed the request.[5827] Millian and Cohen had a brief exchange on September 5, 2016, when Millian re-introduced himself as a Trump supporter and forwarded questions from journalists about Millian's role with the Trump Organization.[5828] Cohen told the Committee that he "just responded to kind of be kind."[5829] Millian responded a week later, on September 13, 2016, saying thank you, then following with: "I'm friends with Greek American George Papadopoulos, who says he is now your official compaign [sic] advisor on foreign policy from Ben Carson group. He asks questions about you. Do you know George?"[5830] The Committee has no evidence that Cohen responded or furthered the relationship. In his second interview, Cohen told the Committee that Millian also proposed that Cohen bring Trump to a function in Switzerland, but that Cohen dismissed him completely. Cohen said, "I believed he was a complete con artist and I just wasn't in the mood to deal with him."[5831] Cohen told the

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[5825] (U) FBI, FD-302, Gates 11/7/2018.

[5826] (U) Email, Millian to Cohen, March 15, 2016 (MDC-S-000261). ("Please feel free to incorporate me in the Russian direction as you know I have an insider level knowledge on what is happening in Russia after 10 years of hosting Russian ministers, governors, businessman and public leaders. Now, I'm a US citizen after my name having been cleared by national security and FBI.") Millian included a link to a Fox News interview he did.

[5827] (U) Cohen, in his first interview with the Committee, said he recalled Millian also reaching out via phone around the same time as this email. His reaction was "wow, this guy is off the wall. . . . I was completely disinterested in what he had to say." Cohen Tr. I, p. 287. The Committee has no indication that Cohen responded to this inquiry. Millian, from his RACC email account, also invited Michael Cohen to an event on March 23, 2016. Cohen told the Committee he did not attend, and never signed up for the RACC's mailing list. *See* Cohen Tr. I, p. 289; Cohen Tr. II, p. 323. Email, Millian to Cohen, March 23, 2016 (MDC-S-000258).

[5828] (U) Millian wrote, "Just wanted to bring it to your attention. This unexpected and unwelcome pressure only makes me a stronger supporter of your cause. . . ." Email, Millian to Cohen, September 5, 2016 (DJTFP00018153). Cohen responded the same day, in entirety: "They are just I to [sic] negative reporting on trump and everyone connected to him. I believe you gave them enough and if they, and I'm sure they will, want more, ignore him." Email, Cohen to Millian, September 5, 2016 (DJTFP00018152).

[5829] (U) Cohen Tr. I, p. 292.

[5830] (U) Email, Millian to Cohen, September 13, 2016 (DJTFP00018152).

[5831] (U) Cohen Tr. II, p. 320.

[redacted]

[redacted]

Committee that he never met Millian[5832] and that the Trump Organization had no relationship with Millian.[5833]

(U) Millian and Papadopoulos exchanged several emails and met at least once. Documents the Committee obtained indicate email exchanges through the summer and into the fall. Millian was scheduled to pick Papadopoulos up at the airport in New York in September 2016,[5834] and Papadopoulos told the FBI the two discussed business opportunities in November, 2016.[5835]

(U) The Committee notes that much about Sergei Millian resembles activities by a Russian intelligence officer or cooptee. In attempting to interview Millian, the Committee found that his organization, the RACC, has several listed addresses but no apparent actual offices. Millian also has four names—Sergei Millian, Sergio Millian, Sergey Kukuts, and Sarhei Kukuts. Further, Millian publicly professed his non-involvement in the 2016 campaign, then departed the United States for China.[5836]

[redacted]

The DOJ OIG found a document circulated among the Crossfire Hurricane team in early October 2016, which indicated that "Person 1," who the Committee assesses to be [redacted] had historical contact with persons and entities suspected of being linked to Russian Intelligence Services. The

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[5832] **(U)** Cohen Tr., p. 286; Cohen Tr. II, p. 319.
[5833] **(U)** Cohen Tr., p. 292.
[5834] **(U)** Email, Papadopoulos to Epshteyn, September 12, 2016 (B&P GP File 2018 000603–608).
[5835] **(U)** FBI, FD-302, Papadopoulos 9/19/2017. For more on the relationship between the two, *see infra* Vol. 5, Sec. III.E.
[5836] [redacted] SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Andrei Shperling, May 11, 2018, pp. 20, 91, 102; [redacted]
[5837] [redacted] *Ibid.*, p. 41. [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

document further described reporting from [redacted]"[5838]

(U) The Committee was unable to fully establish the role [redacted] played, if any, in Russia's attempts to interfere with the 2016 election.

iii. (U) Counterintelligence Concerns

(U) Disinformation is a constant concern in the intelligence profession, particularly for those, like Steele, who work against targets well-known for sowing doubt. Collecting usable intelligence from human sources necessitates skepticism and diligent effort to corroborate the information. Steele would have been aware that human sources can vary in their credibility, and one source can be credible on one subject and not on a similar subject. Steele wrote to the Committee that he saw "no reason to believe" that his subsources or sub-subsources were seeking to "influence rather than inform."[5839] According to Simpson, Steele was acutely aware of that possibility:

> *When Chris talks about his work in Russia, the first thing he says is: I've been doing Russia all my life professionally, and one of the central problems of my profession is disinformation. It's something that we get trained on originally and that we deal with for our entire careers. So I am trained to spot disinformation, and you should know that any time you gather information in Russia some of it may be disinformation. And I'm not telling you that there's not disinformation in this material. What I'm telling you is I'm trained to spot it and if I saw it it's not there.*[5840]

(U) Kramer was also aware of Steele's concern there could be possible disinformation in the dossier:

> *[Steele] said that he did his best to try to factor that into what he was putting together, but felt that there was not a deliberate dis-or mis-information campaign that was launched. And if the sources, the names on that list I saw, were in fact the sources, it strikes me as difficult to believe that they would have come together to have a disinformation campaign. Can it be ruled out completely? No. Can there be parts in there that are true and other parts that are deliberately false?*

[5838] (U) *DOJ OIG FISA Report*, p. 166, footnote 302.
[5839] (U) Written Responses, Steele, August 16, 2018. "Influence rather than inform" is an intelligence professional's term of art. An asset handler will say the information may be intended to influence rather than inform if s/he is concerned the asset has a particular agenda and wants the target government to see things a certain way.
[5840] (U) Simpson Tr., p. 107–108.

[redacted]

[redacted]

That's possible. But I think he did—I think he and his intermediary did their best to try to factor that in and account for it to the best they could.[5841]

(U) James Baker, former FBI General Counsel, summed up the environment this way:

This is how it operates. The organized crime. The overlay between the organized crime, the oligarchs, the government, the intelligence services. It's all like one big giant mess. And so, given that... how do you sort through that when you are trying to do a legitimate investigation and then figure out what's the truth. And so you are extremely skeptical of anything that anybody is telling you.[5842]

(U) Dr. Fiona Hill, a Russia expert who served on both the National Intelligence Council as National Intelligence Officer for Russia and Eurasia and on the NSC as Senior Director for European and Russian Affairs, discussed the possibility of Moscow inserting disinformation in the dossier in her deposition in the House: "it's very likely that the Russians planted disinformation in and among other information that may have been truthful, because that's exactly, again, the way they operate." She went on to say that:

And this is why I was concerned about the Steele report because that is a vulnerability. Christopher Steele going out and looking for information. He's obviously out there soliciting information. What a great opportunity to, basically, you know, present him with information that he's looking for that can be couched with some truth and some disinformation.[5843]

(U) There was ample opportunity for Steele's source network to be coopted by Russian security services, which would have allowed the service to shape the information that was eventually included in the dossier.

[redacted]

[5841] **(U)** Kramer Tr., p. 36. Kramer further clarified that he thinks these sources would not have had a natural way to coordinate their information. *Ibid.*, p. 37.
[5842] **(U)** SSCI Transcript of the Interview with James Baker, October 2, 2018, p. 139.
[5843] **(U)** Deposition of Dr. Fiona Hill, in front of the HPSCI, joint with the Committee on Oversight and Reform and the Committee on Foreign Affairs, U.S. House of Representatives, October 14, 2019, p. 179 and pp. 390–391
[5844] [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted] the DOJ OIG said that "In late January 2017, a member of the Crossfire Hurricane team received information [redacted] that [Russian Intelligence Services] may have targeted Orbis and research (sic) all publicly available information about it."[5846]

[redacted]

[redacted] Winer, who had received many non-dossier Russia and Ukraine-related reports from Steele, said Steele was "concerned about his sources. He was concerned about protecting his sources. He didn't want them [the Russian intelligence services] deconstructing his network." Winer told the Committee that in an effort to reduce risk the Orbis header was removed from any reports that Steele sent the Department of State and documents were "password protected." [redacted]

[redacted]

[5845] (U) *Ibid.*
[5846] (U) *DOJ OIG FISA Report*, p. 191, footnote 342.
[5847] (U) Richard Norton-Taylor, "MI6: The nightmare scenario as a rogue agent goes public," *The Guardian*, May 13, 1999. According to the article, "Britain's secret intelligence service, MI6, was thrown into unprecedented disarray last night when a renegade former officer published the names of over 100 agents—some said to be false—on the internet."; *see also* Jane Mayer, "Christopher Steele, the Man Behind the Trump dossier," *The New* Yorker, March 5, 2018.
[5848] (U) Winer Tr., pp. 23-25. Winer's interactions with Steele are covered more comprehensively later in this section.

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

5849 [redacted] *DOJ OIG FISA Report*, p. 191, footnote 342. [redacted]

5851 (U) DOJ, Office of the Inspector General, "A Review of Various Actions by the Federal Bureau of Investigation and Department of Justice in Advance of the 2016 Election, Appendix One," June 2018, p. 2.

5852 [redacted] *Ibid.*, p. 1. [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted] Finally, the U.S. Government has [redacted] reports on the potential for Russian disinformation influencing Steele's election reporting [redacted] First, a January 12, 2017, report describes [redacted] assessing that a subset of Steele's reporting regarding Michael Cohen was part of a Russian disinformation campaign. Second, a report from February 27, 2017, is from:

> *an individual with reported connections to Trump and Russia who claimed that the public reporting about the details of Trump's sexual activities in Moscow during a trip in 2013 were false, and that they were the product of RIS "infiltrat[ing] a source into the network" of a* [redacted] *who compiled a dossier of information on Trump's activities. The* [redacted] *noted that it had no information indicating that the individual had special access to RIS activities or information.*[5854]

[redacted] The Committee was able to gain additional specifics about both reports. [redacted]

iv. (U) Multiple Links Between Steele and Deripaska

(U) The Committee found multiple links between Steele and Deripaska, including through two of Deripaska's lawyers, and indications that Deripaska had early knowledge of Steele's work. Steele had worked for Deripaska, likely beginning at least in 2012, and continued

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[redacted]

[5854] [redacted] *DOJ OIG FISA Report*, p. 197, fn. 350. The OIG's portrayal of the reports above is not complete, and may not contain contradictory or other contextual information from the reports. [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

to work for him into 2017, providing a potential direct channel for Russian influence on the dossier.[5856]

(U) A February 2016 email strongly suggests Deripaska's awareness of Steele's work, generally. Steele wrote to Ohr on February 21, 2016[5857]:

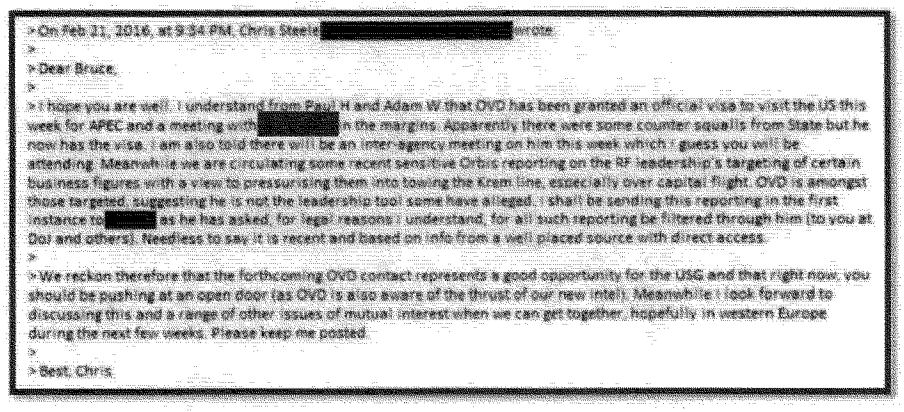
[5856] (U) Several other people who appear in this section also have ties to Deripaska. Simpson told the Committee he had written stories about Deripaska for *The Wall Street Journal*. Simpson Tr., pp. 147, 181. Simpson also said that "I believe that I have reached out to his companies and employees on numerous occasions when I was a journalist. And beyond that, I don't think I've knowingly had any contact with his organization." *Ibid.*, p. 88. However, David Kramer said that Simpson had once worked for Deripaska. He said: "Actually, I know Simpson had....just that he had been hired to do some work for Deripaska in the past. I will tell you that caused me a little consternation." Kramer Tr., p. 12. The Committee was not able to rectify this discrepancy. Jonathan Winer, a decade-long professional contact of Steele's, also worked for Deripaska, but Winer told the Committee in his first interview that he never met Deripaska in person and has not been in touch with him for 15 years. In a second interview, Winer clarified that Deripaska hired Alston & Bird, specifically Senator Bob Dole, in 2003, to help with an immigration issue. Winer, in his capacity as an attorney at Alston & Bird, provided assistance to Senator Dole. Winer cited attorney-client privilege in declining to provide details on his work for Deripaska, but he did give a general example: "For example, if someone, anyone, wanted to travel to the United States and couldn't travel to the United States, I could tell somebody, these are the kinds of things you might have to do if you want to be able to come to the United States, and they're real; they're not bogus. It's not a matter of doing it half-heartedly, and these are the consequences, positive and negative. That's the kind of thing that someone like me might tell an oligarch." Winer Tr., pp. 23, 88–89; SSCI Transcript of the Second Interview with Jonathan Winer, April 18, 2018, p. 4. Winer also said that Bill Browder was one of his clients. Winer, Tr., p.11. For more, *see infra* Vol. 5, Sec. III.C.6. Deripaska retained the law firm Alston & Bird from 2003 until approximately 2009. Lobbying Registration pursuant to the Lobbying Disclosure Act of 1995, Alston & Bird LLP, November 14, 2003; Lobbying Report pursuant to the Lobbying Disclosure Act of 1995, Alston & Bird LLP, October 20, 2009. Deripaska has over time retained a number of individuals to assist him in obtaining visas to the United States, with inconsistent success. The Committee has limited insight into the network of attorneys and firms retained by Deripaska, but it has included Bryan Cave in the U.S. and the U.K. and the Endeavor Law Firm. Other individuals who have not registered, such as [redacted] have similarly sought to work with Deripaska in the United States, potentially on similar issues. Waldman Tr., pp. 261-262.

[5857] (U) Email, Steele to B. Ohr, February 21, 2016 (HPSCI (3-23-18)-DOJ-000004). This email suggests that Steele planned to share the Orbis report with the United States Government, initially through [redacted], his primary contact and handling agent. The Committee notes that neither Steele (through counsel), Ohr, [redacted] FBI, nor the Department of Justice have been able to locate that report or produce it to the Committee.

[redacted]

[redacted]

COMMITTEE SENSITIVE – RUSSIA INVESTIGATION ONLY



> On Feb 21, 2016, at 9:34 PM, Chris Steele [redacted] wrote:
>
> Dear Bruce,
>
> I hope you are well. I understand from Paul H and Adam W that OVD has been granted an official visa to visit the US this week for APEC and a meeting with [redacted] in the margins. Apparently there were some counter squalls from State but he now has the visa. I am also told there will be an inter-agency meeting on him this week which I guess you will be attending. Meanwhile we are circulating some recent sensitive Orbis reporting on the RF leadership's targeting of certain business figures with a view to pressurising them into toeing the Krem line, especially over capital flight. OVD is amongst those targeted, suggesting he is not the leadership tool some have alleged. I shall be sending this reporting in the first instance to [redacted] as he has asked, for legal reasons I understand, for all such reporting be filtered through him (to you at DoJ and others). Needless to say it is recent and based on info from a well placed source with direct access.
>
> We reckon therefore that the forthcoming OVD contact represents a good opportunity for the USG and that right now, you should be pushing at an open door (as OVD is also aware of the thrust of our new intel). Meanwhile I look forward to discussing this and a range of other issues of mutual interest when we can get together, hopefully in western Europe during the next few weeks. Please keep me posted.
>
> Best, Chris

(U) The Committee has no further information on what Steele meant by "OVD is also aware" of his work.

(U) The Committee found ample evidence to dispute Steele's assessment that Deripaska is "not the leadership tool some have alleged." Rather, Deripaska is a key implementer of Russian influence operations around the globe.[5858]

(U) Multiple witnesses, to include Simpson, Ohr, and Waldman, either told the Committee or implied to the Committee that Steele had a business relationship with Deripaska. One recognized link between the two men was a pair of lawyers: Deripaska's London-based attorney, Paul Hauser, and Waldman, Deripaska's D.C.-based attorney.

- (U) Ohr was aware that Steele had a business relationship with Deripaska.[5859] Ohr told the Committee that Steele mentioned Hauser at breakfast in the context of "information that could make out some kind of a criminal case against Paul Manafort."[5860]
- [redacted] Further, in two sets of Ohr's handwritten notes provided to the Committee, Ohr references links between Steele and Deripaska. In one set of notes titled "Chris" that are undated, Ohr writes "Paul Hauser and OD [Deripaska] almost ready to talk w/ us re $

[5858] (U) For more information on the relationship between Deripaska and Putin, *see infra* Vol. 5, Sec. III.A.8.i.
[5859] (U) B. Ohr Tr., pp. 37, 41–44, 148, 152.
[5860] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 44, 146.

[redacted]

COMMITTEE SENSITIVE – RUSSIA INVESTIGATION ONLY

[redacted]

Manafort stole."[5861] The rest of the first set of notes include information that appears in the dossier memos. In the second set of notes titled "PARTIAL CHRON," Ohr appears to list his interactions with Steele from 2007 through October 2016. In that list, he includes this notation: "9/30/2015 Met OD & Paul Hauser NY."[5862] It is unclear why he associates that meeting with Steele.

- (U) While Steele never confirmed for Simpson that he had worked for Deripaska, Simpson told the Committee that the possibility had occurred to him. When asked, and on advice from counsel, Simpson refused to give details on why he thought the two might have worked together in the past.[5863]

- (U) As of February 2017, Steele was working for Hauser and for a German client, Bilfinger, likely separately.[5864]

(U) Steele also had links to Waldman. Steele in his written responses to the Committee referred to Waldman as "a former friend and professional associate I met in London when working for a law firm on legal casework."[5865] Waldman told the Committee that he met Steele while working jointly on an unnamed client possibly between 2012 and 2016, though Waldman did not employ Steele. The Committee assesses the unnamed client was probably Deripaska. Waldman said that Steele's project in this effort was business intelligence related to "his relationship with members of the U.S. Government."[5866] More recent ties include the following:

[5861] (U) Ohr, handwritten notes (HPSCI (3-23-18)-DOJ-000036). Deripaska appears to be engaged in these efforts while simultaneously working cooperatively with Manafort to counter the public revelation involving Russia's interference in the 2016 U.S. elections. *See infra* Vol. 5, Sec. III.A.7.

[5862] (U) Ohr, handwritten notes (HPSCI (3-23-18)-DOJ-000037).

[5863] (U) Simpson Tr., pp. 85–86, 88–90. Simpson, in response to the question "Were you ever aware that [Steele] had in fact done work for Mr. Deripaska?" said "I don't believe he's ever told me that," then later, when pressed, "I don't—he's never specifically told me that. There was work—it became—the possibility had occurred to me, put it that way... Because when we were doing [a] report on Paul Manafort we found this lawsuit, we found this liquidation proceeding." Simpson remembered the proceeding as related to business dealings between Manafort and Deripaska. "It wasn't a Deripaska matter, it was a Manafort matter, this liquidation proceeding. ...[I]n the course of researching this, the question of who was trying to collect the debt became a question." Simpson, on advice of counsel, refused to answer any more questions. Counsel cited a confidentiality agreement between Fusion GPS and Orbis Intelligence.

[5864] (U) B. Ohr Tr., p. 152. Ohr told the Committee that his recollection was Steele working for Paul Hauser and simultaneously for a German Engineering company called Bilfinger. It was unclear if the two were related. In a text between Ohr and Steele on March 16, 2017, Steele provided the name of the DOJ official "responsible for overseeing the FCPA/DPA applied to Bilfinger, our non-paying German engineering company client." Text message, Steele to Ohr, March 16, 2017 (HPSCI (3-23-18) DOJ-000026). *Also see* Committee Memorandum from December 18, 2017, summarizing FBI, FD-302, B. Ohr 2/14/2017.

[5865] (U) Written Responses, Steele, August 16, 2018.

[5866] (U) Waldman Tr., pp. 189–194. As of the date of the interview, November 3, 2017, Waldman said he still represented the unnamed client.

[redacted]

[redacted]

- **(U)** On January 12, 2016, Steele in an email to Bruce Ohr said, "I heard from Adam WALDMAN yesterday that OD [Deripaska] is applying for another official US visa ice [sic] APEC business at the end of Feb."[5867] On February 8 and 21, Steele followed up, writing Ohr that Deripaska had been granted an official visa.[5868]

- **(U)** In January or early February of 2017, Steele discussed Waldman with Simpson. Simpson paraphrased the conversation between the two:

> *[Steele said,] "Well, [Waldman] knows [Senator] Mark Warner and he says that he can talk to Warner and the Committee about telling them what we know." So I just said: "Okay, fine, whatever." At the time I was encouraging him to meet with the Committees, but particularly the Senate Committee, because we assumed it was going to be a more substantive and bipartisan investigation.*[5869]

- **(U)** Steele in February 2017 asked Waldman to represent him, pro bono, working to establish a conversation with the Committee, but in the spring of 2017, Steele told Waldman he had hired a new lawyer. Waldman said the two had not spoken since.[5870]

[redacted] The DOJ OIG reported that "sensitive reporting from June 2017 indicated that a [person affiliated] to Russian Oligarch 1 was [possibly aware] of Steele's election investigation as of early July 2016,"[5871] and later that "an early June 2017 USIC report indicated that two persons affiliated with RIS were aware of Steele's election investigation in early July 2016."[5872] [redacted]

[5867] **(U)** Email, Steele to B. Ohr, January 12, 2016 (HPSCI (3-23-18)-DOJ-000001).
[5868] **(U)** Email, Steele to B. Ohr, February 8, 2016 (HPSCI (3-23-18)-DOJ-000002); Email, Steele to B. Ohr, February 21, 2016 (HPSCI (3-23-18)-DOJ-000004A).
[5869] **(U)** Simpson Tr., p. 186-187. *See also infra* Vol. 5, Sec. III.A.7.
[5870] **(U)** Waldman Tr., pp. 180, 197–199.
[5871] **(U)** *DOJ OIG FISA Report*, p. 93, fn. 211.
[5872] **(U)** *DOJ OIG FISA Report*, p. 191, fn. 342.
[5873] **(U)** The Committee found that Kilimnik is a Russian intelligence officer. *See infra infra* Vol. 5, Sec. III.A.8.ii.
[5874] [redacted]
[5875] **(U)** *Ibid.*

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

- (U) Sam Patten, a political consultant who had worked in Ukraine and a former business partner to Kilimnik, said, "When [the dossier] was in the news [Kilimnik and I] talked about it, that Konstantin saw it as proof of a cooked story being pushed around."[5879]

[redacted] The DOJ OIG also highlighted Steele's contacts with representatives of Russian oligarchs. [redacted] The OIG reported that "a 2015 report concerning oligarchs written by the FBI's Transnational Organized Crime Intelligence Unit (TOCIU) noted that, from January through May 2015, 10 Eurasian oligarchs sought meetings with the FBI, and five of these had their intermediaries contact Steele." That report noted such activity was unusual and recommended a validation review of Steele.[5882]

(U) Steele was adamant with the DOJ OIG that "Russian Oligarch 1" had no influence on the dossier and that Oligarch 1 had no contact with any of Steele's sources. Steele said he

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[5876] (U) *Ibid.*
[5877] (U) McCabe Tr., pp. 85–86.
[5878] (U) *DOJ OIG FISA Report*, p. 191, fn. 342.
[5879] (U) Patten Tr., pp. 152–153.
[5880] (U) *DOJ OIG FISA Report*, p. 92.
[5881] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 93.
[5882] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 92-93.

[redacted]

worked for the oligarch's attorney and that he had met the oligarch one time. He also said he had no information indicating the oligarch knew of his investigation.[5883] Steele declined to answer the Committee's direct questions on whether he worked for Deripaska, but he said no client would have known about the dossier or provided input, other than Fusion GPS.[5884]

v. (U) A Possible Omission in the Dossier

(U) Steele and his subsources appear to have neglected to include or missed in its entirety Paul Manafort's business relationship with Deripaska, which provided Deripaska leverage over Manafort and a possible route of influence into the Trump Campaign.

(U) Steele mentions Paul Manafort by name roughly 20 times in the dossier, always in the context of his work in Ukraine; and, in particular, Manafort's work on behalf of then-Ukrainian President Victor Yanukovych. Deripaska, who had a long-standing business relationship with Manafort, is not mentioned once. Neither is Kilimnik, Manafort's right-hand man in Kyiv, who himself has extensive ties to Deripaska.[5885] Despite Steele's expertise on Ukraine and Russia, particularly on oligarchs, the dossier memos are silent on the issue.

(U) Steele, however, had worked for Deripaska—through Deripaska's attorneys—on matters related to a past business dispute between Deripaska and Manafort. In October 2016, Steele told the FBI that he had previously been retained to work on a litigation matter concerning debts allegedly owed by Manafort.[5886] Deripaska's attorneys had retained Steele to work on a Manafort tasking, prior to Steele's Trump-related work with Fusion GPS.[5887] At the time, Manafort was engaged in a dispute with Deripaska related to an investment that had failed more than six years earlier and that had resulted in a distancing of the relationship between Manafort and Deripaska.[5888]

(U) Additionally, despite not including the topic in his memos, Steele verbally briefed his concern about the Deripaska-Manafort relationship and the leverage that existed, along with other topics, to a DOJ official who he hoped would pursue the issue with FBI.[5889]

[5883] [redacted]

[5884] (U) Written Responses, Steele, August 16, 2018.

[5885] (U) For more on Kilimnik, *see infra* Vol. 5, Sec. III.A.

[5886] [redacted]

[5887] (U) DOJ OIG, Briefing to SSCI, December 2019.

[5888] (U) *See infra* Vol. 5, Sec. III.A.4.ii.

[5889] (U) B. Ohr Tr., p. 37.

[redacted]

[redacted]

(U) In his book with Fritsch, Simpson revealed that Fusion GPS was also involved in this endeavor. Simpson writes that:

> *Weeks before Trump tapped Manafort to run his campaign, Christopher Steele had hired Fusion for help investigating Manafort. The matter had nothing to do with politics and was a typical commercial assignment. Orbis had recently been queried by an American law firm about finding Manafort's assets. The firm's unidentified client claimed that Manafort owed him millions of dollars.*[5890]

The Committee notes that Simpson did not tell the Committee about this business arrangement.[5891]

vi. (U) A Confluence of Events: Natalia Veselnitskaya and the June 9, 2016 Meeting

(U) Glenn Simpson and Fusion GPS had, since 2014, worked with Natalya Veselnitskaya, a Russian lawyer with ties to the Russian government, Russian intelligence, and Aras Agalarov. The Committee found no evidence that Veselnitskaya used her ties with Fusion GPS to influence the contents of the dossier. Nevertheless, the Committee sought to understand the significance of Veselnitskaya's relationship with Simpson because of the timing of their interactions, and because Veselnitskaya and Simpson both appear as key players in other events related to the 2016 election.[5892]

[5890] **(U)** *Crime in Progress*, pp. 50–51. Simpson later says that he and his partner debated whether the situation presented a possible conflict of interests, given that they were also investigating Manafort for the DNC, but they decided there was no conflict "since the parties were not adverse to each other."

[5891] **(U)** The Committee sought to understand the reasons for apparent omissions in the dossier and several explanations are possible. One explanation is that Steele was compartmenting his work between clients. Steele's claimed business practice was to not use information from one client's project on another. This asserted business practice, however, is partially refuted by the above mentioned October 2016 FBI interview, where Steele presented some information as stemming from his past work related to the project targeting Manafort. *DOJ OIG FISA Report*, p. 112. Another explanation is that Steele was self-censoring his findings, in an attempt to protect his own business relationship with Deripaska. Alternatively, Deripaska or his associates could have requested that Steele shape the content of the dossier. Finally, Steele could have judged that the information on Manafort and Deripaska was somehow unreliable or irrelevant; this seems unlikely, however, given that Steele had recently done extensive work on Manafort on behalf of Deripaska's attorneys. Steele would have known that Manafort's debts and ties to Ukrainian political figures could—and eventually did—prove a problem for the Trump Campaign and an entry point for Deripaska to attempt to exert influence.

[5892] **(U)** For more on Veselnitskaya's links with Russian officials, *see infra* Vol. 5, Sec. III.C.

[redacted]

[redacted]

(U) Fusion GPS, specifically Simpson, conducted research for Veselnitskaya related to Bill Browder, Prevezon, and the Magnitsky Act.[5893] Veselnitskaya worked with a U.S. law firm, BakerHostetler, who hired Fusion GPS in early 2015 to conduct that research.[5894] Simpson told the Committee that:

> *[BakerHostetler] is an old client of mine, very respectable lawyers, and they have their ethical obligations to know who their clients are, and I relied on that. And Natalya was represented to me as the lawyer for the client. So her identity was not actually something that I was terribly curious about . . . she was just the lawyer who hired my lawyers.*[5895]

(U) On June 9, 2016, Simpson went to New York City to attend a hearing on BakerHostetler's role in the Prevezon case. Veselnitskaya was there to represent Prevezon. Later that day, Veselnitskaya attended a meeting with several associates in Trump Tower with representatives of the Trump Campaign and Trump Organization.[5896] Simpson told the Committee that he had no knowledge of the meeting before it occurred and was unaware that Veselnitskaya had any meeting related to the Trump Campaign planned.[5897] Soon after the meeting, Veselnitskaya attended a dinner organized by one of the BakerHostetler lawyers in Washington D.C. with Simpson, Rinat Akhmetshin, who also attended the Trump Tower meeting, and others. Simpson recalled to the Committee that while he may have briefly interacted with Veselnitskaya, he did not recall having any substantive conversation with her and stated that he remained unaware of the existence of the June 9, 2016 meeting in Trump Tower until 2017, when the meeting became public.[5898]

(U) Although Simpson told the Committee he was unaware Veselnitskaya planned to meet with Trump Campaign staff and family members in June 2016, he had supplied at least some of the research she presented to the June 9, 2016 meeting—the purported "dirt" on Hillary Clinton's donors. Veselnitskaya told the Committee that "The first person who ever told us

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[5893] (U) Bill Browder is the founder and CEO of Hermitage Capital Management and was the largest foreign investor in Russia until 2005. According his profile in *Time*, "Since 2009, when his lawyer, Sergei Magnitsky, died in prison after uncovering a $230 million fraud committeed by Russian government officials, Browder has been leading a campaign to expose Russia's endemic corruption and human rights abuses." *See* Bill Browder, "I'm Bill Browder. Here's the biggest mistake Putin made when trying to get access to me through Trump," *Time*, July 16, 2018.

[5894] (U) Simpson Tr., p. 195. Fusion GPS was retained by the law firm BakerHostetler to assist its client—Russian oligarch Denis Katsyv—in the Prevezon case [(U.S. v. Prevezon Holdings, Ltd., et al., No. 13 Civ. 6326)].

[5895] (U) Simpson Tr., p. 195.

[5896] (U) For More on the Agalarovs, *see infra* Vol. 5, Sec. III.C.

[5897] (U) Simpson Tr., pp. 166–167.

[5898] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 166–167, 201; Transcript of the Interview of Glenn Simpson, HPSCI, November 14, 2017, p. 118. "And I found out about it...within a day of it being disclosed in the New York Times. Someone called me and said 'you heard about this meeting? And I said no."

[redacted]

[redacted]

about the involvement or existence of Ziff Brothers[5899] was Mr. Glenn Simpson. The first report that I obtained from him was dated December 2014. That was the very report . . . that Ziff Brothers was one of the DNC sponsors."[5900] She went on to say that "I have his reports in the number of hundreds of pages."[5901] Simpson, however, thought the Ziff brothers research was mostly useless, and was puzzled by Veselnitskaya's use of it as derogatory information at the June 9, 2016 meeting.[5902]

(U) Veselnitskaya said that she was unaware of Steele, and that Simpson had never mentioned him.[5903] Veselnitskaya suggested that she would have appreciated Steele's help on a project, but Simpson had not made the introduction. She told the Committee:

> *For a sort of unknown reason, Glenn Simpson avoided approaching [Steele] in 2014, and I had to grab all the pieces of information myself... [Simpson] even emphasized that he had no capabilities to work in London because he had no one he used to know there.*[5904]

(U) The Committee has no indication that Veselnitskaya and Simpson's relationship extended past his work on the Prevezon case and related work. However, the two have different recollections of their last communications. The last time, in Simpson's recollection, was the dinner discussed above at some point after the June 9, 2016 meeting. Simpson told the Committee that "in neither of these encounters did she say she was going to go meet with the Trump campaign [for the June 9, 2016 meeting]. She didn't ask me for information. I'm not familiar with the information she gave them."[5905]

(U) Veselnitskaya did not recall these interactions.[5906] Her memory of their last communication is an October 2016 communication, through Simpson's lawyer. She said: "You understand I cannot disclose what it was about, but it has nothing to do [with] the subject matter of your investigation."[5907]

[5899] **(U)** The Ziff brothers are American investors. Juliet Chung, "Ziff Brothers Investments Set to Gradually Close U.S. Hedge Fund," *Wall Street Journal,* October 31, 2013.
[5900] **(U)** Veselnitskaya Tr., p. 52.
[5901] **(U)** *Ibid.*, p. 72.
[5902] **(U)** Simpson Tr., p. 210.
[5903] **(U)** Veselnitskaya Tr., p. 75.
[5904] **(U)** *Ibid.*, pp. 117–118.
[5905] **(U)** Simpson Tr., p. 201. If Simpson's recollection is correct, Veselnitskya saw him both before and after the meeting at Trump Tower and in neither instance mentioned to him that she had used his information to brief senior members of the Trump Campaign.
[5906] **(U)** Veselnitskaya Tr., pp. 100–101.
[5907] **(U)** *Ibid.*, p. 100.

[redacted]

[redacted]

vii. (U) A Separate Information Stream Joins the Dossier: Two Additional Memos

(U) Separate from the memos that comprise the dossier, in September 2016 a set of documents emerged alleging sexual and financial misconduct by then-candidate Trump and those associated with his businesses. Cody Shearer, a sometimes freelance journalist, had compiled his notes in the course of "an ongoing news reporting project," and "No person or organization with whom Shearer shared his notes had permission to transmit them to anyone," according to Shearer's attorney.[5908] Sidney Blumenthal, an associate of Shearer's and longtime associate of Hillary Clinton, who received the documents from Shearer, described them as "just raw notes . . . raw, preliminary, investigative, uncorroborated notes."[5909]

(U) The notes were contained in two documents. The first document, entitled "The Compromised Candidate," alleged sexual misconduct and financial misconduct involving Trump and financial misconduct involving members of Trump's family.[5910] That document references an FSB agent and a Turkish businessman, but no other sources are discussed. The second document, entitled "FSB Interview," states that there was a split within the FSB on "how far this should go," referring to an intelligence operation against Trump, and it describes in some detail the *kompromat* the FSB allegedly held on Trump.[5911]

(U) Blumenthal said he would be surprised if Shearer was talking to an actual member of the FSB, but Blumenthal said he knew nothing about the sources of the documents.[5912] According to Blumenthal, "[Shearer] has a wide network of contacts, and I've been surprised in the past that some of the things he turns up, which seem wild, turned out to be true."[5913]

(U) The original provenance of the information in the documents is still unclear. Blumenthal told the Committee that Shearer sent him the documents unsolicited. The first document arrived on September 24, 2016, and the second arrived on October 12, 2016.[5914]

(U) Winer received the first document, "The Compromised Candidate," from Blumenthal following a dinner on September 24, 2016.[5915] Winer described Steele's work to Blumenthal during dinner, based on Winer's memory of the documents, and Blumenthal noted

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[5908] (U) Letter, [Attorney] to SSCI, February 28, 2018.
[5909] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Sidney Blumenthal, March 23, 2018, p. 43.
[5910] (U) Winer Tr. II, p. 13; Document, produced by Blumenthal to SSCI, (SSCI-Blumenthal-0003-6)
[5911] (U) SSCI-BLUMENTHAL-0003-0010.
[5912] (U) Blumenthal Tr., p. 40.
[5913] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 43.
[5914] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 20–22.
[5915] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 30, 32–34. Shearer did not attend the dinner.

[redacted]

[redacted]

that he had received notes from Shearer earlier that day that sounded similar.[5916] Blumenthal provided the first document to Winer, which Winer then shared with Steele.[5917] Winer said, "I thought Chris should see it. He was in town, and I shared it with him."[5918] According to Winer, Steele thought the document might corroborate some of his own work.[5919] In mid-October, Blumenthal received the second document from Shearer, "FSB Interview," and passed it to Winer as well.[5920]

(U) Steele provided the second document, "FSB Interview," to the FBI, after receiving it from Winer.[5921] Before doing so, he appended a description of the document to the top entitled "Company Note," dated October 19, 2016, which stated:

> *We received this report from Jon WINER, US State Department on 18 October 2016. It is the second in this series we have seen. We consider it potentially significant and apologize in advance for its rough format. The sub-source, as we understand it, is a Turkish businessman with strong Russian, including FSB, links. He is in touch with Cody SHEARER, a contact of Sidney BLUMENTHAL, a friend of the CLINTONs, who passed it to WINER. We have no means of verifying the source/s or information but note that some of the report is remarkably similar to our own, albeit from completely different sourcing chain, and therefore could be important collateral, especially on the reported Ritz Carlton incident in 2013; TRUMP's compromise by the FSB (and knowledge of it); and subsequent Kremlin funding of the TRUMP campaign (through the AGALAROVs). We judge that WINER at least would be happy to discuss all this further with you.*[5922]

[5916] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 32–34. In response to a question, Blumenthal said that it was "totally coincidental, very, very coincidental" that he received Shearer's notes on the same day he had dinner with Winer.

[5917] (U) Winer Tr. II, p. 11. Winer, in his first interview with the Committee, did not mention the existence of these documents, but he described how he came to possess them in an op-ed in the *The Washington Post* in February of 2018. The Committee then called Winer in for a second interview to discuss this issue and other follow-up questions.

[5918] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 15.

[5919] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 16.

[5920] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 13–15. Blumenthal Tr., pp. 22, 48.

[5921] [redacted] FBI, Background on Documents Known to the FBI Comprising the "Steele Dossier." Steele does not appear to have provided the first document ("The Compromised Candidate") to the FBI; *see also* [redacted] An October 19, 2016, internal FBI email says [redacted]

[5922] (U) FBI, Background on Documents Known to the FBI Comprising the "Steele Dossier."

[redacted]

[redacted]

(U) Winer recalled that he did not share the documents with FBI or any security officer at Department of State.[5923] Winer also told the Committee that, at the time, he was unaware that Steele had passed one of the documents to the FBI, and he found out from journalists that Steele gave the document to the FBI.[5924]

(U) The Committee was unable to fully pursue questions about the information in these two additional documents, their origins, or their credibility. The Committee requested documents from and an interview with Shearer, but he refused. In a letter, his attorney cited "an ongoing news investigation . . . therefore protected by the Reporter's Privilege grounded in the First Amendment."[5925] Steele, in his written responses to Committee questions, said: "We are (post-dossier) aware of the sourcing details of Shearer's information on the relationship between Russia and Donald Trump and his campaign but we are restricted from being able to share this with the Committee."[5926]

5. (U) FBI's Handling of the Dossier

(U) Personnel at the FBI, from Steele's handling agent to FBI leadership, considered Steele's information to be extremely sensitive and potentially relevant to ongoing investigations. They assigned Steele's reporting credibility based on a flawed understanding of his past work with the FBI and likely assuming that the source and subsource descriptions in the dossier memos accurately reflected those subsources' access. The dossier joined a stream of intelligence and investigative reporting about Russia's attempts to interfere in the 2016 elections, and FBI in its pursuit of the Crossfire Hurricane investigation never fully explored the allegations in the dossier or Steele's tradecraft.

i. (U) The Dossier's Path Through the FBI

a. (U) FBI's First Awareness

(U) An urgent phone call from Steele to Special Agent [redacted] in early July 2016 led to two months of cautious confusion, as FBI tried to decide how to handle information that was uncorroborated, concerning, and extremely politically sensitive.

[5923] (U) Winer Tr. II, pp. 20–22.
[5924] (U) *Ibid*, p. 22.
[5925] (U) Letter, [Attorney] to SSCI, February 28, 2018. The Committee's decision not to compel testimony does not signal its agreement with this position.
[5926] (U) Written Responses, Steele, August 16, 2018.

[redacted]

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(U) On July 2 or 3, 2016, Steele called [redacted] his FBI handler who was posted in [redacted] and said "We need to talk."[5927] [redacted] said Steele showed an "extreme" sense of urgency, and "he was not an excitable guy."[5928] Steele did not want to give additional details over the phone, so [redacted] agreed to meet in person.[5929]

(U) [redacted] went to [redacted] on July 5 to meet with Steele, who likely gave him the first two dossier memos (Reports 80 and 86).[5930] [redacted] told the Committee: "I know for sure the first one I read was the report talking about hiring hookers to urinate on the bed . . . [Steele] put the report in front of me and said: You have to read this. At which time I did. And I said okay, to myself; this is now going to change things a little bit."[5931]

(U) [redacted] recalled Steele giving a little background on his clients. [redacted] paraphrased the conversation as:

> *So he said: Look, here's the story: I was hired by a guy named Glenn Simpson to develop information on Donald Trump's business activities in Russia. [Simpson] was hired by a law firm; I don't know who is behind the law firm, but I know there's a law firm who hired Simpson and Simpson hired me.*[5932]

(U) At the time, [redacted] did not recognize Simpson's name. [redacted] said that "in the first conversation we had, I said: you know, clearly if this is politically motivated, which obviously it is—he wasn't aware from which side—somebody's doing this to ultimately do something with it. They're not just going to keep it under a rock."[5933] At the point of their early July meeting, Steele had already sent at least the first memorandum to Simpson.[5934]

(U) [redacted] said Steele's main motivation for collecting the information was to fulfill his contract with the client. However, [redacted] also recalled that Steele wanted to deliver the information to FBI because of "his concern that the possible President of the United States could have these ties to Russia… [and] Russia being able to somehow compromise ultimately the next

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[5927] (U) [redacted] Tr., pp. 34–35.
[5928] (U) *Ibid.*
[5929] (U) *Ibid.*
[5930] [redacted] *Ibid.*, pp. 35–36. [redacted] thought he may have received two memoranda in total, but he was not sure. He was certain that he received Report 80. *See also* [redacted]
[5931] (U) [redacted] Tr., p. 37.
[5932] (U) *Ibid.*
[5933] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 55–56.
[5934] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 59.

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President of the United States."[5935] At that point, Steele was not arguing that the information should be made public.[5936] According to [redacted]

> *He said: You know, people have to see this. I said, okay. I said, but right now we don't know who has to see this . . . I've got to determine within the Bureau who needs to know this, who has to see this, because the issue at this point was I have a credible source of information with a very kind of explosive document that is completely uncorroborated and unverified.*[5937]

(U) [redacted] made the point that FBI could not act on the information without corroboration.[5938] Steele said he had not corroborated the information yet, but that he was working to, and he was working on other memos.[5939] [redacted] also made clear the FBI was not tasking Steele to gather more information.[5940]

(U) [redacted] flew back to [redacted] with a hard copy of the first memo. He told the Committee he was worried about getting the memo into the right hands within FBI, discreetly, given the sensitivity of the information. He said that:

> *Because of the nature of this information it had to be really as much as possible directed to the people who needed to know about it, without broadcasting it. It had to be done discreetly even within the Bureau. And . . . those people who ultimately needed to know about it are not advertising themselves throughout the Bureau. They're not saying: hey, we are doing the super-secret stuff, the counter-espionage stuff; here's our office.*[5941]

(U) [redacted] had a trusted colleague at the FBI in New York who had experience with political corruption cases.[5942] While he said he did not consider this information political corruption, he wanted to start with an FBI colleague who, as he put it, was "somebody at least who had been involved in matters with those names, or at least with Hillary Clinton's name."[5943] In mid-July, [redacted] colleague in New York told him to send the Steele memos.[5944] [redacted] sent

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[5935] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 43.
[5936] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 44.
[5937] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 40.
[5938] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 42.
[5939] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 40.
[5940] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 42.
[5941] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 47.
[5942] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 49.
[5943] (U) *Ibid.*
[5944] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 51. [redacted] did not reveal the name of his colleague to the Committee.

[redacted]

[redacted]

them via secure email on July 28, 2016.[5945] His colleague reported back in late July that "Executive Management" in New York was aware, as was FBI Headquarters "to the [Executive Assistant Director] level."[5946] Then, in early August, one of the division counsels in the New York Office and another executive spoke to [redacted] and [redacted] sent them the memos. The counsel told [redacted] that a group in FBI headquarters may already be investigating something similar, but he did not provide specifics.[5947] [redacted] recalled, "Then throughout the month of August, I was waiting to hear back who the people were at headquarters who I could send this to."[5948]

(U) At some point during August 2016, Bruce Ohr called [redacted] to say that he had seen the dossier, and to ask how FBI was responding. [redacted] did not ask how Ohr knew about or had seen the dossier, but [redacted] communicated that the EAD-level of FBI headquarters was aware of the memos and their contents.[5949]

(U) Finally, in mid-September 2016, FBI headquarters passed [redacted] the name of the individual at FBI headquarters who was responsible for the related investigation. [redacted] paraphrased the message as "There is a group working something and . . . they're going to need to see this."[5950] The group was in the Counterintelligence Division (CD).[5951]

(U) Deputy Assistant Director Pete Strzok, at that point the lead for FBI's Crossfire Hurricane investigation, told the Committee that his team became aware of the Steele information in September 2016. He said, "We were so compartmented in what we were doing, [the Steele reporting] kind of bounced around a little bit," also, in part, because [redacted] and Steele did not normally report on counterintelligence matters.[5952] Strzok said that the information was "certainly very much in line with things we were looking at" and "added to the body of knowledge of what we were doing."[5953]

(U) Steele, meanwhile, was still under contract with Fusion GPS and simultaneously discussing his memos with other contacts in the U.S. Government. Steele called Simpson in late September 2016 and said that FBI wanted his memos; Simpson's response was "okay, give it to

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[5945] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 54; *see also DOJ OIG FISA Report*, p. 100. The report describes in detail the meetings inside FBI establishing who should receive the memos from Steele.
[5946] (U) [redacted] Tr., p. 51.
[5947] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 53–54.
[5948] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 53.
[5949] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 62–63.
[5950] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 59.
[5951] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 61.
[5952] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Peter Strzok, November 17, 2017, pp. 29–30. The team received six Steele memos on September 19. *DOJ OIG FISA Report*, p. 103.
[5953] (U) Strzok Tr., p. 31.

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them."[5954] Steele called [redacted] on September 30, 2016, to report that he had also given the memos to Jonathan Winer.[5955]

b. (U) FBI Headquarters Takes the Lead on the Dossier

(U) In September and October 2016, FBI Headquarters worked to corroborate Steele's reporting and validate the identity and access of his subsource network. McCabe told the Committee he remembered getting the information in mid-September 2016, and recalled:

> *It was concerning to us. It was concerning to us all. The Steele information raised a lot of questions. Steele was somebody who [had] a productive history with us as a source. We took his information seriously. But it was obviously very detailed, significant, kind of serious allegations. So we immediately went into a mode of trying to understand how should we think about Steele's information, how accurate is it, how credible is it, how significant is it? That kind of unleashed the whole process of trying to figure out how we could confirm it or disprove it, and what ultimately we should do with it.*[5956]

(U) The first step was for FBI Counterintelligence Division personnel to interview Steele directly.[5957] That meeting happened on October [redacted], 2016, in [redacted][5958] [redacted] attended and served as interlocutor. The FBI personnel discussed with Steele his subsources, FBI's Crossfire Hurricane investigation, and the outlines of a future arrangement with Steele to gather more information. They also discussed restrictions on Steele's sharing of his information.[5959]

(U) [redacted] told the Committee that the FBI agents asked Steele for information about his source network. [redacted] reminded Steele that "if you want ultimately this stuff to be deemed credible, they're going to have to know [the identity of your sources]."[5960] Steele described the sources' access, but did not provide names. [redacted] said, "That's his bread and butter, is his sources…he doesn't want to divulge that to anybody."[5961]

(U) The FBI agents discussed their counterintelligence investigation into Russian activities with Steele, including George Papadopoulos's conversation with the Australians related to outreach from Russia on damaging information about Clinton. Steele said he was not

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[5954] (U) Simpson Tr., p. 121.
[5955] (U) [redacted] Tr., p. 64.
[5956] (U) McCabe Tr., p. 61; *DOJ OIG FISA Report*, pp. 116–117.
[5957] (U) [redacted] Tr., p. 62.
[5958] (U) *Ibid.*
[5959] (U) *DOJ OIG FISA Report*, pp. 110–117.
[5960] (U) [redacted] Tr., pp. 66–67.
[5961] (U) *Ibid.*

[redacted]

[redacted]

aware of Papadopoulos. FBI also raised their investigation into Manafort, Flynn, and Page.[5962] The Committee questions whether this is common or appropriate practice—sharing details from an ongoing counterintelligence investigation with a human source, in this case a foreign citizen, even if the goal is to ask that source to collect additional information. Simpson may have become aware of the FBI's interest in Papadopoulos based on the FBI's discussion with Steele during this interview. Simpson says in his book that Steele passed that information along to Fusion GPS: "The session yielded an important bit of intelligence for Fusion. FBI agents surprised Steele by asking him what he knew about Trump adviser George Papadopoulos . . . suggesting that there was an active Bureau investigation that relied on sources other than Steele."[5963]

(U) The Counterintelligence Division agents asked Steele to collect more information that might corroborate what he had found.[5964] However, [redacted] said, "It was specifically stated that, look, anything you collect from today going forward, we want to be exclusively for us, the Bureau, not to be provided to anybody else." [redacted] said Steele's response was "okay," but there was no signed contract.[5965] Steele told the agents that he had given information to "a longtime friend at the State Department to be sure it's getting to the right place in the USG," almost certainly meaning Jonathan Winer. The agents told Steele to "stand down" on efforts to further disseminate the information and only deal with the FBI.[5966] The content of this conversation later became a point of contention between Steele and the FBI.

(U) [redacted] summarized that the agents offered Steele payment for "his efforts for coming to [redacted] and for the reports, and just for agreeing to engage in further activity and taskings in this regard." According to [redacted] the agents further said "if you can corroborate this information we will pay you." Steele accepted, but he was ultimately never paid by FBI for any reports related to the election.[5967] The FBI began the process to approve a $15,000 payment to Steele, but [redacted] recalled that "we didn't get authority and we didn't actually have the money set aside and in hand until the end of October [2016]."[5968] By that point, FBI had broken off the relationship because FBI learned that Steele had broken the exclusivity arrangement by speaking with the press.[5969]

[5962] [redacted] *DOJ OIG FISA Report*, pp. 116–117; [redacted]
[5963] (U) *Crime in Progress*, p. 114.
[5964] (U) *DOJ OIG FISA Report*, pp. 111–112.
[5965] (U) [redacted] Tr., p. 67.
[5966] [redacted] Tr., pp. 85-87; *DOJ OIG FISA Report*, pp. 110, 113–114.
[5967] (U) [redacted] Tr., p. 75.
[5968] [redacted] *Ibid.*, pp. 78, 81. [redacted]
[5969] [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

(U) Later in October 2016, Steele forwarded [redacted] other memos as he completed them, which [redacted] forwarded to FBI headquarters.[5971]

c. (U) The Official End to the FBI's Relationship with Steele

(U) Steele's official reporting relationship with the FBI ended in early November 2016, immediately after *Mother Jones* published an article on October 31, 2016, which outlined Steele's allegations. The article said, in part:

> *A former senior intelligence officer for a Western Country who specialized in Russian counterintelligence tells* Mother Jones *that in recent months he provided the bureau with memos, based on his recent interactions with Russian sources, contending the Russian government has for years tried to co-opt and assist Trump—and that the FBI requested more information from him.*[5972]

(U) [redacted] called Steele to ask if he was the source for the article. Steele admitted that he was, to which [redacted] responded:

> *That's going to change everything. I said: "Firstly, you're not going to get the money, because nobody's going to authorize giving you the money because you were not supposed to talk to anybody, as you know." And then secondly, I said, "odds are likely we are not going to be working together going forward, because of this disclosure."*[5973]

[5970] (U) *Ibid.*
[5971] (U) [redacted] Tr., p. 78.
[5972] (U) David Corn, "A Veteran Spy Has Given the FBI Information Alleging a Russian Operation to Cultivate Donald Trump," *Mother Jones,* October 31, 2016.
[5973] [redacted] Tr., pp. 80–81; *see also* [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

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(U) [redacted] communicated his surprise and disbelief with the situation to the Committee, saying "I've seen crazy source-related stuff in 20 years in New York and this was one of the craziest."[5974] He paraphrased his conversation with Steele:

> *So I said: "Listen, is it about the money?" I said, "because we have the money now. Is it about the money?" ...because I couldn't understand why on earth, because there had literally been no indication between our meeting in October, early October, to then that he would do anything like this, nothing. Nothing led up to it. He wasn't getting increasingly angry, aggravated, frustrated, making comments about our lack of effort or lack of work. There was nothing that led me to believe anything was wrong.*[5975]

[redacted] continued:

> *[Steele says], "yes, I'm owed the money, but that's secondary" . . . . He goes-and I'm paraphrasing . . . "I'm very upset about, we're very upset, about the actions of your agency." I had no idea what he was talking about . . . . He goes: "Last Friday, Director Comey reopening the"—he said something like "your Director," or "the reopening of the investigation." So at that point I'm now understanding that he did this because he was upset that the Director's reopening of the investigation was going to negatively affect the election for Hillary Clinton, meaning he's working to provide information regarding Trump and compromise of Trump's organization and then Director Comey provides this blast, a shot to the side.*[5976]

[redacted] later clarified: "This was my impression only at the time and not based on anything I asked him . . . he was so upset because this was going to allow Russia to get—it was going to allow Russia's candidate to get into office."[5977]

(U) [redacted] explained the next steps: "After that point—after everybody digests what happened, because phones were ringing at that point, people's ears were bleeding. Management said we were going to close him. At that point it's just obvious. That's all you could do."[5978] [redacted] explained that "[o]nce he's closed, nobody is allowed—we can't talk to him, we cannot

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[5974] (U) [redacted] Tr., p. 83.
[5975] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 80–81.
[5976] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 82.
[5977] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 90.
[5978] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 87.

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operate him, we cannot task him."[5979] [redacted] summed up the situation as "Frankly, when he went to the press there were no more agreements in place."[5980]

(U) Steele, on the other hand, did not believe he was under any obligation to report only to FBI. In his written answers to the Committee, he said

> *At no point were we ever asked about contacts with the media by the FBI, let alone instructed not to have any. The FBI were not our client on this project, did not own the product and had no right to determine what we did with it. This was made clear to them at the time.*[5981]

d. (U) Simpson and Steele Seek Other Outlets for the Dossier

(U) Simpson and Steele continued to reach out to the press and, later, Steele made contact with an associate of Senator John McCain. Simpson described to the Committee his logic on going back to the press:

> *So I'm sitting on a real bombshell piece of information now, which is that the FBI's investigating the Russians, the Trump campaign and whether they've connected with the Russians, and Comey comes out with a thing about Hilary Clinton . . . .*[5982]

Simpson continued:

> *I felt that if the standards had changed and the FBI was willing to disclose investigations, then the press should go back to the FBI and ask them whether they're investigating Donald Trump. And I was expecting all this to be exposed after the election, but when this happened I said they should expose it now.*[5983]

(U) Contributing to Simpson's calculation was an October 31, 2016 article in *The New York Times*: "Investigating Donald Trump, FBI Sees No Clear Link to Russia." The story said that "for much of the summer, the FBI pursued a widening investigation into a Russian role in the American presidential campaign," but concluded that:

[5979] **(U)** *Ibid.*, p. 91.
[5980] **(U)** *Ibid.*, p. 73.
[5981] **(U)** Written Responses, Steele, August 16, 2018.
[5982] **(U)** Simpson Tr., p. 135.
[5983] **(U)** *Ibid.*, p. 136.

[redacted]

[redacted]

[L]aw enforcement officials say that none of the investigations so far have found any conclusive or direct link between Mr. Trump and the Russian government. And even the hacking into Democratic emails, FBI and intelligence officials now believe, was aimed at disrupting the presidential election rather than electing Mr. Trump.[5984]

(U) While the article said that FBI officials declined to comment, it cited as sources "an official" and "senior officials" in outlining a wide counterintelligence investigation. Simpson in his book said other news outlets saw this article as a definitive reason to stop pursuing the story Simpson had been advocating. Simpson further alleges that FBI was intentionally trying to dissemble.[5985]

(U) Simpson began advocating with Steele to go public with what he knew:

I said to Chris right before the election: you know, maybe you should come back and we should just do a press conference on the Capitol steps and tell everyone what we know. And he said: I'm not coming back, because I don't understand what's happening at the FBI and I don't know why they would tell the press that they weren't investigating Trump when I know they are. . . . Chris was concerned, as was I, that something had happened in the FBI, there had been some sort of a faction or a political division within the FBI that had caused them to dredge up new allegations against Hillary Clinton and suppress information about Donald Trump.[5986]

ii. (U) FBI's Investigative Approach

(U) FBI Counterintelligence Division's efforts to investigate the allegations in the dossier were focused on identifying Steele's source network and recruiting those people to serve as sources for, or provide information to, the FBI. FBI also made efforts to corroborate the information in the dossier memos, but the Committee found that attempt lacking in both thoroughness and rigor. The FBI pursued FISA coverage of Carter Page in October 2016, including information from the dossier, but at the time it had very little information on Steele's subsources or corroboration of Steele's information.

(U) As of May 2017, when the SCO began its own investigation, the FBI had taken the following investigative steps:

[5984] **(U)** Eric Lichtblau and Steven Lee Myers, "Investigating Donald Trump, FBI Sees No Clear Link to Russia," *The New York Times*, October 31, 2016.
[5985] **(U)** *Crime in Progress*, pp. 120–121.
[5986] **(U)** Simpson Tr., pp. 145–146; *see also* Kramer Tr., p. 28.

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

a. (U) Steele's Reputation as a Proven Source

(U) Steele had built a solid reputation as a source in the FBI's work on the FIFA investigation, which predisposed the FBI to give credence to his reporting on counterintelligence issues. The Committee has very little insight into exactly what Steele provided to FBI regarding FIFA, so it was not possible to independently judge Steele's contributions to the multi-year investigation. [redacted] told the Committee that Steele provided valuable investigative leads that were later borne out by further investigation. [redacted] said:

> *Our squad initiated the FIFA investigation. Steele made a couple of introductions to individuals who provided different levels of information regarding corruption within FIFA and ultimately had provided a very interesting piece of intelligence that really highlighted the highest level of corruption for us.* [5990]

(U) The DOJ OIG report reflected this understanding as well: Steele introduced FBI to a contact, and "but for Steele's assistance in arranging this meeting, the FBI would not have had the impetus to open the FIFA investigation in 2010."[5991] [redacted] also told DOJ OIG that Steele provided two other investigative leads to the FBI in connection with FIFA. One was a report that Putin acknowledged a Russian oligarch had bribed the President of FIFA so Russia could win its bid to host the 2018 World Cup tournament. In 2012, Steele also introduced FBI to two British

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[5987] (U) SSCI Memorandum, "FBI Briefing on Steele 'Dossier' Sourcing," February 15, 2018; *DOJ OIG FISA Report*, pp. 189–190.

[5988] [redacted] *DOJ OIG FISA Report*, p. 195 [redacted]

[5989] (U) SSCI Memorandum, "FBI Briefing on Steele 'Dossier' Sourcing," February 15, 2018. On standup of the SCO, the Committee lost access to all relevant information regarding FBI's efforts to verify the dossier, as it did with all information the SCO declared to touch its "equities."

[5990] (U) [redacted] Tr., p. 13.

[5991] [redacted] *DOJ OIG FISA Report*, pp. 87–88. The Committee notes that the unnamed Handling Agent 1 for the DOJ OIG is also Special Agent [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

officials who had more information on this topic.[5992] Other FBI sources had corroborated Steele's reporting;[5993] [redacted] said it was "Not exactly similar, but very close."[5994]

(U) The DOJ OIG report also made clear, however, that Steele did not provide testimony in any court proceeding and his information was not used to obtain any compulsory legal process.[5995] That report discusses the gap in understanding of Steele's role between [redacted] and those on the Crossfire Hurricane investigation, saying that "SSA 1 told us the [Crossfire Hurricane] team had 'speculated' that Steele's prior reporting had been corroborated and used in criminal proceedings because they knew Steele had been 'a part of, if not predicated, the FIFA investigation.'" However, [redacted] told the DOJ OIG that "only 'some' of Steele's prior reporting had been corroborated—most of it had not—and . . . Steele's information was never used in a criminal proceeding."[5996] [redacted] told the Committee, that "In the criminal world…Christopher Steele would never be a witness in a criminal case for us. The individuals who he introduced us to would not be witnesses in a criminal case for us. But the intelligence that he provided is significant for us in terms of leads, in terms of which direction to go."[5997]

(U) Steele had provided information to the FBI on subjects other than FIFA. [redacted] told the Committee that "[Steele's] information was put into a number of IIRs that were sent out to the [intelligence] community. A few times—I can't say exactly how many—we would receive a response saying: that looks to be on point; can you develop more information on that line?"[5998] [redacted] said the information from Steele "ran the spectrum of average to very good."[5999] FBI also told the DOJ OIG that Steele in 2013 provided "lengthy and detailed reports to FBI on three Russian oligarchs, one of whom was among the FBI's most wanted fugitives."[6000]

(U) Steele and the FBI had different views on the nature of their relationship. The FBI had Steele officially enrolled as a CHS as of 2013.[6001] Steele, however, saw the relationship as contractual.[6002] Steele told the DOJ OIG that the nature of his relationship with the FBI "was never really resolved and both sides turned a blind eye to it. It was not really ideal."[6003] FBI

[5992] (U) *DOJ OIG FISA Report*, p. 88.
[5993] (U) [redacted] Tr., p. 14.
[5994] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 15.
[5995] (U) *DOJ OIG FISA Report*, p. 88.
[5996] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 371.
[5997] (U) [redacted] Tr., p. 14.
[5998] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 17.
[5999] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 21.
[6000] (U) *DOJ OIG FISA Report*, p. 88.
[6001] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 90.
[6002] [redacted] *Ibid.*, p. 89. [redacted]
[6003] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 90–91.

[redacted]

[redacted]

paid Steele $95,000 between 2013 and 2016 for a variety of work, but largely because of his work on the FIFA investigation.[6004]

b. (U) FBI's Vetting of Steele

(U) FBI examined Steele's history as a source using official procedures, but the review was lacking in thoroughness. Peter Strzok explained that generally the procedure for a "human validation review" is for FBI's Directorate of Intelligence to analyze an asset's entire case file, looking at the reporting history, the circumstances of recruitment, their motivation, and their compensation history.[6005] Strzok recalled that the result was "good to continue; that there were not significant concerns, certainly nothing that would indicate that he was compromised or feeding us disinformation or he was a bad asset."[6006] However, Strzok also said that after learning that reporters and Congress had Steele's information:

> *[FBI] started looking into why he was assembling [the dossier], who his clients were, what the basis of their interest was, and how they might have used it, and who would know, it was apparent to us that this was not a piece of information simply provided to the FBI in the classic sense of a kind of a confidential source reporting relationship, but that it was all over the place.*[6007]

[redacted] Steele's handling agent submitted quarterly and annual source reports on Steele over the years, which raised no derogatory information and generally reflected positively on Steele's reporting, according to the DOJ OIG.[6008] In November 2016, a supervisory special agent on the Crossfire Hurricane team requested a Human Source Validation Review on Steele, which Counterintelligence Division delayed until early 2017 due to concerns about leaks of sensitive information. The Validation Unit completed its report on March 23, 2017. [redacted] The report also said:

> *VMU assesses it is likely [Steele] has contributed to the FBI's Criminal Program. VMU makes this assessment with medium confidence, based on the fact that [Steele's] reporting has been minimally corroborated.*[6010]

[6004] (U) Steele never received any compensation for his work on the dossier. [redacted] Tr., pp. 23–25, 74–76.
[6005] (U) Strzok Tr., p. 39.
[6006] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 41.
[6007] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 32.
[6008] (U) *DOJ OIG FISA Report*, p. 185.
[6009] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 186.
[6010] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 186.

[redacted]

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Priestap later told the DOJ OIG that he was surprised by the assessment of "minimally corroborated," which conflicted with his general understanding that Steele had a "long, successful track record of reporting, that had withstood, in effect, judicial or court-of-law scrutiny." It had not. Priestap also expressed concern that the FBI's internal report on Steele did not address whether Steele's reporting could be corroborated.[6011]

(U) The DOJ OIG in November of 2019 investigated the integrity of FBI's vetting of human sources. The report says "We found that the FBI's vetting process for CHSs, known as validation, did not comply with the Attorney General Guidelines. We also found deficiencies in the FBI's long-term CHS validation reports, which are relied upon by FBI and DOJ officials in determining the continued use of a CHS."[6012] The DOJ OIG further found that the FBI's long-term CHS validation reports were insufficient "because they did not ensure the full scope of a long-term CHS's operation was reviewed," and FBI validation personnel told OIG "they were discouraged from documenting conclusions and recommendations."[6013]

(U) The Committee notes that prior to Steele's dossier reporting in 2016, Steele's interactions with the FBI had been exclusively with the Criminal Division of FBI, rather than Counterintelligence Division. In the case of Steele, Counterintelligence Division assumed Criminal Division had fully vetted Steele and that the credibility of his work transferred into a new topic area. [redacted] Steele's original handler, said that he had assumed Counterintelligence Division was doing its own checking on Steele.[6014] The DOJ OIG pointed out the incomplete efforts to explore Steele's credibility in a footnote:

> *We found that the first time the Crossfire Hurricane team accessed Steele's Delta file was in November 2016. The Supervisory Intel Analyst told us that the team was in contact with [redacted] beginning in September and relied on him for information about Steele. [redacted] expressed surprise that the Crossfire Hurricane team did not access Steele's Delta file earlier. He said that the team should have "turned the file upside down" looking for information two months earlier and that he assumed that some members of the team had thoroughly reviewed the file.*[6015]

[6011] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 186–187.
[6012] (U) DOJ, Office of the Inspector General, "Audit of the Federal Bureau of Investigation's Management of its Confidential Human Source Validation Processes," November 2019, p. i.
[6013] (U) *Ibid.* Generally, a CHS is considered "long-term" after five years. FBI never answered the Committee's question on whether Steele was considered a "long-term" source.
[6014] (U) [redacted] Tr., p. 45.
[6015] (U) *DOJ OIG FISA Report*, p. 105. A "Delta file" refers to FBI's Delta database, "which FBI agents use to record their interactions with, and information derived from, CHSs," according to the DOJ OIG. *Ibid.*, p. 13.

[redacted]

[redacted]

(U) The Committee also found that FBI's vetting process for Steele was lacking in rigor and thoroughness.

c. (U) FBI's Attempts to Corroborate Steele's Allegations

(U) FBI worked to find corroborating information for the allegations in the dossier. The Committee saw few indications, however, that efforts to establish corroboration were either robust or successful, and FBI's other investigative steps were completed after critical junctures in the fall of 2016. Finding additional facts was difficult with Steele's reporting, according to [redacted] who said "[corroboration] didn't happen often with his information because from our position his information was at such a unique level that it's very difficult to corroborate that type of information."[6016] [redacted] said Steele's information was "at a unique level"[6017] because Steele had "a very small number" of "highly placed" individuals who were providing information but were unaware that that information was going to Steele.[6018]

(U) Baker confirmed the challenge FBI faced on the 2016 Steele memos:

> *It pretty quickly led into some type of a conversation about how in the world are we going to go about validating this? . . . There were discussions about how to get back in touch with him about this material to get more details and to start to dig down to identify as quickly as possible his sub-sources and for the Bureau to go out and interact with the sub-sources to try to validate what was going on.*[6019]

(U) In an attempt to corroborate individual allegations in the dossier, FBI laid out the allegations in Steele's memos in a detailed spreadsheet. McCabe said the spreadsheet was "really just the most general stuff that you could prove with travel records and kind of publicly known information, which, quite frankly, is not very satisfying."[6020] Strzok said that, starting in September 2016, "there were people, agents and analysts, whose job specifically it was to figure this out and to do that with a sense of urgency."[6021]

(U) The Committee reviewed a redacted version of that spreadsheet, which reflected progress made until May 2017, when the SCO began its work and FBI halted efforts on the dossier.

[6016] (U) [redacted] Tr., p. 17.
[6017] (U) *Ibid.*
[6018] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 18.
[6019] (U) Baker Tr., pp. 126–127.
[6020] (U) McCabe Tr., pp. 89–90.
[6021] (U) Strzok Tr., p. 54.

[redacted]

[redacted]

(U) One column of the spreadsheet was devoted to any information FBI had found to corroborate the allegations. Much of the information cited there as corroboration was press reporting. Given that Simpson and Steele briefed the press extensively on their information, the press pieces cited might also be sourced back to the Steele memos, rather than to additional, corroborating information.

(U) FBI also was unable to disaggregate some of the subsources' original reporting from information that had already appeared in the press. McCabe said:

> *Were these things that Steele was telling us or that his sub-sources were telling him were already widely known in the press or otherwise and they were just reporting on what they were picking up in open source, or did they come across these facts before they were widely known and therefore you got pretty good intel? Quite frankly, for a lot of the Steele information it's quite hard to make that distinction.*[6022]

(U) As described by the DOJ OIG, as of September 2017, the FBI had corroborated limited information in the dossier, and much of that information was publicly available.[6023] This included basic facts such as Carter Page's travel to Moscow and the titles for some Russian government officials mentioned in the dossier.[6024] Further, many of the substantive allegations contained in numerous key reports in the dossier, including Reports 80, 94, 95, and 102, "remained uncorroborated and, in several instances, were inconsistent with information gathered by the Crossfire Hurricane team."[6025] The Committee was unable to secure from the SCO a final accounting of which allegations SCO pursued or was able to corroborate.

6. (U) Other Recipients of the Dossier

ii. (U) Bruce Ohr and the Department of Justice

(U) Bruce Ohr, an Associate Deputy Attorney General who had known Steele for a number of years, acted as a conduit for Steele's information into the FBI and DOJ from about 2009 through the summer and fall of 2016 and into 2017, well after FBI officially cut ties with Steele in early November 2016.

[redacted] Ohr met Steele in 2007 in London, where they were both working in their official capacities. Ohr was Chief of the then-Organized Crime and Racketeering Section

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[6022] (U) McCabe Tr., p. 195.
[6023] (U) *DOJ OIG FISA Report*, p. 198.
[6024] (U) *Ibid.*
[6025] (U) *Ibid.*

[redacted]

[redacted]

of DOJ, and Steele was working for the British Government on Russia-related matters.[6026] Ohr told the Committee that he reported his contacts with Steele to the appropriate section of DOJ, [redacted].[6027] Ohr said:

> *Generally the impression that I got was that Chris Steele was very concerned about the power and reach of Russian organized crime and its ability to corrupt the Russian government, and that includes . . . mobsters, oligarchs, government officials, all working together in various ways.*[6028]

(U) The two stayed in touch after Steele left British Government service to establish Orbis. Ohr and Steele did not discuss ongoing investigations; Steele would occasionally—about once a year—provide Ohr copies of his memos. Ohr received these memos acting in his official capacity, and he typically would pass them to the FBI.[6029]

(U) Ohr introduced Steele to [redacted] in the spring of 2010 so that [redacted] could be Steele's main FBI point of contact.[6030] The intent was for FBI to get Steele's memos directly, rather than have Ohr serve as an informal intermediary.[6031] Ohr maintained his own direct contact with Steele, in a professional capacity.[6032]

(U) In late July 2016, Steele communicated the contents of his first dossier memoranda to Bruce Ohr and his wife, Nellie, who at the time was working on contract as a researcher with Fusion GPS.[6033] On July 30, 2016, Steele asked Ohr and his wife to meet for breakfast the following day.[6034] Nellie Ohr told the Committee that she thought it would be a mostly social breakfast.[6035] However, according to Bruce Ohr, Steele "conveyed his fears that there . . . were contacts between the Russian government and the Trump campaign."[6036] Steele also told the Ohrs that Carter Page had contacts with high-level Russian officials, that a source close to the

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[6026] (U) B. Ohr Tr., pp. 9, 12.
[6027] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 15–16.
[6028] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 11-12.
[6029] (U) B. Ohr Tr., pp. 19, 22–23.
[6030] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 17–18; *see also* [redacted] Tr., p. 6.
[6031] (U) B. Ohr Tr., p. 22.
[6032] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 34, 40.
[6033] (U) B. Ohr Tr., p. 35. Nellie Ohr left Fusion GPS in September 2016. B. Ohr Tr., p. 62. Nellie Ohr told the Committee that Steele knew she worked for Fusion GPS. She stated "He told me that Glenn knows that we're meeting. Glenn knows I'm meeting you." When asked if that was surprising to her, she said yes, that "I hadn't been aware that they knew each other." N. Ohr Tr., pp. 17–18.
[6034] (U) Email, Steele to Ohr, July 29, 2016 (HPSCI (3-23-18)-DOJ-000008–9). Ohr and Steele also met for breakfast on Friday, September 23, at Steele's hotel (Capital Hilton). *See* Email, B. Ohr to Steele, September 21, 2016 (HPSCI (3-23-2018)-DOJ-000011).
[6035] (U) N. Ohr Tr., p. 25.
[6036] (U) B. Ohr Tr., p. 35.

[redacted]

[redacted]

former head of the SVR had heard that the Russians "have Trump over a barrel," and that Deripaska and his attorney had "information that could make out some kind of a criminal case against Paul Manafort."[6037] Bruce Ohr also told the Committee that, at the meeting, Steele discussed that he had shared the information with Fusion GPS.[6038] Further, Ohr said that, while he was not certain when he learned the information was also being shared with the Clinton Campaign, he recalled that he "probably was aware from the beginning."[6039]

(U) After the meeting, Ohr recalled being troubled by the information he received unexpectedly from Steele and contacted both Deputy Assistant Attorney General Bruce Swartz and [redacted] told Ohr that an Executive Assistant Director at FBI Headquarters and executive management in the New York Field Office knew about Steele's reporting and were addressing it.[6040]

(U) Ohr met with Glenn Simpson in late August 2016. Simpson told the Committee that "Chris [Steele] also told me that he had provided some of this stuff to a Justice Department prosecutor named Bruce Ohr and . . . told me that Bruce wanted to talk to me. So I also met with Bruce."[6041] The Committee received documents indicating that on August 22, 2016, Simpson reached out to Ohr on email, asking Ohr to call Simpson and providing his phone number.[6042] According to the DOJ OIG, the two met later that day at Simpson's request.[6043] Ohr told the Committee that at the meeting:

> *[Simpson] passed some leads or possible intelligence. I think he may have been the one to say, or one of the ones saying: Look at Alfa Bank, look at this guy Torshin. So he provided some information at that time, and then I provided that to the FBI.*[6044]

(U) Ohr said he knew Simpson was working on behalf of a client, and he assumed the information he was gathering would be beneficial to the Democrats.[6045]

[6037] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 37. Ohr clarified that the Attorney was Paul Hauser. He would not provide further information on his interactions with Hauser because it "might touch on other FBI investigative matters." *Ibid.*, pp. 41–43.
[6038] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 38.
[6039] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 38–39. Ohr's recollection of when he became aware of who was funding Steele's work was hazy and not specific as to a date. According to the DOJ OIG, it was at a second meeting with Steele on September 23, 2016, that Steele identified the person who was funding Fusion GPS's opposition research, "however, [Ohr] did not recognize the name and could not remember it long enough to write it down after the meeting." *DOJ OIG FISA Report*, pp. 278–279.
[6040] (U) *DOJ OIG FISA Report*, p. 277.
[6041] (U) Simpson Tr., p. 179.
[6042] (U) Email Simpson to Ohr, August 22, 2016 (HPSCI (3-23-18)-DOJ-000010).
[6043] (U) *DOJ OIG FISA Report*, p. 278.
[6044] (U) B. Ohr Tr., p. 115.
[6045] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 128-129.

[redacted]

[redacted]

(U) Steele again reached out to Ohr in mid-September 2016 to request a meeting on matters of "mutual interest."[6046] Ohr and Steele met on September 23, 2016.[6047] The DOJ OIG reports that, at the meeting, Steele discussed several topics, including more of Steele's ongoing efforts related to the 2016 U.S. election and Deripaska's[6048] willingness to come to the United States to testify against Manafort.[6049]

(U) Steele and Ohr talked again at Steele's request about a month later, on October 18, 2016.[6050] In interviews with the DOJ OIG, neither Ohr nor Steele could recall the substance of the call, but both believed it might have been about Deripaska.[6051] The Committee obtained documents that support the idea they discussed Deripaska, perhaps primarily. After the call, Steele sent Ohr an email "[f]urther to our Skypecon earlier today and in terms of background." In his email, Steele relayed that Hauser had asked if Steele would forward information about the "unfolding Government of Ukraine-RUSAL dispute."[6052] Steele attached information about a dispute between the Ukrainian government and RUSAL related to the latter's assets in Ukraine. Steele noted that Hauser was concerned about the politicization of the dispute and "rumours circulating this morn (sic) about new USG sanctions against RUSAL."[6053]

(U) Shortly after his Skype call with Steele, Ohr contacted McCabe, and they agreed to meet later that day.[6054] Ohr told the Committee that he reached out to McCabe in particular because McCabe had a background in Russia-related cases and had previously worked with Ohr.[6055] Later that day, Ohr met with McCabe and Lisa Page, who was then serving as special counsel to McCabe.[6056] Ohr told the Committee his motivation was to pass Steele's information to FBI,[6057] but Page's notes from the meeting indicate that the group also discussed Deripaska.[6058] McCabe told the Committee that Ohr's goal at the meeting was to find out who at FBI headquarters he should talk to about Steele: "I kind of handed him off to the team, the CI team, which would have been some combination of Bill [Priestap] or Pete [Strzok] or John

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[6046] (U) Email, Steele to Ohr, September 16, 2016 (HPSCI (3-23-18)-DOJ-000011–000012)
[6047] [redacted]
[6048] [redacted]
[6049] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 278–279.
[6050] (U) Email, Steele to Ohr, October 18, 2016 (HPSCI (3-23-18)-DOJ-000013); *DOJ OIG FISA Report*, p. 280.
[6051] [redacted]
[6052] (U) Email, Steele to Ohr, October 18, 2016 (HPSCI (3-23-18)-DOJ-000014–000015).
[6053] (U) *Ibid.*
[6054] [redacted]
[6055] (U) B. Ohr Tr., p. 51. Ohr was asked whether McCabe's past work on matters related to Deripaska had any relation to his reaching out to McCabe in particular. Ohr stated he was unable to answer the question because of concerns that doing so would reveal ongoing matters at the time.
[6056] (U) McCabe Tr., pp. 92–93; [redacted]
[6057] (U) B. Ohr Tr., p. 49–50.
[6058] [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[Moffa]."[6059] Ohr recalled that he conveyed to McCabe and Page the information Steele had raised on the Skype call, provided context about his relationship with Steele, and explained his wife's connection to Fusion GPS.[6060] The Committee was unable to obtain any further information about the Deripaska-related discussion.

(U) At some point after his initial meeting with Steele in July 2016—Ohr did not recall when—Ohr told a limited number of colleagues at DOJ who were responsible for international crime and fraud about his discussions with Steele and Simpson, the meeting with McCabe, and that he had passed the information to the FBI. However, he did not inform anyone in the DOJ front office or DOJ leadership.[6061]

(U) Ohr said he continued to pass information back to FBI from Steele as it came in. On November 21, 2016, Ohr met with several members of the Crossfire Hurricane team, along with FBI Supervisory Special Agent [redacted] to discuss Steele. This interview was memorialized in an FBI memorandum called an FD-302.[6062] Ohr was in contact with the FBI about Steele's allegations beginning in late July or early August 2016, but the FBI did not take steps to formalize the intake of that information until mid-November, after FBI had terminated its direct relationship with Steele.[6063] The Committee is aware of 13 FBI FD-302s total regarding interviews with Ohr; Ohr estimated those reflected somewhere between 15 and 20 interviews.[6064]

(U) In December, Ohr met Simpson again. At that meeting Simpson passed Ohr a thumb drive. Ohr told the Committee: "My guess at that time was that had the dossier on it, but I don't remember specific—he didn't say and I didn't ask."[6065] Ohr did not look at it and passed it to the FBI.[6066]

(U) On December 20, Bruce Ohr also gave DOJ[6067] a thumb drive from Nellie Ohr. He never saw the contents, but he told the Committee he was generally aware of them.[6068] He told the Committee that it was different from the contents of Glenn Simpson's thumb drives and

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[6059] (U) McCabe Tr., p. 93.
[6060] (U) B. Ohr Tr., p. 53. Ohr said he considered the information about his wife's affiliation to be "an important disclosure to make."
[6061] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 57–59. For more information on the knowledge of Ohr's activities within DOJ, *see DOJ OIG FISA Report.*
[6062] (U) B. Ohr Tr., pp. 63–64.
[6063] (U) B. Ohr Tr., p. 88–90.
[6064] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 93.
[6065] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 118.
[6066] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 118.
[6067] (U) The Committee notes that Ohr's testimony suggests he gave the Simpson thumb drive to FBI but the Nellie Ohr thumb drive to DOJ; It is not clear if by "DOJ" Ohr meant FBI.
[6068] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 142.

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included Nellie Ohr's work on the 2016 election for Fusion. "I believe it was on some of the same characters," Ohr said.[6069]

(U) Steele in early 2017 seemed to use Ohr as a venue for expressing concerns about investigations into Russian interference and for insight into the U.S. Government, judging from documentation provided to the Committee.

- (U) In March 2017, Steele expressed concern about the U.S. Senate, saying he had received a letter from Senator Charles Grassley, then Chairman of the Judiciary Committee, and expressed concern about "its possible implications for us, our operations and our sources. We need some reassurance."[6070] After a phone call with Ohr, Steele said, "Thanks for that, old friend. Please do fight our cause and keep in touch. Really fundamental issues at stake here."[6071]

- (U) Also in late March 2017, Steele texted Ohr that "we understand an approach from the Senate Intelligence Committee to us is imminent. I would like to discuss this and our response with you in the next couple of days if possible."[6072] They agreed to speak on Sunday, March 26.[6073] On the 30th, Steele expressed further reservations about engaging with the Committee and asked for an update.[6074] Ohr said he had none.[6075]

(U) FBI continued to capitalize on Ohr's discussions with Steele through 2017. In May, the agent assigned as Ohr's primary point of contact[6076] asked Ohr to ask Steele whether he would consider a meeting with FBI. Ohr told the Committee:

> *I asked Chris Steele whether he would be willing to talk to the FBI. . . . I recall putting a caveat on that, saying: They just want to talk; it's not going to necessarily be resuming a relationship; they just want to talk; would you be interested in that? And his response was: Yes; I need to check with my business partner and my former employer, but yes.*[6077]

[6069] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 144.
[6070] (U) Text message, Steele to B. Ohr, March 7, 2017 (HPSCI (3-23-18) DOJ-000025). Although these documents are labeled for distribution to the HPSCI, DOJ and FBI provided them to this Committee.
[6071] (U) Text message, Steele to B. Ohr, March 7, 2017 (HPSCI (3-23-18) DOJ-000026).
[6072] (U) Text message, Steele to B. Ohr, March 24, 2017 (HPSCI (3-23-18) DOJ-000026).
[6073] (U) Text messages, Steele and B. Ohr, March 24, 2017 (HPSCI (3-23-18) DOJ-000026).
[6074] (U) Text message, Steele to B. Ohr, March 30, 2017 (HPSCI (3-23-18) DOJ-000027).
[6075] (U) Text message, B. Ohr to Steele, March 30, 2017 (HPSCI (3-23-18) DOJ-000027).
[6076] (U) At this point in time, the primary agent serving as Ohr's point of contact had changed. *DOJ OIG FISA Report*, p. 287.
[6077] (U) B. Ohr Tr., p. 157.

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(U) On May 15, 2017, Steele texted Ohr, telling him that "having now consulted my wife and business partner about the question we discussed on Saturday I'm pleased to say yes, we should go ahead with it."[6078] As of August 2017, the reengagement between FBI and Steele had not happened, and Steele was frustrated by the delay.[6079] Steele eventually met with FBI representatives assigned to the SCO in September 2017.[6080]

(U) Ohr and Steele stayed in contact through at least November 2017.[6081]

(U) In response to a Committee question on whether Ohr being interviewed by the FBI was a normal arrangement, particularly for a lawyer at DOJ, Ohr said he was not surprised that FBI memorialized the conversations, but he thought the information flow in general was "an unusual situation."[6082] Ohr said, "I thought that as long as he's calling me and there is information that might be important I should pass it to the FBI, whether or not they had a relationship with him. So I can't really say whether they were using me as a cutout or not."[6083] Ohr said he had never handled an asset or confidential human source before, and reiterated that he would have preferred if FBI had talked to Steele directly.[6084] He also said he viewed his engagements with FBI regarding Steele as in his official capacity.[6085] Ohr explained how he understood his ongoing reporting to the FBI: "I don't think they ever said 'You must call us every time you hear from him.' But they gave me a point of contact to give information to. So I continued to do that."[6086]

(U) McCabe clearly conveyed to the Committee that he did not realize the Ohr-Steele discussions would be an ongoing interaction. McCabe said, "I had one meeting with Bruce . . . I was not aware that we were continuing to interview Bruce until recently." He also said that "My guess is that Bruce continued to [interact] with Steele in the same way that he had for many years, and presumably before we were even in touch with him. And if Bruce was so inclined to bring that information to our attention, we would document it."[6087]

[6078] (U) Text message, Steele to B. Ohr, May 15, 2017 (HPSCI (3-23-18) DOJ-000027).
[6079] (U) Text message, Steele to B. Ohr, August 6, 2017 (HPSCI (3-23-18) DOJ-000028) ("Hi Bruce, hope you're well and getting some holiday with the family. Whenever convenient I would like a chat, there's a lot going on and we are frustrated with how long this reengagement with the Bureau and Mueller is taking. Anything you could do to accelerate the process would be much appreciated. There are some new, perishable, operational opportunities which we do not want to miss out on. Best to All, Chris.").
[6080] (U) *DOJ OIG FISA Report*, p. 288.
[6081] (U) Text message, B. Ohr to Steele, November 27, 2017 (HPSCI (3-23-18) DOJ-000030).
[6082] (U) B. Ohr Tr., p. 64.
[6083] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 85.
[6084] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 85.
[6085] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 18.
[6086] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 86.
[6087] (U) McCabe Tr., pp. 92–99.

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(U) The DOJ OIG interviewed leadership at FBI and supervisory-level agents about their interactions with Ohr. Those conversations reflect a divergence of understandings of Ohr's role. For example, one of the four agents who served as Ohr's official point of contact with FBI on Steele material said that Ohr was "just some [person] you [had] to talk to when [he] call[ed]."[6088] That agent had concerns about the arrangement, and the DOJ OIG wrote that the agent "did not task Ohr because of the appearance of using Ohr to obtain information from a closed source, calling that 'out of the norm.'"[6089] Similarly, another of the agents assigned to be Ohr's point of contact told the DOJ OIG that he discussed with a colleague who also served as one of Ohr's points of contact "it being a 'bad idea' to continue engaging with Ohr regarding his contacts with Steele."[6090]

(U) FBI Leadership, conversely, seemed to regard the relationship as informal. For example, Bill Priestap told the DOJ OIG that he was surprised to learn that the FBI treated Ohr more like a witness or a source. He further said that, had he known the extent of Ohr's activities, it would have raised "red flags" for him.[6091] James Baker told the DOJ OIG that he viewed the arrangement as "imprudent" and "a bit of a mess" but that he believed McCabe, [Executive Assistant Director Mike] Steinbach, and Priestap were "on top of it."[6092] The Committee found that somewhere between the agent level and the leadership level, communication broke down regarding the formality and nature of FBI's relationship with Ohr.

ii. (U) Department of State

(U) In September 2016,—after [redacted] Ohr, and some press became aware of the dossier memos but before the October 3 FBI debrief of Steele in [redacted]—Steele also shared the allegations in the dossier with a small number of Department of State officials, apparently motivated by a concern that the FBI was not moving quickly enough to investigate. Steele first shared his information, in summary form, with Jonathan Winer (then-Special Envoy to Libya), who shared the summary with Victoria Nuland (then-Assistant Secretary for European Affairs), Jonathan Finer (then-Chief of Staff to the Secretary and Director of Policy Planning), and Anne Patterson (then-Assistant Secretary for Near Eastern Affairs). Finer likely briefed then-Secretary of State John Kerry at some point on the Steele allegations. Steele also met with Winer and then-Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Kathleen Kavalec in September and October to discuss his findings.

[6088] (U) *DOJ OIG FISA Report*, p. 292. Brackets in original.
[6089] (U) *Ibid.*
[6090] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 292.
[6091] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 293–294.
[6092] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 294. The Committee notes that Baker told the Committee during his interview that he was not aware of the extent of Ohr's involvement with Steele. Baker Tr., pp. 149–153.

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(U) Steele had established ties to Department of State officials, through his relationship with Winer. Winer described his early relationship with Steele as:

> *In 2009, after I had moved to APCO Worldwide and was still engaged in various types of Russian representation all over the map—some might be pro-Putin, some might be anti-Putin; it was any work that was consistent with their needs and my values—I met Christopher Steele, who had just left [British Government Service].*[6093]

(U) Winer said that he and Steele never formally worked together. According to Winer:

> *[Steele] never paid me anything. I never paid him anything. Our decision to try and work with one another and to stay in touch was based on mutual affinity in light of mutual knowledge and interest in . . . this esoteric topic [Russian organized crime].*[6094]

(U) Starting in 2013, Steele offered Winer, who was then at Department of State, reports he had written for clients on Russian-Ukrainian political leadership, economic issues, and political security.[6095] Winer showed them to Nuland, who asked Winer to share them with her Principal Deputy, Paul Jones.[6096] Winer recounted Nuland's reaction: "She said, these are good reports; they're valuable; keep them coming."[6097] Winer further said that State officials thought the reports were "shockingly real-time."[6098] Nuland, who said that she never met Steele, told the Committee, "I found his stuff to be 70, 75 percent accurate, credible…when he was off base, it generally looked to me, felt to me, like he had been paying human sources who were exaggerating or getting extra money by pumping up what they knew or extrapolating."[6099] The Department of State did not pay Steele for the reports,[6100] and the Committee does not know who Steele's private clients were.

[6093] [redacted] Winer Tr., p. 11. When asked whether he ever reported his contact with Steele to security officers, in the context of his security clearance at Department of State, Winer sai [redacted] I saw no need for any contact report, for both those reasons." Winer Tr. II, p. 25.

[6094] **(U)** Winer Tr., p.13.

[6095] **(U)** *Ibid.*, pp. 19, 24, 28.

[6096] **(U)** *Ibid.*, pp. 19–20. For example, *see* Email, Winer to [Sr. Admin. Associate to Amb. Brett McGurk], March 5, 2015 (CDP-2017-00011E-001810–1811).

[6097] **(U)** Winer Tr., pp. 19–20.

[6098] **(U)** *Ibid.*, p. 22.

[6099] **(U)** Nuland Tr., pp. 41–42.

[6100] **(U)** *Ibid.*, p. 45.

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(U) Between late 2013 and January of 2016,[6101] Steele provided at least 110 reports to Winer.[6102] Winer reported that he and his colleagues at State attempted to conceal the origin of the information to protect Steele and his sources. "We would denature it. It wouldn't say 'Orbis' any more. It would say 'O Report,' for example."[6103] Winer would also transfer the reports from State's unclassified systems to State's classified systems.[6104] Winer also said that:

> *None of these related to Trump, Manafort, or any other name that has emerged on the American side. None of this related to any American, period, or to any political person in the United States, period. It related to Ukrainians and Russians, nobody else. It was about their deal, about Crimea, Ukraine issues, Russia's undermining of Ukraine, the various stratagems of Ukrainian officials, various stratagems of Russian officials, Russia's economic problems as oil prices decreased, the strength or weaknesses of particular banks in terms of what they were facing, that kind of thing.*[6105]

(U) The frequency of these reports ebbed, then nearly stopped early in 2016. Winer told the Committee that Steele was no longer producing reports because his client stopped paying him, and that the client's "needs had been answered."[6106]

a. (U) The Dossier at Department of State

(U) As with previous Steele reports, Winer served as the main conduit for the dossier materials into the Department of State. Winer met Steele in D.C. in September 2016, and Steele conveyed the core of his election-related findings in an oral briefing.[6107] Winer told the Committee: "He was extraordinarily distressed about it. He also said he was as certain, if not more certain, about the information that he had acquired as anything he'd ever acquired in his career." When asked why Steele was so certain, Winer said "the amount of sourcing is my guess, but I don't know."[6108]

(U) Shortly thereafter, still in September, Winer asked the heads of Fusion GPS if he could read the actual documents. Fritsch and Simpson showed him the memos and let him take

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[6101] (U) Winer Tr., p. 24.
[6102] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 21–22.
[6103] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 21–22.
[6104] [redacted] *See infra* Vol. 5, Sec. IV.B.4.iv.
[6105] (U) Winer Tr., p. 27.
[6106] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 27, 29-30.
[6107] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 48.
[6108] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 37.

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notes. Winer said "I created a two-page document of the highlights from it for sharing with key people at the Department of State I thought would need to know."[6109]

(U) Winer shared his summary with Nuland, who directed Winer to share it with Finer, under the instruction that it not be shared with anyone other than Kerry.[6110] Winer told the Committee that he also shared it with Patterson, who was Winer's boss.[6111] In addition, Kavalec's notes from a September 27, 2016, meeting include references to "Orbis," "Winer," "20-30 reports," "Trump + Rs," "feeding Kremlin kompromat on R oligarchs," "wanted real estate," "prostitutes" and "Ritz Carlton."[6112]

(U) Nuland told the Committee that she was concerned about the information and suggested that in addition to it being shared with Finer, as Kerry's Chief of Staff, that Winer ask Steele whether Steele would be willing to be interviewed by CIA or FBI.[6113] In Winer's recollection, Nuland immediately asked him whether FBI also had the information; Winer responded that he didn't know. Winer relayed to the Committee that:

> *[Nuland] had some conversation with the FBI and became convinced their wires were not fully integrated, that there were different people in the Bureau who didn't have access to the same information, and that they needed to be brought together so they could deal with it as an institution.*[6114]

(U) Related to these inquiries, Steele told Winer about the upcoming meeting in [redacted] in early October 2016 with FBI personnel and said he was in contact with the FBI Legal Attaché in [redacted].[6115]

(U) Finer told the Committee that he got a roughly four- or five-page summary of the dossier's contents from Winer, perhaps in August, but his memory of the date was unclear.[6116] Winer remembered Finer briefing Kerry in September.[6117] Finer said he treated it as extremely sensitive:

[6109] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 49. Other witnesses, in particular Victoria Nuland and Jonathan Finer, remembered a four-page summary document. Nuland Tr., p. 44; Finer Tr., p. 32.
[6110] (U) Nuland Tr., p. 44.
[6111] (U) Winer Tr., p. 50.
[6112] (U) Kavalec, handwritten notes (CDP-2017-00011F-000160).
[6113] (U) Nuland Tr., pp. 44–50.
[6114] (U) Winer Tr., p. 52.
[6115] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 52–53.
[6116] (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Jonathan Finer, July 11, 2017, p. 32.
[6117] (U) Winer Tr., pp. 51–52.

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I locked it up in my safe every night. I don't think I briefed anyone at the State Department on it at all other than Secretary Kerry. And I didn't even tell him right away . . . I wasn't honestly sure what to make of it, because Jonathan [Winer] I think had a relationship with Steele or knew Steele or trusted him. I didn't [have a relationship with Steele] and some of the stuff in there . . . is pretty salacious and shocking. So what I didn't want was to get the Secretary of State all spun up about something that I didn't know how to vouch for or validate. But at a certain point, when I got the sense that lots of other people in Washington had this, I didn't also want to leave him in the dark.[6118]

(U) When Finer told Secretary Kerry about the allegations, he contextualized his briefing as "I don't have any way to know what in here is true or not true; I don't know that this requires or suggests any action on our part." He told the Committee, "my advice was, let's just leave this with [FBI] and see what happens."[6119] Secretary Kerry told the Committee that he remembered hearing rumors, but he did not recall being briefed or otherwise learning about the existence of the dossier prior to its publication, a discrepancy the Committee was unable to resolve.[6120]

b. (U) October Meeting at State

(U) On October 11, 2016, Steele met with Winer and Kavalec at the Department of State.[6121] It is unclear how the meeting was initiated. Winer likely set up the meetings, judging from his long-time role as an interlocutor between Steele and the Department of State, his signing Steele into the building,[6122] his name appearing in Kavalec's notes from the meeting,[6123] and Steele's assertion that Winer invited him to the Department of State to brief.[6124] Steele indicated in his written answers to the Committee that he thought he would meet Nuland, but she intentionally avoided the meeting.[6125] Nuland told the Committee she "made a conscious decision to have a cut-out relationship with [Steele], again because I'm worried about any perception that I'm involved in something that could come back to be a Hatch Act violation."[6126]

[6118] (U) Finer Tr., p. 33.
[6119] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 34.
[6120] (U) SSCI Memorandum, Staff interview with Former Secretary Kerry, October 27, 2017.
[6121] (U) State, Virtual Reading Room Documents "Notes from Meeting with Chris Steele and Tatyana Duran of Orbis Security," Ocotber 11, 2016.
[6122] (U) Visitor log entry from Department of State, October 11, 2016 (CDP-2017-00011F-000530) (indicating that Winer signed for Steele's entry to the Department of State; Winer Tr. II, p. 27.
[6123] (U) State, Virtual Reading Room Documents "Notes from Meeting with Chris Steele and Tatyana Duran of Orbis Security," October 11, 2016; Kavalec, handwritten notes (CDP-2017-00011F-000162).
[6124] (U) Written Responses, Steele, August 16, 2018.
[6125] (U) *Ibid.*
[6126] (U) Nuland Tr., p. 45.

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(U) In his first interview with the Committee, Winer discussed how he shared a summary of Steele's reports within the Department of State and his other activities in September or October of 2016,[6127] but he omitted facilitating meetings between Steele and U.S. Government officials during September and October 2016. However, in his second interview, when shown visitor logs from the Department of State listing Steele as his visitor, Winer said he remembered bringing Steele to the Department of State but did not recall when.[6128] Winer recalled that: Steele "wanted to meet someone in the Russia territory of the Department of State, in light of the information he had."[6129] As a result, Winer said he "touched base with [Nuland] and she was out, and so Kathy agreed to take the meeting."[6130] Winer recalled that at the meeting between Steele and Kavalec:

> *I think [Steele] provided a summary of what he'd already provided me earlier relating to the dossier. But I don't remember any of the details at this point at all. I remember where the meeting took place. The only meeting I recollect him having was with Kathy Kavalec. I remember it being in her office, and . . . I escorted him to her office. And it was about the Russia intrusion into our election system and the question of whether there'd been Russian compromise.*[6131]

(U) Steele stated in his written responses to the Committee that he met with Kavalec and Winer for about an hour.[6132] According to Steele, they talked about the substance of the dossier but Steele did not show Kavalec the memos nor did he bring them to the meeting.[6133] Kavalec's notes from the meeting reflect that substance. They also mention that a "Tatyana Duran" from "Orbis Security" attended the meeting.[6134] Winer understood that Duran worked for Steele as a researcher.[6135]

(U) Kavalec's notes outline many of the dossier's major themes and allegations. For example, a typed version of her notes shows "the Russians have not needed to use that

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[6127] (U) Winer Tr., pp. 50-51.
[6128] (U) State, visitor logs, October 11, 2016 (CDP-2017-0011F000530); Winer Tr. II, p. 27. Before he saw the logs, Winer answered the question "Did you help facilitate any meetings with Mr. Steele and U.S. Government officials during September and October 2016?" by saying "I don't think so." *Ibid.*, p. 8. In addition to the October 2016 meeting, Winer believed he may have facilitated a meeting at the Department of State between Steele and Paul Jones, although Winer was uncertain if such a meeting had occurred. Winer stated that if it had, it was prior to any work Steele had done related to Trump. Winer Tr. II, pp. 27–28.
[6129] (U) Winer Tr. II, p. 37.
[6130] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 37.
[6131] (U) Winer Tr. II, pp. 30–31.
[6132] (U) Written Responses, Steele, August 16, 2018.
[6133] (U) *Ibid.*
[6134] (U) State, Virtual Reading Room Documents "Notes from Meeting with Chris Steele and Tatyana Duran of Orbis Security," Ocotber 11, 2016.
[6135] (U) Winer Tr. II, p. 38.

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'kompromat' on [Trump] as he was already interested in cooperation," and "Manafort has been the go-between with the campaign," and "Ivanov persuaded Putin it was possible to use the hacked information and run an operation without being detected, while others argued against it." Further, Kavalec's notes reflect some sourcing information, such as, "Steele also mentioned an émigré Amcit by the name of Serge Millian who may be involved in some day [sic]. Steele noted Millian had left the U.S. and seemed to have disappeared."[6136]

(U) Department of State officials did not specify to the Committee any particular actions they took on the substance of the dossier, other than to ask FBI if they were engaging with Steele and investigating the allegations about Alfa Bank's relationship with Putin. Nuland told the Committee that she found those allegations, as outlined in the dossier, unlikely to be true.[6137] Nuland said, regarding Alfa Bank in particular: "[the FBI said] we've looked at it; we don't think there's anything. And we said: Okay. This is not our job. Our job is working with Russia. So as long as the right people are talking to the right people, fine."[6138]

(U) After Steele's memos were published in the press in January 2017, Steele asked Winer to make note of having them, then either destroy all the earlier reports Steele had sent the Department of State or return them to Steele, out of concern that someone would be able to reconstruct his source network. Winer told the Committee, "So I destroyed them, and I basically destroyed all the correspondence I had with him" on Winer's personal devices.[6139] Department of State was able to produce for the Committee, from their archives, many Steele memos from 2015 and some from 2016, but most of his reports from 2014 are missing.

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iii. (U) McCain and Kramer

[6136] **(U)** State, Virtual Reading Room Documents "Notes from Meeting with Chris Steele and Tatyana Duran of Orbis Security," October 11, 2016. For complete handwritten notes, *see* Kavalec, handwritten notes (CDP-2017-00011F-000162–172). Another typed version of Kavalec's notes also lists information that appeared in the dossier, *see* Kavalec, handwritten notes (CDP-2017-00011F-000389-390).

[6137] **(U)** Nuland Tr., p.42.

[6138] **(U)** *Ibid.*, p. 51.

[6139] **(U)** Winer Tr., p. 62; Winer noted, "I also in the same period of time, by the way, in accordance with State Department strictures, destroyed essentially every email I had from the State Department during my tenure, because I'm not supposed to retain anything relating to my State Department work. That's owned by the government; it's not owned by me." *Ibid.*, pp. 62-63.

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(U) After FBI had cut ties with Steele, and Trump won the election, Steele sought another audience to help ensure that FBI was pursuing his information: Senator John McCain. Simpson told the Committee that Steele approached him around Thanksgiving and raised the idea of talking to David Kramer, a longtime aid to McCain, as an intermediary with the Senator.[6141] Simpson also knew Kramer, who had once given Simpson some information on Deripaska: "I had to deal with him when I broke a story [in 2007] about Deripaska being excluded from the United States, the fact that he couldn't get a visa, and that he was lobbying to get his visa restrictions lifted."[6142] Simpson told Steele that Kramer was "on the right side of the Russia issue" and that they could trust him.[6143]

(U) Sir Andrew Wood, former British Ambassador to Russia and Yugoslavia and an associate of Orbis,[6144] approached Kramer, who introduced him to Senator McCain on November 19, 2016, in Halifax, at an annual conference there, to describe Steele's research.[6145] Kramer told the Committee that he had known Wood for a few years, and that he has "enormous respect" for him.[6146] At Senator McCain's direction, Kramer traveled to London on November 28, 2016.[6147] Kramer told the Committee that Wood "arranged for Steele to meet me at Heathrow airport."[6148] Kramer continued:

> *The whole purpose was for me to convey [the memos] to Senator McCain . . . [Steele] was very concerned with what he had discovered and felt that having Senator McCain do whatever it was that Senator McCain might decide to do would be a necessary push to get this taken more seriously.*[6149]

(U) Kramer read the memos and reviewed Steele's source list sitting at Steele's dining room table.[6150] Kramer did not take any documents with him.[6151] Kramer said that he was informed by Steele that Steele had given the memos to the FBI through a contact, but that communication with the FBI had "abruptly ended a month or so" before Kramer flew to London

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[6141] (U) Simpson Tr., pp. 146–147.
[6142] (U) *Ibid.*
[6143] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 147.
[6144] (U) Defence, *Aleksej Gubarev, et al, and Orbis Business Intelligence Ltd., et al.*, Claim No HQ17D00413 (High Court of Justice April 4 2017).
[6145] (U) Written Responses, Kramer, August 25, 2017.
[6146] (U) Kramer Tr., p. 6.
[6147] (U) Written Responses, Kramer, August 25, 2017; Kramer Tr., p. 5.
[6148] (U) Kramer Tr., p. 6.
[6149] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 8.
[6150] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 26
[6151] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 26

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[redacted]

to meet with him.[6152] Kramer did not indicate if he knew why Steele's affiliation with FBI had ended.

(U) The next day, when Kramer arrived back in the United States, he met with Simpson at Steele's request.[6153] Simpson gave Kramer two copies of the dossier—one redacted and one not.[6154] Kramer recalled that the redacted version had only 20 pages, while the unredacted version, which he had first read in London, consisted of 33 pages.[6155] Simpson told the Committee that "I walked [Kramer] through this and told him we didn't know whether a lot of stuff was true, but that we knew a lot of stuff—I remember talking to him about my suspicion that the Russians were also helping Trump in the primaries."[6156] Simpson refused to provide additional information about Kramer, again citing First Amendment privilege.[6157]

(U) On November 30, 2016, Kramer gave unredacted copies of the memos to McCain.[6158] According to Kramer, McCain directed him to share the information with Celeste Wallander, who was then Senior Director for Russian and Eurasian Affairs at the National Security Council.[6159] Kramer recalled that he at first just discussed the dossier with Wallander, but that later she received a copy.[6160] McCain gave a copy to FBI Director Comey on December 9, 2016, and mentioned the contents of the dossier to Chairman Richard Burr, who in turn spoke to Comey to confirm FBI's awareness of the allegations.[6161]

(U) Kramer discussed and, in some cases, eventually passed copies of the dossier to several other individuals, some of whom were journalists.[6162] Kramer recalled that Steele had requested he speak with two other individuals who were not in government and who had previously contacted Steele. Kramer said that Steele "had reached a point where he didn't want

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[6152] (U) Written Responses, Kramer, August 25, 2017.
[6153] (U) Kramer Tr., p. 4.
[6154] (U) Written Responses, Kramer, August 25, 2017.
[6155] (U) *Ibid.*
[6156] (U) Simpson Tr., pp. 148.
[6157] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 153.
[6158] (U) Kramer Tr., p. 4–5.
[6159] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 13; *Crime in Progress*, p. 141.
[6160] (U) Kramer Tr., p. 13.
[6161] (U) *DOJ OIG FISA Report*, p. 180. The DOJ OIG cites Comey's email to his staff, which reads in part: "I added [to DNI Clapper] that I believed that the material, in some form or fashion, had been widely circulated in Washington and that Senator McCain had delivered to me a copy of the reports and Senator Burr had mentioned to me the part about Russian knowledge of sexual activity by the President-Elect while in Russia."
[6162] (U) *DOJ OIG FISA Report*, p. 178. According to Steele's written responses to the Committee, he also gave information from the dossier to a British national security official and to Strobe Talbott, who was then at the Brookings Institution, with the intent that Talbott would share the memos with senior U.S. Government officials. *See* Written Responses, Steele, August 16, 2018. The Committee does not know how Talbott received the documents or if Talbott further shared them.

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to talk to other people about it. So he requested that I do so."[6163] In his written answers, Kramer put his communications regarding the dossier in the context of news outlets already having the information.[6164]

(U) According to Kramer, several news outlets, including *Mother Jones*, *The Guardian*, *The Washington Post*, and *ABC News*, contacted Kramer. His interpretation was that these outlets had already either seen or had copies of the memos.[6165] According to Kramer, the outlets had also heard, "not from me, that I had given the memos to Sen. McCain. I confirmed that indeed I had."[6166] Kramer also knew that Steele and Simpson had given "a version of the memos to the *New York Times* but were frustrated that the paper had not done, in their view, anything with them."[6167] In response to subsequent foreign litigation, Kramer has stated that Steele requested that Kramer meet with *BuzzFeed*, and that Steele had neither asked nor prohibited Kramer from sharing a copy of the dossier with *BuzzFeed*.[6168] As part of the same litigation, Kramer stated that Steele was aware that Kramer was also sharing the dossier with *The Washington Post*.[6169]

(U) In mid-December 2016, Simpson gave Kramer the final two pages of the dossier, which are dated December 13.[6170] In total, Kramer had a series of 17 memos totaling 35 pages, dated from June 20, 2016 and ending with December 13, 2016.[6171]

(U) Kramer says he spoke with Steele a total of eight to ten times, almost entirely by phone. Their last contact was in late February or early March of 2017.[6172]

iv. (U) Simpson's and Steele's Efforts to Brief the Press

(U) Over the late summer and into the fall of 2016, as Steele was sharing his findings with the FBI, DOJ, and Department of State, Glenn Simpson was briefing members of the press corps on Steele's research, sometimes with Steele present. Marc Elias, Simpson's client for the work, represented to the Committee through counsel that he had not authorized Fusion GPS to share research in the dossier with journalists.[6173] The conversations with the press eventually

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[6163] (U) Kramer Tr., p. 27.
[6164] (U) Written Responses, Kramer, August 25, 2017.
[6165] (U) *Ibid.*
[6166] (U) *Ibid.*
[6167] (U) *Ibid.*
[6168] (U) *DOJ OIG FISA Report*, p. 178.
[6169] (U) *Ibid.*
[6170] (U) Kramer Tr., p. 4; Written Responses, Kramer, August 25, 2017.
[6171] (U) Written Responses, Kramer, August 25, 2017.
[6172] (U) *Ibid.*
[6173] (U) Attorney Proffer, Elias, May 21, 2018.

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culminated in a *Mother Jones* article on October 31 summarizing the allegations and in *BuzzFeed* publishing most of the contents of the dossier on January 11, 2017.

a. (U) Initial Briefings for the Press

(U) In early August, Simpson and Fritsch traveled to New York to meet with *New Yorker* editor David Remnick and features editor Daniel Zalewski. Later that day they gave the same briefing to two editors at *Reuters*.[6174] In September and October 2016, Simpson and Steele gave two off the record briefings to small groups of reporters from major media outlets at gatherings in Washington, D.C.[6175] Neither Simpson nor Steele would identify for the Committee which outlets.[6176] Steele and Simpson both stated that contacting the press was Simpson's initiative.[6177] Simpson told the Committee that he did not provide the actual memos to reporters, because "if you thought that this information might be genuine, you wouldn't be passing it to a bunch of different journalists, because people could get killed."[6178]

(U) According to Simpson, he and Steele intended to provide leads, not for news outlets to report on the dossier itself. Simpson's goal was for reporters to "do their own journalism" and "to ask the government whether the government's doing its job."[6179] According to Simpson:

> *[T]he general reaction was: "You're not expecting me to write a story about this, are you? Because you've got this anonymous [person] telling me a bunch of wild stuff for which you have no documentation, and you're not willing to go on the record, and I don't even know who's paying."*[6180]

(U) Simpson continued the briefings, despite those reactions, because he wanted to "educate" the media and he "figured it was going to be a big issue later and that no one was going to say boo about this in the final weeks of a presidential election."[6181]

b. (U) Renewed Press Briefings: *Mother Jones* and *The New York Times*

(U) FBI Director Comey's decision to publicly reopen the investigation into Hillary Clinton's emails affected Simpson's and Steele's calculus as well as their sense of urgency. On Friday, October 28, 2016, Director Comey sent a letter to Congress disclosing that the FBI had

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[6174] **(U)** *Crime in Progress*, pp. 98-99.
[6175] **(U)** Simpson Tr., pp. 126–127; Written Responses, Steele, August 16, 2018.
[6176] **(U)** Simpson Tr., pp. 126–127; Written Responses, Steele, August 16, 2018.
[6177] **(U)** Simpson Tr., p. 130; Written Responses, Steele, August 16, 2018.
[6178] **(U)** Simpson Tr., p. 139.
[6179] **(U)** *Ibid.*, p. 128.
[6180] **(U)** *Ibid.*, p. 131.
[6181] **(U)** *Ibid.*

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possibly found additional emails that "appear to be pertinent" to the Clinton email investigation.[6182] The following Monday, October 31, David Corn published an article in *Mother Jones* entitled "A Veteran Spy has Given the FBI Information Alleging a Russian Operation to Cultivate Donald Trump."[6183] As described above, Steele told [redacted] that he had gone to *Mother Jones* because he was upset about Director Comey's October 28 letter and about the FBI's reopening of the Clinton investigation.[6184]

(U) Winer told the Committee that he thought Steele "got increasingly personally concerned about the Russia relationship" because Steele "believed what was in [the dossier]."[6185] According to Winer, "In October [Steele] got to the point where he wanted people to know about it."[6186] Simpson told the Committee that "I'm sure more than half of America will never believe this, but it really wasn't a thing where we were trying to use this information to win the election, because we thought—we already thought we were going to win the election.[6187] However, according to Bruce Ohr, it was Simpson who asked Steele to speak with a reporter from *Mother Jones*.[6188] Ohr understood that having Steele speak with the reporter was Simpson's "Hail Mary attempt" to stop Trump from being elected.[6189] Simpson and Fritsch said in their book that they briefed additional reporters in mid-December.[6190]

c. (U) *BuzzFeed* Published the Dossier on January 10, 2017

(U) On Tuesday, January 10, 2017, Ken Bensinger published an article in *BuzzFeed* entitled "These Reports Allege Trump Has Deep Ties to Russia," which included a link to images of most of Steele's memos.[6191]

[6182] (U) Letter, Comey to Chairmen and Ranking Members, October 28, 2016 ("Due to recent developments, I am writing to supplement my previous testimony. In connection with an unrelated case, the FBI has learned of the existence of emails that appear to be pertinent to the investigation. I am writing to inform you that the investigative team briefed me on this yesterday, and I agreed that the FBI should take appropriate investigative steps designed to allow investigators to review these emails.").

[6183] (U) David Corn, "A Veteran Spy Has Given the FBI Information Alleging a Russian Operation to Cultivate Donald Trump," *Mother Jones,* October 31, 2016.

[6184] (U) [redacted] Tr., pp. 82–83.

[6185] (U) Winer Tr., p. 69.

[6186] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 69.

[6187] (U) Simpson Tr., pp. p. 129.

[6188] (U) *DOJ OIG FISA Report*, p. 287.

[6189] (U) *Ibid.*

[6190] (U) *Crime in Progress*, p. 139-141.

[6191] (U) Ken Bensinger, et al., "These Reports Allege Trump Has Deep Ties to Russia," *BuzzFeed News*, January 10, 2017.

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(U) Kramer described Steele's reaction to the *BuzzFeed* article as "shocked," and told the Committee that Steele "knew he was probably going to have to go into hiding."[6192] Winer similarly characterized Steele as "beside himself" and very concerned for his sources.[6193] As noted above, Steele asked Winer to return or destroy any copies of the dossier material that Winer had in his possession; Winer said he destroyed the material and all correspondence he had with Steele on Winer's personal device, as he did with all Department of State communications on that device when he left the Department.[6194]

d. (U) *The Wall Street Journal* Publishes Steele's Identity

(U) On January 11, 2017, the day after the *BuzzFeed* article, Kramer contacted *The Wall Street Journal*, because he had "received a tip from a friend at the *Journal*" that the paper was planning to publish Steele's name.[6195] Kramer told the Committee that he spoke with two editors in an attempt to prevent them from publishing Steele's name, and "tried to stress that putting his name out there would put him in grave danger, but they didn't seem to care."[6196] Later that day, *The Wall Street Journal* published an article entitled, "Christopher Steele, Ex-British Intelligence Officer, Said to Have Prepared Dossier on Trump."[6197] The article identified Steele as "the author of the dossier of unverified allegations about President-elect Donald Trump," a "director of London-based Orbis Business Intelligence Ltd." and "a former British Intelligence officer."[6198]

v. [redacted] A Summary of the Dossier is Attached as an Annex to the Compartmented Version of the Intelligence Community Assessment

(U) In late December 2016, when the IC wrote a comprehensive assessment on "Russian Activities and Intentions in Recent US Elections," FBI insisted that the authors include a summary of the dossier. FBI leaders believed the information was responsive to the President's tasking, even though FBI had officially broken ties with Steele and had corroborated very little of the information. The IC did not use the dossier to reach the conclusions in the assessment.

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[6192] (U) Kramer Tr., p. 30.
[6193] (U) Winer Tr., p. 61.
[6194] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 62.-63
[6195] (U) Kramer Tr., p. 30.
[6196] (U) *Ibid.*
[6197] (U) Bradley Hope, et al., "Christopher Steele, Ex-British Intelligence Officer, Said to Have Prepared dossier on Trump," *The Wall Street Journal*, January 11, 2017.
[6198] (U) *Ibid.*

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[redacted] As previously mentioned, the dossier material was not used in the ICA and did not contribute to its findings.

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vi. (U) Dan Jones

(U) Dan Jones, a former FBI analyst and former SSCI staffer, worked with Steele and Fusion GPS in 2017.[6200] Jones, as head of the Penn Quarter Group, and then as head of The Democracy Integrity Project (TDIP), appears to have contacted Steele in 2017 regarding Russian interference in the 2016 election.[6201] As of March 26, 2018, Steele appeared to be a contractor for Jones's TDIP projects.[6202]

- (U) Jones said that he was first introduced to Steele in 2017, after Orbis began contracting for TDIP, but declined to answer any questions about how that introduction

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[6199] (U) For an in-depth discussion of the negotiation over and creation of the annex, *see infra* Vol. 4.
[6200] (U) HPSCI, *Report on Russian Active Measures,* March 22, 2018, pg. 113. fn. 5. Due to Jones's prior relationship with some Committee staff conducting the investigation on behalf of the Chairman and Vice Chairman, a limited subset of Committee staff who had no prior relationship with Jones conducted Jones's interview, to avoid any conflicts of interest.
[6201] (U) *Ibid.*
[6202] (U) Jones Tr., p. 17–20.

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took place,[6203] whether he knew of any of Steele's subsources,[6204] whether he had spoken with the FBI about Steele,[6205] or whether he had ever given the FBI a thumb drive of the research he himself had conducted.[6206] Simpson refused to answer any questions about any contractual work with Jones.[6207]

- (U) Jones told the Committee that he "wasn't aware of any work that Steele did outside of what was publicly known at the time in 2016" and that he had "no special access or information on Steele's activities" prior to 2017.[6208]

- (U) Jones told the Committee he had met Winer once, in January 2017, to discuss a project unrelated to Jones's work, and that they had been introduced by Steele, who Jones referred to as a "professional associate."[6209]

[redacted] During an FBI interview on March 28, 2017, Jones said his Penn Quarter Group had contracted with Steele, Burrows, and Fusion GPS to expose Russian interference in the 2016 U.S. presidential election.[6210] Jones further indicated to the FBI that "he had possible access to a witness that could share direct knowledge of information in support of Chris Steele's published Trump/Russia manifesto."[6211] Jones did not share this fact with the Committee during his interview, and the Committee has no further information on who the "witness" might be.

(U) Jones indicated that, separate from Steele's work for him on TDIP matters, he attempted to serve as an intermediary between the Committee and Steele in response to the Committee's attempts to interview Steele.[6212] Winer was also under the impression that Jones was communicating to the Committee on Steele's behalf.[6213] To further those liaison efforts, Steele introduced Jones to Waldman in March of 2017; Jones recounted his and Waldman's conversation: "[Waldman] spoke with me about his relationship with Vice Chairman Warner at great length." Jones added, "Waldman told me he was going to

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[6203] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 17–20. Jones declined to respond to these questions, among others, on advice of his counsel, who asserted that Jones would not be answering questions that would jeopardize the "confidentiality" of TDIP's work. *See, e.g., ibid.*, pp. 21–22.
[6204] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 17–20.
[6205] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 22.
[6206] (U) *Ibid.*, p. 24.
[6207] (U) Simpson Tr., pp. pp. 183–184. Simpson's attorneys stated: "[I]nsofar as Mr. Jones and any entity affiliated with Jones and Fusion GPS have a contractual relationship, it's a confidential client matter and he's going to decline to answer questions."
[6208] (U) Jones Tr., p. 23.
[6209] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 17–20.
[6210] [redacted] Jones refused to discuss this contract with the Committee.
[6211] (U) *Ibid.*
[6212] (U) Jones Tr., pp. 26–32.
[6213] (U) Winer Tr., p. 70.

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a hockey game in Washington, D.C., that night with the Vice Chairman; and he would mention to the Vice Chairman [arranging] a meeting between the Committee and Steele or providing information from Steele to the Committee."[6214]

(U) Following the meeting, Jones "did not think it wise to continue the relationship" with Waldman. He implied, but did not state outright, that he was concerned about Waldman's link to Deripaska, and he also said that he thought Waldman lacked credibility and was unsure if Waldman actually represented Steele.[6215]

(U) Jones declined to discuss with the Committee any other instances during which he may have negotiated or been authorized to negotiate on Steele's behalf.[6216] Steele's counsel made very clear to the Committee that only Steele's counsel was authorized to enter into any agreements with the Committee on Steele's behalf.[6217]

(U) The exceedingly limited amount of useful information Jones provided during his interview about TDIP's structure, operations, and funding renders the Committee's complete and accurate portrayal of the organization and its work an impossibility.[6218] However, an abundance of detail concerning the inner workings of TDIP appears to have been furnished in support of Simpson and Fritsch's *Crime in Progress*.[6219]

[6214] (U) Jones Tr., pp. 45–48
[6215] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 47–49, 54–57.
[6216] (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 26–32.
[6217] (U) Email, [Steele's counsel] to SSCI, October 13, 2017.
[6218] (U) Jones shared some limited information about the makeup of TDIP's board, its mission, and the general characteristics of its donors. Jones identified himself, Adam Kaufman, and Michael Belasio as TDIP's board members, described TDIP's mission as being "to investigate foreign interference in elections around the world," and characterized TDIP as a nonprofit organization funded by nonpartisan donors. Jones Tr., pp. 8–11.
[6219] (U) *Crime in Progress*.

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V. (U) RECOMMENDATIONS

(U) The Committee's inquiry highlighted several ways in which hostile actors were able to capitalize on gaps in laws or norms and exert influence. Those areas included unclear laws regarding foreign advocacy, flawed assumptions about what intelligence activity looks like, and a campaign's status as a private entity intertwined with the structures of democracy. Further, the freedom of expression at the root of our democratic society became an opportunity for Russian influence to hide in plain sight.

(U) The Committee's recommendations, outlined below, present a variety of paths through which Congress, the executive branch, and private entities and individuals can and should begin to respond to these threats, both jointly and independently. These recommendations, however, do not mark the end of the Committee's work in this space, which requires ongoing vigilance by the United States government and further consideration of legislative and policy responses. To that end, the Committee will continue to evaluate and consider the results of this investigation as part of its ongoing oversight and legislative responsibilities and its efforts to understand and address malign foreign interference targeting U.S. democratic processes.

1. (U) Review, Update, and Enforce the Foreign Agents Registration Act and Related Statutes

(U) The Committee recommends that Congress update the Foreign Agents Registration Act (FARA), and that the Department of Justice (DOJ) clarify the statute's requirements by issuing public guidance on enforcement and more stringently enforcing the existing statute. FARA was enacted over 80 years ago, in large part to target Nazi propaganda. FARA seeks to aid the U.S. Government and the American people in understanding and evaluating the activities, statements, and motives of individuals and entities functioning as agents of foreign principals in the United States. Since that time, Congress has made some modifications to the statute to increase transparency with respect to lawyers and lobbyists who also engage in political activity on behalf of foreign powers inside the United States. However, loopholes still exist, and foreign actors exploited those loopholes in 2016. The Committee's investigation revealed a number of lawyers, public relations experts, businesses, political consultants, and campaign operatives working in the United States in coordination with, or at the request of, foreign principals. Many of these individuals and businesses did not register under FARA.

- (U) DOJ should increase enforcement of FARA. For years, DOJ failed to pursue criminal penalties for even the most flagrant violations of the statute. While recent enforcement efforts have resulted in several successful criminal prosecutions, the Committee found numerous incidents where FARA registrations were excessively delayed, retroactive, incomplete, inaccurate, or otherwise insufficient to accomplish the objectives of the law.

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- (U) DOJ should publish comprehensive public guidance on FARA. In part as a result of limited enforcement, the public has insufficient information about the statute's scope and application. DOJ's interpretation of the statute is largely untested and undefined. While DOJ has made efforts to publish more information about its interpretation of the statute, including through the publication of advisory opinions, these are overly redacted and incomplete. Comprehensive public guidance has been beneficial for other similarly-situated statutes, and those publications, such as DOJ's *Resource Guide to the U.S. Foreign Corrupt Practices Act,* may serve as a helpful model in issuing useful and practical guidance on FARA.

- (U) Congress should update FARA to more clearly define the activities covered by the statute. This may include narrowing or redefining the breadth of some provisions, such as those that may apply to purely foreign consulting, while strengthening other provisions, such as activities targeting the U.S. Government or the American people.

- (U) Congress should remove the Lobbying Disclosure Act (LDA) exemption to FARA registration. Currently, FARA registrants for foreign principals who are not themselves foreign governments or political parties may register under the LDA regime rather than the more comprehensive registration regime under FARA. The Committee found that individuals not formally affiliated with a foreign government may nonetheless sufficiently represent that government's interest, even if that government is not the principal beneficiary, to merit the application of FARA's heightened requirements.

(U) Congress should also examine whether other foreign agent laws and the Espionage Act need to be updated to more effectively address the reality of modern intelligence operations targeting the United States.

- (U) For example, 18 U.S.C. § 951 makes it a crime to operate as an agent of a foreign government, to include an agent with respect to non-political activity, without first notifying the Attorney General. While DOJ has generally reserved prosecutions under this statute for behavior that resembles espionage, the statute's overlap with FARA and its general scope may need refined and updated. 18 U.S.C. § 219 provides criminal penalties for a public official of the United States to be or act as an agent of a foreign principal required to register under FARA. Together, these and other interrelated law make up a patchwork of overlapping and ill-defined prohibitions that are overdue for a more thorough review.

(U) Although DOJ makes FARA registration filings publicly available on its website, there is no obligation on registrants to disclose this information when they are engaged in covered political activities. As a result, the registration materials do little to further the statute's goal of transparency for the American public. This lack of transparency is especially acute in the

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media space, where messaging by a single FARA registrant has the potential to reach millions of Americans.

- (U) Congress should amend FARA to mandate, or the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) and other relevant authorities should impose a requirement, that FARA-registered news agencies operating in the United States provide clear, prominent, and regular notifications to audiences regarding the outlet's FARA-registered status. Transparency should be affirmatively provided to audiences on a regular basis so that the American public is able to make informed decisions about information consumption.

- (U) In addition, all U.S. media outlets should clearly label or otherwise identify content that appears in connection with FARA-registered work, even if it comes in the form of an opinion column. It is the ultimate responsibility of the editorial staff at U.S. media outlets to understand the origins of the information that their journalists and outside contributors are promoting, and to inform their audiences when that information is in some way sponsored or influenced by a foreign agent.

- (U) More broadly, all U.S. media outlets should clearly label opinion content as such, in particular when opinion content, in tone or in format, could be mistaken for journalistic reporting.

2. (U) Recognize Russia's Use of Non-Traditional Intelligence Actors for Influence

(U) The Russian government treats oligarchs, organized crime, and associated businesses as tools of the state, rather than independent, private entities. The Kremlin uses these entities to pursue Kremlin priorities, including money laundering, sanctions evasion, and influence operations. This is a fundamentally different model than in the United States.

- (U) While U.S. companies can and should conduct business as they see fit within the bounds of the law, they should proceed with maximum caution when doing business in Russia. Business exchanges can be a vehicle for compromise of electronic devices, collection of compromising information for influence efforts, theft of proprietary business information, and recruitment by intelligence services. Such efforts can be overt or covert, and can target national security information and hamper the competitiveness of U.S. companies. American business leaders need to understand that they, too, are a target and take precautions.

- (U) Politically-active U.S. organizations, including non-profits and advocacy groups, should likewise recognize that they can also be, and likely are, targeted by foreign intelligence services. Although the known targeting in 2016 was directed toward conservative organizations, organizations of all political and ideological stripes should be prepared for it. Hostile foreign governments may seek to influence U.S. policy in foreign

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affairs, energy and environmental policy, military conflict, and others matters involving international relations, through indirect channels like these. Leadership in such organizations should consider conducting due diligence, as appropriate, when dealing with counterparts from adversarial countries, and adopting sound cyber security practices to protect their networks and sensitive information.

- [redacted] Just as business leaders need to recognize their counterparts may be extensions of the Russian state, the U.S. Government should similarly treat non-governmental entities close to the Kremlin as legitimate targets for intelligence collection and surveillance. The U.S. Government needs the tools and authorities in place to determine whether a non-governmental entity is operating on behalf of the Russian state and mitigate the counterintelligence threat, particularly if that entity seeks to operate in the United States or allied countries. These tools and authorities should augment the entire spectrum of U.S. Government activities, including to the ability to deny visas, the ability to conduct surveillance akin to that used against suspected intelligence officers, and the ability to target financial operations, such as the ability to deny transactions or seize assets.

3. (U) Protect Campaigns from Foreign Influence Efforts

(U) As part of its counterintelligence mission, FBI should offer defensive briefings to all presidential campaigns, including during the primaries, for both candidates and staff. FBI should provide detailed briefings as specific issues arise. When nominees are official, FBI should undertake a renewed effort to educate campaigns—from leadership to schedulers—about the avenues of influence adversaries use. These briefings should include specific, if hypothetical, examples and clear defensive steps campaigns can take. FBI has traditionally delivered these briefings as brief conversations; given the aggressive efforts Russia undertook in 2016 and the likelihood of similar future efforts by Russia and others, these conversations should cover cybersecurity best practices and how to recognize approaches that are outside ordinary relationship building.

(U) Future presidential campaigns should perform thorough vetting of staff, particularly those staff who have responsibilities that entail interacting with foreign governments. Diligence, experience, and caution are all the more critical when interacting with representatives of adversaries' governments.

(U) Campaigns should recognize that campaign staff are attractive targets for foreign intelligence services, and that staff who have not previously been sensitized to counterintelligence threats are especially vulnerable to targeting and exploitation. Presidential campaigns should require staff who interact with foreign governments to receive counterintelligence training from the FBI. Further, that staff should report to designated campaign leadership any foreign contacts, including any offers of foreign assistance, so that the

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campaign can recognize patterns in foreign outreach. Campaigns should institute a centralized reporting structure to ensure that suspicious contacts with foreign governments or their proxies are documented and can be shared with law enforcement when appropriate, in a timely and accurate manner. This information would assist U.S. counterintelligence efforts to more quickly identify patterns and a clearer picture of nation-level threats. FBI and law enforcement should treat the information passed by campaigns as extremely sensitive, and protect the information from inadvertent disclosure, such as by limiting the number of personnel with access. In addition, a full understanding of the problem will encourage law enforcement agencies to pass defensive information back to campaigns.

(U) To facilitate these activities, campaigns should designate specific individuals to be responsible for counterintelligence and for cybersecurity issues. These individuals should be clearly identified within the campaign as a point of contact for security-related questions or concerns, but will also serve as an accountable entry point for the FBI's interaction and information sharing with the campaign.

(U) Campaigns should notify FBI of all foreign offers of assistance, and all staff should be made aware of this expectation. In order to not encourage, or amplify, foreign influence efforts, campaigns should reject the use of foreign origin material, especially if it has potentially been obtained though the violation of U.S. law.

(U) The Russian Government has sought to understand, and potentially exploit, vulnerabilities in the U.S. campaign finance system in furtherance of Russia's election influence activities. Russia's interest in this tactic is longstanding. The Committee is not aware of specific successful efforts in this regard related to the 2016 U.S. election, however the Committee's insight is limited, and in other countries Russia has gone to great lengths to launder money intended for election influence. The DOJ, the Intelligence Community, regulators and legislators should work together to identify and address any loopholes that could be abused, by Russia or any other foreign actor, in malign influence operations targeting U.S. elections.

4. Protect Government Employees from Foreign Influence Efforts

(U) Congressional leadership should work with the IC and federal law enforcement to assess the counterintelligence and foreign influence risk associated with foreign government-funded travel by congressional staff, in particular the Mutual Educational and Cultural Exchange Act. Congress does not allow registered lobbyists to pay for the travel or the meals of congressional staff due to concerns about undue influence. This same logic should apply to foreign governments. Congressional leadership should explore increasing the budget for staff travel, so that it is funded and managed by Congress and not by foreign governments.

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(U) In addition to enhanced cybersecurity training for all U.S. Government personnel, all federal government employees who travel internationally, regardless of agency or department, should be required to receive counterintelligence training.

5. (U) **Bolster Resources for IC Elements to Uncover Influence Campaigns and Focus the NIPF on Foreign Government Influence**

[redacted] These terms are vague and vast, and do not acknowledge the growing threat of disruption by foreign actors conducting malign influence activities targeting the United States.

- (U) The Committee recommends, therefore, that all future iterations of the NIPF, which is an exercise and tool used to distribute finite IC resources across a wide variety of threats, specify and prioritize foreign malign influence activities.

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(U) FBI should empower its analysts to check assumptions underpinning FBI operations, to apply the rigor of intelligence analysis to assessments and confidential human sources, and to create a culture where questioning previously held assumptions is acceptable and encouraged.

6. (U) **Improve Victim Notification and Information Sharing**

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(U) While the Committee understands FBI's reluctance to force solutions on hacked victims, FBI should develop a clear policy to address how to escalate victim notifications within a hacked entity, particularly for those involved in an election, when it appears that entity has not successfully remediated a cyber breach.

(U) In addition, the FBI's Cyber Division should have an escalation policy for how to engage a victim entity when the victim is not responsive to the FBI's investigative needs. The policy should include how to communicate with the victim entity about escalation, and, in narrow situations where the security of the election is at risk, the potential use of compulsory process. Channels of communication, both within the FBI and with political organizations, should be established early in a campaign cycle.

(U) The FBI should seek to downgrade and share classified information for defense against cyber intrusions whenever possible. If downgrading the information is not feasible, the FBI should work to find a cleared individual at the victim entity and brief that individual at the highest possible level about the incident, prior to or contemporaneous with engaging with the entity's IT staff.

(U) The FBI should develop clear best practices for dealing with cybersecurity vendors in incident response. Congress should consider legislation that mandates third-party cybersecurity vendors to report indicators of nation-state compromise to the U.S. Government, be it through FBI or other entities, which may include sharing malware, network traffic, forensic images, and other appropriate data to enable the U.S. Government to protect against nation-state cyber adversaries. Any sharing mandate should also include suitable protections for personally identifiable information or other sensitive or privileged material.

7. (U) Strengthen Congressional Authority to Challenge Executive Privilege

(U) Congress should consider amending the Senate's subpoena enforcement statute to remove or otherwise limit the carve out in 28 U.S.C. § 1365(a) that precludes enforcement against government officials asserting a "governmental privilege or objection." This exception, the Committee's investigation showed, allows for the potential abuse of executive privilege claims. Such an amendment should include a process to expedite judicial review of disputes between Congress and the executive branch over subpoena compliance, and clarify that a government official's mere assertion of a government privilege does not strip a federal court of jurisdiction.

[redacted]

[redacted]

VI. (U) ANNEX A

[THIS ANNEX IS REDACTED IN ITS ENTIRETY]

[redacted]

[redacted]

COMMITTEE SENSITIVE – RUSSIA INVESTIGATION ONLY

VII. (U) ANNEX B

[THIS ANNEX IS REDACTED IN ITS ENTIRETY]

[redacted]

COMMITTEE SENSITIVE – RUSSIA INVESTIGATION ONLY

[redacted]

COMMITTEE SENSITIVE – RUSSIA INVESTIGATION ONLY

VIII. (U) ANNEX C

[THIS ANNEX IS REDACTED IN ITS ENTIRETY]

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COMMITTEE SENSITIVE – RUSSIA INVESTIGATION ONLY

ADDITIONAL VIEWS OF SENATORS RISCH, RUBIO, BLUNT, COTTON, CORNYN, AND SASSE

(U) Volume 5 of the report on Russian Active Measures Campaigns and Interference is the last body of work relating to the Committee's investigation into Russian meddling in the 2016 U.S. presidential election. This final volume brings an end to more than three years of investigative work. Bipartisan professional staff reviewed more than one million documents and interviewed more than 200 witnesses to produce over 1,000 pages of analysis. Volume 5 exhaustively reviews the counterintelligence threats and vulnerabilities to the 2016 election, but never explicitly states the critical fact: ***the Committee found no evidence that then-candidate Donald Trump or his campaign colluded with the Russian government in its efforts to meddle in the election.***

(U) The Trump campaign publicly and repeatedly promoted a policy of improving relations with Moscow which, in some ways, was a view not much different than the effort by the Obama administration to "reset" relations between the two countries. Such a policy does not itself constitute collusion or a counterintelligence threat. Volume 5 includes sections that address foreign policy actions taken by the Trump transition team in line with this policy, not because the Committee found any evidence that these foreign policy actions were the result of collaboration with the Russian Government, but to show that after an exhaustive investigation allegations of cooperation can be put to rest. Decisions taken were the result of a foreign policy viewpoint, not illicit Russian influence. We feel Volume 5 should have explicitly stated this.

(U) More than three and a half years later, the Trump administration's record on Russia shows a consistent attempt to cooperate with Russia where possible, while responding firmly to Russia's nefarious activity worldwide. For instance, under the leadership of President Trump, the administration effectuated the largest expulsion of Russian spies in U.S. history after Russian operatives poisoned Sergei Skripal in London, provided Javelin anti-tank missiles to Ukraine to deter Russian aggression, and led the U.S. withdrawal from the Open Skies Treaty and Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty—international agreements that the Russians have been violating for years and wish to preserve.

(U) While this Volume did not find evidence of collusion between President Trump and the Russians, it does detail a stunning accounting of the FBI's sloppy work and poor judgment. In 2016, the Democratic Party, using a series of arm's length transactions, hired a foreign citizen to seek out dirt on a political opponent, provided by foreign sources. This Volume confirms that Christopher Steele used information gained from sources in Russia—some with direct ties to the Russian Government. That unverified, uncorroborated, foreign information was then actively circulated with the press to disparage a U.S. political candidate.

(U) Meanwhile, the FBI should have followed the advice of other intelligence agencies to view Steele's reports skeptically, and the Bureau should have verified the methodology and the information before using it. Instead, the Bureau used the material in FISA applications and insisted on its inclusion in the Intelligence Community Assessment. Other IC agencies wanted to exclude the Dossier from the ICA because they had not verified its sources or its data. All

Americans should be deeply troubled that the FBI was willing to accept and use Steele's information without verifying its sourcing or methodology.

(U) Volume 5 is an important contribution to the historical record from which historians will someday draw. As is evident to those who read all five volumes of the Committee's report, the Russian government inappropriately meddled in our 2016 general election in many ways but then-Candidate Trump was not complicit. **After more than three years of investigation by this Committee, we can now say with no doubt, there was no collusion.**

ADDITIONAL VIEWS OF SENATORS HEINRICH, FEINSTEIN, WYDEN, HARRIS, AND BENNET.

(U) Almost four years after the 2016 U.S. presidential election, the Committee has now published the bipartisan results of its investigation of the Russian government's election interference and efforts to aid Donald Trump's candidacy. The Committee's work product is voluminous, fact-oriented, and essential reading for all Americans. But the Committee has not sought to draw overarching conclusions about its investigation, opting instead to let the reader determine the significance of these events. These additional views provide necessary context for the reader regarding (1) the Trump Campaign's cooperation with Russia; (2) investigative limitations; and (3) significant ongoing concerns.

(U) The Trump Campaign's Cooperation with Russia

(U) The Committee's bipartisan Report unambiguously shows that members of the Trump Campaign cooperated with Russian efforts to get Trump elected. It recounts efforts by Trump and his team to obtain dirt on their opponent from operatives acting on behalf of the Russian government. It reveals the extraordinary lengths by which Trump and his associates actively sought to enable the Russian interference operation by amplifying its electoral impact and rewarding its perpetrators – even after being warned of its Russian origins. And it presents, for the first time, concerning evidence that the head of the Trump Campaign was directly connected to the Russian meddling through his communications with an individual found to be a Russian intelligence officer.

(U) These are stubborn facts that cannot be ignored. They build on the Committee's bipartisan findings in Volume 2 and Volume 4 that show an extensive Kremlin-directed effort to covertly help candidate Trump in 2016, and they speak to a willingness by a major party candidate and his associates, in the face of a foreign adversary's assault on the political integrity of the United States, to welcome that foreign threat in exchange for advancing their own self-interest.

(U) The Committee's bipartisan Report found that Paul Manafort, *while he was Chairman of the Trump Campaign*, was secretly communicating with a Russian intelligence officer with whom he discussed Campaign strategy and repeatedly shared internal Campaign polling data. This took place *while the Russian intelligence operation to assist Trump was ongoing*. Further, Manafort took steps to hide these communications and repeatedly lied to federal investigators, and his deputy on the Campaign destroyed evidence of communications with the Russian intelligence officer. The Committee obtained some information suggesting that the Russian intelligence officer, with whom Manafort had a longstanding relationship, may have been connected to the GRU's hack-and-leak operation targeting the 2016 U.S. election. This is what collusion looks like.

(U) The Committee's bipartisan Report found that a member of the Trump Campaign's foreign policy advisory team was *provided with advance notice of the Russian plot* to anonymously release hacked emails that would damage Trump's opponent, and the Report found

that it is implausible that this information was not passed to the Campaign. The advance notice of a forthcoming covert Russian intervention on Trump's behalf came from an individual linked to the Russian government, and took place in April 2016, prior to any public awareness of the Russian meddling effort. No authorities were notified.

(U) The Committee's bipartisan Report found that Russia's goal in its unprecedented hack-and-leak operation against the United States in 2016, among other motives, was to assist the Trump Campaign. Candidate Trump and his Campaign responded to that threat by embracing, encouraging, and exploiting the Russian effort. Trump solicited inside information in advance of WikiLeaks's expected releases of stolen information, even after public reports widely attributed the activity to Russia, so as to maximize his electoral benefit. The Campaign crafted a strategy around these anticipated releases to amplify the dissemination and promotion of the stolen documents. *Even after the U.S. government formally announced the hack-and-leak campaign as a Russian government effort*, Trump's embrace of the stolen documents and his efforts to minimize the attribution to Russia only continued. The Committee's Report clearly shows that Trump and his Campaign were not mere bystanders in this attack – they were active participants. They *coordinated* their activities with the releases of the hacked Russian data, *magnified* the effects of a known Russian campaign, and *welcomed* the mutual benefit from the Russian activity.

(U) Additionally, the Committee's bipartisan Report shows that, at the June 9, 2016 meeting in Trump Tower, senior members of the Campaign sought, explicitly, to receive derogatory information for electoral benefit from a Russian lawyer known to have ties to the Russian government, with the understanding that the information was part of "Russia and its government's support for Mr. Trump." Prior to and during that meeting, members of the Trump Campaign's leadership clearly stated their desire to receive the promised derogatory Russian information, and ultimately they also clearly expressed their displeasure that the Russian information that was presented was not sufficiently damaging. That the Campaign leadership's desire to coordinate with Russia failed in this particular instance is hardly exculpatory; instead, it is emblematic of the leadership's mindset, intent and willingness to work with Russia in hopes of influencing the U.S. election to their benefit. The Committee's investigation found that the Russian lawyer that the Campaign leadership met with in Trump Tower, and one of her colleagues who also participated in the meeting, both have significant and concerning ties to Russian intelligence.

(U) Trump's Russia-friendly statements and policies during the Campaign did not occur in isolation. The Committee's bipartisan Report shows that, *during the campaign*, Donald Trump and the Trump Organization were pursuing a business deal in Russia. This is a topic about which the Campaign and its associates misled the public and Congress. The Committee's Report shows that Trump's outreach to the Kremlin began early and that during the Republican primary campaign, around the time that Trump authorized pursuit of the Russia deal, Trump asked for an in-person meeting with Putin. That request was relayed to the Kremlin. The Committee's Report shows that, during the campaign, Trump was kept up-to-date on the progress of the Russia deal and made positive public comments about Putin, in connection with the campaign, while deal negotiations were ongoing. During the campaign individuals working

for or with the Trump Organization were in contact with the Kremlin regarding the deal and sought to leverage Trump's positive comments about Putin to advance the deal. A U.S. intelligence assessment indicates that Putin, who ordered the Russian operation that assisted Trump in the 2016 election, had a preference for leaders whose business interests made them more likely to deal with Russia. This made Trump uniquely appealing in Moscow, and the Committee's investigation found that Kremlin-directed influence efforts worked to undermine Republican candidates who ran against Trump in the U.S. presidential primary.

(U) There may be some who attempt to minimize the seriousness of Trump's actions, or the actions of his associates, by arguing that these individuals were motivated simply by self-interest or self-promotion. This argument overlooks that when self-interest is intertwined with the goals of a malign Russian influence operation, and when self-interest promotes the known Russian effort while also being promoted by that same Russian effort, then self-interest and Russia's interest become one and the same. Moreover, this argument misunderstands the deep counterintelligence vulnerability that is created when those who seek positions of great power, or proximity to that power, are willing to trade away national security for personal gain. There is good reason that such individuals are Putin's preferred interlocutors, and there is good reason why the U.S. security clearance application asks extensively about vulnerabilities that could be used as leverage, including foreign financial interests.

(U) Candidate Trump's pursuit of private business in Russia during the campaign, and his Campaign Chairman Paul Manafort's deep financial ties to a Kremlin-aligned Russian oligarch during the campaign, are not the only sources of leverage to which Trump and his Campaign were vulnerable. The Committee's bipartisan Report shows that during the campaign Trump maintained personal correspondence with a Russian oligarch and his adult son on topics including the upcoming U.S. election. The Moscow-based oligarch and his son, who were involved in offering the Trump Campaign derogatory information related to the election and who gave Trump a sizable gift during the Campaign, maintain significant and concerning connections not only to Kremlin leadership but also to Russian organized crime. Trump had previously done business with the oligarch in Moscow. The Committee's Report also shows that prior to and during the campaign, Trump was informed of alleged compromising tapes of him in Moscow. These allegations are separate from Christopher Steele's reports, which were not used to support the Committee's work. The Committee found that the Russian intelligence services clearly engage in the collection of compromising information for leverage, and that there may be substance to some of the allegations regarding Trump, which leaves open an ongoing concern about Russian influence operations.

(U) Finally, the Committee's bipartisan Report shows that almost immediately following Election Day in 2016, the Trump transition responded to Russia's election interference not by supporting punitive action, but rather by holding a series of secretive meetings and communications with Russian representatives that served to undercut the outgoing administration's efforts to hold Russia accountable. The transition's openness to this private Russian outreach prior to taking office, so soon after Russia's interference on Trump's behalf, combined with Trump publicly questioning Russia's involvement, signaled that there was little

intention by the incoming administration to punish Russia for the assistance it had just provided in its unprecedented attack on American democracy.

(U) Investigative Context

(U) There is also important additional context that should be provided to the reader regarding what the Committee's Report is, and what it is not. The Committee's Report does not duplicate the Special Counsel's investigation. The Special Counsel's work was *criminal* in nature, not a *counterintelligence* investigation. Counterintelligence investigations address intelligence questions pertaining to national security threats, not merely statutorily prohibited crimes. That is why the Committee pursued its investigation from a counterintelligence perspective. And it is why the Special Counsel's inability to "establish" a criminal conspiracy between the Trump Campaign and Russia does not convey the breadth and complexity of the threat presented by their actions.

(U) In its Report, the Committee described the events of 2016 in as much relevant detail as it could. Even so, the Committee's power to investigate—which does not include search warrants or wiretaps—falls short of the FBI's. So too do its staffing, resources, and technical capabilities. The result is that the American people still do not, and may never, have all the facts necessary to determine the full extent of the cooperation between Russia and the Trump Campaign in 2016.

(U) In addition, the Committee did not cover all areas of concern. For example, the Committee's investigation, for a variety of reasons, did not seek, and was not able to review, records regarding Donald Trump's finances and the numerous areas where those financial interests appear to have overlapped with Russia. In turn, the reader should not interpret the Report's absence of information on this topic to indicate that nothing of interest was found. Rather, it should be acknowledged that this was a potentially meaningful area that the Committee did not probe.

(U) Nevertheless, the facts above, which are further examined in the Committee's bipartisan Report, clearly show that what did happen between Russia and the Trump Campaign in 2016 is far worse than has been publicly revealed thus far. Furthermore, in nearly 1,000 pages of text, we are not aware of a *single case* where the information that is redacted makes the conduct of Trump or his associates less concerning. To the contrary, across the Report's most critical sections, the redacted information makes the already alarming public findings even more granular, explicit, and concerning.

(U) Significant Ongoing Concerns

(U) The value of the Committee's investigation is not purely historical. The counterintelligence lessons contained in this report regarding what happened to the United States in 2016 should be an alarm bell for the nation, and for those preparing to defend the nation against current and evolving threats targeting the upcoming U.S. elections. Indeed, Russia is actively interfering again in the 2020 U.S. election to assist Donald Trump, and some of the

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COMMITTEE SENSITIVE

President's associates are amplifying those efforts. It is vitally important that the country be ready.

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(U) It is our conclusion, based on the facts detailed in the Committee's Report, that the Russian intelligence services' assault on the integrity of the 2016 U.S. electoral process and Trump and his associates' participation in and enabling of this Russian activity, represents one of the single most grave counterintelligence threats to American national security in the modern era.

ADDITIONAL VIEWS OF SENATOR WYDEN

(U) The fifth and final volume of the Committee's report includes a wealth of extremely troubling new revelations about the counterintelligence threat posed by Donald Trump and his campaign. Much of the new information in this report, however, remains needlessly classified. That is unfortunate, not only because the counterintelligence concerns that surround Donald Trump constitute an ongoing threat to national security, but because this report includes redacted information that is directly relevant to Russia's interference in the 2020 election.

(U) As the report details, the Committee was hindered in numerous ways by the subjects of its investigation. In other respects, however, the impediments to the investigation were self-inflicted. First, while the Committee investigated interactions between Donald Trump and particular Russians and identified deeply concerning financial links, it did not seek to answer key questions about Donald Trump's finances that relate directly to counterintelligence. In short, the Committee did not follow the money.

(U) Second, the Committee's arbitrary limits on staff access undermined members' ability to engage fully in the investigation. As a result, my support for the report as well as some of the directions the Committee did and did not take must be qualified.

(U) Excessive redactions

(U) The report includes new revelations directly related to the Trump campaign's cooperation with Russian efforts to get Donald Trump elected. Yet significant information remains redacted. One example among many is the report's findings with regard to the relationship between Trump campaign manager Paul Manafort and Russian intelligence officer Konstantin Kilimnik.

(U) The report includes significant information demonstrating that Paul Manafort's support for Russia and pro-Russian factions in Ukraine was deeper than previously known. The report also details extremely troubling information about the extent and nature of Manafort's connection with Kilimnik and Manafort's passage of campaign polling data to Kilimnik. Most troubling of all are indications that Kilimnik, and Manafort himself, were connected to Russia's hack-and-leak operations.

(U) Unfortunately, significant aspects of this story remain hidden from the American public. Information related to Manafort's interactions with Kilimnik, particularly in April 2016, are the subject of extensive redactions. Evidence connecting Kilimnik to the GRU's hack-and-leak operations are likewise redacted, as are indications of Manafort's own connections to those operations. There are redactions to important new information with regard to Manafort's meeting in Madrid with a representative of Oleg Deripaska. The report also includes extensive information on Deripaska, a proxy for Russian intelligence and an associate of Manafort. Unfortunately, much of that information is redacted as well.

(U) The report is of urgent concern to the American people, in part due to its relevance to the 2020 election and Russia's ongoing influence activities. The public version of the report

details how Kilimnik disseminated propaganda claiming Ukrainian interference in the 2016 election, beginning even before that election and continuing into late 2019. [redacted] And the report includes information on the role of other Russian government proxies and personas in spreading false narratives about Ukrainian interference in the U.S. election. This propaganda, pushed by a Russian intelligence officer and other Russian proxies, was the basis on which Donald Trump sought to extort the current government of Ukraine into providing assistance to his reelection efforts and was at the center of Trump's impeachment and Senate trial. That is one of the reasons why the extensive redactions in this section of the report are so deeply problematic. Only when the American people are informed about the role of an adversary in concocting and disseminating disinformation can they make democratic choices free of foreign interference.

(U) As the Committee stressed in Volume 3 of its investigation, the public must be informed as soon as possible about ongoing foreign influence campaigns. The American people are not served by aggressive redactions to a narrative describing the continuity of Russian interference before and after the 2016 election. The American people also deserve better than a double standard in which information related to Russian interference in U.S. elections remains heavily redacted while information that might cast doubt on investigations into that interference is released wholesale.

(U) Follow the money

(U) From day one, I said that the Committee must follow the money – that is, scrutinize Donald Trump's extensive financial entanglements with foreign adversaries. Following the money is, after all, Counterintelligence 101. The way to compromise people is through money. Donald Trump, had he been an applicant for a national security position in the U.S. government, would never have obtained even the lowest level security clearance. What's more, no review of his suitability for a clearance would have ignored his finances. It is therefore derelict that the Committee, having set out to conduct an investigation of counterintelligence threats and vulnerabilities, would have failed to scrutinize so much information that would be relevant to any application for a security clearance. This must be the last time that the Committee gives short shrift to this issue.

(U) The Committee investigated specific counterintelligence threats and did uncover concerning new financial connections. The section on Donald Trump's pursuit of a Trump Tower Moscow, while he was publicly praising Vladimir Putin, is deeply troubling, particularly given the revelation that Putin was almost certainly aware of the deal by January 2016. The report also describes important new information about the Agalarovs, with whom Donald Trump had a long-standing financial relationship, noting that Aras Agalarov has significant ties to the Russian government, including to individuals involved in influence operations targeting the 2016 election. Unfortunately, this section also suffers from extensive redactions.

(U) These and other revelations in the report suffice to establish that Donald Trump poses a counterintelligence threat to the United States, no less because he is President of the United States and not a government employee with a low level security clearance. But the report falls far short of telling the full story. As has been extensively reported in the media, Donald Trump

has spent decades developing, maintaining, and relying on financial relationships with Russia. The details of these relationships would almost certainly lead investigators to specific counterintelligence concerns. But the sheer volume of Trump's financial entanglements with Russia also point toward the inescapable conclusion that Donald Trump has been, as Donald Jr. acknowledged publicly, financially dependent on Russia and that, in itself, is a counterintelligence threat.

(U) A thorough investigation into this threat would have required a review of Donald Trump's finances. In the House of Representatives, three committees issued subpoenas for financial records, including the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence which did so for the express purpose of conducting an investigation into foreign influence. In the *Mazars* case, the U.S. Supreme Court considered these subpoenas and upheld the principle that Congress may subpoena information, including the president's personal information, if it is related to and in furtherance of a legitimate task of the Congress. Given that the Committee has undertaken this counterintelligence investigation as a legitimate task of Congress and that counterintelligence investigations indisputably encompass financial entanglements, I regret that the Committee did not pursue the records sought by the House.

(U) By remanding the cases, the Supreme Court effectively delayed the House's access to these documents until after the 2020 election, thereby preventing Congress and the voting public from fully considering the counterintelligence threat posed by the incumbent. On a matter of such urgency, one that implicates the national security of the United States and the defense of its democracy, this delay is unacceptable. Congress must therefore pursue additional means to obtain and release financial information, including S. 20, the Presidential Tax Return Bill, which codifies the long-standing practice of presidents and presidential candidates releasing their finances to the public. Congress should also pass legislation that would reveal foreign influence efforts behind financial transactions, such as S.1978, the Corporate Transparency Act, which prevents the use of anonymous shell companies for illicit activities.

(U) Concerns about access

(U) As I have noted, publicly and privately since the beginning, the Committee's arbitrary limits on staff access to documents and witness interviews have impeded members' ability to fully engage in and help shape this investigation. Some limitations were at the behest of Executive Branch agencies, although the extent to which the Committee could have negotiated on behalf of broader staff access is unclear. Other limitations, including with regard to both classified and unclassified information, were imposed by the Committee itself.

(U) The Committee's actions run counter to the intent of the U.S. Senate and the Committee's previous practices. In 2004, the Senate amended the resolution establishing the Committee to require that each member have staff to serve as his or her "designated representative" on the Committee. This amendment has allowed individual members of the Committee to engage fully in the Committee's previous investigations. The exclusion of those designated representatives from this investigation represents both a departure from previous practice as well as an extremely unfortunate precedent. It is my fervent hope that the Committee will recognize that its investigations, as well as its oversight more generally, are strengthened

when each of its members is granted access to the staff resources required to fully and independently engage in those investigations.