SENATE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE
UNITED STATES SENATE
WASHINGTON, D.C.

INTERVIEW OF:

BRUCE OHR

TUESDAY, JUNE 30, 2020

The interview in this matter was held at the Senate Dirksen Building, Hearing Room 226, commencing at 10:04 a.m.
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MR. SOMERS: Good morning. This is a transcribed interview of Bruce Ohr. Chairman Graham requested this interview as part of an investigation by the Senate Judiciary Committee into matters related to the Justice Department's and the Federal Bureau of Investigation's handling of the Crossfire Hurricane investigation, including applications for and renewals of the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act warrant on Carter Page.

Would the witness please state your name and current position at the Justice Department for the record.

THE WITNESS: Good morning. Bruce Ohr. I am senior counsel with the Office of International Affairs, Criminal Division, Department of Justice.

MR. SOMERS: Thank you.

On behalf of Chairman Graham, I want to thank you for appearing today and we appreciate your willingness to appear voluntarily.

My name is Zachary Somers. I'm the Majority chief investigative counsel to the Committee. I would now like to ask everyone that's here in the room, other than your personal counsel, to introduce themselves for the record.

MR. BAKER: Arthur Baker, senior investigative counsel for the Majority staff and Senator Graham, chairman.
MR. HASKELL: Alex Haskell, counsel for the Minority staff and Ranking Member Feinstein.

MS. ZDEB: Sara Zdeb, senior counsel for the Minority staff, and we're also expecting Heather Sawyer, Senator Feinstein's chief counsel.

MR. HOLMES: I'm Lee Holmes, Chairman Graham's chief counsel.

MS. HEKMAN: Rebecca Hekman for Bruce Ohr.

MR. FINDLAY: Patrick Findlay, U.S. Department of Justice.

MR. BERMAN: Josh Berman, counsel for Bruce Ohr.

[REDACTED]: [REDACTED], assistant general counsel, Federal Bureau of Investigation.

[REDACTED]: [REDACTED], senior counsel, U.S. Department of Justice.

[REDACTED]: [REDACTED], counsel for Department of Justice Legislative Affairs.

MR. SOMERS: Thank you.

The Federal Rules of Civil Procedure do not apply in this setting, but there are some guidelines that we follow that I would like to go over.

Our questioning will proceed in rounds. The Majority will ask questions for the first hour. Then the Minority will have an opportunity to ask questions for an equal period of time. We will go back and forth in this
manner until there are no more questions and the interview is over.

Typically, we take a short break at the end of each hour of questioning, but if you would like to take a break apart from that, please let us know.

As I noted earlier, you are appearing voluntarily. Accordingly, we anticipate that our questions will receive complete responses. To the extent that you decline to answer our questions or counsel instructs you not to answer, we will consider whether a subpoena is necessary.

As you can see, there is an official reporter taking down everything that is said to make a written record. So we ask that you give verbal responses to all questions.

Do you understand that?

THE WITNESS: Yes.

MR. SOMERS: So that the reporter can take down a clear record, is it important that we don't talk over one another or interrupt each other, if we can help it.

The Committee encourages witnesses who appear for transcribed interviews to freely consult with counsel if they so choose, and you are appearing today with counsel. Would counsel please state his name for the record.

MR. BERMAN: Joshua Berman for the Clifford,
Chance law firm.

Thank you for the opportunity to be here. Thank you for the accommodation with my personal situation last Thursday to allow for us to be here this morning. I want to say thank you for that.

MR. SOMERS: No problem.

MR. BERMAN: Mr. Ohr is here to be 100 percent fully cooperative.

MR. SOMERS: Thank you.

We want you to answer our questions in the most complete and truthful manner as possible. So we will take our time. If you have any questions or if you don't understand one of our questions, please let us know.

If you honestly don't know the answer to a question or do not remember it, it is best not to guess. Please just give us your best recollection and it is okay to tell us if you learned information from someone else. If there are things you don't know or can't remember, just say so and please inform us who, to the best of your knowledge, might be able to provide a more complete response to our questions.

You should also understand, although this interview is not under oath, you are required by law to answers questions of Congress truthfully. Do you understand that?
THE WITNESS: Yes.

MR. SOMERS: This also applies to questions posed by Congressional staff in an interview. Do you understand this?

THE WITNESS: Yes.

MR. SOMERS: Witnesses who knowingly provide false testimony can be subject to criminal prosecution for perjury or for making false statements. Do you understand this?

THE WITNESS: Yes.

MR. SOMERS: Is there any reason you are unable to provide truthful answers to today's questions?

THE WITNESS: No.

MR. SOMERS: Finally, we ask that you not speak about what we discuss in this interview with anyone outside who is not in the room here today in order to preserve the integrity of our investigation.

That is the end of my preamble. Do you have any questions before we begin?

THE WITNESS: No.

MR. SOMERS: It's now 10:08. We'll begin our first round of questioning.

EXAMINATION BY COUNSEL FOR THE MAJORITY

BY MR. SOMERS:

Q. Mr. Ohr, have you had a chance to review all or
some of the IG's December 2019 report on the Crossfire Hurricane investigation?
A. Yes.
Q. Other than your attorney and counsel for the Department, have you consulted or spoken with anyone in preparation for today's interview?
A. No.
Q. For the record, what was your position at the Department from, roughly, July 30, 2016 until December of 2017?
A. I was the director of OCDETF, the Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Forces, and associate deputy attorney general.
Q. Just in general, what were your responsibilities for both of those positions?
A. Primarily, the oversight of all aspects of the OCDETF program, so all the different things that OCDETF does. It would take a lot to list them all. As a ADAE in the AG's office, I, obviously, reported on OCDETF and also served as a member of the Capital Case Committee and I was, you know, director of the Attorney General's Organized Crime Task Force.
Q. Did you have any responsibility for counterintelligence in that position?
A. I did not, no.
BY MR. BAKER:

Q. I think we'll probably get to this in a second, but in any of those jobs that you have just listed, were you involved in any travel, foreign travel, on behalf of the Department of Justice?

A. Yes, I was.

Q. Would that have involved any -- my term -- police training or facilitating training seminars, meetings, seminars, for foreign law enforcement officials?

A. I don't recall if I did any training during that period. I had done so previously, certainly.

Q. What would the nature of your official travel with the Department have been?

A. Meetings with other foreign law enforcement officials, not necessarily training meetings. That's sort of in general.

Q. Just as a rough estimate, in the capacity that you occupied when you were doing travel, how much of your official work time would have been spent doing overseas travel?

A. Maybe 10 percent or something. It wasn't that frequent.

MR. BAKER: Okay. Thank you.

BY MR. SOMERS:

Q. So I take it you had some, obviously,
responsibility for crime, at least with OCDETF. You didn't have general responsibility within ODAG for the Criminal Division, crime in general; is that correct?

A. That's correct.

Q. Was there an associate in ODAG that had sort of the general criminal responsibility?

A. Yes, there was.

Q. Who was that?

A. I don't recall at during that time. I think it changed at times.

Q. Do you recall who in the Office of the Deputy Attorney General responsible for national security during this time period?

A. Tash Gauhar was responsible for national security at the time I was there.

Q. So part of your regular responsibilities in ODAG and with OCDETF, did you have regular contact with the FBI?

A. Yes, I did.

Q. How often was your contact with the FBI?

A. It's hard to say, probably a few times a week.

Q. And what did that -- what did that contact generally consist of?

A. It usually had to do with OCDETF matters,
issues with different strike forces, funding for particular investigations. I'm sure there were other things.

Q. Was this a combination of in person, on the phone, E-mail, etc.?
A. Yeah.

BY MR. BAKER:
Q. But the primary entity for the FBI that you were in official contact with was their OCDETF counterparts?
A. Yes, and their organized crime section.
Q. And would that have been OCDETF -- and I think I know where the organized crime section is. Where would OCDETF have in the FBI's organizational chart?
A. Most of the folks dealing with OCDETF matters at the FBI were in their what they call Transnational Organized Crime West section as opposed to Transnational Organized Crime East, which handled generally drug enforcement.
Q. Is that under their criminal division?
A. Yes.

MR. BAKER: Okay. Thank you.

BY MR. SOMERS:
Q. Is that what's referred to as the TOC East and West; Transnational Organized Crime was the abbreviation for those?
A. Yes.

Q. And you said you had more contact with TOC West than East?

A. During the time I was at OCDETF, probably more contact with TOC West, but I had contact with both.

Q. Was there one person in particular that you had the most contact who was like your counterpart at FBI or was it a diverse group of people?

A. Different people. I would talk with different people in those sections.

BY MR. BAKER:

Q. Is there any one person that you had a, well, friendship relationship with or that you had dealt with the longest that would be your go-to person if you needed to reach out to somebody over there?

A. The section chief of TOC East was someone who had been there a long time.

Q. And who was that?

A. Max Marker.

Q. Do you say Matt?

A. Max, Maxwell.

MR. BAKER: Okay.

BY MR. SOMERS:

Q. Now, apart from you, did ODAG have a usual contact at the FBI, someone that was kind of their liaison
to the FBI?

A. I'm sure there were several. Yes.

Q. But is there anyone in particular that was like, Hey, if I need to call DOJ, I call this person? Is there a person at ODAG or a particular section at ODAG?

A. From ODAG, they often would deal with the director and the deputy director's office. You know, there's all the different matters that came into the office. They would talk to different people.

Q. Now, during this time period, did you have contact with anyone in the National Security Branch just in general, not related to Crossfire Hurricane, during the time that you were in ODAG?

A. For the most part, no, not that I can remember.

Q. When was the last time you spoke or had any contact with Christopher Steele?

A. Fall of 2017, I believe. I don't remember the exact date.

Q. So he hasn't tried to reach out to you since then about anything?

A. No.

Q. You've sort of cut off all contact?

A. I haven't heard from him since then.
Q. What about anyone from his firm, Orbis?
A. No.
Q. Same question for Glenn Simpson, when was the last time you --
A. For who?
Q. Glenn Simpson. When was the last time you had contact with Glenn Simpson?
A. Oh, maybe before that, maybe January or February of 2017.
Q. So prior to the fall of 2017, it's pretty clear that you reported that you had regular contact with Christopher Steele over a number of years.
A. Yes.
Q. How frequent were those contacts?
A. For most of the time, it was maybe once a year or so. Obviously, there were more contacts in 2016 and 2017.
Q. Obviously, we all have ideas. Do you know why it is that Christopher Steele in particular cut off contact with you in the fall of 2017?
A. Beyond the obvious ones, I can't speculate.
Q. He never told you I'm not talking to you anymore?
A. Yeah.
Q. Glenn Simpson, prior to him cutting off contact with you in the beginning of 2017, did you have pretty regular contact with him as well?

A. No, not so much.

Q. How frequent was the contact with him?

A. A few times over the preceding 10 years or so.

Q. Have you spoken with anyone else or emailed or had any contact with anyone else from Fusion GPS since Glenn Simpson cut off contact with you?

A. I have not.

Q. Did you have regular contact with anyone at Fusion GPS before Glenn Simpson cut off contact with you?

A. No. I mean, my wife worked there as a contractor, but I didn't.

Q. Did anyone else from Fusion GPS contact you about Russia election reporting in particular or Russian interference in the 2016 election?

A. I don't believe so, no.

Q. So just Glenn Simpson?

A. I believe so.

Q. Have you ever spoken with Daniel Jones?

A. No. The name is not familiar.

Q. Anyone from the Penn Quarter Group?

A. That's not familiar either.
Q. I believe they picked up some of the opposition research, shall we say, for the -- against Trump after the DNC dropped and may have had contact with Glenn Simpson.

A. Yeah, but I have not.

Q. I spoke about this a little bit a second ago: So you had contact with Steele other than Crossfire Hurricane prior to and during the time he was contacting you about -- I shouldn't say Crossfire Hurricane -- about the possible Russian interference in the 2016 election; you had contact with him in other matters. Correct?

A. Yes.

BY MR. BAKER:

Q. Could you explain, just briefly, how you came to know Mr. Steele in the first place, how that relationship came to be --

A. Yes.

Q. -- initially.

A. I met him over 10 years ago. I don't remember the exact year. At that time, he was working for the [ ] . I met him in London as part of a meeting that had been arranged by the assistant legal attache, the FBI's legal attache in London.

We talked about Russian organized crime. It was held at the headquarters. There were representatives there from
maybe a half-dozen governmental bodies, and they talked generally about the dangers of Russian organized crime was under-appreciated, and Mr. Steele sort of took the lead on that.

Q. Were you or Mr. Steele a presenter at this seminar?
A. Well, it was informal. I wouldn't call it a seminar. It was just a meeting, but I would say Mr. Steele probably did most of the talking from the side.

Q. And was there somebody that spoke from the U.S. side?
A. I was there. ALAT was there. I'm not sure there was anybody else from the U.S. side. We were mainly listening. We wanted to hear the kind of stuff they were working on.

I'm sure we said something about how we appreciated there was Russian organized crime and were concerned about it.

Q. You said this about 10 years ago?
A. Yeah, maybe more at this point.

Q. And this was the first time you made contact with Mr. Steele?
A. Yes.

Q. And would you say subsequent to that time,
you maintained a friendly relationship with Mr. Steele?

A. Yes.

Q. You've mentioned the term "LEGAT" and "ALAF". Just for the record, that's the Legal Attache and the Assistant Legal Attache?

A. That's correct.

Q. And they are FBI agents?

A. That's correct.

Q. Who were they at the time that you first met Mr. Steele?

A. I do not recall the names.

Q. Okay. And you kind of alluded to this, but would it be fair to say to say that after this initial meeting that you did maintain a relationship with Mr. Steele?

A. Yes.

Q. And how often immediately following the seminar did you and Mr. Steele speak and communicate?

A. I think the next time I saw him was a few months later. There was some kind of a seminar that some British institute or something had put on, and I was there. I recall at least 40, 50 people there. I was there and he happened to be there as well. I didn't know he was going to be there.

Q. In addition to the official capacity that
you both occupied for different governments, would you say your relationship was a friendship also?

A. I would say it was professional, but it was friendly.

Q. Did it evolve to a friendship as time went along?

A. It's hard to say. I mean, I only saw him once a year or so. So we would exchange friendly greetings, ask about family and stuff like that. I'm not sure I would characterize it as a friendship.

MR. BAKER: Thank you.

BY MR. SOMERS:

Q. Have you reviewed, looked at, read, the set of election reports that are commonly referred to as the Steele dossier?

A. Yes, I have.

Q. And that sort of general format, has Steele given you documents like that before about other things?

A. Occasionally, yes, maybe once or twice.

Q. And he gave you other information over the years, obviously?

A. [Gestures.]

Q. Who at the FBI generally were you giving this information to?
A. I would share it with somebody generally in TOC East and also there was an agent from New York that I worked with who worked on the organized crime squad, and I talked with him about it as well.

BY MR. BAKER:

Q. What's his name?

A. [Redacted].

BY MR. SOMERS:

Q. I assume, just for the record, Russia is in the jurisdiction of TOC East.

A. Yes.

Q. Did you ever share any of this non-Russia-related election reporting with Steele; did you ever share any of that information that he had given you in the past with anyone at Main Justice?

A. I may have mentioned -- I may have shared it. I can't recall exactly.

Q. But you may have shared information? How about the U.S. Attorney's Office?

A. Probably the Criminal Division would have been most likely, but I can't recall any specifics.

Q. Was all of the information he had given you in the past related to Russia in some way?

A. Yes, except for he mentioned some stuff about the FIFA corruption, which I don't think was Russia
Q. And this information he was giving you, what was your understanding of why he was gathering it?

A. Well, once he left the government, he had a private firm, and my understanding was he would gather this information on behalf of clients of the firm, but that if there was something he thought would be of interest to the DOJ and the FBI, he would give me some of that.

BY MR. BAKER:

Q. Do you know the name of his firm?

A. His firm is, I believe, Orbis.

BY MR. SOMERS:

Q. Did you ever do anything to vet any of the information Steele gave you?

A. I'm sorry?

Q. Did you ever do anything to vet any of the information?

A. No. I would just pass it along.

Q. Did you ever not pass information along that he gave you?

A. Probably, if it didn't seem to be important.

Q. Did you have any concern -- I mean, you said he was gathering this information on behalf of private clients -- that by giving it to you, he was trying to do it
for the benefit of his private clients?

A. He almost -- no. For the most part, he didn't -- it didn't seem like information that would help his clients.

Q. What type of caveats or description or however you want phrase it -- you'd get a piece of information from Steele. You'd give it to somebody at the FBI. What message did you generally send along with that in terms of like what this is, where it's coming from?

A. I'd explain the source of the information, and the people I was dealing with know very well that any source information has to be treated with care and Russian source information particularly.

Q. Generally, what you would say if you decided this piece of Steele information is worth giving to somebody at the FBI, you would have some sort of general admonition like that associated with it?

A. Yeah. I don't know if I would repeat that every time. I think the people who work on this stuff very well understood.

Q. Were the people that you passed this information from Steele on regularly enough prior to the election report, they knew or had some information who Steele was?

A. At some point, yes, because the FBI signed
up Mr. Steele as a source.

Q. Did Glenn Simpson prior to the events of 2016 ever provide you with information that you then provided to the FBI?

A. I don't recall ever doing so, no.

BY MR. BAKER:

Q. When you would hand information off to the FBI, in addition to the things that Mr. Somers was asking that you might have sent with it, did you do any kind of analysis or sort of a rough read-through and make any notes to alert the FBI as to what your assessment or initial thoughts on it would be, or would you just hand the materials off as you received them?

A. I don't recall doing any threat analysis or anything significant like that, no.

Q. You had said something in response to a question Mr. Somers just asked you that, eventually, Mr. Steele was signed up as a source?

A. Yes.

Q. What does that mean?

A. It means he had a relationship with the FBI where he would provide information to them, and I think they were paying him.

Q. And was that a formal relationship?

A. I believe so, yes.
BY MR. SOMERS:

Q. You said they would pay him. That implies that the information he was giving to you, you never provided any form of compensation through the Department to Steele for his reporting?

A. I did not.

Q. And just to get back to Glenn Simpson just for one moment, you said you had contact with him in some form prior to the election in 2016 that didn't involve him passing information to you, just more social, or what was your contact with Glenn Simpson prior to that?

A. I remember meeting him on a couple of occasions. One, he may still have been a reporter with "The Wall Street Journal" at that time. I'm not sure, or had left recently, and I believe he did talk about Russian organized crime matters. I don't recall who else was there, whether there were FBI people there or other DOJ people. I don't remember doing anything with that further beyond that. At one time, I met him again at some kind of a seminar where he spoke and I spoke and we talked, but I don't remember any more than social. Our interaction was more social.

Q. So you were surprised the first time he gave you information related to Russia in 2016?

A. Well, no, because Chris Steele had
indicated that he was meeting with Glenn Simpson and Glenn had more information. So then I heard from Glenn.

Q. You mentioned a few times that Steele was signed up as a confidential human source formally at the FBI. Did you introduce Steele to his handling agent?
A. Yes. I believe I did.

Q. And that's [redacted]
A. Yes.

BY MR. BAKER:

Q. How were you made aware that he had, in fact, Mr. Steele had, in fact, been officially signed up as a source? Did that come from the FBI or did it come from Mr. Steele or both?
A. Probably from the FBI, but I can't recall.

BY MR. SOMERS:

Q. So on July 30, 2016, that's when you had that meeting with Steele where he first told you, according to your previous testimony, about this Russia election interference project. So on July 30, 2016, to your knowledge, was [redacted] still Steele's Steele handler?
A. Yes.

Q. What was your impression of [redacted]
A. Good agent, professional, and I had a lot of respect for him.

Q. Why [redacted] in particular did you pass
Steele off to or introduce him too?

A. I don't remember what his exact position was at the time.

[Discussion held off the record.]

THE WITNESS: I don't remember what his exact position was when I first introduced him to Steele, but he was an Agent 14 in organized crime matters. At some point, I believe he became the supervisor of a squad which was responsible for these matters. I don't remember if he was the supervisor at the time of the introduction.

BY MR. BAKER:

Q. What office was he physically at during this time?

A. The New York Field Division.

Q. And had he been on an overseas assignment prior to that?

A. He did an overseas assignment later, I believe.

Q. And what was his position?

A. He was one of the assistant legal attaches.

MR. BAKER: Thank you.

BY MR. SOMERS:

Q. Did you have contact with [redacted] over the
years as well after your introduction of Steele and

A. Yes.

Q. What did that contact exist of?

A. Occasional conversations. We did meet up

in one time to talk to different people, including Mr. Steele, and generally talked about what I'm hearing about

organized crime and what he's working on.

Q. So you had contact with him both related

and unrelated to Steele and information Steele was providing
to you?

A. That's correct.

Q. So when Steele contacts you on July 30th

with this election information that he had been gathering,

why didn't you tell him, Hey, why aren't you taking this to

A. I believe he told me he had given it to

or at least some of it to

Q. Why did he say he was coming to you?

A. He didn't. He just sometimes told me what

he was working on and I was not expecting that kind of

information.

Q. So who was -- was the first person

at the FBI who you contacted after your July 30th meeting?

A. I can't recall. It may have been

It may have been Mr. Marker. I'm not sure.
Q. What was that name? I'm sorry.

A. Max Marker. The person I mentioned earlier.

Q. Oh, I'm sorry. I misheard his name earlier.

So why did you reach out to either of them after you received the reporting from Steele?

A. I can't recall the exact conversation as to why. I'm sure I wanted to check in and make sure they were aware.

BY MR. BAKER:

Q. Were you still running into Mr. Steele, for lack of a better word, in any overseas travel you were doing for the Department?

A. Not aside from that one time, no. I don't recall at that point.

BY MR. SOMERS:

Q. And I don't know if this will refresh your recollection at all, but according to the IG report, you reached out to [redacted] on August 3, 2016. During that conversation, [redacted] told -- this is what [redacted] told OIG. I don't know if you will recall him telling you, but [redacted] told OIG that he advised Ohr that news of the reports had reached an EAD level at FBI Headquarters and that executive management at the New York Field Office was aware of the
Do you recall that conversation at all?

A. I don't recall the specifics, but that sounds right.

Q. So I guess my question is why didn't you leave it at that? The EAD level, what did you take that to mean? Is that Executive Assistant Director?

A. Yes.

Q. Why wasn't that a sufficient answer to you in terms of, Okay, the report is in the system?

A. I think for while, it was. I don't think I reached out to the FBI until some months later. We reached out to Mr. McCabe, Deputy Director McCabe, some months later.

Q. So what happened between the assurances you get from on August 3rd that it's reached the EAD level and the next time you reach out to the FBI?

A. Unfortunately, I can't recall the specifics, but I remember being concerned that the information might be getting siloed within the FBI and that I wasn't sure whether the criminal side and the national security side were discussing the information.

Q. Why would you have those concerns?

A. I can't remember the specific things I was told, but it must have been from conversations I was having
with some people at the FBI, probably Mr. Marker or [redacted].

I can't recall.

BY MR. BAKER:

Q. Was Mr. Steele frustrated that things seemed to be moving slow within the FBI or that his information didn't seem to be acted on?

Was he pinging you, for lack of a better word, to maybe look under the hood to see what the holdup was?

A. I don't believe so, no.

BY MR. SOMERS:

Q. The IG report also indicates on October 13, 2016, you received an E-mail from, I guess, the Transnational Organized Crime East section chief. I guess that's Mr. --

A. Mr. Marker.

Q. Saying that: "Counterintelligence agents had traveled to [redacted] and spoken to Handling Agent 1 and said they were examining Steele's allegations."

Do you recall that E-mail or a conversation related to that?

A. I don't recall that E-mail, no.

Q. Do you recall reaching out to the TOC East section chief?

A. I mean, I'm sure I spoke with them. I don't recall specifically at this time reaching out to him,
but yeah.

Q. Okay. So I think you get the reports from Steele on -- not the reports. You didn't actually get anything from Steele on July 30th; is that correct?

A. Correct.

Q. When did you actually -- did he send you something?

A. He never sent me anything. I was given a thumb drive later, maybe in December -- it's in the report, I think -- from Glenn Simpson.

Q. So you didn't have the actual reports prior to Glenn Simpson giving them to you?

A. Correct.

Q. So you meet with Steele on July 30th. He contacts you again after that July 30th meeting about this?

A. Mr. Steele?

Q. Mr. Steele, yes.

A. He did at some point. I don't remember exactly when, but yes.

Q. The IG report indicates you confirmed that you reached out to [Redacted] and he gave you the information about the information getting to the EAD level at FBI. The IG report indicates that on October 13th, the TOC East section chief told you that counterintelligence analysts had traveled to [Redacted], spoke with Handling Agent 1, and they were
examining Steele's allegations.

BY MR. BAKER:

Q. For the record, counterintelligence agents had traveled, not analysts. Right?

A. I don't know.

BY MR. SOMERS:

Q. Then on October 18th, according to the IG report, you reach out to Andy McCabe. Why did you reach out to Andy McCabe?

A. As I said before, I was concerned that somehow the information wasn't being fully shared. I don't recall what prompted that or what specifically I heard, but that was my concern.

Q. But why Andy McCabe in particular versus somebody else at the FBI versus Bill Priestap?

A. I didn't know Mr. Priestap. I did know Mr. McCabe. He and I worked together on Russian organized crime matters over the years. He had been the head of the Russian organized crime squad in New York. So we knew each other from that and, also, his position was -- given his position, he had visibility into whatever the criminal side and the national security side was doing at the FBI.

Q. How often did you speak with Mr. McCabe aside -- or prior to October 18th?
A. Fairly rarely, certainly as he became deputy director. It may have been a couple of years before that that I had spoken with him. I used to call him when he was the head of Russian organized crime unit.

BY MR. BAKER:

Q. Your relationship with him went way back when he was a street agent, case agent?

A. Yeah. I don't think I worked with him so much when I was an AUSA, but certainly when he took over the Russian organized crime squad, I think I was probably in Washington at this point. So I'm sure I dealt with him from that point forward, maybe earlier, but I can't recall.

Q. So he would have been a logical person for you to reach out to at the Bureau if you were trying to get somebody with some rank?

A. Yes.

Q. It was a good likelihood he would take a call from you?

A. Yes.

BY MR. SOMERS:

Q. So the IG report indicates, I think, you first called him and asked for a meeting. What did you tell him you wanted to meet about?

A. I don't recall exactly. I'm sure I said something about I had information that I wanted to talk with
him about, but I don't recall.

Q. And he took the meeting with you, according to the IG report, the same day you requested it?

A. I don't recall, but I'm sure if it's in there --

Q. Do you think it had anything to do with the fact that you were an associate deputy attorney general?

A. I would like to think that it was because we worked together for many years.

Q. Did you in your meeting with McCabe on -- well, first, in this meeting with McCabe on October 18, who else was in that meeting? Was Lisa Page?

A. Lisa Page was there. There may have been other people. I don't recall.

Q. You don't recall if anyone else was there?

A. I don't.

Q. What did you tell him like why you were there, why you, Bruce Ohr, associate deputy attorney general, was there at the meeting with him about this material?

A. I gave him the whole background, explained who Chris Steele was and how I knew him and that this is the kind of relationship we had and this was the information I received from him.

I remember also explaining that my wife worked at
Fusion GPS and I had not realized that Chris had anything to

do with them prior to the July 30th meeting. So I mentioned

that as well and I gave him the information.

Q. Did you say, imply in any way, that this

was part of your official role at the Department?

A. I don't recall discussing that.

Q. Do you think he would have assumed that

from the circumstances?

A. I mean, from our prior relationship, I

think he wouldn't be surprised to hear that I had gotten

some information, but I don't recall.

Q. Okay. So we have ___ We have the

TOC -- I'm sorry. I can't remember his last name.

A. Marker.

Q. The TOC East section chief.

Did you contact anyone else at the FBI between July

30th, 2016 and this October 18th meeting with McCabe?

A. I don't recall doing so, no.

Q. How many times did you meet with McCabe,

just the one meeting about this --

A. Yes.

Q. -- particular subject?

BY MR. BAKER:

Q. You said Lisa Page was in the room when

you went to visit Mr. McCabe. Had you worked with her
prior?
A. Yes. Before going to the FBI, she had been a trial attorney in my office, organized crime and racketeering section.
Q. How long did you -- you were her direct supervisor?
A. Well, second-level supervisor, yes.
Q. And how long was she there?
A. Several years. I don't recall exactly.
Q. And then she left there to go to the FBI?
A. I think so. I'm not sure.
Q. You mentioned that your wife worked at Fusion GPS. Your wife is who?
A. She's an analyst, a Russia-related analyst.
Q. And she has a particular expertise in that?
A. Yes.
Q. And her name is?
A. Nellie.
Q. I think we talked about this a little bit earlier, but Fusion GPS, in your understanding, what kind of work do they do?
A. A general understanding, they are a consulting or intel firm. They gather information for
clients.

Q. So she worked there based on her expertise as a Russian analyst?
A. Yes.

Q. Do you know what particular things she did?
A. No.

Q. Or did you know?
A. No.

MR. BAKER: Thank you.

BY MR. SOMERS:

Q. I think we spoke, obviously, about the FBI side of the house at the Department. Let's go to the Department side of the house at the Department. Who was the first person you reached out to at DOJ about the Steele info?

A. I believe it was Bruce Schwartz.

Q. And that, according to -- what was his position? He was deputy --

A. Deputy assistant attorney general in the Criminal Division.

Q. Did he have a particular specialization within the Criminal Division?

A. International Affairs.

Q. And the IG report indicated that you
reached to him on August 4, 2016. Why? Why Bruce Schwartz?

A. He's also an expert in all things international. I worked for him for a couple of years directly. I worked with him for many years, and so he's kind of sort of a mentor to me and I would seek his advice on many things strange or weird like this.

Q. Did you -- were you expecting him to do anything professionally in his role at the Department with this information or were you just seeking advice from him?

A. I don't know that I expected him to do anything specific, but if it needed to be done, I assumed he would.

Q. But you were alerting him to the information as part of, in your mind, his job duties?

A. Yes. Yes.

Q. Did you see something criminal in the information that Steele had given you?

A. I'm not sure criminal, but, certainly, it had national security implications.

Q. If it had national security implications, then why didn't you go to the National Security Division with the information?

A. I knew Bruce Schwartz better and I thought it was easier to go to him and he has contacts in the different parts of the Department.
Q. What about Tash Gauhar; why didn't you go to Tash with your information?

A. I wanted to keep it initially at the lowest possible level and just because it was very raw, and so I didn't feel it was something that I could just bring up to the higher level.

Q. She's a career official or she was a career official?

A. I believe she is.

Q. I'm sorry. I spoke over you. Can you just answer again.

A. Yes.

BY MR. BAKER:

Q. So you sort of alluded that you had a preference for not alerting higher-level people. Did you have the same preference for career people, that you felt more comfortable alerting them to any of your information as opposed to the politicals?

A. I wanted to get it to people that are used to handling that kind of raw intel, particular Russian-related raw intel.

Q. And would that have been more likely career people?

A. Probably, yeah.

Q. Who else did you take this information to
at the Department?

A. Well, I know I discussed this with Mr. Schwartz more than once, and at some of those meetings, there were a couple people that worked with him who were present. Zainab Ahmad was there at least once or twice and Andrew Weissmann was there at least once or twice.

Q. And why -- again, the same question. You probably know why I'm asking these questions, but why Weissmann and Ms. Ahmad?

A. That wasn't -- I didn't reach out to them. They were present when I was speaking with Schwartz.

Q. Did you ever discuss taking this information to someone in the Public Integrity Section of the Criminal Division?

A. I don't recall, no.

Q. Did you ever discuss these meetings with -- we'll just leave it at the meeting with Schwartz where others may have attended, including Weissmann and Ms. Ahmad. Did you ever discuss taking the information to the NSD?

A. I don't recall.

Q. Did you ever ask for a contact for NSD?

A. I don't recall doing so.

BY MR. BAKER:
Q. What was the reaction from these people that you did visit? Were they interested in your information? Not interested? Indifferent? What was your takeaway from impressions?

A. I think my takeaway was they were alarmed, as I was, but, again, cautious, because we didn't know if it was real or not.

Q. Did they indicate that they had anything that they were going to do, next steps that they were going to take or guidance to you for next steps?

A. There was some discussion about some of the other things that they were either working on or knew about, such as the Manafort investigation, which was already out there, but beyond that, I don't recall.

Q. Do you recall any of them saying, Well, you really need to let blank know about this?

A. I don't recall.

MR. BAKER: Okay.

BY MR. SOMERS:

Q. So what did you discuss? About how many meetings are we talking about here?

A. I don't recall. Maybe -- I don't recall -- a few times.

Q. A few times. What did you discuss at these meetings?
A. I think, generally, I would tell them whatever the latest I had heard was from Steele or any information from Simpson. I don't recall the exact timing, and they were talking more among themselves about what was happening with Manafort or others on the criminal side.

Q. Did they indicate that the had some responsibility for the investigation of Manafort?
A. I believe that was in the money laundering section.

Q. And neither of those three are in the money laundering section?
A. That's correct.

Q. Just quickly switching back to the FBI for a second, Michael Steinbach, you didn't know him?
A. I don't know him.

Q. Bill Priestap?
A. No.

Q. Before all of this, Peter Strzok?
A. I did not know him before all of this.

Q. Jen Boone?
A. No.

Q. Stephen Laycock?
A. No.

Q. Jon Moffa?
A. No.
Q. Then at some point, the IG report indicates that the meeting we just talked about with Schwartz, Weissmann, and Ahmad included at some point Peter Strzok and Lisa Page as well; is that correct?
A. I believe there was one meeting. I think it was one meeting where they were there. Yes.
Q. And how did they come to have a meeting with your group, your group at the Department and these two individuals at the FBI?
A. I'm not sure, but my recollection is Bruce had them invited.
Q. What was discussed at this meeting?
A. The same thing, this is what I'm hearing, are they pursuing this, are they aware of the Manafort investigation, that sort of thing.
Q. Okay. Did they have -- what information were they providing?
A. I don't recall the specifics.
Q. Did they mention that this in any way related to an investigation that they were aware of?
A. I think at least in general terms, they were working on something about this, but I don't think I
remember details like that.

Q. I was probably pretty vague in my question. I'll never know what I was asking when I go back and look at the transcript when I say "about this".

About the Steele reporting, did they -- let me ask my question again.

Did they indicate in any way that they had an investigation going that was related to the Steele reporting?

A. I don't recall the specifics. As I said, I was aware that were interested in the information. I think I asked at one point whether they had an AUSA and they said no, but I don't know, you know, whether it was focused on Steele information or other information.

Q. Why did you ask that question, about whether they had an AUSA?

A. I was curious.

Q. So did you just -- I know it's a long time ago -- have a general characterization that they were in listening mode or just --

A. Probably, although, again, I can't recall the specifics of the conversation.

BY MR. BAKER:

Q. What would it have meant to you if they would have answered your question about the AUSA that, yes,
they had an AUSA?

A. You know, if an AUSA is involved, then generally a couple things. One is the investigation is probably further along; and, secondly, you know, prosecutors generally like to hear there's an AUSA involved.

Q. So it would have meant, basically, to you that there was something that was a little more down the road than just you giving them some information and them taking notes or listening?

A. Yes.

BY MR. SOMERS:

Q. Do you think they would have told you if there was an AUSA involved? Is it possible there was an AUSA involved and, because the investigation was sensitive, they didn't answer your question?

A. I guess that is possible.

Q. Did you have some indication there may have been?

I think the quote you used, actually, was, least in the IG report, there was a prosecutor involved or some indication that there may have been a prosecutor involved at that point in time. So I'm wondering if maybe they didn't give you information because the case was sensitive.

A. I don't know.

Q. I think you -- so you had that meeting and
then you also on November 21, 2016 had a broader meeting
with people from FBI, including Strzok, Moffa, [REDACTED], and
[REDACTED], and this meeting appears to be the first
meeting you had with the FBI that was memorialized in a 302.

So I want to get, again, sort of a sense -- I cut you
off before at October 18th as being the day that you met
with McCabe. So in between meeting with McCabe and Lisa
Page on October 18th and this -- it seems to be a large
meeting or larger meeting you had on November 21st -- did
you have any contact with anyone else at the FBI in this
time period?

A. I don't recall having, but I can't say for
this period of time.

Q. On December 10, 2016, switching subjects
slightly, I'm just trying to get a sense as to the timing of
everything. You met with Glenn Simpson, and during this
meeting, according to the IG report, Simpson gave you a
thumb drive.

On page 282 of the IG report, Simpson told the IG that:
"Ohr requested that he provide information regarding
Steele's election reporting."

Do you remember making a request of Simpson for
information?

A. I don't recall exactly how that happened.
I think I remember Steele telling me that Simpson had more
information. I don't remember if I reached out for Simpson or whether he reached for Simpson. I'm sure it was somehow conveyed to Simpson that I was interested in getting more information.

Q. And then on December 20th, again, just timeline stuff, you provided with another thumb drive. This one contained your wife's research that she did for Fusion GPS. This is also on page 282 of the IG report.

Why didn't you give that thumb drive when you met with him on December 10th?

A. I was trying to provide information that might be helpful.

Q. I think my question is why the multiple meetings within a week to give him information that the IG report, at least according to your wife, said you already had for some time?

A. I don't recall. I called and gave information whenever I got it.

Q. You weren't in any way trying to meet with more often --

A. No.

Q. -- to try and -- did you discuss the case? Did you get information from?

You met with, according to the IG report, I believe the first meeting and 12 additional times. During
these meetings with [REDACTED], did he provide you with
information or were you only providing him with information?
A. My recollection is I was providing him
with information.

BY MR. BAKER:
Q. Did you look at the thumb drives at all
before you passed them to [REDACTED]?
A. No, I did not.
Q. Why didn't you look at them?
A. There was no particular reason for me to
look at them. I was just providing the information.

BY MR. SOMERS:
Q. So you never asked him, Hey, [REDACTED], how's
the case going?
A. What I think I did ask [REDACTED] was if
that was the dossier, could I get a copy, and he did provide
it.

BY MR. BAKER:
Q. Why did you think it might be the dossier?
A. I think something that Steele had said,
that he had provided more information to Simpson. So I
think I assumed at that point, it was probably the dossier.
Q. So it was a conversation you heard or
something you were told that made you think it; you didn't
look at it?
A. Right.

Q. Then you asked for a copy and you got a copy of it?

A. Yes.

BY MR. SOMERS:

Q. Did you ever sign chain of custody forms for any thumb drives?

A. No.

Q. What was your awareness or are you aware that there was a FISA application on Carter Page during this time period?

A. No. I don't believe so.

Q. You were aware that they were investigating Paul Manafort?

A. Yes. There was an investigation on Manafort that preceded all of this.

Q. What was your awareness of that investigation?

Well, first, where did your awareness come from of that?

A. I must have learned it from the FBI, but I don't recall specifics.

Q. But you said it predated all of this. What did you mean by that?

A. I believe it had to do with the money
laundering allegations, but I don't know. I'm pretty sure I knew about that long before any of this happened.

Q. So just to kind of rephrase what you said, you were aware that there was an investigation of Manafort that didn't have anything to do with the Trump campaign; it was a separate money laundering investigation?

A. I think that's right, yes.

BY MR. BAKER:

Q. Is this something you would have learned in an official capacity by attending a meeting or a briefing?

A. Yes. I think so. I would probably have heard it from agents working on it.

I had encountered Manafort's name earlier when I was in Kiev in the fall with President Yanukovych, but I don't remember hearing about an investigation at this point.

Q. But you initially hear of the name in the course of your official duties, meetings and briefings and travel or whatever?

A. Yes.

BY MR. SOMERS:

Q. So throughout, you were providing information from Steele to the FBI. Your initial contact is

In January 2017, with Crossfire Hurricane, who did you
have contact over that with?

[Discussion held off the record.]

THE WITNESS: I don't recall who the next agent was.

BY MR. SOMERS:

Q. Was it at the same level as [redacted]?

A. As far as I know.

Q. How did that handoff occur? Did he say I'm out of here; this is going to be the new guy to contact?

A. Yeah. Again, I don't recall the specific conversation. I think it was pretty matter of fact, here's your new contact.

Q. What type of -- we talked about two thumb drives that you provided in December of 2016. What type of information were you providing from Steele to the FBI after those thumb drives?

A. Whenever he would call and say something, I would provide whatever it was he said, just tell the agent, Hey, I got the call from him.

Q. So in May of 2017, a special counsel was appointed to investigate these allegations. Did you have any particular point of contact in the FBI or -- I'm sorry -- on the special counsel's team the same way you did with the FBI to pass Steele information?
A. No.

Q. Did you have a point of contact with special counsel?

A. I did not.

Q. Were you interviewed by the special counsel's team?

A. I was not.

Q. What do you think Steele was trying to accomplish with you?

He had election reporting. The election happened. Any sense of what his goal, for lack of a better term, was in continuing to provide you information and contacting you after the 2016 election?

A. Well, my sense was he just very alarmed by the information, thought it posed a threat to the United States, and wanted to make sure he was getting it to somebody.

Q. Did you become aware at some point in time that Steele had been terminated as a confidential human source?

A. Yes.

Q. Did you get that information from Mr.

A. I don't recall exactly, but I saw it in the IG's report.
Q. Did you -- I'll just read from the IG report here and see if you recall this conversation.

According to Handling Agent 1 -- that's [□] -- "as a courtesy, he told Ohr that he was not engaging with Steele anymore, warned Ohr to be careful in dealing with Steele and said that Steele could not be trusted."

Do you recall that?

A. I don't recall those words, no.

Q. Not those specific words. Do you recall any warning from [□] about future dealings with Steele?

A. No, I don't.

Q. The IG report, same page, 278, also said that Ohr apologized to [□]

"Ohr apologized for introducing him to Steele."

Do you recall apologizing to [□]

A. I don't recall my specific words, but -- I don't recall specifically, no.

BY MR. BAKER:

Q. It's been reported and it's in the IG report a couple of times, I believe, that Steele was, quote, desperate that Donald Trump not get elected. What did "desperate", mean?

What was it that made him desperate? What was his behavior? What was his attitude? What was his want?

A. Yeah. I saw that word in the 302. I
don't remember saying that specific word to the Bureau, but I might have. My impression at the time was he was very alarmed at the information that the Russians had some kind of connection or possible hold over Donald Trump and that he was very concerned that if Donald Trump was elected President, then that would mean the Russians had influence.

MR. BAKER: Okay.

BY MR. SOMERS:

Q. Did Steele mention anything to you about his being terminated as a confidential human source?

A. I don't recall him saying that, no.

Q. So he never mentioned to you that, according to the IG report, he was terminated and he was admonished.

"Additionally, the Handling Agent advised that the CHS was not to operate, to obtain any intelligence whatsoever on behalf of the FBI."

So Steele never mentioned to you any instruction, Yeah, I'm not supposed to be doing this anymore?

A. I don't believe he did, no.

BY MR. BAKER:

Q. You mentioned earlier that Steele was signed up as a confidential source. Did Steele in conversations you had with him, was it his understanding
that he was a confidential source for the FBI?

A. I don't recall exactly. I mean, he certainly acknowledged that he had a relationship with the FBI. At some point, I remember him saying that he wanted his company, rather than him, to have the relationship with the FBI, but I don't recall anything, any discussions with him beyond those facts.

Q. Did he explain what the distinction would be for him wanting his company rather than himself personally having a relationship with the Bureau?

A. I don't recall an explanation.

BY MR. SOMERS:

Q. Was there any -- you talked to a lot of people in the -- not a lot. You talked to a group of people at the FBI. You talked to a group of people at DOJ. I assume over the years, you talked to other people about Christopher Steele.

Did he have any concern about like his identity, that he was a confidential human source? Was there sort of an identity concern that, Hey, this guy is giving me information that I'm giving to the FBI? Did you have any concerns along those lines?

A. I don't recall saying anything like that, no.

Q. Did you have any -- did take any caution
when telling anyone about Steele over the years, not just with regards to this?

A. I think I tried to keep it to the few people that needed to know, but yeah.

Q. According to the IG report in 2017, your communications with Steele changed from using your DOJ E-mail account to using a commercially-available encrypted communication apps, like What's App, I believe. Do you know why there was a change in the communication method?

A. I think he asked for that.

Q. But you didn't tell him to stop communicating with your department?

A. Correct.

BY MR. BAKER:

Q. Do you know why he asked for that change?

A. I think he was concerned about keeping communications secure.

Q. Just a general concern or was something happening that made him specifically concerned that his communications were being intercepted or monitored?

A. I think it was more a general concern.

BY MR. SOMERS:

Q. I think this is the last question for this round.

In May of 2017, I think the FBI reached out to you
to -- or at least in one of your conversations with the FBI
to try and see if Steele would reengage with the FBI. Did
you get any explanation from whoever it was you were
speaking to you as to why they wanted to reengage with
Christopher Steele?

A. I don't believe so, no.
Q. And he was willing to reengage; is that
correct?
A. Yes, he was.

MR. SOMERS: I think we're --

BY MR. BAKER:
Q. What was your understanding, real quick,
of what "reengage" meant? Was it just to establish a
dialogue communication or was it to sign him up again?
A. I didn't know.

MR. BAKER: Thank you.

MR. SOMERS: I think that's our time for this
round. We'll turn it over to the Minority.

MS. ZDEB: We'll take a quick break, say five
minutes.

[Recess.]

EXAMINATION BY COUNSEL FOR THE MINORITY

BY MR. HASKELL:
Q. Mr. Ohr, again, I'm Alex Haskell from
Senate Feinstein's staff, the Minority staff of the
Committee with Sara Zdeb and Heather Sawyer, my colleagues. Thank you for being here today and, of course, for your multiple decades of service at the Department of Justice.

As you know, the DOJ Inspector General issued a 400-plus page report in December of last year titled "Review of Four FISA Applications and Other Aspects of the FBI's Crossfire Hurricane Investigation". The report detailed the results of the two-year investigation into the same topics we're addressing here today.

According to that report, the IG examined more than one million documents and interviewed more than a hundred witnesses, including Christopher Steele and numerous current and former government employees. There's an entire chapter of the IG report, which is 36 pages long, titled "Department Attorney Bruce Ohr's Activities During the Crossfire Hurricane Investigation" that details your involvement in, again, the exact issues you were brought here to discuss again today.

Did you cooperate with that IG investigation?

A. Yes.

Q. And were you interviewed?

A. Yes.

Q. One time? How many times?

A. I believe it was three times.

Q. Three times, and if you could just give a
ballpark number of how many total number hours did you
spending interviewing with the IG?
A. Probably, eight or nine hours altogether.
Q. Did you provide complete and truthful
answers to the IG's questions during the course of those
tree interviews?
A. Yes.
Q. And did you or the Justice Department
provide the IG with documents related to your involvement
with Crossfire Hurricane as part of that investigation?
A. I believe the Department did, yes.
Q. Okay. Did the IG ever complain that they
needed more information from you that they didn't have?
A. No.
Q. Do you recall if the IG ever complained
that they didn't get documents that they wanted from you or
related to you?
A. I'm not aware of that.
Q. Did you have an opportunity to review the
IG report, at least the portions you were involved in,
before it was finalized or published or --
A. Yes.
Q. -- did you review a draft?
A. Yes.
Q. And did you provide any comments on that
A. I believe we did, yes.

Q. Can you please characterize those comments?

A. I can't recall the specifics of the comments. I'm sorry.

Q. Okay. That's all right. Can you recall whether the IG addressed the comments that you provided in the final draft?

A. I believe they did, yes.

Q. So, in other words, to the extent you identify errors in the draft that you reviewed, the IG's final report addressed those errors?

A. I believe it does.

Q. The IG report painstakingly details your contacts with Christopher Steele, Glenn Simpson, and other members of the U.S. Government. Recognizing that different witnesses may have differing recollections or interpretations of certain events, does the IG report accurately reflect the testimony that you provided to the IG about your contacts with Christopher Steele?

A. I believe it does, yes.

Q. And how about your contacts with Glenn Simpson?

A. Yes.
Q. FBI personnel?
A. Yes.

Q. And what about DOJ personnel?
A. Yes.

Q. What about State Department personnel?
A. Yes.

Q. And does the IG report accurately reflect why you passed the information, passed certain information, on to the FBI?
A. Yes.

Q. And I understand that there are also 302s that memorialize meetings you had with the FBI.
A. Yes.

Q. And that the report also addresses those same meetings that the 302s memorialized?
A. Yes.

Q. Now, the IG's investigation isn't the only information related to these matters that you've been interviewed for. You were interviewed for around eight hours on August 28, 2018 as part of an investigation by the House Judiciary and Oversight Committee; is that right?
A. Yes.

Q. And as is true today, did you appear and answer questions voluntarily as part of that House investigation?
A. Yes.

Q. So House Republicans didn't seek to subpoena or hold you in contempt for failing to cooperate with that investigation?

A. No.

Q. Have you been interviewed by any other congressional committees about your interactions with Christopher Steele?

A. Yes.

Q. And did you provide those committees with truthful and complete answers when asked questions?

A. Yes.

Q. And, again, you cooperated voluntarily with all of those, whichever committees those were?

A. Yes.

Q. No subpoenas were issued to require --

A. That's correct.

Q. So in total, several congressional investigations, three interviews with the IG. How many hours or days would you estimate that you've spent providing testimony in connection with this particular matter?

A. Several. I don't know.

Q. And any way you can be more specific? If you can't, no problem.

A. Five or six days maybe.
Q. Thank you.

Our committee, the Judiciary Committee, held a six-hour hearing with Inspector General Horowitz following the release of the 484-page IG report. A number of unproven or disproven allegations were made during that hearing and some of those allegations have been subsequently repeated at other hearings and meetings of this committee. We believe those allegations were investigated and answered by the IG, but I'm going to ask you a series of questions about them because we continue to hear them from people who don't have firsthand knowledge about the Crossfire Hurricane investigation.

Now, I understand that your firsthand knowledge of Crossfire Hurricane is very limited, but I ask that you answer these questions based on that limited knowledge.

The IG found that there was no documentary or testimonial evidence of bias impacting the FBI's work in the Crossfire Hurricane investigation, but, nonetheless, there have been allegations that there were tons of evidence of bias, and that's a quote. Did political bias impact any of your actions in connection with the Crossfire Hurricane investigation?

A. No.

Q. And I should say, more broadly, the investigation into Russian interference?
A. That's right. Yes. The answer is still no.

Q. You interacted with several members of the FBI in connection with the Russian interference Crossfire Hurricane investigation. Do you have any evidence that political bias impacted any of their work?

A. Nothing that I saw, no.

Q. President Trump repeatedly has stated that the Crossfire Hurricane investigation and Russia investigation, more broadly, was a witch hunt, including in tweets that accuse you and your wife of illegally conspiring to hurt him politically.

Did you conspire to hurt Trump politically?

A. No.

Q. Do you have any evidence that the Russian investigation was part of a, quote, deep state effort to take down President Trump?

A. No.

Q. And there's also been allegations that the purpose of that investigation was to, quote, change or nullify the results of the 2016 election. Have you ever done anything with the intent of changing or nullifying the results of the 2016 election?

A. No.

Q. Do you have any evidence that the goal of
the Russian investigation was to change or nullify the
results of the 2016 election?
A. No.
Q. I want to turn quickly to some testimony
with Mr. Baker and Mr. Somers earlier about Christopher
Steele and why he was closed as a source. It was mentioned
that one individual had remarked that he could not be
trusted.
FBI Assistant Director Bill Priestap told the IG that,
quote: He decided that Steele had to closed immediately
upon learning that Steele had disclosed his interactions
with the FBI to a reporter. Peter Strzok reiterated to the
IG that it was Steele's disclosure to the reporter that led
to his termination as a source."
He said, Strzok said, quote: We did not close him
because we thought he was a fabricator."
And all of that is on page 173 of the IG report. Do
you have any evidence to contradict Priestap's and Strzok's
statement that Steele was closed as an FBI source because of
his disclosure to a reporter?
A. I do not.
Q. In other words, to your knowledge,
Steele's closure or the termination of the relationship,
whatever exactly the contours of that relationship was with
the FBI, that the termination of that had nothing to do with
any allegation that he had fabricated evidence; is that correct?

A. That's correct.

Q. In fact, Steele has been a source of useful and important information in the past. Former Acting Attorney General Sally Yates told the IG that Steele was, quote, credible, very knowledgeable of Russia, and not just somebody out of the blue, quote, someone with whom the FBI had worked for many years.

That's on page 153. Do you agree with Yates' assessment of Steele?

A. Yes.

Q. And Steele's handling agent testified during this investigation that, quote: He had no indication that Steele was anything other than professional and productive."

And that's on page 36 of the transcript of that interview.

So quote: He had no indication that Steele was anything other than professional and productive.

Do agree with that statement?

A. Yes.

BY MS. ZDEB:

Q. One other quick follow up about one the other questions that Mr. Baker asked you regarding Mr.
Steele: He asked you about your characterization in one of the 302s that Mr. Steele was, quote, desperate that Trump not be elected.

Recognizing that you don't necessarily recall using that specific word, could you elaborate a bit on what you understood Mr. Steele's concerns at that to be?

A. I think my impression at the time was he was very alarmed by the information. So if it were true, that would be a serious threat to the American national security, and that was my -- that was what my impression was of his reason.

MS. ZDEB: Thank you.

BY MS. SAWYER:

Q. Before we move off that topic, I just want to drill down a little more on that. Did he ever indicate to you that he was opposed to any Republican being in the White House?

A. No. I never heard anything like that, no.

Q. Did he ever express to you a strong desire that Hillary Clinton win the election?

A. No.

Q. So from where you sat, were the concerns he was raising unique to Donald Trump?

A. Yes. He had specific information that he had obtained that he was passing on regarding Mr. Trump.
Q. I think, as you characterized it earlier, was his concern that Donald Trump in particular might be vulnerable to undue influence from Russia?

A. Correct.

MS. SAWYER: Okay.

MR. HASKELL: I think that's all we have for now.

That's all I have for now.

BY MS. SAWYER:

Q. I just wanted to just clarify a couple of more timing points than anything else.

On a few occasions, you were asked by our colleagues about Mr. -- the handling agent's remark that the handling agent believed that news of the report had reached the, quote, EAD level at FBI Headquarters. Do you recall at all the timing of when the handling agent believed those reports had reached the, quote, EAD level?

A. I'm afraid I don't.

Q. Who would the EAD have been at that point in time?

A. I don't know the name of the person. It would have been at Headquarters.

Q. Is it possible it was Michael Steinbach?

A. I don't know.

Q. And in the IG report at page 100, it says: "On September 19, 2016, the Crossfire Hurricane team
received a Steele reporting for the first time when the handling agent E-mails SSA 1, six reports for SSA 1 to upload the sub file."

Do you have any information that would contradict or call into question the finding that it was September of 2016 when the Crossfire Hurricane team first learned about the Steele reporting?

A. I don't have any information on that.

Q. During the conversation that you were having with our colleagues as well, there was some conversation about Christopher Steele at times having been paid for some of the source reporting he provided to the FBI. The Committee, and I believe it's also in the Inspector General's report, also has other information confirming that with regard to Mr. Steele's Russian election reporting, he was never paid by the FBI.

Is that your understanding as well?

A. I don't know. I don't know if he was paid or not.

Q. So you wouldn't have any information that would contradict --

A. Correct.

Q. -- the receive information that we received?

A. Correct.
MR. HASKELL: I think that's all we have for now.

MR. SOMERS: Are you good to keep going?

THE WITNESS: Yes.

MR. SOMERS: It's 11:40. We can go back on the record.

FURTHER EXAMINATION BY COUNSEL FOR THE MAJORITY

BY MR. SOMERS:

Q. In the previous round, we spoke a little about your meetings with Mr. Schwartz, Ms. Ahmad, and Mr. Weissmann. I'll read you a quote from page 292 of the IG report:

"The meetings between Schwartz, Ahmad, and Weissmann focused on the shared concern that MLARS was not moving quickly enough on the Manafort criminal investigation and whether there were steps they could take to move the investigation forward."

First, what's MLARS, just for the record?

A. Money Laundering Asset Recovery Section.

Q. Do you recall what the concerns were with the pace of the Manafort criminal investigation?

A. I don't beyond what you just said.

Q. Did you have any formal involvement in the Manafort criminal investigation?

A. No.

Q. Did Mr. Schwartz, Ms. Ahmad, or Mr.
Weissmann work in the MLARS section?

A. I don't believe they did.

Q. And your responsibility in ODAG did not include the supervision of MLARS; is that correct?

A. Mine did not, no, except maybe with OCDETF.

Q. Again, so we talked about these meetings between Schwartz, Ahmad, and Weissmann, and the IG report indicates that some of the meetings -- I think we discussed this last round. Some of the meetings included Page and Strzok and, quote, focused primarily on whether the FBI could assess the cases relevant, if any, to the FBI's Russia interference investigation.

For context, the case is the Manafort case. Do you recall discussions about how -- having discussions or being in the meetings where it was discussed how Manafort related to the Russia interference investigation?

A. I don't recall the specifics.

Q. Do you recall anything?

A. Just what you said.

Q. Do you know why MLARS was never included in any of these meetings?

A. I don't, no.

Q. Did you ever ask like, Hey --

A. I don't recall.
Q. -- should we invite MLARS up?
A. I don't recall.

Q. Had you ever contacted MLARS?
A. Not at this time. I don't believe so.

Q. You said there was some overlap between OCDETF, I think, and MLARS a moment ago. There was no one at MLARS you could reach out to to discuss this with directly?
A. I didn't have a particular person to call, no.

Q. Was there an individual in ODAG that had responsibility over MLARS?
A. I don't know if there was a particular person for MLARS. I'm sure there was someone from the Criminal Division. I can't remember who that is right now or who that was.

Q. And again, you didn't consult that person?
A. No.

Q. For what reason?
A. I don't recall. I mean beyond what I said earlier.

Q. Why did you choose not to inform Sally Yates of your work in this area?
A. I wanted to keep this raw intelligence at the level of people who were working with that sort of
thing. I didn't see it as part of a case or, you know, it wasn't reliable enough to be considered, in my opinion, as part of a case at that point.

It was just raw intel. So I wanted to keep it to the people who would be able to analyze it and work with it.

Q. Is that lower-level people?
A. In general, yes.

Q. Was there any aversion to telling political appointees about this information?
A. Only in that they would not be as used to dealing with this kind of information.

Q. But not anything to do with the fact that they were politically appointed?
A. I mean, there's always some concern about political issues, but in this case, it was just information.

Q. Did you recall any conversations with Bruce Schwartz where he may have expressed concerns about sharing information about politicals?
A. He may have, but I don't recall the exact conversation. I saw it was in the report.

Q. But that wasn't your concern; that was his concern?

If there was a concern, it was not your concern; it was his concern that politicals not be involved with the investigation; is that an accurate statement?
A. It's hard to know, looking back on it now.

Q. So you don't recall that you were concerns --

A. Right.

Q. -- with politicals?

A. Right.

Q. Do you have any reason to think that Sally Yates would somehow allow political influence or politics to influence an investigation?

A. No. I think the leadership of the Department would do its best to try to be political about things. So, obviously politics, affects some of their work. They do their best not to let it influence.

Q. That would apply to Dana Boente as well?

A. Yes.

Q. Rob Rosenstein?

A. Yes.

Q. It would apply to him as well?

A. Yes.

Q. And you also did not Dana Boente?

A. Correct.

Q. And you provided some information to Rod Rosenstein about your involvement; is that correct?

A. Yes.

Q. Other issues in the IG report
discusses -- the IG report indicates that you never sought
ethics advice about whether your wife's employment by Fusion
GPS presented a conflict of interest; is that correct?
A. Correct.
Q. You told the IG that you may not have
sought ethics advice because you did not want to spread the
information around the Department before it was evaluated;
is that correct?
A. Yes.
Q. Is the ethics advice not confidential?
I'm not familiar with the ethics process at DOJ.
A. I believe they try to keep it
confidential. I was trying to keep the number of people
involved limited.
Q. But you said you didn't spread the
information around the Department. By that, you did not
mean that you were concerned that if you sought ethics
advice that the information would get more broadly; is that
not what you meant by that?
A. I'm not sure exactly. No.
Q. You still work at the Department. Do you
have concerns now if you went to the Department for ethics
advice about something that the information you shared would
be spread throughout the Department?
A. Well, I think now, I would more likely to
go for the advice.

Q. But you wouldn't have concerns about it being spread throughout the Department if an issue was shared?

A. Not particularly. I mean, there's always some risk.

Q. Who would you have sought ethics advice from at that time?

It doesn't have to be a person. A particular office.

A. Yeah. The Office of Professional Responsibility.

Q. Would you have had to go to Scott Schools at that point in time to get ethics or was there someone else you could have gone to to get the advice?

A. There are probably other people as well. Scott would have been certainly one place to go.

Q. What was Scott Schools’ position at the time?

A. He was kind of the senior career person in ODAG.

Q. Was he at the same level that you were?

A. Yeah, but he was more senior.

Q. He was also, technically, an assistant deputy attorney general?

A. Assistant associate deputy attorney
general.

Q. Scott Schools was also associate deputy attorney general?

A. That is correct.

Q. Did the fact that he was in the ethics chain in any way affect your decision to seek or not seek ethics advice on your wife's employment by Fusion GPS?

A. I don't believe so.

Q. I would like to sort of switch agencies once again to outside the Department and switch to the State Department.

According to the IG report: "In the morning of November 21, 2016, at the State Department's request, Ohr met with Deputy Assistant Secretary Katherine Kavalec and several other senior State Department officials regarding State Department efforts to investigate Russian influence in foreign elections and how the Department of Justice might assist those efforts. During a break in this, Ohr and Kavalec discussed together Kavalec's interaction with Steele."

Do you recall this conversation?

A. I recall speaking with Kavalec about Steele. I don't recall that specific conversation.

Q. But you recall an initial conversation with her?
A. Yes.

Q. About Steele?

A. There was an initial conversation, yes.

Q. Stepping back, other than Kavalec, did you discuss Steele or Russian election interference in the 2016 election with anyone else at the State Department?

A. I don't recall. I don't think so.

Q. Victoria Nuland?

A. No.

Q. Jonathan Winer?

A. No.

Q. What was the meeting about? Do you recall the gist not the meeting with Kavalec, but more the general meeting -- it says with State Department official regarding State Department efforts to investigate Russian influence in foreign election and how the Department of Justice might assist those efforts.

Can you speak more broadly about this meeting?

A. I'm happy to tell you my recollection of the meeting. I do believe it was probably classified at the time. So I don't know whether there's a problem. If not, I can certainly --

Q. Well, I don't need the specific efforts. I'm just trying to understand if you can say anything more broadly about it.
A. I think they were primarily interested in talking with other countries that felt like they were being threatened with election interference from Russian and sharing lessons from our experience.

Q. Was there any discussion about Russian interference in the United States election in 2016 at that meeting?

A. I don't recall specifically any discussion about that.

Q. Do you recall why you were invited to the meeting?

A. I generally was the person dealing with -- no, I don't. I don't know.

Q. Was there anyone else from DOJ at the meetings?

A. I don't recall.

Q. I mean, would that seem an obvious topic for you to be the DOJ representative at?

A. I mean, I dealt with Russia matters generally, but, you know, I don't know. I don't recall if there were other people there from DOJ or not.

Q. You didn't say that -- did you ever express to Kavalec or someone else at the State Department that they have the wrong guy to attend this meeting?

A. I don't recall doing that, no.
Q. I guess what I'm asking is this would also seem to -- this meeting would seem to fall outside of your portfolio, as you explained it earlier, as either ADAG or OCDETF.

A. If I recall, what I talked about at the meeting was more of we support criminal investigation into Russian organized crime activity and that some of the same actors might be involved.

Q. Let's go back. We talked more broadly about the bigger meeting. Let's talk about the smaller between you and Kavalec that was -- you said that it was during a break from this larger meeting. Do you remember how she approached you?

A. I don't, no.

Q. How did she know that you knew Steele?

A. I don't recall how that came up.

Q. You knew her, Ms. Kavalec, prior to this meeting; is that correct?

A. I may have met her once before, but, generally, that was my first meeting with her.

Q. You didn't generally have contact with her?

A. I don't believe so.

Q. Did you confirm to her that you knew Steele in the conversation?
A. I believe I did. I don't recall the specifics.

Q. Did you tell her Steele was also telling you the same or similar information?

A. I don't recall. Again, I don't recall.

Q. And, again, I asked you about this earlier: You had no concern talking about Steele with her even though he was a confidential human source?

A. No, because it was clear to me she had had conversations with Steele. So I was curious what she had heard.

Q. And what did she tell you she heard?

A. I don't recall the specifics.

Q. Was it similar to what you already heard?

Do you recall that?

A. I believe generally, yeah.

Q. What contacts did you have with her after the initial meeting about either Steele or Russian interference in the 2016 U.S. election?

A. I saw her at least a couple of times. So I don't recall exactly how many.

Q. Did you correspond with her by E-mail regarding these topics?

A. I know we sent E-mails back and forth. I don't know if they were specifically about this topic.
Q. Did Kavalec tell you that she had separately reached out to the FBI about Steele and the information he provided?

A. I don't recall that.

Q. Did you indicate to her that you were also having conversation with FBI about Steele?

A. I don't know. I don't recall.

Q. According to the IG report on page 279, she, Ms. Kavalec: "She told us that Ohr responded that Steele's information was, quote, kind of crazy, kind of wild, quite a tale. She told us that she provided this information to Ohr believing that he would pass it along to whoever needed it."

I guess my first question would was that your take on Christopher Steele's information, that it was kind of crazy, kind of wild, and quite a tale? Does that sound like the feeling you had about it?

A. I don't recall the -- I don't recall saying that specifically. I mean, I think it was pretty wild information, but he had provided good information in the past.

Q. Did you tell you would pass the information along to the FBI that she had told you?

A. I don't recall.

BY MR. BAKER:
Q. Do you know if there was any follow up with her? Did you circle back and say you did pass it along or did she affirmatively reach out to you to verify that you did, in fact, pass it?
A. I know we spoke more than once. I don't remember exactly what we said. So I'm not sure.
Q. You don't recall a specific discussion about whether you, in fact, passed it along and who you passed it to?
A. I don't recall anything.
BY MR. SOMERS:
Q. Did you pass -- I'm sorry. If he asked this. Did you pass Kavalec's information to the FBI?
A. I believe I did.
Q. Who did you pass it to?
A. Whoever was the agent that I was talking with at the time.
Q. Did she -- do you recall her raising an issue with you about whether Russia had a consulate in Miami?
A. I don't recall that.
Q. Did she tell you she had done any digging into the Steele information herself?
A. I don't recall.
Q. Whether she had may have found something
inaccurate, do you recall that?

A. I don't recall, no.

Q. Any discussion about outcomes with her? Do you recall?

A. No. I can't -- no. I don't recall.

Q. One of the people I asked you about earlier was Jonathan Winer. The 302 of your November 21, 2016 meeting with the FBI, it notes that: "Ohr knew that Steele's reporting was going to, among other Jon Winer at State."

How did you know that?

A. You know, I don't recall now.

Q. Do you know Jon Winer?

A. A little bit yes.

Q. Did you -- what were your contacts with -- what's relationship with Jon Winer?

A. I dealt with him a little bit when he was in the government back in the early 2000s and I think I saw him once the hall passing during the Obama Administration, but I don't think we ever spoke about anything substantive.

BY MR. BAKER:

Q. What was his position at State?

A. Back when I knew him in the early 2000s, I think he was a deputy assistant secretary for INL, and I don't know what his position was in 2016.
Q. You said INL?
A. Yeah. It's the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement. I may be getting that wrong.

MR. BAKER: Okay. Thank you.

BY MR. SOMERS:
Q. So during the post-July 30, 2016 through, say, December 2017 time -- well, I guess he left the State Department. Well, let's keep it broad.
In December 2017, what was your relationship with Winer in that particular time? Did you have contact with him?
A. I don't believe I did.
Q. Did you discuss Winer with Steele?
A. I think Steele mentioned Winer, but I don't know.
Q. Could that be how you, quote, knew that Steele's reporting was going to, among others, Jonathan Winer? Could it have been Steele who told you that?
A. It could be, yes.
Q. Did Winer ever share information with you about the Trump campaign or Russia in the 2016 election?
A. No.
Q. In one of your 302s, the May 8, 2017 302, at the end there is a statement, quote: "Jonathan Winer was bringing over a letter separately" and, in parentheses, "NFI".
1. Do you have any recollection of what that letter is?
2. A. I can't recall anything as I sit here, no.
3. Q. There must have been -- you told the FBI.
4. So you must have had some awareness of this at some point in time.
5. Did you communicate with him after he left the State Department in January of 2017?
6. A. No.
7. Q. Did you ever receive information from Jonathan Winer?
8. A. No.
9. Q. Your November 21, 2016 302, similar to my questions about Winer: Ohr, quote, knew Simpson and others were talking to Victoria Nuland at State."
10. How did you know this?
11. A. I think Steele told me.
12. Q. Simpson and others. Do you recall who the others were?
13. "Ohr knew Simpson and others were talking to Victoria Nuland at State."
14. Do you know the others were?
15. A. No.
16. Q. Could it have been the intelligence community?
17. A. I don't know.
BY MR. BAKER:

Q. What position did Ms. Nuland occupy at State?

A. She was -- I'm not sure. It may have been assistant secretary for their Europe Bureau. I don't recall.

BY MR. SOMERS:

Q. Could the others have been Steele? Did Steele talk to you about Victoria Nuland?

A. I'm sorry?

Q. "Ohr knew Simpson and others were talking to Victoria Nuland at State. I'm asking about the others and whether Steele may have mentioned to you that he was speaking to Victoria Nuland at the State Department.

A. I think so. I'm not sure. I'm not sure.

Q. Do you know what they were talking to her about, Simpson and the others?

A. No.

Q. Presumably, since it's in that 302, it had something to do with elections interference.

A. Yeah, but I don't know.

Q. Okay. Did you ever communicate with Victoria Nuland?

A. No.

Q. About anything?
A. No.

MR. SOMERS: Let's go off the record for a second.

[Discussion held off the record.]

MR. SOMERS: I would like to mark this entire set of documents Exhibit 1 for the court reporter.

[Ohr Exhibit No. 1 was marked for identification.]

BY MR. SOMERS:

Q. If you could, these are Bates numbered at the bottom. They're in order, but I only printed out the documents from the complete set that were of interest to me rather than giving you a large set of documents.

Go to page 25.

A. Twenty-five.

Q. At a little further than halfway down the page, January 31st of 2017 at 5:48 p.m., you respond to Christopher Steele. This is a series of messages, text messages, of some sort between you and Christopher Steele, and it says -- this is from you:

"Bruce: Understood. I can certainly give you an FBI contact if it becomes necessary."

Do you know why you were at the point in time discussing giving Christopher Steele an FBI contact?

A. I don't recall the conversation, but looking at the prior message from Christopher to me, he
says: If you end up out though, I really need another, Bureau, question mark, contact point/number who is briefed. We can't allow our guy to be forced to go back home. It would be disastrous all around, though his position right now looks stable. A million thanks.

Q. Do you recall who "our guy" is?

A. I believe that's his primary source.

Q. And I'm not going to ask you to reveal his name, but did you know who his primary source was?

A. I did not.

Q. What was his concern at the time about the primary source?

A. I think that the primary source would be forced to go back home. I don't know exactly where home is.

Q. Could you go to the next page, Bates 26 on March 16, 2017 at 7:52 p.m.

Do you see that text message?

A. Yes.

Q. It says: Hi. Apparently Laura Perkins is the DOJ official responsible for overseeing the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act, slash DPA, Deferred Prosecution Agreement applied to Bilfinger, our non-paying German engineering company client. Best."

A. Yeah.

Q. Do you know why Mr. Steele was raising
this issue with you?

A. I think he had some information about other wrongdoing by Bilfinger.

Q. Was he asking you to take any action about Bilfinger on behalf of or to intervene with Laura Perkins on something?

A. It looks like he's asking me to call Laura Perkins.

Q. Did you call Laura Perkins?

A. I did not.

Q. If you go a little further down the page, did you tell him it wouldn't have been appropriate for you to call Laura Perkins about --

A. I wouldn't have.

Q. Because it would have been inappropriate?

A. I think -- yeah. I would not have felt comfortable doing that.

Q. Did you convey that to Steele?

A. I don't remember if I did or not.

Q. Had you ever gotten a request like this from Steele before or after, to intervene in -- "intervene" is not the right word -- the contact someone at the Justice Department about a client of his?

A. I don't recall any other time, no.

Q. A little further down the page, at March
24, 2017 at 7:15 a.m., skipping into the middle of that text: "Otherwise, we understand an approach from 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."

Do you recall discussing the Senate Intelligence Committee their request with Steele?

A. I believe we did. I don't recall the specific one, but I'm sure we did or I believe we did at some point.

Q. What did you discuss?

A. I think, again, he was worried about his source's safety, is my recollection.

Q. Did you provide him with any advice on how to deal with that request?

A. No. I don't recall doing so.

Q. If you could go -- sorry -- back to Bates 25 for a second.

Toward the bottom on March 7, 2017 at 4:53 a.m., this is from Steele to you: "Would it be possible to speak later today? We're very concerned about the Grassley letter and its possible implications for us, our operations, and our sources. We need some reassurances. Many thanks."

Did you discuss a Grassley oversight letter with Christopher Steele?
A. I believe we did.
Q. Do you recall -- sorry. You said "we did?"
A. I believe I did.
Q. Is that you and Steele?
A. Yes.
Q. What did you discuss?
A. Again, I remember him being concerned about his source becoming exposed.
Q. Then this is kind of a general question. I think it occurs in a lot of these texts, but we'll just take this one, for example, the same as I just asked you about Grassley.
"We're very concerned about the Grassley letter." Do you know who the "we're" is? Were you talking to anyone else with Steele? Is that how he spoke generally?
A. I don't know.
Q. So you were not in contact with anybody else from Orbis?
A. That's correct.
Q. If you can you turn to Bates 27, the top of the page, the very first text, March 30, 2017 at 9:07 a.m.
"Hi, Bruce. Any news? The Senate Intel Committee is leaking like a sieve, which is giving us pause for thought on engagement."
Then you respond at 9:15 a.m.: "Bruce: Chris, no news on this end aside from what I'm reading in the papers."

Did you make an inquiry of somebody?

A. I don't recall making any inquiry, no.

Q. Did you ever talk to anybody on the Intelligence Committee about the requests they were making of Christopher Steele?

A. No.

Q. On the bottom of that page, July 16, 2017, 5:47 p.m., it's from Steele to you again and the second sentence there says: "I spoke to my old colleague last week and they assured me they would not stand in the way of our reengagement with the Bureau."

Do you know who he was referring to by his old colleague?

A. I think he means people in British intelligence.

Q. Do you have any sense of why they would stand in the way of his reengagement with the Bureau? Was that a concern then?

A. My understanding was he needed to check with them before talking with the Bureau because it was a former employee.

Q. Do you know if he checked with them before he spoke with the Bureau in the -- this text message is sent
in the summer of 2017. So in the summer of 2016, did you ever have any conversation with him about whether he engaged with his old colleagues to see if it was okay to talk with either you or the FBI?

A. I don't recall any conversations along those lines.

Q. The next is -- your response to this is the next text on that page at 5:49 p.m.: "Bruce: Hi, Chris. It's good to hear from you. Hope all is well. I will pass this along to my colleagues."

Who did you pass that along to?

A. The FBI.

Q. So would that be -- do you know who at the FBI?

A. Either ______ or his successor.

BY MR. BAKER:

Q. Do you know the successor's name?

A. I don't recall it as I sit here.

BY MR. SOMERS:

Q. Do you recall if they're at Headquarters or a field office?

A. I don't.

Q. Where did you meet with -- first, where did meet with ______ when you met with him, generally?

A. I believe I generally met with ______
at Headquarters.

Q. And then he had two successors, I believe is indicated in the IG report. Did you meet with them at Headquarters as well?

A. At some point, I met with -- started meeting with one of them in the Washington Field Office, but I don't recall exactly when that transition occurred.

Q. Did you ever meet with them at Main Justice?

A. Your offices is at Main Justice. Correct?

Q. Your office is at Main Justice?

A. Right. I was at Main Justice.

Q. I gave you that question in reverse order. Did you ever meet with him at Main Justice?

A. I don't believe.

BY MR. BAKER:

Q. How would a handoff have been done? is leaving. Did he set up an introduction with whoever was taking his place with you?

A. I don't recall.

BY MR. SOMERS:

Q. We're were still on Bates 28, the next text there. This is August 6, 2018 at 12:28 p.m. "Hi, Bruce. Hope you're well and getting some holiday
with the family. Whenever convenient, I would like to chat. There's a lot going on and we are frustrated at how long this reengagement with the Bureau and Mueller is taking. Anything you could do to accelerate the process would be much appreciated."

What was he expecting you to do to accelerate the process with the Bureau and with Mueller?

A. I don't know.

Q. Did you ever engage with the special counsel on behalf of Christopher Steele?

A. Not that I was aware of. I just kept going to the same agent they told me to talk to.

Q. Did you ever go back to the FBI and express Steele's frustration about not being reengaged?

A. I'm sure I passed this along to whoever the agent was I was talking to.

Q. Did they ever give any explanation as to why things were going slow or whether they were able to deal with it?

A. I don't recall any explanation.

Q. The next last sentence of that text message says: "There are some new, perishable, operational opportunities which we do not want to miss out on."

Do you know anything about that?

A. I don't know if it was this occasion, but
it may have been this occasion. He had some other people, I think, who he thought might be able to provide information to the FBI.

Q. Regarding?
A. Some Russian interference in general.

Q. But you don't know whether those opportunities were ever taken? Did you ever facilitate it?
A. Well, I passed this information back to the FBI. I don't recall what they did with it.

Q. Did you ever facilitate the FBI meeting with anybody else related to this Russia interference investigation?
A. I mentioned Kathleen Kavalec to them.

Q. But no -- Steele didn't give you -- did Steele ever give you anyone else's name and then you provided that name, slash, person to the FBI to give further reporting to FBI?
A. I don't recall anything like that happening.

Q. Would you turn to Bates 29, the next page there, November 18, 2017 at 4:22 p.m. It's kind of towards the bottom of the page, the long text there.

This is again from Steele to you. I'm going to skip to the third sentence: "I am presuming you've heard nothing from your SC colleagues on the issues you kindly put to them
from me. We have heard nothing from them either."

Would you agree with me that SC is probably Special Counsel?

A. I think that's who he's referring to.

Q. Is that who you understood him to be referring to?

A. Yes.

Q. It says: "On the issues that you kindly put to them from me."

What issues did you put to the special counsel colleagues?

A. Whatever the other things he mentioned, I guess as reported to the agents that I was dealing with.

Q. Did you ever talk to Andrew Weissman, not the meeting we talked about earlier, but Andrew Weissman once he was on the special counsel team, did you ever talk with him about Christopher Steele?

A. No.

Q. Same question for Ms. Ahmad.

A. No.

Q. Did you know -- I mean, other than them, did you know anyone else on the special counsel's team?

A. I was acquainted with one of the agents.

Q. And that agent was not the same person that was your handler --
A. Correct.

Q. -- for passing off Steele information?

A. Correct.

BY MR. BAKER:

Q. What was the agent's name?

A. [redacted].

BY MR. SOMERS:

Q. Had you ever spoken to him about --

A. I spoke with him, but I did not pass on information.

Q. I'm sorry. I didn't hear your response.

A. I spoke with [redacted] at one point, but I did not -- it was purely social. I did not pass on any information.

Q. So nothing about Russian interference?

A. Correct.

Q. They weren't Russian interference conversations?

A. Correct.

Q. At the bottom of that page 29 and it continues onto 30, it says -- you response to Chris. This is November 18, 2017 5:22 p.m.

"I understand the difficulties and uncertainty you are experiencing. I haven't heard anything back, but I'll reach out again and ask for an update."
Who would you have reached out to again?

A. The same agent.

Q. If you could turn to the next document there, this is about the Senate Intel -- it's Bates No. 47 about the Senate Intel letter that we discussed a few minutes ago. I think these are -- are these your handwritten notes, your handwriting?

A. Yes.

Q. This refers to a call we were talking about earlier, your call with Chris.

"Got letter from the Senate Intel Committee."

I'm reading the second sentence.

"Got letter from Senate Intel Committee."

Asked, something, three questions. Is that roughly how you read it?

A. Yes.

Q. Do you know what that word is?


Q. "Them three questions."

Can you read the last sentence on that note?

A. The last sentence?

Q. Yes. "Also", something.

A. "Also, Don Jones still in the picture, his own channel."

Q. Could that be Dan Jones and not Don Jones,
possibly?

A. It might be.

Q. I asked you earlier about Dan Jones, and you don't know who Dan Jones is?

A. No.

Q. The Penn Quarter Group?

A. No.

Q. And you don't know whether at some point, Dan Jones or the Penn Quarter Group took over paying for research from Christopher Steele?

A. No, I don't.

Q. Let's go to Bates 49, the next page. Again, I think it's:

"Dan Jones, former FBI, was staff to Senate Intel Committee."

Is that what that says there?

A. Yes.

Q. Do you know what the next three words are there?

A. "During water boarding."

Q. A little further down -- these are your handwritten notes?

A. I believe so, yes.

Q. There's a sentence that looks like: "He has talked."
Can you read that sentence?

A. "He has talked with current FBI, trying to help discretely."

Q. Do you think this relates to Russia?

A. I don't know. I don't think -- as I said, I don't think I'm familiar with Dan Jones.

Q. Whatever these notes are, do you believe this is your notes on the phone call or some other, Skype call or whatever, with Christopher Steele?

A. Yes.

Q. So this information you have here is from Christopher Steele?

A. Yes.

Q. Then if we go to the next page here, relates back to the question I asked you earlier about Jon Winer and the letter. The second sentence there, I think I can read this one.

"Jon Winer bringing over a letter separately. They are trying to keep a low profile as much as possible."

Did I read those two sentences correctly?

A. I believe so, yes.

Q. Does this refresh your recollection at all about Jon Winer and that letter I asked you about earlier?

A. Yeah. I don't know what was in the letter. I don't know what that was about.
Q. Again, this is information from Christopher Steele, though, to you?
A. I believe so, yes.
Q. Turn to the next page, Bates 57. It's got the date of November 8, 2017. There's a one, two, three in the column, and then a little bit further down the page, it looks like it says Mifsud. Do you see that?
A. Yes.
Q. Can you -- there's an arrow through some other words. I can't read those words. Can you -- I can read some of them, but could you read the words that are arrowed to there?
Again, these are your notes. Correct?
A. Yes. I have to admit I'm having a little trouble here. I don't know what the first -- I'm not sure what that first word is. Underneath, it says "con last year", so conversation last year, and then Mifsud, maybe "to Scotty", Mifsud, something Scotty, former battalion foreign minister.
Q. Do you know who Scotty is?
A. No.
Q. You don't know who that is?
A. No.
Q. Do you know Joseph Mifsud is?
A. The name rings a bell, I think from the
newspapers, but I don't know who he is. I didn't have any contact or any knowledge about it him.

Q. Again, I keep asking this question, I guess, but these notes here are based on, to the best of your knowledge, a conversation you would have had with Christopher Steele?

A. Yes.

Q. So he was telling you something about Joseph Mifsud, but you don't recall who Joseph Mifsud is?

A. No.

Q. Can you turn to the next page, page 58, and again there is a Mifsud and some words after that. Could you read that to us? I can't make that out.

A. I'm not sure. It looks like instru -- it could instrumental, but I'm not sure. I think that's "R", slash, "Saudi" relationship.

Q. What does "R", slash, "Saudi" mean?

A. I think Russia-Saudi relationship.

Q. So Mifsud is something, maybe instrumental, in Russia, slash, Saudi relationship?

A. That's how I read that, yes.

Q. Do you know who Alison Saunders is?

A. Yes. Yes.

Q. Did you go serve her a dinner at her house in 2016?
A. I believe I did, yes.

Q. Who is that?

A. She at that time may have been the chief or the head of prosecution services.

Q. So you can save me a reading of George Papadopolous' book, let me just read you this tweet from George Papadopolous: "The person who introduced me to western intelligence asset Joseph Mifsud also introduced Alison Saunders, UK's top prosecutor to Bruce Ohr four days before the Trump Tower meeting. I exposed this person in my book. UK is the epicenter of a coup attempt from the last two years."

Who introduced you to Alison Saunders, if you recall?

This is your saving me from having to look at George Papadopolous' book.

A. Okay. I knew Alison Saunders for many years. She was previously the head of their organized crime branch in the criminal prosecution service, and I started dealing with her -- I don't know -- five, ten years before this.

Q. So you've known her for a long time?

A. Yes.

Q. Did you ever discuss Russian interference in the election with her?

A. No.
Q. Did you ever discuss Joseph Mifsud with her?
A. No.
Q. Are you familiar with Link Campus in Italy?
A. I'm sorry?
Q. Link Campus in Italy?
A. No. I don't think so.
Q. That will be my last Mifsud-related question.
A. Okay.
Q. If we could go to the beginning of those documents.
Bates No. 1, down towards the bottom is an E-mail from Christopher Steele to Bruce Ohr: "I heard from Adam Waldman yesterday that OD is applying for another official U.S. visa ICE APEC business at the end of February. Apparently, he is being encouraged in this by the Agency guys who told Adam that the U.S. Government stance on him is softening, a positive development, it seems."
Who do you take OD to be in that sentence?
A. I believe he's referring to Oleg Deripaska.
Q. And who is Oleg Deripaska?
A. He is a criminally-connected oligarch in
Russia.

Q. And what would -- why would Christopher Steele being talking about Oleg Deripaska?

A. I think he had some kind of connection with Deripaska.

Q. What would your interest is Oleg Deripaska be?

A. Because he's a criminally-connected Russian oligarch. That's my interest.

Q. Had you discussed Deripaska with Steele over the years?

A. We did have an ongoing conversation. I don't know if it predates this E-mail.

Q. Who is Adam Waldman?

A. A lawyer.

Q. A private lawyer?

A. Yes.

Q. For Deripaska, presumably?

A. I believe so.

Q. "The U.S. Government stance on him is softening, a positive development, it seems."

What would be positive about the U.S. Government's
stance on this guy, who you said was a criminal, softening?

A. I think, as I said, Chris Steele had some sort of a relationship with Oleg Deripaska. So I think he thought Oleg Deripaska could be harmful.

BY MR. BAKER:

Q. What was your understanding of why the U.S. Government's stance would be softening?

A. I don't believe it was. I may be wrong about that.

Q. Do you know why he thought it was? Was there anything specific that he --

A. He says he was encouraged in this by agency guys. So he may heard something.

Q. But you don't know what specifically?

A. I mean, I think that it's just what it says here. He was told by agency guys it was softening.

BY MR. SOMERS:

Q. Would you agree that it was a positive development that the relationship was softening or the stance was softening?

A. No, I would not.

Q. And, to your knowledge, Steele had some sort of client relationship with Deripaska?

A. I don't know exactly what their relationship was.
Q. Turn to Bates 2. This is an E-mail from you back to Steele on February 9, 2016.

The one sentence there says: "I was aware of OD's travel, and to the extent, I'll keep an eye on the situation."

A. Yes.

Q. What would you have done to keep an eye on the situation?

A. Listen for any reports from the FBI or anywhere.

Q. Do you have any concern that Steele corresponding to you on your, I assume, unsecured account at Justice about the agency guys claim to have a hand in this and there was another reference to agency folks in the previous E-mail we read? Do you have any concern about that, related to discussing the agency?

A. Yeah. I -- yeah. Yes, I do have concerns.

Q. Did you ever speak to him about the means of communication not being appropriate?

A. Well, I think at some point, we switched to encrypted communication, but I still wouldn't want discussions, these kind of discussions, over E-mail.
probably know which sentence I'm going to ask you about, the one with the exclamation point there: "It concerns our favorite business tycoon."

A. Yes.

Q. I think you testified you believe that's Deripaska?

A. Yes.

Q. That's your recollection?

A. Yes.

Q. And you do not think it could have been Donald Trump?

A. No.

Q. Page 8 -- sorry -- Bates No. 8, at the top of page, Chris Steele to Bruce Ohr on July 30th. This would have been after the meeting you had with him in person on July 30th.

"Great to see you and Nellie this morning, Bruce. Let's keep in touch on the substantive issues. Glenn is happy to speak with you on this if it would help."

I assume the substantive issues, you would take that to mean the election reporting --

A. Yes.

Q. -- he told you about earlier?

BY MR. BAKER:

Q. Did he bring up anything else in that
conversation that would have been of interest to the
Department, slash, FBI that had nothing to do with --
A. I don't recall.
Q. -- Russia?
BY MR. SOMERS:
Q. Why would Glenn have been of help on this?
I assume Glenn means Glenn Simpson.
"Glenn is happy to speak with you on this if it would
help."
Do you know why he thought Glenn Simpson could have
been of help?
A. No.
Q. Turn to Bates 14. It should be the next
in the packet there. There's not much information there. I
just want to focus on the subject line here. It's from
Chris Steele to Bruce Ohr.
"GOU Kraine", is that the government of Ukraine?
A. I believe so.
Q. "RUSAL". What's RUSAL?
A. Rusal is the Russian aluminum. That's
Deripaska's company.
Q. What was the dispute?
A. I don't recall.
Q. Do you recall discussing a Rusal dispute
with Christopher Steele around that time?
A. Based on this, yes.

Q. Did he ask you to take any action?

A. I don't think so. I don't believe so, no.

Q. Did Rusal have any issues with the Department of Justice or the FBI, criminal issues, legal issues?

A. I don't know about legal issues.

Q. Criminal issues?

A. There was concern about Rusal activities as part of Deripaska's area of operations.

Q. But do you have -- it wasn't your understanding that Christopher Steele through a lawyer -- do you know Paul Hauser is?

A. Another lawyer.

Q. Do you know if Christopher Steele was a client of his?

A. I don't know.

Q. Do you know that he Oleg Deripaska's attorney?

A. Yes. I did know he had a connection to Deripaska.

Q. I'm just trying to -- I sort of asked this earlier, but I'm just trying to understand whether you realized that Christopher Steele had been hired either directly or indirectly by Oleg Deripaska to do some sort of
work for him.

A. Yeah. Again, I don't know the specific nature of relationship, but I think it was clear to me that he had some sort of relationship with Deripaska.

Q. Did he ask you to take any action that was a favor -- any action with the U.S. Government, Department of Justice, Department of state, whoever you had contact with, did he ask you take any action that would benefit Deripaska?

A. I don't believe -- I don't recall him doing that, no.

Q. Let's switch agencies again, back to the State Department here. Look at Bates No. 22. Bruce Ohr to Kathleen Kavalec, November 21, 2016. You say to Kathleen: "Kathy, thanks for taking the time to meet with us. I really hope we can get something going here."

Do you know what that sentence, "I really hope we can get something here -- I'll give you a chance to read the E-mail, but my question is going to be, "I really hope we can get something going here", what that refers to.

A. I think, just generally, the information that she had provided. So I was trying to encourage her to continue providing information.

Q. And that was information from Steele?

A. Oh, well, information she was providing,
some of it was from Steele.

Q. Why did you really hope to get something going?

A. I think I was trying to encourage her to give more information. It was just along the same lines as information Steele had provided, because it could be important. I was encouraging her to give me information to pass along.

Q. Turn to Bates 24.

On 24, if you could just look at the article that was linked here. I didn't pull the article. I think it's pretty clear -- I think it was also attached to your 302. So I believe you provided this document to the FBI at some point in time.

It looks the subject of the article is about Kremlin and GOP share a new friend and boy does she love guns. Do you recall what -- this is on February 23, 2017 from -- it's unclear, but it does look like on February 23, 2017 at 10:05 a.m., Glenn Simpson wrote and he attached this article.

Do you recall what they were wanting to do, if anything, having to do with the Kremlin, NRA, and guns?

A. I remember he wanted me to have the information. I don't recall if they asked us to do anything with it specifically.

Q. I do think you provided that information
BY MR. BAKER:

Q. Go back to Bates No. 2 for just a second, the long E-mail at the bottom from Mr. Steele to you on February 8, 2016, and about five sentences down, he has in the sentence: "Our old friend OD apparently has been granted another official visa to come to the U.S. later this month."

He has "official" in italics. What meaning did that have for you? Why would he have "official" in italics?

A. My understanding at the time was he could not -- he was on a visa ban list or something like that. He could not apply for a normal visa, but if the Russian Government put him on a list official representatives or something, then the State Department would issue a visa. I think that's what he meant by official.

MR. BAKER: Thank you.

BY MR. SOMERS:

Q. We're almost out of time. Let me see. I didn't, unfortunately, print out this particular exchange, but it looks like you had a meeting with Christopher Steele at the Capitol Hilton in Washington, D.C. on Friday, September 23, 2016. Do you recall that?

A. Not the specific date, no.
Q. And he stated he was there on a client-related program. Do you know what he meant by that?
A. No.
Q. You don't recall why he was in the United States around that time, September 23rd?
A. No.
Q. Did he ever talk to you about his contacts with the press?
A. I think he mentioned he was in contact with the press.
Q. Do you know, roughly, when he would have told you?
A. I don't.
Q. You didn't bring it up in the first meeting in July?
A. I don't recall.
Q. Do you recall whether he mentioned in this meeting or sometime between the July meeting and this meeting on September 23rd that he was also speaking to the press?
A. I don't recall.
Q. But you definitely knew that he was speaking to the press?
A. I think I remember him saying that, yes.

MR. SOMERS: I think that's all the time we have
this round.

MS. SAWYER: In term of logistics, it's now 12:40. I'm just trying to get a sense of how long, how many more rounds you guys think you have. Is now a good time to take a break to get a little bit of food?

MR. SOMERS: I don't think we have any more than one more round, I don't believe. I mean, we can take a break now. It's up to you. I don't know how much more you guys have.

MS. SAWYER: I'm guesstimating that we will have questions for not more than an hour, but that would take us to 1:40.

MR. SOMERS: I'm happy to take a break.

MS. SAWYER: We can take a half-hour.

THE WITNESS: Okay.

MR. SOMERS: Let's just make it 1:15.

[Whereupon, at 12:42 p.m., a lunch recess was taken, to reconvene at 1:15 p.m. this same day.]
AFTERNOON SESSION

MR. HASKELL: It's 1:20. We are returning from the lunch break.

FURTHER EXAMINATION BY COUNSEL FOR THE MINORITY

BY MR. HASKELL:

Q. So, Mr. Ohr, I want to follow up on some of my colleagues' questions about Oleg Deripaska, who you characterized before the break as a criminally-connected Russian oligarch. Would you mind, given your extensive experience and expertise dealing with Russian organized crime, just tell us a little bit more about Deripaska.

MR. FINDLAY: Just before you answer, just one thing there. I don't think we want to go into other investigations or earlier investigations, so a general overview.

BY MR. HASKELL:

Q. Absolutely. Just your general knowledge.

A. His is a figure that controls a large portion of the Russian aluminum industry. The Russian aluminum industry, the control of that industry famous subject of a series of violent organized crime battle back in the nineties.

He's been pretty notorious as having connections with different criminal groups out there. He is also very well connected with the Kremlin and, obviously, is the head of
one of the biggest, if not the biggest, aluminum company in
the world right now.

He has a great deal of influence not just in Russia,
but in many other countries. This is the kind of organized
crime thing that I think the Justice Department and the FBI
needs to pay attention to.

Q. Thank you. And just to pick up on one
thing you said, that he was connected with the Kremlin.
That aligns with how the Mueller Report characterized him,
as closely aligned with Vladimir Putin, and that's on page
131 of Volume 1 of the Mueller Report.

That also aligns with testimony you gave to the House
that, quote: The line between government business and
organized crime in Russia is gray, nonexistent. Russian
criminals, businessman, government officials often use the
government for their own private end and, conversely, the
Russian State often uses oligarchs and criminals for
government ends.

You provided quite a bit there, but can you just
elaborate a little bit on that, on the connection between
oligarchs, such as Deripaska, the government, and crime?

A. Well, Russia is not the place where the
rule of law prevails in most instances, unfortunately,
and they have had a legacy from the communist era where
criminals and the -- where a lot of the actual economic
activity was illegal under their law.

So, unfortunately, what we've seen over the last 30 years since the fall of communism is that there are very few rules in Russia and that people who have power in one sphere tend to use that to gain power in a different sphere. The government is often -- they're often in the position of working directly with criminals.

Also, I think businessman feel that their property is not safe from the government or from criminals. So they tend to strike deals with both of them.

So the same figures tend to be prominent in more than one sphere. So any time you look at something -- it could be hostile state operation -- you have to look for other criminal angles to it, criminals involved in that and vice versa.

Q. Okay. Thank you.

With acknowledgment to the previous remark about not commenting on any cases, could you tell us generally about -- generally what you know with that limitation in mind about Deripaska's relationship with Trump's former campaign manager, Paul Manafort?

A. They had some business together, from my understanding, and that was part of the information that I passed to the FBI, was some information from that relationship.
Q. Okay. And I assume you have some familiarity with the Mueller Report. I hope, for your benefit, it's not something you read frequently or have been required to read the entirety of, but I want to ask you a few questions about the report's discussion of the Manafort-Deripaska relationship.

The report details how Manafort funneled internal campaign data and strategy, including the campaign's plan for winning in battle ground States like Michigan, Wisconsin, Pennsylvania, and Minnesota to Konstantin Kilimnik, who the FIB assesses has ties to Russian intelligence.

For one example, Manafort personally briefed Kilimnik on, quote, the state of the Trump campaign and Manafort's plan to win the election, on page 140 of Volume 1, and Manafort instructed Rick Gates, who was his deputy on the campaign, quote, to send Kilimnik internal polling data and other updates, and that was with the expectation that it would be provided to Deripaska. Gates did, in fact, send that type of information to Kilimnik.

Based on your experience, could information that was transferred to Deripaska, a Russian oligarch also aligned with Putin in a country with, as you said, nonexistent lines between government and business, have ended up in the hand of the Russian Government?
A. It could have.

Q. And given Deripaska's ties to Russian organized crime, is it also possible that information was directed to transferred or was -- that if it was transferred to Deripaska, it could have ended up in the hands of other Russians organized criminals?

A. It could have.

Q. Now, Special Counsel Mueller could not reliably determine what happened to the internal Trump campaign information after Manafort, through Gates, provided it to Kilimnik, and Mueller couldn't do that because evidence wasn't sufficiently available. That's in part, as the Mueller Report explains, because Manafort and Gates deleted and encrypted communications with Kilimnik and because Manafort lied several times to the Mueller team about, among other things, his interactions with Kilimnik.

So we don't know exactly what happened with that campaign information, but given that we do know what we do know with certainty, do you find it is concerning as an expert in Russian organized crime that internal U.S. campaign information was being directed to someone with connections to organized crime and the Kremlin?

A. In general, yes.

Q. And would that raise national security or counterintelligence concerns?
A. It probably would.

Q. Would you mind elaborating on what sort of concerns that might raise?

A. Well, I think pretty much what I've said earlier, that information that was being passed to -- sensitive U.S. information was being passed to a criminally-connected oligarch could end up in the hands of what we regard as a hostile foreign power who could use it to undermine the security of the United States.

Q. And would that concern be heightened if that hostile foreign power was at the time actively engaging in sweeping systematic interference in U.S. elections?

A. It would.

Q. Special Counsel Mueller also revealed that Manafort had his deputy, again, Rick Gates, prepare a memo for Deripaska and several Ukrainian oligarchs that details Manafort's role on the campaign. That's on page 135 of the report.

Manafort said that his role on Trump's campaign would be, quote, good for business. He asked Kilimnik how, quote, do we use my campaign position to get whole, and that ws get whole with Deripaska who had a pending lawsuit against Manafort seeking millions of dollars.

Mueller also revealed that Manafort fully expected that, and again I'm quoting from the report, if Trump won
Deripaska would want to use Manafort to advance whatever interest Deripaska has in the United States and elsewhere, page 137, Volume 1.

Given Deripaska's ties to organized crime in Russian, is it fair to say that, quote, whatever interest Deripaska has could include advancement of interests of Russian organized criminals?

A. Yes.

Q. And do Russian organized criminals have interests in the United States?

A. Sure.

Q. A similar question: Given Deripaska's close ties to Putin, is it fair to say that, quote, whatever interest Deripaska had could include advancing of Putin's and, more broadly, Russia's interests?

A. It could.

Q. And do Putin and Russia have interests in the United States?

A. Yes.

Q. I'll switch gears now, returning to the Steele dossier.

You told the Inspector General that you viewed Steele's reporting as raw and unfinished Russian source information that the FBI needed to evaluate. You similarly told House investigators when you were interviewed there in 2018 that
you viewed Steele's reporting as information that the FBI collects, quote, not to present in court, but to see if different sources corroborate each other and that you just passed to the FBI for whatever it was worth.

Can you expand upon that?

A. I think as I said before, the FBI collects a lot of information from many different sources and not all of it pans out in terms of leading to a particular crime or other basis for an investigation, but it's extremely important for the FBI to get that information so they can see potential threats, criminal threats or national security threats to the country.

So I thought this information fell into the category of information that could be very important, but that could not be -- should not be relied on by itself. So it would go to the FBI, the people who would no doubt have access to many other sources of information so they that could evaluate it properly.

Q. In fact, Steele wasn't the only person outside the U.S. Government that you, over the years, had received information from and passed along to the FBI; you testified during your House interview that you've met people over the years who would have information that they wanted to tell somebody in U.S. law enforcement.

You said that because you had been working in this
area, meaning organized crime, transnational organized crime, for many years: "Many people know me know, but might not know an FBI agent. They would me things. I would pass it to the FBI."

So is it correct that Steele was not the only person that you would pass the information on from and, in fact, it was something that happened with some degree of frequency?

A. Yes.

Q. And you explained during your House interview that you viewed this as, quote, part of your job to gather as much information or introduce the FBI to possible sources of information whatever ways to further the Department's and the Bureau's goals.

So I take it that it wasn't just that you thought this information might be useful to the FBI, but you viewed it as your job to get that information to them if you thought it may be useful.

A. Yes.

Q. Returning to the Steele information specifically and what you had said about it being raw and unfinished source information, notes of FBI personnel about meetings with you state that intelligence Steele collected, quote, may be exaggerated or conspiracy theory talk and that even Steele doesn't know if all this reporting is true.

Again, that's on page 280 of the IG, notes from -- FBI
personnel notes from meetings with you.

Did you take any steps to conceal the nature of Steele's reporting from the FBI?

A. No.

Q. And it's fair to say -- and I think you've touched on this, but I'll ask again. Is it fair to say that you assumed the FBI would take steps to corroborate Steele's reporting?

A. Yes.

Q. And it is also accurate to say that Steele, himself, indicated that this information would need corroboration?

A. I believe so.

Q. Okay. Since you have been questioned so extensively today by the Inspector General and other congressional committees because of your interactions with Steele, it would seem that Steele and his reports must have played a major role in all aspects of the government's Russian interference investigation. So I would like to ask you a little bit about that.

The Crossfire Hurricane investigation was opened on July 31, 2016. The Inspector General in his nearly 500-page report determined that Crossfire Hurricane team did not become aware of Steele's reporting until September 19, 2016. The IG confirmed that, quote, the Steele dossier played no
role in the opening of Crossfire Hurricane.

Are you aware of any evidence that disputes that finding?

A. No, I'm not.

Q. This committee recently had a hearing with former Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein who supervised the Mueller investigation. At that hearing Senator Feinstein asked him to identify which finding in Special Counsel Mueller's report relied on information from the Steele dossier.

Mr. Rosenstein testified, quote: I don't believe there is any such information.

Do you have any evidence that contradicts Rosenstein's testimony that no findings in the Mueller Report rely on the Steele dossier?

A. I have nothing to contradict that.

Q. Rosenstein also testified at that same hearing that none of the 199 criminal counts resulting from Special Counsel Mueller's investigation relied on the information obtained from Steele. Do you have any reason to dispute or any evidence that disputes that statement by Rosenstein?

A. No.

Q. So, in other words, you don't have any evidence or reason to believe that Special Counsel Mueller
and his team relied on the Steele dossier for any of those
criminal counts that his office charged?

A. That is correct.

Q. Thank you.

Despite the Steele dossier's minimal role in the
Crossfire Hurricane and Mueller investigation, as we just
discussed, the President's allies continue to suggest
otherwise. They've also suggested that none of the
information that Steele provided, meaning none of the
information in the so-called Steele dossier, proved true. I
wanted to just ask you a few questions about that.

In June-July 2016, Steele reported that, quote: Russia
has an extensive program of state-sponsored offensive cyber
operation, targeting, among other things, quote, political
opponents abroad.

That's in Memo 86 on July 26, 2016.

In fact, Russia did conduct cyber attacks on U.S.
computer systems, specifically, the systems of U.S.
political parties and members of political campaigns, stole
information and then used it to interfere in the 2016
election.

So Steele's reporting about Russia's, quote, program of
state-sponsored cyber operation that targeted foreign
political opponents proved true, did it not?

A. It appears that it did.
Q. In June 2016, Steele reported that Putin, quote, supported and directed pro-Trump interference efforts.

That's Memo 2016, June 20, 2016.

In January of 2017, which was six months after Steele had reported that, the U.S. intelligence community assessed that, quote: Putin ordered an influence campaign aimed at the U.S. presidential election.

So Steele's reporting about Putin, himself, supporting and directing Russian influence efforts also proved true, did it not?

A. It appears so, yes.

Q. Also in June 2016, Steele reported that Russia's interference efforts intended to, quote, show discord and disunity both within the U.S. and the Transatlantic Alliance, Memo 80, June 20th.

The intelligence community in that same January 2017 assessment said that Russia aimed, quote, to undermine public faith in the U.S. democratic process and, quote, the U.S.-led democratic order.

Special Counsel Mueller similarly found in his report that Russia's goal was, quote, to provoke and amplify political and social discord in the United States.

So Steele's reporting that Russia aimed, quote, to show discord and is disunity both within the U.S. and the
Transatlantic Alliance also proved true; is that correct?

A. Yes.

Q. In July 2016, Steele reported that Trump and Russia had, quote, a mutual interest in defeating Secretary Clinton, whom President Putin apparently both hated and feared. That's Memo 95, July 2016.

Again, many months later, January 2017, the U.S. intelligence community wrote, quote, Putin and the Russian Government had a clear preference for Trump, and they added that Putin long had disliked Clinton.

Special Counsel Mueller similarly found that Russia, quote, favored Candidate Trump and disparaged Candidate Clinton and perceived it would benefit from the Trump presidency.

So Steele's reporting about Russia and Trump's, quote, mutual interest in defeating Clinton and his reporting that Putin had a long-held dislike for Clinton also proved true; is that correct?

A. Yes.

Q. I've got one last one for you, in August 2016.

So in August to 2016, Steele reported that, quote, the aim of leaking the DNC E-mails to Wikileaks during the Democratic Convention had been to swing supporters of Bernie Sanders away from Hillary Clinton and across to Trump, Memo
The Mueller investigation found substantial evidence that that was true, including internal Russian intelligence documents directing officers to, quote, post content that focused on politics in the USA and to use any opportunity to criticize Hillary and the test except Sanders and Trump. We support them.

Russian Government-run Twitter accounts, quote, posted pro-Sanders and anti-Clinton material. Russian Facebook ad purchases pushed material to Sanders supporters that criticized Clinton. This is evidence from our Committee's investigation into Russian interference, the Mueller report, and an indictment of the IRA.

So Steele's reporting about Russia's efforts to swing supporters of Sanders away from Clinton also proved true; is that correct?

A. Yes. It appears so.

Q. So just summarizing, as I said, the Steele dossier played a limited role and confirmed that Steele's dossier played limited role in the Russian investigation and no role in the findings of the Mueller Report and no role in any of the counts charged by Special Counsel Mueller, but that is not to say that critical pieces of the dossier did not prove true?

A. Yes.
BY MS. SAWYER:

Q. I have one or two, I think, questions.

You were asked -- I think you still have the documents in front of you that my colleague had had you review about some of the conversations that you had with Christopher Steele --

A. Yes.

Q. -- that were spanning a few months period, and I'm talking about the documents that have the Bates numbers -- in particular, I'll have you take a look at Bates No. 29 where it appeared that Mr. Steele had been reaching out to you over a period of months or at least at one period of time and that you talked some of the communications, but at top of that page, there is an entry, 10-26-17 at 7:12:47. It appears that it's Mr. Steele reaching out to you and wanting to speak about a story in the media about the Bureau handing over docs to Congress in relation -- about the work in relation -- and then it goes "with them". I assume that's the Bureau.

It says, quote, very concerned about the people's lives may be in danger, end quote.

You had indicated earlier you thought that he had raised some concerns about safety. Does that help remind you about some of his specific concerns regarding people being in danger?
A. Yes. He was concerned about the safety particularly of one source and he raised that on multiple occasions, which if the source was somehow revealed, that could put the source's life in danger.

Q. And one of the concerns was that some of the materials that could be turned over could have identified or put that source at risk?

A. Yes.

Q. And that is sometimes something that the Department itself is concerned about, protecting sources and methods or at least sensitive information from public disclosure?

A. Yes, and the physical safety of the source.

Q. So would you have deemed his concern about potential exposure that would put someone's life at risk as a reasonable concern?

A. Yes.

Q. Would it have been reasonable for him to reach out to you to discuss that with you and try to find a way to mitigate that danger?

A. Yes.

Q. Did he ask you to do anything inappropriate to try to help protect sources or methods or him or his work?
A. I don't believe so, no.

MR. HASKELL: I think that's all we have for this round. Thank you.

THE WITNESS: Thank you.

[Chairman Graham enters the proceeding.]

FURTHER EXAMINATION BY THE MAJORITY

CHAIRMAN GRAHAM: Thank you. How many times have you done this?

THE WITNESS: Many.

CHAIRMAN GRAHAM: Okay. This won't take long.

MR. SOMERS: I'll note the time for the record is 1:48.

BY CHAIRMAN GRAHAM:

Q. All right. Mr. Ohr, you were not part of Crossfire Hurricane; is that correct?

A. That is correct.

Q. Okay. And the way you knew Mr. Steele was from prior engagements; is that right?

A. That's correct.

Q. What were those?

A. I had met him originally when he was working for British intelligence and we had shared or he had shared with me information about Russian organized crime, and once he left the British Government and set up his own firm, he continued to provide information from time to time.
Q. And when did he -- and he provided you with what's now called the dossier, some excerpts from that; is that correct?

A. Yes.

Q. Okay. Do you remember the first time you got one from him?

A. Well, he provided information orally, and the first one, I don't remember the date as I sit here, but I am told it was July 30th, around that time.

Q. 2016?

A. 2016, yes.

Q. When did first become suspicious that this was raw intelligence and you might want to check a little bit further?

A. I think from the very beginning, it was clear it was raw intelligence.

Q. Well, I think you did the right thing, for what it's worth, to say, Hey, there's some accusations here, but somebody needs to check it out.

Who did you tell you should be concerned about this intel?

A. I spoke with various people at the FBI and some people at Criminal Division.

Q. Did you ever talk with Strzok about it, Peter Strzok?
At some point in the fall, I was introduced to Peter Strzok and I believe I conveyed the same information to him that I had conveyed to others.

In your House testimony on November 21st, you testified to the House Judiciary Committee that you have to be clear that this is source information. "I don't know how reliable it is. We're going to have to check it out and be aware."

Does this sound familiar with what you said in the past?

And that was sort of what you were trying to convey?

To be careful here?

So on November 21st, you previously testified you had meeting with Peter Strzok, Lisa Page, and several other members of Crossfire Hurricane during which you provided information about the knowledge of Steele and Steele's election reporting. Does that sound right?

Again, I don't remember the specific date, but yes.

That's what you said to the House?

Yes.
Q. All right. Did you report to them that Steele appeared to be desperate that Trump not get elected?

A. Again, as I just mentioned to these folks earlier today, I don't remember using that specific word, but I certainly conveyed --

Q. That he had a bias?

A. Well, I wouldn't say bias. He was very alarmed by the information, and if it were true, then he was afraid that --

Q. Did he ever suggest to you that he wasn't sure if it was true or not, Mr. Steele?

A. I think he found it -- I think he believed it was credible, but as a professional, he knew as well as I did that you can't trust everything. Anything like this, you have to be careful with.

Q. Yeah. You previously said that reporting of criminal activities may be exaggerated or conspiracy theory talk. That's what Steele told you, saying you can't know whether all the reporting is true. Does that sound right?

A. Yes.

Q. So even Steele had questions about it?

A. I don't recall specifically, but that sounds right.

Q. All right. Have you ever obtained a FISA
warrant?

A. No.

Q. Were you ever -- have you ever been involved in obtaining a warrant at all?

A. Criminal search warrants, not FISA.

Q. Okay. Would you have used this information to get a warrant based on your past behavior?

A. I would want to have it corroborated.

Q. That's fair enough.

Do you know what was done to corroborate the dossier before it was used?

A. I do not.

Q. Okay. Are you aware that the dossier was the primary source for obtaining the warrant against -- the primary document for obtaining the warrant against Carter Page?

A. I have seen press reports about it.

Q. Did you ever talk with Mr. McCabe about this?

A. I conveyed the information I heard to Mr. McCabe on the one meeting we had in the fall of 2016.

Q. In the fall of 2016, you put McCabe on notice, Hey, you need to watch this, you need to verify?

A. I certainly gave him the same caveats.

Q. Yes. Your concerns?
A. Yes.
Q. Okay. Do you know when Mr. McCabe first became aware of the Steele dossier?
A. I do not.
Q. Okay. Do you know how people in New York became aware, the FBI in New York became aware, of the Steele dossier?
A. At that first meeting with Chris Steele, he mentioned to me that he had provided information to the agent in New York.
Q. Okay. And how many times do you -- did you ever talk to Director Comey about this?
A. I did not.
Q. But you did talk to McCabe.
All right. Were you aware that the FBI interviewed the primary Russian sub-source in January 2017?
A. No. I don't think so.
Q. Okay. Did you ever hear any chatter from anybody that they found the primary sub-source who provided Steele with all the information and it was not adding up?
A. I did not.
Q. Okay. So in the normal course of business, if you have exculpatory information or information that challenges the reliability of a document presented to the court, what should happen?
A. You should inform the court.

Q. Okay. And you should inform your superiors?

A. Yes.

Q. Okay. Do you know why that didn't happen here?

A. I do not.

Q. Okay. So but you heard nothing at all about multiple interviews with the primary sub-source questioning the reliability of the dossier?

A. That's correct.

Q. Did you keep talking to Page and Strzok after November 2016?

A. I don't believe so, no.

Q. When is the last conversation you can remember with anybody related to Crossfire Hurricane?

A. Well, I didn't know who was working on Crossfire Hurricane. So I continued to report what I heard from Chris Steele to an agent from the FBI.

Q. When did you pick this group?

First, when you go to Strzok and Page and that group and talk to them about your concerns, what made you pick them?

A. I picked Andy McCabe and I went to him because I knew him. We had worked together on Russian
criminal matters over the years.

Q. What did he say when you told him that you were concerned about you need to be careful, for lack of a better term?

A. I think he understood, because he also worked on Russian criminal matters.

Q. But he acknowledged to you that we should be careful?

A. I don't remember what he said.

Q. So on November the 21st, you previously testified you met at length with Peter Strzok and Lisa Page and several other members. How did you know to talk to them?

A. I think they called me and asked me to come in.

Q. Did you then know they were working on Crossfire Hurricane?

A. I did not.

Q. Okay. They called you?

A. Well, after I spoke with Mr. McCabe, I think that he said that they would follow up with me and they did.

Q. So McCabe, your understanding is that McCabe called Strzok and Page and they wanted to hear what you had to say?
A. Something like that. I'm not sure.

Q. You don't know for sure --

A. Right, exactly.

Q. -- but you talked to McCabe first. Then you talked to Strzok and Page, and your previous testimony is pretty clear that this is raw intelligence, you need to check it out and be aware.

A. Yes.

Q. What was their reaction?

A. I don't remember any disagreement.

Q. Did they say we'll do it?

A. I don't remember what they said.

Q. All right. So did you have any more conversations with anybody about Mr. Steele after the fall of 2016?

A. Well, I continued to report to an FBI agent what I had heard from Mr. Steele.

Q. Who was that agent?

A. Initially, it was [redacted] and then other agents were substituted in as time went on.

Q. How often did you talk to this person?

A. I would call him whenever I got a call from Chris Steele.

Q. Did you get calls from Mr. Steele after November 21, 2016?
A. After 2016, yes.

Q. Okay. Can you tell us the nature of those calls with Mr. Steele?

A. He provided additional information that he had learned. In one series of calls, he was very concerned about the safety of his source, who he believed might be exposed and in danger.

Q. When did he acknowledge to you that some of this may be not reliable? Was that before or after 2017?

A. I don't recall.

Q. But he did mention to you some of this may be exaggerated?

That's what you said to the House.

A. I mean, it was my understanding all along that we would have to be very careful with information. I don't remember specifics.

Q. I want to know what Mr. Steele said. According to you, he said this may be exaggerated or conspiracy theory talk. Does that sound right?

A. Yeah. I don't remember when he said it.

Q. Okay. But you previously said that. Is there anything that would make you change your mind now?

A. I don't think so.

Q. So in 2017, were you talking to Mr. Steele in January of 2017?
A. I believe I was, yes.

Q. Were you talking to him in February of 2017?

A. I don't recall exactly when the calls were.

Q. When was the last time you talked to Mr. Steele that you recall?

A. I believe it was in November of 2017.

Q. Okay. So, basically, you stayed in contact with Mr. Steele all the way through November of 2017?

A. Yes.

Q. Okay. Did he ever mention to you about the Russian sub-source being interviewed by the FBI?

A. No.

Q. Why was he calling you? What was the purpose?

A. Well, he was passing some additional information, what he had learned.

Q. Why would he pick you and not -- I mean, you weren't working on the case. Why did he pick you?

A. Because we had known each other for some time.

Q. Did you ever tell him you need to hand this to the people running the operation, not me?
A. They weren't speaking with him. At some point, they terminated him as a source.

Q. I think in October of 2016, he was terminated, but you kept talking with him. Did you know he had been terminated as a source?

A. I became aware of that at some point, yes.

Q. Why did you keep talking to me?

A. Well, when he called and offered information, I figured I would want to hear what he had to say.

Q. Well, but the FBI said -- the people running the operation had closed him out. Right?

A. That's correct.

Q. Why did you keep talking to him?

A. I was afraid that the information could be important.

Q. Okay. Did you tell your superiors you were still talking to him?

A. I did not.

Q. Okay. Interesting.

So you never heard of an interview by the FBI with what is now called the primary sub-source?

A. I think it came out -- I saw it in the press or the IG report or something like that.

Q. Before that, on your own, you never heard
anybody --

A. I don't think so, no.

Q. Did you tell Strzok and Page that you were still talking to Steele?

A. Not directly, but I told the FBI agent I was.

Q. What did the FBI agent say? Did he encourage you to keep talking to him?

A. They just take the information.

Q. Do you know what the system did with your concerns about the reliability of the information?

A. I do not.

Q. What did you expect to happen? What were your hoping to happen?

A. That they would analyze it and compare it to other information that they had received.

Q. That's right, and is it fair to say that you did not know it had already been used to obtain a warrant in October of 2016? Did you know that?

A. I did not know that.

CHAIRMAN GRAHAM: Well, thank you very much.

THE WITNESS: Thank you.

BY MR. SOMERS:

Q. You used the term earlier, and it's your term, "source information". Could you just explain exactly
what "source information" is?

A. Information that has been offered to law enforcement that comes from somebody who may or may not be willing to testify and that it's information that law enforcement can use for leads or other purposes, which generally is not the same thing as testimony or evidence.

Q. So source information is information that has be verified generally?

A. Yes.

Q. If you want to use it?

A. Yes. You have to verify source information.

Q. And as we discussed length earlier, you had, obviously, a number of conversations with the FBI over the relevant period of time. Did the FBI ever ask you to help through Steele verify any of the information in the dossier?

A. The only thing they asked me was at one point to ask him whether he would be willing to talk with them again.

Q. And you also talked about how Steele had provided you information on all sorts of things over the years. Had you ever met a source of Steele's before?

A. No.

Q. In the 302, the November 21st 302 of your
November 21, 2016 interview with the FBI, the 302 says that: "Ohr met with Steele in July and September 2016 during which Steele advised Ohr of Steele's election reporting and who had hired him."

Does that sound right?

A. Yes.

Q. And by "who had hired him", what did you know about who had hired Steele?

A. He mentioned to me a name of the person that had hired him, but I did not recognize the name and, frankly, I couldn't remember.

Q. Obviously, Glenn Simpson directly hired him. He mentioned who, basically, hired Simpson; is that what you're saying?

A. I think that's my understanding, yes.

Q. Do you remember if that name was an attorney?

A. I don't recall.

Q. You don't recall if it was Michael Sussman, that name?

A. No. I wouldn't recognize it now.

Q. But the bottom line is Steele was willing to tell you who the ultimate client was?

A. He did, I believe.

Q. Did you have an understanding that this
ultimate client, whose name you can't remember, was somehow associated with the Democratic Party?

A. I don't recall, but I guess it had something to do with the Clinton campaign. I didn't know.

Q. What was your understanding of what Steele and Simpson were doing with Sussman in that way?

A. My general impression is they were looking into the possibility that there was some of collusion between the Russian Government and the Donald Trump.

Q. But it was for -- this wasn't for their own, you know, curiosity; this opposition research; is that your understanding?

A. Yes.

Q. So it was to be used against Trump or the Trump campaign?

A. Yes.

Q. And Steele didn't say to you, you know, Oh, I can't tell you what this is for; he was forthcoming?

If you asked -- you would know right now if you could remember who the ultimate client was; there was no hiding this information by Steele from you?

A. Right.

BY MR. BAKER:

Q. You had previously indicated that he indicated that it needed to be validated or vetted or
sourced when he gave it to you?

A. Yeah. Again, I can't remember exactly when he said that, but yes.

Q. Did he ever add a caveat to any of the information he passed to you that he, himself, questioned a particular document or a particular reporting?

A. I can't remember that. He might have, but I don't remember. I can't recall.

BY MR. SOMERS:

Q. But you weren't speculating this was opposition research; you knew this was opposition research?

A. Yes.

Q. So if could just read -- I'm only going to ask you about the last sentence in this, but I'm going to read the entire footnote. This is Footnote 8 from the Carter Page FISA application. I'm reading from the version that appears in page 143 of the IG report.

"Steele, who now owns a foreign business/financial intelligence firm, was approached by an identified U.S. person who indicated to Steele that a U.S.-based law firm had hired the identified U.S. person to conduct research regarding Candidate 1's ties to Russia. He identified the U.S. person and Steele had a longstanding business relationship.

The identified U.S. person hired Steele to conduct this
research. The identified U.S. person never advised Steele as to the motivation behind the research into Candidate 1's ties to Russia."

And this is the sentence: "The FBI speculated that the identified U.S. person was likely looking for information that could be used to discredit Candidate 1's campaign."

But as far as you knew, that wasn't speculation; you knew it was opposition research?

A. Yes.

Q. And you conveyed at one or more meetings with the FBI this was opposition research?

A. I think they knew it.

Q. So this wasn't a big topic of conversation, because everyone was aware it was opposition research? Would you characterize it that way, my characterization?

A. I can't remember the exact words, but somehow I thought that.

BY MR. BAKER:

Q. Did you ever follow up to see what either Andy McCabe, Pete Strzok, or Lisa Page did with any of the info that you provided to them?

A. No. No.

Q. Did they have any followup for you based on information that you passed to them?
A. No. They just said to keep telling them the information that I got.

Q. They said to keep telling them information as you were getting it?

A. Yes. They probably put me in touch with

Q. Okay. So did you have any additional followup or information to pass to Strzok, McCabe, or Page that then went to [redacted]?

A. I didn't have specifically for Strzok, Page, or McCabe. I continued to pass on whatever I heard from Chris Steele to [redacted].

Q. So after that passing of information to McCabe, Strzok, and Page, that was sort of the end of the conversations with them?

A. Right.

Q. There wasn't a followup from you to them or them to you?

A. I'm sorry?

Q. There wasn't a followup from you to see if they did anything with it and there wasn't a followup from them to you for clarification or additional information or to let you know what they did with this?

A. That's right.

MR. BAKER: Thank you.
BY MR. SOMERS:

Q. Back to the point on opposition research, that same 302 that I cited earlier goes on to say later -- this is the November 21st 302 of your interview -- I'm sorry -- the 302 of your November 21st interview with the FBI:

"Ohr advised the FBI of the follow: Simpson, who hired Steele, was himself hired by the lawyer who, quote, does opposition research and Steele's reporting was going to Hillary Clinton's presidential campaign, an identified State Department official, and the FBI."

So you knew that the reporting was going to Hillary Clinton's presidential campaign?

A. As I indicated before, yeah.

Q. So it wasn't like it was going there; you knew it was going there?

A. Yea. I didn't know the exact who, but yes.

Q. And you conveyed that, obviously, according to the notes in 302 to the FBI.

I think that the chairman sort of broached this earlier, but also in this meeting -- this is a note from the IG -- you must have conveyed to the FBI Steele may have some doubts about his source network.

The IG report on page 286 says: The reporting of
Kremlin activities may be exaggerated or conspiracy theory talk. So Steele could not know whether all the reporting is true."

Could you elaborate on that comment a little bit?

A. I mean, that's certainly my understanding. When you hear information from a Russian source, it's often speculation, conspiracy, everything mixed in. So you have to be very careful with any information you get that's related to Russian criminal activity, Russian operations, that sort of thing.

Q. So any information that comes from Russia, you always should look at with a skeptical eye; is that fair?

A. That's correct.

Q. And is that something that you, in particular, know as a Russia expert or do counterintelligence people generally know that you don't trust Russian information and you have to take it at face value?

A. I would assume they know it well.

Q. Also, in this November 21 meeting, you told the FBI that, quote: "Steele's reporting was shared by Simpson with a lot of people."

This is in the IG report at page 280.

I think I asked you this earlier, but did you
acknowledge that included the press?

A. I believe so.

Q. A lot of people?

A. Yeah.

Q. I talked over you.

A. I said I believe so, yes.

Q. According to the IG report, again on page 280: "Ohr told the FBI that Steele wrote well-sourced reports, using a variety of sub-sources."

What's your basis for saying they were well-sourced?

A. I think he had -- I understand he had multiple sources over the years that provided information. I think he said that to me and the reporting he provided seemed to reflect pretty -- not a single point of view, different points of view of what was going on in Russia.

Q. But you had never met any of his sources?

A. That's correct.

Q. Did anyone else vouch for Steele's reputation with you before you started your relationship with him or as you had a relationship with him?

A. I think the FBI found his information useful. So at least in some circumstances, the information was substantiated.

BY MR. BAKER:

Q. Was it your understanding that Mr. Steele
would deal with the primary sub-source himself or did have
an employee who would deal with the sub-sources?

A. I don't know.

BY MR. SOMERS:

Q. We spoke about the Manafort case earlier. So at the November 21st meeting, I think it's in the IG report that you were asked a question about whether there was a prosecutor assigned to the investigation, and then the IG report on page 280 indicates he, as you, Ohr: "He also said that no one at the meeting told him about the Crossfire Hurricane investigation, but that he was advised that the FBI was pushing ahead on the Manafort case."

So were aware of the Manafort case before that November 21st meeting?

A. I believe I was.

Q. Did you share this Manafort case information with Steele, about the Manafort case?

A. No.

Q. Getting back to what I asked you about earlier, I just found the quote I was looking for that I didn't have earlier.

This is about Ohr said he introduced Steele to -- this is page 269, I believe, of the IG report. "Ohr said he introduced Steele to Handling Agent 1 -- who was -- "so that Steele could provide
information directly to FBI in approximately the spring of 2010. He told us that he pushed to make Steele an FBI confidential human source because Steele's information was valuable. Ohr also said that it was not efficient for him to pass Steele's information to the FBI and he preferred having Steele work directly with an FBI agent."

I mean, that seems to be in contrast with what you did with election reporting.

"Ohr also said that it was not efficient for him to pass Steele's information to the FBI and he preferred having Steele work directly with an FBI agent."

What changed from that, you pushing for him to signed up as a CHS, to the summer or fall of 2016?

A. Nothing changed. It was still better that he was talking with them directly, but if he provided information to me and the information seemed important, I would pass it along to the FBI.

Q. But that wasn't the ideal setup?

A. Right.

Q. So you still agree with that.

Had you ever passed Steele information to McCabe prior to the October 18th meeting?

A. I don't believe so.

Q. Then you said, I believe you said during our first round, that when you got information from Steele
in the past that you would use your normal point of contact.

Not always, but your normal point of contact would be the TOC East or West; is that accurate?

A. TOC East and the handling agent.

Q. And the handling agent.

So in normal course, not involving Crossfire Hurricane, you receive information from Steele. You pass it to, let's say, TOC East. Did you usually follow up on the information after you passed it to TOC East?

A. I can't recall specific episodes, but generally, I think when I passed information, I just gave them the information. I don't recall following up.

Q. You don't recall following up?

A. [Gestures.]

BY MR. BAKER:

Q. Did you ever get any -- sort of like the question we asked earlier about McCabe, did you ever get any follow up on that information; Hey, is this really good; we'd like keep this dialogue going?

A. I don't recall anything like that, no.

BY MR. SOMERS:

Q. I may have asked you about this in the last round when I was going through the documents. Footnote 436 of the IG report: "Ohr said he understood Steele was, quote, angling for Ohr to assist him with the client issues.
For example, Ohr stated that Steele was hoping that Ohr would intercede on his behalf with a Department attorney handling a matter involving a European company. Ohr denied providing any assistance to Steele in this regard and we found no evidence that he did. The attorney handling the matter involving the European company told us that Ohr never spoke with her about the matter. Steele told us that he asked Ohr about the Department attorney involved in the case because he was considering contacting the attorney about an issue involving his client."

The long thing I just read, though, was prefaced by "for example". So "Ohr said he understood Steele was angling for Ohr to assist him with his client's issues." Can you comment on what you meant by that?

A. Just that Bilfinger instance.

Q. There weren't other instances? I mean, the lead-in says "for example".

A. I don't recall any other things.

Q. What about election reporting?

A. No. I think my impression on that is he was giving us information because he thought it was important, not that he thought it would help him in any way.

Q. What about Glenn Simpson?

A. Same thing. I don't think they were
particularly expecting anything from the government on that.

Q. If they weren't expecting anything from the government, why did they follow up with you so many times?

A. I think Chris Steele was concerned that the government was involved, but I don't think it was any personal gain.

Q. But he must have been expecting the government to do something?

A. I think he hoped we would look into it.

Q. Did he ever express frustration with you that the information hadn't come out publicly that there was investigation into the Trump campaign?

A. No. I don't recall that, no.

Q. Did he ever express frustration that Comey had made, Director Comey had made, announcements about the midyear exam investigation around the time of the 2016 election?

A. I don't recall whether he talked about that or not.

Q. So you don't recall having a conversation with him about frustration about derogatory -- I'll strike "derogatory" -- about information about an investigation into Hillary Clinton's E-mail server coming out at the time of the 2016 election, but similar about investigation into
Candidate Trump not coming out?  
A. I don't think so. I don't recall that, sitting here, anything like that.

Q. And you don't think that his contacts with you about Oleg Deripaska fit this angling situation that you described?
A. He never really asked me to do anything with respect to Oleg Deripaska. So no.

MR. BAKER: I guess this is more appropriately directed to Mr. Berman.

We talked about this before in the past, but a different day, a different forum. I was wondering if we might be able to -- I think you represent Ms. Ohr -- that we might be able to get copies of her research she did at Fusion that was turned over to some of the other authorities by Mr. Ohr, if this committee could get a copy of that.

MR. BERMAN: If you want to reach out to me about Mrs. Ohr to get a copy of that, I'll be happy to take your call.

MR. BAKER: Thank you very much.

MR. SOMERS: I think that's all we have unless you guys have questions. Do you have another round?

MS. SAWYER: I don't think we have a lot.

[Pause.]

We'll go back on the record. It's 2:25.
FURTHER EXAMINATION BY COUNSEL FOR THE MINORITY

BY MS. SAWYER:

Q. I just had a couple of questions for you. You were asked by my colleagues and also the chairman about your outreach directly to Deputy Director Andy McCabe and you were also asked whether or not it was usual for you to follow up once you had passed information over to the FBI, and from what I understood, you indicated it was not your usual practice to then follow up again.

So to me, its sound like you did behave in this instance differently than you might in others. I wondered if that was accurate.

A. I'm not sure what you mean.

Q. Well, in this instance, it does seem like you did follow up. You first reached out to the handling agent in July and then, as far as I can tell, you also later, in October, reached out at a higher level to Deputy Director McCabe.

A. Okay. Yes.

Q. So there was that followup?

A. Yes.

Q. So it did seem different to me and I just wondered if that was true and, if true, why that would be the case here, why you felt the need to reach out?

A. Because of the potential importance of the
Q. And do you recall contextually what you were also seeing or hearing or, you know, even if it was through public reporting about what Russia might be doing, what Wikileaks might be doing, what generally going on with regard to Russia and the election?

A. Very broadly, I remember there were articles in the press about potential Russian interference and -- yes.

Q. Do you remember whether you were aware at the time that Wikileaks had started releasing information that had been hacked from the computer systems of a U.S. political party?

A. I think that was happening around that time. I certainly read it in the papers, yes.

Q. So my recollection was, certainly, in July, around the time of the Democratic National Convention, Wikileaks had published some 20,000 E-mails that had been stolen from the DNC. So that would have been two weeks before reached to the handling agent.

A. Yes. I don't remember the dates, but yes.

Q. At it would have been about two weeks before Christopher Steele first reached out to you and reported to you, at least verbally, some concerns about Russian interference and potential involvement in the Trump
1 campaign?

2 A. Yes. Going from your timeline, yes.

3 Q. Do you recall whether or not you were aware or heard then Candidate Trump on the campaign trail around July 26th making the statement, Russia, if you're listening, in essence, inviting Russia to hack his opponent, Hillary Clinton?

4 Do you remember whether you were aware of that?

5 A. I'm sure I was aware of it at the time.

6 Q. So just looking at a calendar, that statement on the campaign trail would have come some four days before Mr. Steele had first reached out to you and said he had concerns or had gotten a reporting that Russia might be interference and that the Trump campaign may know or be involved?

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. So did that heighten your concern and your desire to make sure that the FBI was aware of this information?

9 A. I'm sure it did.

10 Q. And was that -- throughout that fall, Wikileaks continued to release information that had been hacked from the DNC. Do you recall that?

11 A. In broad terms.

12 Q. And do you recall the campaign, the Trump
campaign specifically, what I would term "weaponized", but
certainly tried to amplify the message of Wikileaks by, for
example, then Candidate Trump declaring on the campaign
trail, I love Wikileaks; Wikileaks just released
information; I encourage all of you to go and read the
information that Wikileaks just released"?
A. I remember something like that.
Q. Did that kind of behavior by a U.S.
presidential campaign, U.S. presidential candidate, have
heightened your concern about the reporting you had heard
from Mr. Steele?
A. I'm sure it did.
Q. So even though it was what we referred to
or described as raw intelligence, you felt it was something
that the FBI should certainly be looking into?
A. Yes. It potentially could be extremely
important.
Q. Certainly, it posed, potentially, a
extremely important national security risk to our country?
A. Yes. As I said before, yes.
Q. So when you took the -- when you had these
conversations with Mr. McCabe, in addition to noting that it
was raw intelligence that should be followed up on,
certainly, the underlying themes of the report that Russia
was seeking to interfere in our election and that there
could be potential knowledge of that and even the potential assistance, whether witting or unwitting, from the Trump campaign is something that you felt was important that he know about?

A. Yes.

Q. Once you had conveyed it at that level, did you seek then to recommend or follow up or suggest any particular investigative steps?

A. I did not.

Q. At any point in either the Crossfire Hurricane investigation or what then became the Mueller investigation, did you recommend that anyone take any particular investigative steps?

A. I did not.

BY MR. HASKELL:

Q. I first just want to clarify one point. There's been -- both myself and my colleagues and Chairman Graham mentioned a quote. I'll just read the quote, "may be exaggerated or conspiracy theory talk", pertaining to Steele reporting and there's been some mention that that was your testimony in the House and I think there's also been just some confusion about who that quote is ascribed to.

Just for the record, I want to make clear that that is on page 280 of the IG report and it is a quote that is under the heading "Notes Taken by Meeting Participants, FBI" and
indicates that "Ohr shared the following information", and then it says:

Among other things, Kremlin activities, quote, may be exaggerated or conspiracy talk, end quote, so Steele cannot know whether all reporting is true.

So I just want to clarify that those are the words from notes of FBI personnel, not the words of Mr. Ohr and not the words of Mr. Steele.

Turning to page 270 of the IG report, and you do not yourself need to turn there, although, you're welcome to. It says that: "Ohr's contact with Steele did not end after Steele formalized his relationship with Handling Agent 1 and the FBI. Ohr told us that he viewed meeting with Steele as part of his job -- as you again reiterated today -- "because he needed to maintain an awareness of Russian organized crime activities and Steele knew Russian organized crime trends better than anyone else. Handling Agent 1, Steele's handling agent, told the IG that he knew Steele and Ohr were in contact after that relationship had been formalized."

So I think the report speaks for itself on that point, but to be clear, you did not cease talking to Steele once he had a formal relationship with FBI and then pick up talking to him when that relationship changed; is that correct?

A. You're correct.

Q. You consistently spoke with him; is that
You were asked questions by our colleagues about your knowledge of the primary sub-source and the U.S. Government's interactions with the primary sub-source and you said that you were not aware of that, and that's not surprising because of the limited nature of your role vis-a-vis the Crossfire Hurricane investigation. We talked about that throughout the day, but I'm just going to ask you a couple of questions just to make sure we're absolutely clear.

You were not a member of Crossfire Hurricane team; is that correct?

A. Correct.

You played no role in the decision by FBI Assistant Director Priestap to open the Crossfire Hurricane investigation in July of 2016; is that correct?

A. That's correct.

And you played no role in the decision to open the individual investigations into Michael Flynn, Paul Manafort, George Papadopolous, and Carter Page; is that correct?

A. That's correct.

You also played no role in the decision seek a FISA warrant on Carter Page in October of 2016; is
A. That's correct.

Q. And you played no role in the preparation, the drafting, or the reviewing of the October 2016 FISA application; is that correct?

A. That's correct.

Q. No role in the approval process for that FISA application?

A. That's correct.

Q. And is the same true, that you played no role in the decisionmaking, preparation, or approval for the three subsequent renewals of that Page FISA application?

A. That's correct.

Q. I believe you already confirmed this, but just for the sake of the record, were you even aware in the fall and winter of 2016 that the FBI was seeking or had obtained a FISA warrant on Carter Page?

A. I don't believe I was.

Q. You also weren't a member of Special Counsel Mueller's team; is that correct?

A. That's correct.

Q. And because of what we discussed about your position on Crossfire Hurricane and what you just said about your position on the Mueller team, am I right that you weren't privacy to the internal deliberations or decisions
of the Crossfire Hurricane and Mueller teams?

A. That's correct.

Q. And, in fact, the IG reports states that, quote: The FBI personnel we interviewed generally told us that Ohr did not make any requests of the FBI, nor did he inquire about any ongoing cases, or make any recommendations about potential investigative steps."

Do you share the recollections of the FBI personnel, the ones that you interacted with, that you didn't make any requests, inquire about ongoing cases, or recommend investigation steps?

A. I think that's right.

Q. The President has tweeted about your family more than 30 times. You've also been singled out and accused of various things, including of having, quote, worked on behalf of the Clinton campaign by members of Congress.

You didn't work for the Clinton campaign; is that correct?

A. That is correct.

Q. You worked and you continue to work at the Department of Justice. Why is it that you have elected to dedicate your career over the last almost 30 years, I believe, to the Department's
mission and I think it's a worthy goal to try to investigate and prosecute criminal activity against the people of the United States and I still believe it, obviously.

Q. And I apologize for asking this, but you, obviously, continue to work there notwithstanding the attacks I just mentioned. Why is it that you continue to work there in light of the public targeting of you and your family?

A. Well, the mission hasn't changed and the need to keep trying to seek for justice is still present and I still feel it and so I will continue doing it.

Q. That's extremely admirable and you may be a rare bird in that regard. Do you ever have concerns that public attacks like that make it difficult for the Justice Department to maintain and recruit people like you to join its ranks?

A. Yes.

BY MS. SAWYER:

Q. If I could just follow up on that for a minute, I often hear people describe what the Justice Department and the FBI do as investigating that is warranted and necessary prosecuting in the interest of the United States, and I often hear people use the phrase "without fear or favor".

From your perspective, what does that mean?
A. It means that you shouldn't be swayed by anything aside from the facts of the case.

Q. And do you believe that with regard to, certainly, your behavior and the handling of the information that Christopher Steele alerted you to and then you then passed along, did you feel that you were behaving in accord with that mission?

A. Yes. I certainly did my best to.

Q. I know this is a difficult question since you're employed at the Department, but do you believe that any of the efforts that have been undertaken to target individuals have been an effort to diminish people's ability to follow the facts where they lead, to engage in the mission of the Department without fear or favor?

A. I can't speak to anyone's motives, but I think some people, obviously, feel like they are being discouraged, but I can't talk about or I can't say why people are doing that. I wouldn't guess.

Q. Would you agree, at least, that there is a risk that people are being discouraged to follow the facts where they lead and to engage in the mission of the Department without fear or favor?

A. Yes. I think there's always that risk.

So within the Department, we try to keep people encouraged.

Q. Understanding that there is always that
risk, do you feel that there's a risk when the President of the United States is using a social media platform to target people individually who work for the Department or the FBI? And not speaking of you in particular.

A. I generally hear from people that they are discouraged.

MS. SAWYER: I think that is all that we had. Our colleagues may have some more questions, but we appreciate your time today as well as your cooperation in the investigation to date.

THE WITNESS: Thank you.

MR. SOMERS: We don't have any further questions. I think we can conclude the interview, and I just want to thank Mr. Ohr and counsel for coming here today and putting up with us for a little while.

Thank you.

THE WITNESS: Thank you.

[Redacted]: I do have one statement for the record.

The FBI and/or DOJ will provide a list of names to the staff for redaction from the transcript.

MS. SAWYER: I guess while we're still on the record, one of the questions that has come up, and I wasn't here in the beginning, I just wanted to clarify. I mean, I assume that we are providing the witnesses and including
this witness the opportunity to review the transcript, like we usually do.

MR. SOMERS: Yes. We will provide the witness the opportunity to review the transcript here.

MR. Berman: I would like to just thank the Majority and Minority for their professionalism and their civility all day today. Thank you so much.

THE WITNESS: Likewise, thank you.

MR. SOMERS: Thank you.

[Whereupon, at 2:41 p.m., the interview concluded.]
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