

EXECUTIVE SESSION
PERMANENT SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE,
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
WASHINGTON, D.C.

INTERVIEW OF: 

Wednesday, December 20, 2017

Washington, D.C.

The interview in the above matter was held in Room HVC-304, the Capitol, commencing at 1:36 p.m.

Present: Representatives Rooney, Ros-Lehtinen, Gowdy, Schiff, Speier,



Quigley, Swalwell, and Heck.



[REDACTED]

Appearances:

For the PERMANENT SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE:

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

For the U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE,
FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION:

GREGORY A. BROWER
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR
OFFICE OF CONGRESSIONAL AFFAIRS

[REDACTED]

OFFICE OF GENERAL COUNSEL

For [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]



LAWRENCE BERGER, ESQ.



[REDACTED] Thanks, everybody. Good morning.

This is a transcribed interview of Special Agent [REDACTED]

Thanks for joining us today and speaking with us. We appreciate that.

For the record, I am [REDACTED], [REDACTED] here at the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence for the majority. There are a number of other members and staffers present today who will introduce themselves as the proceedings get underway. However, before we begin, I just want to set a few rules of the road so you understand where we're going and how we're going to do this.

The questioning will be conducted by members and staff that are present, and they will be permitted to ask questions during their allotted time period. Some questions may seem basic, but that is because we need to clearly establish facts and understand the situation.

Please don't assume, do not assume we know any facts you have previously disclosed as part of any other investigation or review.

This interview will be conducted at the Top Secret/SCI level.

We ask that you give complete and fulsome replies to questions based on your best recollections. If a question is unclear or you're uncertain in your response, please let us know. And if you do not know the answer to a question or can't remember, just simply just say so.

You're entitled to have counsel here for you. I see that there are representatives from the FBI and also private counsel. If at this time all those individuals could please state their names for the record.

[REDACTED] [REDACTED] with the FBI, OGC.

[REDACTED]

MR. BROWER: Greg Brower, assistant director of OCA.

MR. BERGER: Lawrence Berger, counsel for the witness.

[REDACTED] Thank you very much all.

The interview will be transcribed. As you just noticed, there is a reporter making a record of these proceedings so we can easily consult a written compilation of your answers. Because the reporter cannot record gestures, we ask that you answer all questions verbally. If you forget to do this, you might be reminded to do so.

You may also be asked to spell certain terms or unusual phrases. And in the abundance of caution, instead of using acronyms, if you could please just spell it out for everyone here on the record, we would appreciate it.

Consistent with the committee's rules of procedure, you and your counsel, upon request, will have a reasonable opportunity to inspect the transcript of this interview in order to determine whether your answers were correctly transcribed. The transcript will remain in the committee's custody. And the committee also reserves the right to request your return for additional questions should the need arise.

The process for the interview will be as follows. The majority will be given 45 minutes to ask questions, then the minority will be given 45 minutes to ask questions. We will take a break immediately thereafter should you wish, and we will take any breaks that you desire during the course of the proceedings. Please just let us know.

After that period, the majority will be given 15 minutes to ask questions and the minority will be given 15 minutes to ask questions. These 15-minute rounds will continue in an alternating fashion until the questioning has been completed by

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

both sides. Time will be kept by myself for each round with warnings given at the 5- and 1-minute marks, respectively.

To ensure confidentiality, we ask that you do not discuss the interview with anyone other than your attorneys. And you're reminded that it is unlawful to deliberately provide false information to Members of Congress or staff.

Lastly, the record will reflect that you are voluntarily participating in this interview, which will be under oath.

Special Agent [REDACTED] could raise your right hand to be sworn, sir?

Do you swear or affirm the testimony you are about to give is the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth?

[REDACTED]: Yes. I do.

[REDACTED]: Thank you. And if could leave that microphone on so the reporter can hear.

Mr. Chairman, over to you for any opening comments.

[REDACTED] go ahead.

[REDACTED]: Yeah, I just wanted to make a comment. The FBI has provided [REDACTED] as a witness in this matter. He is actually a supervisory special agent in [REDACTED]. He is not a member of our senior executive service. We often provide and produce witnesses who are SES level.

[REDACTED] will be continuing to do his day-to-day activities in the field office, which means meeting with witnesses and subjects and sources. And so we just ask, to date his identity has not been released publicly in the press, and he would hope that that continues.

[REDACTED]: We absolutely agree.

[REDACTED]: I just wanted to put that on the record as the witness is

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

concerned about that and it could have an impact on his investigative abilities going forward.

[REDACTED] Absolutely. I think all sides are in agreement on that. We appreciate that.

Mr. Chairman, any opening remarks?

MR. ROONEY: I just want to thank the witness and his counsel for being here, for helping us conduct this investigation, and for us to write a report that hopefully at some point can help the Intelligence Community and the FBI and those people like yourself that are charged with keeping us safe to do a better job in the wake of a lot of international adversities.

How did you want to proceed?

[REDACTED] If the minority has opening remarks.

MR. QUIGLEY: Thank you for being here and thank you for your service.

[REDACTED] [REDACTED] we're going start with our 45 minutes over here.

[REDACTED] Could I just make one comment?

[REDACTED] Please.

MS. ROS-LEHTINEN: Yes.

[REDACTED] I just want to thank you for the opportunity for me to come here and explain my role in this, in what's happened. I appreciate the opportunity. I'm here to answer everything that I can possibly answer as fully and completely as possible.

[REDACTED] Thank you very much, sir. We know we have pulled you off from your important job, so we will try to be as brief as we can and we appreciate your service, sir.

BY [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Q Obviously, we're here to talk about information that relates to what the public has now commonly referred to as the Steele dossier. So I think it makes sense if you could start for us, how did you meet Christopher Steele? How did that come about? When did it come about?

A Okay. So in 2009 I was stationed in [REDACTED] and I was placed as a supervisor of the Russian organized crime squad in [REDACTED] at that time.

At that time the squad was going through a bit of a change in that the Russian organized crime threat was moving from the classic street-level, extortion type activity to very sophisticated transnational type activity.

I was placed there specifically to improve our response and our attack against this criminal threat, meaning to develop transnational cases, to work with overseas partners, to develop sources at a higher level to obtain information that would enlighten us and assist our investigations against this type of criminal activity, which was generally at the time very sophisticated fraudulent type activity, money laundering type activity. That was in 2009.

I had been contacted late 2009, early 2010 by Bruce Ohr, who at the time was here at DOJ, there down at main Justice. I had known Bruce from the late '90s when he was a unit chief in the securities fraud unit at the Southern District of New York and I was investigating Mafia influence within Wall Street at the time. So I had a good deal of interaction with Bruce in that regard.

Q Did Bruce give you a call or did he --

A So he gave me a call. He had learned that I was now in this new position. And he, similarly, I think, had just taken a position as -- I don't know what the official title was, but being responsible for the Department of Justice's transnational organized crime program.

[REDACTED]

So he had called me, and said, look, I'd like to introduce you to certain people. And we met a number of people overseas.

Q Was Bruce -- sorry, I don't mean to cut your off -- was Bruce, at that time when he contacted you, was he at main Justice in D.C.?

A He was at main Justice, yes. I hadn't spoken to him for a number of years. During that time he was also down in OCRS, I believe, in Justice Department. So I had some interaction with some of our Mafia investigations. Obviously, we do numerous wiretaps and we had to engage with DOJ in that regard, but nothing regular or consistent.

2009 he becomes -- goes to that position. He learns of my new position and calls me and says, I'd like to start introducing you to some people. I understand, you know, what the FBI is trying to do in terms of this program, transnational organized crime, particularly Eurasian organized crime from groups from the former Soviet states. And I think, you know, look, who knows where these introductions can go. Whether we develop cases or sources -- we being the Bureau -- but it would be a good idea. And my bosses at the time thought it was an excellent idea and it's an excellent avenue to try and develop lines of information for us to move and operate in that space, so to speak.

So Christopher Steele was one of these individuals. I met him with Bruce. The first time, I believe, was the spring of 2010, was when I met Christopher Steele.

Q Prior to that meeting in -- your first meeting with Christopher Steele in spring of 2010, had you had any communications with Mr. Steele?

A No.

Q Just Mr. Ohr told you about him?

[REDACTED]

A He had told me about him in lead up to the introduction and the meeting, which happened in London. Again, I think it was April. I don't know exactly the date. But spring of 2010.

Q But it was in London?

A Yes.

Q Okay. Anyone else there, just you and Mr. Steele?

A Mr. Steele, myself, Bruce Ohr. I can't recall if there were -- I can't recall if anyone else was there.

Q You don't remember. It's pretty easy.

What happened at this meeting in London in April of 2010?

A So at this meeting I was induced to Christopher Steele. I was told -- he explained his background to me. He explained what he now currently did or was doing. Had just opened a private firm. He had retired [REDACTED] [REDACTED] and was now beginning a private company, basically an intelligence, corporate intelligence type firm, where he was engaging with private sector businesses to develop information on Russian businesses, businessmen.

He had been engaged also, there was another individual who I had known in London, met through Bruce, who at the time it was the -- I think it was called the [REDACTED] that they had hired Christopher Steele for some report. I didn't know the specifics of it. But he had told me also that they had dealt with Mr. Steele.

Q He, Christopher Steele, told you about that?

A He [REDACTED] had told me that they had worked with Christopher Steele in the past.

Q Okay.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

A But at this point Christopher Steele was just telling me what his business was and saying that he had lines of information [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Did not identify who they were, I didn't ask who they were, but said, you know, he comes upon information regarding high-level criminal activity by these actors at times. And because of his - [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] and that he came across information at times regarding criminal activity at a high level with these actors.

And in the Russian organized crime field, you know, at times it's really -- it's not just traditional organized crime members, it's businessmen, very wealthy businessmen, organized crime members, politicians. And, you know, at times it's a real tight mix between all three of these groups.

He said he had this information that really nobody [REDACTED] interested in seeing and he would like to do something with it. And if the FBI was interested, he would like to start providing this information.

Q Did you capture all this information in a document or investigative report about this meeting in the spring of 2010?

A There should be a document that just describes generally about the meeting. There was certainly a document for me to get authority to travel to London. I have to explain why I should be going and why I need to go.

But in terms of -- at that meeting I don't recall, I don't believe he got into specifics in terms of, like, the type of information he had. But he was really kind of just setting the groundwork for some type of future relationship, which was very interesting to me in that position and for us and our Eurasian organized crime

[REDACTED]

██████████

program because it was an avenue of potential information that we did not have at the time, at least in ██████████ and which could lead to various avenues of successful investigation.

Q And how long did that meeting last in April of 2010, ballpark? An hour?

A Hour, hour and a half maybe.

Q Was that the only communication you had with Mr. Steele on that trip to England?

A On that trip? Yes.

Q When was the next time you saw or heard or talked to Mr. Steele, about?

A I couldn't tell you exactly when, if it was over in London. I was traveling in London not just for Christopher Steele a few times, but for some various cases that we were working on and trying to develop at the time. So I was meeting with other groups, British authorities, to see if we could develop other cases.

So I was there and I saw him a couple of times in London. I saw him, I believe it was once here in Washington, because he also traveled to the States. He was trying to develop business here in the States as well. And then once or twice in ██████████ And this is going from the spring of 2010, probably talking the next year and a half, 2 years, maybe 3.

Q So when did you -- I know -- you know, I think everybody now knows that Christopher Steele was involved ██████████, investigation. We're not really here to discuss that, at least I'm not.

When did you make the decision to make Christopher Steele a source of

██████████

the --

A So that was in the fall of [REDACTED] What had happened, and what was going on between 2010 and [REDACTED] was if he had an interesting report that he had done for a private client that he thought would be of interest to the FBI, he would pass it and give it to us, for us to see and review and look at.

Q So in the fall of [REDACTED] Christopher Steele officially becomes --

A He officially becomes a source. At that point the relationship was such that it made sense now to be official, to initiate official taskings, and also to begin the compensation process, because a source -- unless you're -- unless it's an official source, an individual can't be compensated.

Q So he wasn't compensated prior?

A He wasn't compensated prior to that.

Now, talking [REDACTED], he made introductions to certain people to whom we spoke that enlightened us about certain things going on [REDACTED]

Q And he was paid for those?

A Ultimately, after he was opened, we paid him and compensated him for those introductions.

Q Was that an expectation Mr. Steele had, that he would be --

A No. At the time, no.

Q Was it ever discussed during the course of the process?

A No. So his motivation was to -- it was twofold. And this was discussed at the beginning and those times when I had met him or spoken to him prior to him becoming a source.

One, to get the information, because he was still very motivated about the Russia threat and the different aspects of it. One, get that information to a group

[REDACTED]

that could do something with it.

But then two, as a businessman, to get paid for information. And that was his motivation also, you know. I wouldn't say it was the main driver, but as a businessman, he was concerned about getting paid.

So [REDACTED] introductions, again, what did it, it helped us begin this case which ultimately developed into a very large case for us as the Bureau, the Department of Justice, a successful -- a very successful matter in our eyes. And, frankly speaking, without these introductions, I don't think we with would have had the foresight to go after this case.

Ultimately, because of this case, at that stage [REDACTED] we had, it was three or four cooperating witnesses that we had developed in [REDACTED] case who had already agreed, everything under seal, but had agreed to cooperate and plead guilty and forfeit significant amounts of money.

And so at that time the thinking was, look, it's probably right, open him as a source, because we're going to really start to develop -- try and task and develop this information he's provided. But also, in response to this case that has been successful that wasn't even public at the time, but that was extremely successful that we had known about internally, obviously, in the Bureau.

MR. ROONEY: Can I ask some clarifying questions?

So to be a source, that qualifies you -- officially be a source -- that qualifies you to get tasks and also to be compensated. Is that pretty much the --

[REDACTED] Yes. There are what they call one-off instances where one-time nonsource payments, depending on the situation. But generally speaking, under the Attorney General guidelines, you have to be -- the person has to be a source in order to be compensated.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

MR. ROONEY: If I wanted to be a source and I knew you and was working with you, but generally speaking I'm just a private guy who starts feeding the FBI information and it turns out to be helpful, then is it -- explain to me what the normal process is to make somebody like me an official source.

[REDACTED] Okay.

MR. ROONEY: Like, was this sort of a normal transgression or was this unique.

[REDACTED] Every source is different when we're talking about HUMINT sources. Every source is different, the process in developing the source can be different, the process in making the source an official source.

You know, they have -- there are people out there who provide information, maybe on a semi-regular basis, who may not be official sources on paper and here may be different reasons for that.

In this case, because Mr. Steele was overseas, managing and developing and running an overseas source is much more complicated from an administrative perspective -- also from the perspective of who was involved in terms of overseas, other agencies then have to be involved -- you know, it's much more complicated, it's just much more administratively complicated to do that.

And so that was probably in terms of this case the hesitation at first. And the information flow was not -- it was not weekly, it was not even monthly. It may have been quarterly that a report would come in on something.

In terms of an average, like a person who's becoming a source, the point where that decision is made to make that individual a source can be -- the reason can be varied. It can be because now it's time to start compensating this individual. It can be because now we have to task this individual and this

[REDACTED]

individual will start going out and putting this -- himself or herself at risk on behalf of our taskings. So there could be a number of reasons.

MR. ROONEY: Is there any kind of a vetting as far as or does it just have to be good intel that you're getting from a guy.

[REDACTED] No, certainly there is -- there is an official vetting process as a source is open now within the Bureau. However, in terms of even considering an individual for a source you need to determine if the source is trustworthy, credible, positioned to obtain information that is useful for what you're trying to do.

How do you do that? It's not necessarily easy. You're not just going to ask the source and say, I can trust you, right? You need to corroborate at times, if you can, as much as possible, the information that the source provides you.

In the criminal world where I've -- all my experience is for 22 years, you know, you can have sources that may have 90 percent information that is solid, you know, because you're hearing it on a wiretap, the same thing unrelated to what this source is saying. You may have 5 percent that's good and 95 percent that's bad, but that 5 percent may corroborate everything you're hearing here.

So, you know, you have to -- there's no set kind of matrix, but from my perspective, and I think for experienced agents, it's about corroborating as much as you can the source's information.

It's also about the source. Does the source follow taskings? Does the source go off on his or her own and just do whatever he or she wants to do or do the opposite of what you asked them to do?

You know, it is all of these considerations that you have to review and you do it consistently. When you pay a source you've got to give a number of instructions to the source. You have to do this, you can't do this, you have to do

[REDACTED]

this, you have to report the tax. And they say, yes, of course, I will do that.

Now, you know, do they always follow those instructions? Unless you're wiretapping your source, surveilling your source 24/7, you don't know.

So really at the end of day it's about a source following instructions as far as you can observe, it's about you testing the source in terms of following instructions, in terms of testing the information that the source provides by seeking the same information from other avenues, other sources, independent of this person, to say, okay, what this person has to say, whether it's 90 percent, 50 percent, or 5 percent, is actually right, because this source here is saying it. So it's a whole -- it's a process.

MR. ROONEY: Do you know how long he was a paid source for the FBI?

[REDACTED] Yes.

MR. ROONEY: How long?

[REDACTED] [REDACTED]

MR. ROONEY: Okay.

[REDACTED] Thanks.

BY [REDACTED]

Q Let's transition a little bit here. With Christopher Steele, when did you first become aware or were informed by him of the material that would later become known as the Steele dossier?

A It was early July of 2016. I received a call from Christopher Steele saying, I need to see you, I've got some significant information that you need to see.

Q And did he call you from England?

A At the time I [REDACTED] I worked in our [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Q You were the [REDACTED] right?

A Yes.

Q Okay. When you received this call, what did you do? Did you invite him down [REDACTED] What happened?

A So what I said, I said, really -- and this was the first time -- he had said during the course of the relationship, you know, hey, I have some really interesting information you need to see. He had never said, I need to -- you need to see it now. And so I said, listen, can it wait a while? You know, it's Fourth of July week. You know, can we do this next week? He goes, no, you need to see this immediately.

MR. BERGER: Am I allowed to speak?

[REDACTED] Of course.

[Discussion off the record.]

[REDACTED] Larry brings up a good point.

I just want to say, I've had numerous and developed and worked numerous sources in my career. You don't always jump when the source says, I need to see you now, you know. There is a reason why when Christopher Steele in early July says, I need to see you and it's important, I said, all right, I will be up there tomorrow. And I flew [REDACTED] to London.

That's because, you know, he was introduced to me and had shown himself to me as a professional [REDACTED] And at that time there were a number of instances when his information had borne out, had been corroborated by other sources. And not just [REDACTED] case. A few

[REDACTED]

other instances of some very interesting [REDACTED]

[REDACTED], independent.

So this was somebody who I viewed as credible, professional, you know, worthy of a response, when he says, I need to see you tomorrow, that I get on a plane and I go see him.

Q So when or where did you meet Christopher Steele in early July in London?

A July 5th in his office in London.

Q In his business office?

A Business office.

Q Was anyone else there?

A At the time it was just him, him and myself.

Q And what did he tell you?

A I said, okay, what's going on? And he put it was either two -- I believe it was two or three of his reports. And he had a form report that he would always provide, same form that he put in front of me, and he just said, take a look at that.

Q And what was in those reports, summary?

A Yeah. The summary are these were the first reports of the dossier, you know, basically regarding Russia's efforts to compromise the electoral system. I believe it had mentioned about Hillary Clinton's -- compromise of Hillary Clinton's emails. It mentioned about President Trump in the hotel room with the prostitutes. It was those series of reports.

Q Did Christopher Steele in that meeting ever tell you his personal opinions about then candidate Trump and then candidate Clinton or any of the

other candidates?

A At that time, no.

Q Did he ever?

A No. Other than to say -- and this is just generally throughout that short course of time, period of time -- that he was very concerned about Russia's ability to compromise the next President of the United States. That was his concern.

His concern up until that point was always the Russia threat, Russia, Russia, the threat, because he was an expert. You know, look, as far as I knew at that point in time, as far as others had described, he was a Russia expert, and so that was his concern.

At that time, when he put that in front of me, I read the reports and, you know, I was -- I had to take a step back for a second and just kind of digest it, understanding internally that at that point things were going to be very different because of these reports.

It's not as if this was just some guy off the street who came in with some information and said this is what it is. You know, this is a, as far as the Bureau was concerned, as far as I was concerned, a credible, reliable professional who had this information that was completely unverified at the time, you know, and so I'm trying to digest how I deal with this.

What I --

Q So -- sorry.

A I was just going to say -- go ahead.

Q Sorry. You go ahead.

A All right. What I told him at the time, he said, you know, he goes,

[REDACTED]

you see this? I go, yeah. So the first thing I said, how did you get this, why are you doing this? And then he proceeded to tell me about Glenn Simpson. And he had been contracted by Glenn Simpson to develop information on Donald Trump's business activities in Russia.

Q So if I can ask, you said, you mentioned just a second ago, when you read it at that point, in early July, the information had been totally unverified?

A Yeah.

Q Is that something he, Christopher Steele, told you about the information?

A Well, my first -- one of the first questions I had to him was, do you have any corroboration of this? Is there any independent corroboration, information that you have? Is there a videotape? Is there an audiotape? Do you have anything else? And the answer was no.

Q What did he tell you about whom or how he got that information? I guess what I'm asking is, did he -- did you ask him [REDACTED]

A So he just said it was through his source network. I never asked the identity of his sources or his network.

From a criminal perspective and a criminal investigative kind of framework, you know, Christopher Steele and [REDACTED] were never individuals who were going to be on a witness stand. These were never individuals who were going to be identified publicly, you know.

The use of Steele's information would have been maybe a piece of information that came from there, that would have been attached in an affidavit, a wiretap affidavit, for example, or some other type of affidavit with a number of

[REDACTED]

other similar source -- independent source-related pieces of information.

So it's not as if, you know, at that stage I'm thinking Steele's going to be on the witness stand, his source network's going to be on the witness stand. And so, you know, the identity of his source network to a criminal investigator was not necessarily important. And if I could just --

Q Yeah.

A And the flip side also was he would never -- he did not want to reveal the identity of his source network.

Q No, and fair enough. It's an important distinction, the distinction between criminal investigator and, say, a counterintelligence investigator. So as you were sitting there with him as a criminal investigator, you were thinking in your mind, how do I use some of these bits and pieces to obtain further information, you are not necessarily looking to put Christopher Steele on the witness stand.

A No. I will just clarify that.

Q Please do.

A So as I read it I was not saying, okay, how am I going to use this? As I read it I'm saying, how am I going to put this into the Bureau intelligence stream to get it to who needs to see it? Because I'm not the person that's going to do something with this.

And first of all, it's got to be verified, corroborated before anybody can anything can do anything with it, whether it be a criminal investigator or a counterintelligence investigator. Just the piece on the counterintel side. To them, they need to know the identity of the source network. That's how they determine whether a piece of information -- whether a piece of information is solid or not, by the identity of that network. And they go from point A to Z and

[REDACTED]

everybody in between, because they need to know, all right, we know that guy, he's in place there, he can collect that.

And so that's how they're able to be do it. It's a different animal, the way they deal with sources, because it just has to be.

But in terms of me reviewing that document, my first concern was, how do I get this to somebody who needs to see it? How do I get it to that person so that the rest of the world doesn't see it? Because this -- I mean, it was explosive, obviously, you know, true or false, and I was in no position to assess whether it were true or false, other than knowing that I had a source who is credible and reliable and puts this in front of me.

And as I told him, I said, the ultimate person who may see this, they are going to -- they have to verify it, they have to corroborate it. In and of itself this doesn't mean anything.

And I said, that group, whoever that may be, if there is a group that exists that will review it, I said, you're going to have to tell them who your sources are for them to believe anything that you put in this report, just so you know. That's what I told him.

And at that point, again, you know, he had given it to me, and so I was going to take it back, back [REDACTED] where my office was.

What I told him --

MR. ROONEY: I was just going to say what did you do with it?

[REDACTED] Well, for the sake of -- why don't I just say what I told him at that point before I left?

So I wanted to confirm who had contracted with him to get this information. It was Glenn Simpson. He had told me that there was a law firm behind Glenn

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Simpson who had contracted with Simpson to have him contract with Steele.

He did not know or did not say that the law firm was attached to either party. Clearly, because of the information in his tasking, I assumed it was attached to somebody, politically motivated. He did not -- he said he did not know who the firm was that was behind it. And at that time, again, it was just Glenn Simpson who he had dealt with.

BY [REDACTED]

Q And so at that time did Christopher Steele, while he's telling you about the firm that contracted him to conduct this opposition research against Donald Trump, did he ever indicate to you that it was started by a Republican donor or something like that?

A No.

Q He said it was started by -- he was contracted by Fusion GPS and Glenn Simpson and --

A I'm not -- I don't even recall if he said Fusion GPS. He said Glenn Simpson.

Q Okay.

A And that was as far as he told me. And that was -- I asked him if he knew. As far as he told me, and that was -- I asked him, you know, if he knew -- as far as I recall, he did not know which party had been behind the firm that had contracted with Glenn Simpson.

Q And finishing with this, was that the end of your meeting at that time?

A That was -- it was a short meeting.

Q And then you flew back [REDACTED]

A Yeah.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Q Did you memorialize this report in either a 1023 or a 302 --

A Yes.

Q -- or any other investigative document?

A Yes. It was either, at the time, it was either a 1023 or a 302. I

forget exactly which it was.

Q Okay.

A But that is in the file, the source file.

Q It's in the source file?

A Yes.

Q Christopher Steele's source file?

A Yes.

Q Okay. So you get back [REDACTED], I'm guessing July 6th of --

A So I got back that day. That day was that holiday week. And so the next thing I did -- well, what I continued to do for the next couple of days was just to assess how I was going to deal with this information.

Again, my concern was that -- it was twofold. One, to get it to somebody who could either discount it or say, okay, this is something we have to work on.

But two, to do it, frankly, in a manner that was completely discreet, because I did not want to broadcast this throughout the Bureau. I don't want to broadcast this anywhere, just because of the nature of it, and obviously, you know, we all know the nature of it now. But at the time -- you know, and I did know, understand at the time that there was a group, a private group, that was getting this information that knew it.

You know, my assumption is that whoever is paying for this information is at some point going to somehow broadcast this information. That's something that

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

was out of my control, out of the Bureau's control. My concern was controlling it, since I had this piece of paper, you know, I couldn't just sweep it under the rug, couldn't discount it just on its face because it was an established source.

MR. ROONEY: If Christopher Steele gave this information to you but he was under contract to get this information for Glenn Simpson, why did he give it to you too?

[REDACTED] Okay. So the arrangement that we had had throughout the course of the relationship, he had stated that, look, if the Bureau through me tasks him for specific intelligence information, that he would then ask to be compensated, which was fine.

However, if he came across information in the course of his business with private clients that he thought the FBI, the United States Government needed to see, he would provide it for free, and he had done that in the past.

MR. ROONEY: Did he tell you that Glenn Simpson -- did he tell you that he told Glenn Simpson that he was going to do that?

[REDACTED] I'm trying to recall. I asked him if Glenn Simpson knew he was meeting with us.

MR. ROONEY: Right.

[REDACTED] I know I asked him. I don't recall what his answer was.

MR. ROONEY: Would that be in your report?

[REDACTED]: It might or might not. I don't recall. I just don't recall at this point. But I asked him if Glenn Simpson knew -- knew if he was meeting with us, and I just don't recall the answer.

MR. ROONEY: Do you recall if he said anything about Glenn Simpson wanting you to know about it?

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] No, he did not.

BY [REDACTED]

Q So after you get back [REDACTED] and write up your initial report, which is in the source file, be it a 1023 or a 302, your concern was relaying it to the appropriate channels in the FBI. So how did you do that? Or did you meet or communicate with Christopher Steele again before your subsequent communications with your peers at the FBI?

A So answering it backwards, I did not meet with Christopher Steele again while I was trying to figure out who to get this information to and how to get it to that group, person or person.

So it was, I believe, the second -- so what I did, I came back, formulated this idea to reach out to a trusted colleague in New York, an assistant special agent in charge, who I know and I knew then had been involved in some very sensitive investigations, politically speaking.

Q At New York field office?

A New York field office.

Q Was that JTTF or --

A No, no, no. The ASAC of public corruption.

Q Okay.

A And so I reached out to him on I believe it was the 12th of July. This is after I had told -- so we have [REDACTED] who runs our office. I told him how I -- I told him about the information, he read it. He did not maintain a copy. And then I told him my idea of really surgically trying to determine who should see this and determine if there were somebody to see this.

Q What determination was made?

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

A He agreed with my assessment. Because there's a normal flow of information when we get information from informants or sources [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

I didn't -- I intentionally did not [REDACTED] in order to be discreet with this and in order to again determine who had a need to see this, as opposed [REDACTED] numerous people who I don't even know would see this and in effect there would be no controls on the intelligence -- this information. And what they decided to do, you know, I would have no idea.

Q So how did you get it eventually to the appropriate -- whoever you got it to at the FBI?

A Right. So I started by speaking with the ASAC in New York City, public corruption. I had called him on, I think it was the 12th of July, and said, look, I did not tell him what was in the report, I gave him an idea of the reporting. And I said, you know, I need some advice as to how this can be handled discreetly, but yet processed appropriately, you know, so we can get it to somebody who needs to see it.

He said, okay. I didn't send him the reports. I hadn't sent the reports to anybody at that stage. I still had them. That was a week later. He said, hold it, hold onto it. He goes, I'm going to get back to you.

Q Does he?

A Yes, 2 weeks later. I think it was the 28th of July.

Q If I could just stop here a second.

In between those 2 weeks, in that interim time period, did you have any

[REDACTED]

communications with Christopher Steele or Glenn Simpson or anyone else about --

A Glenn Simpson?

Q About this subject matter?

A I've never spoken to Glenn Simpson or met Glenn Simpson ever.

Q Okay.

A At that -- in that time in July, I don't believe I spoke with Steele, because as I left it at that meeting, I told him -- I told him a couple things. I said understand -- I said -- I asked him, I said, are you still being contracted to get further information? And he said, yes. I said, you're not doing it on behalf of the FBI.

Q You are --

A I told Steele at that meeting on the 5th, I said we are not tasking you to collect this information, so you understand.

I said, in addition, because now you're telling me that this is done on behalf of a law firm, I don't know if there are any privilege issues. I said, I'm not -- we're not getting in the middle of any privilege issues with this information. So I said, anything you do right now you're not doing on behalf of the FBI.

I did say, if you, in your efforts to obtain further information, get corroboration of this information, I said, then let's talk again. I said, until then, I'm going to try and figure out who has to see this, if there is anybody, and then at that point we'll go from there.

And so the 12th I talked to the ASAC in New York. The 28th he contacts me. He calls me back.

Q July 28th?

[REDACTED]

A July 28th. And he tells me, okay, here's how you're going to handle it.

Q I'm sorry, who contacts you?

A ASAC from New York.

Q ASAC. Got it.

A No, I apologize. ASAC contacts me and says, okay, send the reports to me.

I send him the reports on [REDACTED] So he has the reports that I had on the 28th.

Within a day or a couple of days he then says, okay. He contacts me again and says, that information is going to go to the CDC's office in New York, CDC, the local attorneys, FBI attorneys in the field office. They are setting up a special subfile for this information. Just send it directly to them, talk to this one CDC up there and get it to them, and then we'll go from there, okay?

And then he adds, he goes, also, so you know, executive management -- this is on maybe the 1st of August, right around then, either the 31st July, 1st August, right around then -- executive management at FBI New York, meaning the SAC and the assistant director in charge, are aware of the reports and have seen the reports, and EAD level at headquarters is aware of the reports.

Q Okay. So at that time period are you talking with about John Jagalon (ph), Steinbach (ph), or anybody else?

A I couldn't tell you. I don't remember who it was.

MR. QUIGLEY: Ask him with EAD.

[REDACTED] Executive assistant director. So apparently I think in the

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Bureau there's six, maybe seven EADs below the deputy director.

Q So someone in the FBI's front office --

A So at a very high level -- so I was told by the ASAC at a very high level, he goes at the EAD level at headquarters they have the reports.

Q And they at the front office of the FBI had the Steele reports, which had the dossier information, to the best of your knowledge, on either July 31st or August 1st, 2016?

A So as far as I know, ASAC New York had the reports that I received from Steele on the 5th, on July 28th, and then he had told me again, I don't know if he told me the 31st or the 1st of August, right around there, that executive management in the New York office had seen them and was aware and that EAD level at headquarters had them and was aware.

Q So what happened after the EAD received the information from Christopher Steele?

A So I have no idea what happened down at headquarters after that. Again, my concern was getting it now to CDC office in New York. And I had spoken with CDC, sent the reports to him in New York, but at that time it was probably -- now we're talking probably middle of August, I think right around that time, the CDC and another ASAC in the counterintel program in New York advised me that, hey, there is a unit in headquarters that needs to see this, some type of investigative unit that's there that you need to send this to.

I said, okay, give me the name and I will send it to them. That took probably another 3 weeks to a month to get the name of the person to whom I had to send this information to.

Q Okay. Before we get to that, in that interim time period of that 3 to 4

[REDACTED]

weeks, were you doing anything with Christopher Steele, any communications, meetings, any information relayed to you?

A I did not meet with him. I do not believe there were -- I don't believe there were any other reports forwarded to me at that time.

Q So -- and if there were, just to makes it easier on you, if there were any sort of communications or information you received, you would have documented that?

A So anything I received -- so if we're talking July 5th on -- anything I received from him regarding this information I immediately -- there would be a document in the file that said on such and such a date [REDACTED] received the attached document from CHS, whatever his number was.

Q So instead of quizzing your memory, it's fair to say that you in your role as Steele's handler at that point were documenting any sort of communications and information he was providing to you to the DIOC (ph)?

A Yes. And with any of those documents they are in the file. Whatever I received from him was in the file.

Q Who was the POC you were given 3 to 4 weeks later?

A Oh, so, the POC was a unit chief at headquarters in the counterintel program.

Q Was it Pete Strzok?

A No.

Q Or Bill Priestap?

A Yes.

Q Do you recall who it was?

A Yes.

[REDACTED]

Q Who was it?

[REDACTED] It was a -- it's a non-SES-level individual, just to want to make that clear.

MR. BERGER: No position on --

[REDACTED] I think if you're interested in talking to that person, you can reach out to our congressional affairs and we can discuss whether or not we will make that person available?

[REDACTED] Okay. Let's continue.

BY [REDACTED]

Q So you reach out to the unit chief at the counterintelligence division at headquarters?

A So I'm given the name and I reach out to this important. I say, hey, I've got this information. The unit chief had already been contacted by New York saying there is this information coming [REDACTED] that they are going to send your way.

So I first reached out to him, it was probably second week to early of the third week of September, and immediately sent him everything that I had.

Q Him being the unit chief?

A The unit chief of this unit. I send that to him, like I said, the second, third week. So he had it at that point.

And at that point, you know, my feeling internally was my responsibility to get this processed and to somebody who could do something with it or not do something with it in terms of verifying it, validating it, you know, it's solid or it's garbage. Then I had done that at that point.

Q At this point in time, up until you transferred, including the time where

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

you transferred the materials to unit chief in September 2016, were you aware that the FBI had any counterintelligence investigations into the 2016 Presidential election?

A No. No.

Q Okay. When did you first become aware of that?

A When I learned this guy's name down at headquarters. So --

Q The unit chief?

A The unit chief.

Q Okay.

A So those type of investigations are not advertised on the Bureau -- you can't go on the Bureau system and all of a sudden they pop up and they say where they are. They don't exist, even internally in the Bureau.

And that was, frankly, part of the problem trying to get this to that group, was to identify that group and if there was such a group. It turns out there was such a group and I got the name in September and as soon as I did I sent it to them. But up until then I had no idea about any investigation.

Q Did this unit chief upon receiving this information ask you to do anything, say, hey, reach back out to Steele --

A No. Said, all right, we'll take a look at it, we'll get back to you.

Maybe about a week later I shoot a message to the unit chief saying, look -- and this is standard, too, when you're running sources and you're getting information, you want to know if the information is useful, not useful, garbage, you know.

Whoever has the authority and the ability to review it and assess it, as a source handler you want to know what the assessment is and you want to put that

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

in the file so you know going forward this is a line of garbage or this is solid information.

So I reach out to him, I said, hey, let me know, you know, what you think about the information. He emails back, and that was maybe the 23rd, 24th of September, and states that the information that -- in the dossier corroborated information that they received [REDACTED] that actually predicated all this investigation.

And really, I mean, I was just looking for that assessment. But he went on to describe the investigation and the titles, the classified titles of the investigations, and then provided a [REDACTED] who at that time were involved in the investigation and also had seen the reporting from Steele.

MR. ROONEY: What's Five Eyes?

[REDACTED]: I'm sorry. That's the intelligence -- the foreign intelligence partners, Canada, U.K., New Zealand, America.

MR. BERGER: Australia.

[REDACTED]: Australia, yes. So there is a special intelligence relationship between these countries that we don't have with any other countries where we share an exchange.

[REDACTED]: My time's up. I just have one more question. When you heard back from the unit chief in late September of 2016 that the information in the Steele dossier corroborated an investigation they had opened previously, did he specify what information it corroborated and on who?

[REDACTED]: No, just to say that the information [REDACTED] [REDACTED] that predicated the investigations. And as I stated, then he went on [REDACTED] who were involved at the investigative and

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

executive level in those investigations and who were aware of the dossier.

[REDACTED] Over to the minority, Mr. Ranking Member.

MR. QUIGLEY: Sir, again, thank you for being here.

Before I get into my initial questions, help me -- I guess there is a little concern. Did you ever -- were you ever told why this went through a rather unique process to get finally to counterintelligence?

[REDACTED] Was I -- I wasn't told.

MR. QUIGLEY: Can you begin to explain why that might have happened?

[REDACTED] It happened specifically because it was not put into the normal intelligence chain intentionally. So that because of the nature of the this information, whether it were true or not, it was extremely, for lack of a better word, explosive.

MR. QUIGLEY: Sensitive.

[REDACTED] Sensitive. And so it was -- the thought was to determine who actually needed this information, if there were such people, and to get to them directly, to bypass the numerous unknown layers of individuals who would have seen it otherwise internally and to avoid that process, as opposed to then just putting it and finding the people or group who needed to see this information.

MR. QUIGLEY: The question is whether the process can handle such things.

[REDACTED] The process is there for the intake of intelligence and information. But what happens is, it's at different levels and different layers of intelligence analysts, intelligence analyst supervisors, unit chief supervisors, different division supervisors. So there is a number of people who see this intelligence and information.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

MR. QUIGLEY: Do you think it would have gotten to the right people eventually going through the normal process?

[REDACTED] I don't know. In my experience, again, I go back to 1995 where we did not [REDACTED] and when you had a piece of information that needed to be seen by somebody else, you found out who it was and you put it in their hands. You know, that's a very kind of antiquated way of doing it but it's --

MR. QUIGLEY: And maybe it's a tangent, but it is perhaps important for another reason. Because you talked to the ASAC New York officer that you mentioned and he said to send it there eventually. And they told you that the EAD has it.

[REDACTED] Right.

MR. QUIGLEY: Now, how much time passes again before they ask you to send it someplace else?

[REDACTED]: So that was the very beginning of August, and then a few weeks later I was told that there's a group at headquarters to send it to, but I wasn't told exactly where to send it until September, another few weeks after that.

MR. QUIGLEY: And who told you that?

[REDACTED] That was then CDC in New York and an ASAC from the counterintelligence program in New York.

MR. QUIGLEY: Did they ever say why -- it gets to CDC, why CDC decided that they couldn't do the same thing and send it, because they had a copy, right?

[REDACTED] They did -- no, they had copies, yes.

MR. QUIGLEY: So why didn't CDC send it directly to counterintel?

[REDACTED] I don't know and they didn't say why. As the legal office in the New York -- you know, ultimately I would have to be at the end of it anyway

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

because I collected it, so I'm going to have to be involved in that chain in getting the information to wherever it has to go. In terms of CDC sending it independently, I can't answer why or why not they did that.

MR. QUIGLEY: You mentioned something about the kind of witnesses and sources that -- the kind of sources that Mr. Steele had. I believe the expression you used is that these aren't the kinds of sources that go up on witness stands. Could you elaborate what mean by that?

[REDACTED] So, frankly speaking, and without being specific as to his source network, because I don't know [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

And these people may not know they are providing information that ultimately ends up in the FBI's hands. They may be giving it to one or two people over drinks one night, you know, not knowing that that person they are drinking with has a relationship with Christopher Steele or somebody like him.

So, you know, the divulgence of this type of information at that level, which is, again, different in the counterintelligence world, this is the type of information that gets people killed ultimately.

[REDACTED]

[2:35 p.m.]

MR. QUIGLEY: And are you saying that revealing his sources could put them at risk?

Without a doubt.

MR. QUIGLEY: Okay.

Let me go back to the time period before Mr. Steele starts getting paid and is tasked. You said that your agreement during that time period and I think afterwards was that he did work on a professional basis for individuals or corporations, right?

Yes.

MR. QUIGLEY: And that if he came upon information that he thought was important or worthwhile to the FBI, he would task that out.

Yes.

MR. QUIGLEY: Is that correct?

Yes.

MR. QUIGLEY: So he was getting paid to come up with that information by somebody, correct? In that interim period before when he started to the point where he starts getting tasked and paid, right?

He was running a business to get paid for the collection of intelligence.

MR. QUIGLEY: So somebody is paying him to do that work.

Yes.

MR. QUIGLEY: At any point, did you feel that the fact that he was getting paid for that work influenced the quality of his work?

That never came to mind. You know, again, it's --

MR. QUIGLEY: Well, you were always judging it, correct?

[REDACTED] Yes, you have to assess the information. And the way I reviewed, you know, his viability and the success of what he was doing was, you know, if something he had provided us was actually given to us by a completely independent source, you know, and then it said the same thing.

You know, that's, again, going back to corroborating information you get. You know, you can't just rely on when a source looks at you and says, "Oh, yeah, everything's great." That doesn't mean anything. You know, whatever the information is, you have to try and corroborate it.

You can't -- in this case, because the information is coming from such a unique level, you cannot always corroborate it or verify it.

MR. QUIGLEY: But the fact that he was getting paid wasn't something that seemed to alter the quality or credibility of his work?

[REDACTED] As far as I could tell, I couldn't even assess that because I wasn't reviewing his information based on, you know, the other information he was giving to -- and I wasn't seeing all of the reports that he was providing to private clients.

MR. QUIGLEY: But you assessed him as someone who was trustworthy and gave you quality information, correct?

[REDACTED] He was deemed credible and professional. And his information that he had provided at times was corroborated.

MR. QUIGLEY: And it's not just the quality of the information; it's just how important it is as well, correct? The quality is how accurate it is, correct?

[REDACTED] Uh-huh. Right.

MR. QUIGLEY: I would say, how important it is -- you know, he could tell

[REDACTED]

you something innocuous, and it's just not that important. But if it has greater significance, then it becomes more important, correct?

[REDACTED] Obviously, you know, we have to prioritize what we do because we're limited in resources.

MR. QUIGLEY: Right.

[REDACTED] So, you know, if he gives us 100 pages of something, there may be 2 pages that we can actually do something with. So I guess to answer your question, if it's important in terms of Bureau priorities, then, yes, that makes it more important.

MR. QUIGLEY: Did he give you important materials?

[REDACTED] He was giving us information that was unique regarding Eurasian organized crime and criminal activity at a very high level. And it was, yes, at the time, very -- it was interesting and important in terms of the Eurasian organized crime program.

MR. QUIGLEY: And to accomplish this, how would you judge the quality? How good would his sources have been to get the kind of information that he passed over to you during this entire period?

[REDACTED] So, to get that type of information, it seemed -- and, again, we never went down the road of identifying those sources. At least I didn't. I believe the counterintel guys may have tried, but I'm not even sure. You know, the sources, on its face, seemed to have to be placed pretty well.

MR. QUIGLEY: By "pretty well," you mean pretty high up?

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

MR. QUIGLEY: Did he talk about how he developed his sources? How long he had known them, for example?

[REDACTED] Just generally, that when he was there developing his network, and he had remained -- they had remained in touch and a part of that network for years.

MR. QUIGLEY: And, obviously, when he sat down with you, he -- at least when he talked about what became clear was the dossier, you said he talked about them as well?

[REDACTED] Talking about the sources?

MR. QUIGLEY: Right.

[REDACTED] Generally speaking.

MR. QUIGLEY: What did he say? To the extent you can.

[REDACTED] Yeah. No, I mean, it was very general, in terms of him disqualifying that the -- you know, him saying that the quality was good because it came from a good source network. You know, again, I didn't ask who they were, and he didn't offer up who they were.

MR. QUIGLEY: And, again, during this initial period before he became tasked, you said he gave material to you on a quarterly basis?

[REDACTED] If I had to average it out, it wasn't every week, it wasn't every month. Every couple of months. So, you know, if I had to average it out, maybe quarterly.

MR. QUIGLEY: Okay. And at any point during that period was information that he gave you something you found to be incorrect? Not the same as being something you couldn't corroborate.

[REDACTED] That's tough to say. The information that was of interest

[REDACTED]

that we would look at, or that we looked at, there were no instances where it was glaringly incorrect. You know, I cannot say that we were able to determine everything he gave us was 100 percent correct, you know, just statistically speaking and just percentage-wise --

MR. QUIGLEY: It's a batting average, right?

[REDACTED] Yeah. And so --

MR. QUIGLEY: Okay. So if he's in your league, compared to your other sources, how does he rate?

[REDACTED] He was good. He was good. I will say that.

Again, you know, he was a professional in this line of business. And I've dealt with sources from street level to very high-level business types. You know, his motivation was clear. You know, I've dealt with individuals who were providing information because they have no choice, they have to. They're looking at time; they're looking at being arrested. You know, his motivation was clear. He was in that business. He still did that business. He wanted to provide information to somebody who could do something with it, and he wanted to get paid.

MR. QUIGLEY: You talked about his motivations, and you talked about his concern about the Russia threat. Did he elaborate on that?

[REDACTED] The Russia threat?

MR. QUIGLEY: Yes.

[REDACTED] No. It was just obvious is in our conversations. First of all, you know, I was engaging with him because he had this network that could provide information on the Russia threat, the Eurasian threat. That was his thing. That was his business. That was his wheelhouse. And, you know, just obvious in our conversations, you know, how important addressing that was to him.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

MR. QUIGLEY: But he described what he meant by the Russian threat?

[REDACTED] Generally speaking, you know, it's this combination of business, political, intelligence services that are taking advantage of the West, you know, in one way, shape, or form, whether it be to compromise financial systems, whether it be to avoid sanctions, whether it be, you know, just to get an advantage over the West.

MR. QUIGLEY: Did that include money laundering?

[REDACTED] Yes, that's all part of that.

MR. QUIGLEY: Your earlier work investigating, I believe, Russian gambling operations in Trump Tower, did that involve money laundering?

[REDACTED] Yes.

MR. QUIGLEY: Okay. Were there any sources there that helped you understand how Russians launder money and how that operated through this process?

[REDACTED] So I was the supervisor of the squad that engaged in that investigation, so I oversaw the squad from a supervisory level. There were case agents who did the day-to-day part of that. But throughout that case, other sources, no. That was primarily a wiretap investigation where we learned of the activity by the individuals themselves and what they were saying over the phone, and then our logical investigation for banks and bank record information.

MR. QUIGLEY: Well, let me get back to the money laundering in a bit. But let me get back to -- now, we've talked about the process in which Mr. Steele was helpful prior to becoming vetted. Do you know how long it took him to be vetted by the agency?

[REDACTED] To be --

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

MR. QUIGLEY: To become tasked and paid?

[REDACTED] So he became a source -- there was no official vetting process for him to get to become a source. You know, it was this relationship that we had had with him where he provided information every once in a while that was very interesting, including the information that helped us and enlightened us

[REDACTED] And then, at a certain point, we said we need to make this relationship official and also begin some payments and taskings.

MR. QUIGLEY: And was that because he was doing so much work, or there was more tasks for him to do?

[REDACTED] Because there was more tasking for him to do. Because we believed at that time that the results in [REDACTED] investigation warranted compensation, frankly speaking, at that time.

MR. QUIGLEY: To the extent you can tell us, what exactly did he contribute [REDACTED]?

[REDACTED] He made introductions to certain individuals, none of whom would be witnesses. He wouldn't be a witness. These other individuals wouldn't be witnesses. But these introductions and these meetings and interviews that we ended up conducting ended up providing kind of, like I said -- and when I say "enlightening," like, opening us up to the idea that there is this stuff going on there, as well as the fact that there was an individual in New York City to whom we could kind of investigate and really would open things up.

He had also provided a piece of information after we had gotten started that really kind of solidified the Russian organized crime's squad's involvement and justified its involvement in this investigation.

So, I mean, frankly speaking, without any of that -- again, he would never

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

be a witness on a witness stand. But without any of that -- and cases begin in many different forms, in many different ways. This ultimately became a very big criminal investigation for the FBI and Department of Justice and IRS. You know, without any of that, frankly, there might not have been [REDACTED] investigation.

MR. QUIGLEY: Let me ask you to put it another way. In your words, is this correct? Without Christopher Steele, [REDACTED] investigation isn't successful.

[REDACTED] I don't know if I want to say that. I'm not going to say that. What I will say is he is a significant part of the initiation of the investigation.

MR. QUIGLEY: How would you evaluate the sources he gave you, the people he gave you to introduce you, and the information he gave you?

[REDACTED] The introductions were very interesting. The people we ended up meeting with were interesting. And, again, shone a light and showed us kind of a direction to go. These people were never going to be on the witness stand, again. Steele was never going to be on the witness stand regarding this matter.

So, you know, again, it's really, you know, without those introductions, we don't possibly start the case. You know, that's the best I can say. But that's --

MR. QUIGLEY: I'm in no way minimizing everybody else's work there, okay?

[REDACTED] No, no. I get it.

MR. QUIGLEY: He cogs it, but for, they don't go forward.

[REDACTED] Very possibly we don't initiate the investigation but for some of those introductions that he had made at the outset.

MR. QUIGLEY: So he transitions to a process in which he's being tasked and paid for. And, again, what year was that?

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] [REDACTED]

MR. QUIGLEY: And that continued until September of '16. Is that accurate?

[REDACTED] Well, it continued until November -- we closed him in November of '17. No, November of '16. Last year.

MR. QUIGLEY: Okay. So do you know how many -- do you recall how many tasks he was assigned?

[REDACTED] I couldn't tell you exactly, but a number.

MR. QUIGLEY: Okay. Were they in the same general area of expertise?

[REDACTED] Yes.

MR. QUIGLEY: Did he continue in that timeframe to give you information that he had obtained in much the same manner he had done before with his private clients?

[REDACTED] Yes. And the provision of that type of information was not -- it was not a lot. It was some, but it was not -- you know, we were not getting a flood of this privately funded reporting.

MR. QUIGLEY: Right.

When you analyzed, or anyone else in the agency, to your knowledge, did you look at them differently whether he was being tasked or whether he was doing them from somebody else?

[REDACTED] No. So, for example, if he gave us a piece of information on a Russian company that was doing something, if we were involved in the investigation [REDACTED] we would look at it and compare it to other pieces of information or intelligence that we had. We would also send it down to headquarters to the program experts, who would review it and who at times said,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

yes, this is very good information. At times, it would also be put into intelligence reports that were sent out to the Intelligence Community.

MR. QUIGLEY: So, in a sense, his motivations didn't matter. They had to be corroborated anyway.

[REDACTED] Right.

MR. QUIGLEY: But did you question his motivations whether he was being paid by you or a private source?

[REDACTED] No. It was a unique situation. Yes, you have a source who is providing information, intelligence, and getting paid for it as a business to other people in addition to the Bureau. However, because of the type of information he had access to, we decided to go forward with it.

MR. QUIGLEY: Okay.

Could I just have one moment?

[Discussion off the record.]

MR. QUIGLEY: Mr. Schiff.

MR. SCHIFF: Special Agent, I'm sorry, would you pronounce your name for me?

[REDACTED]

MR. SCHIFF: [REDACTED] Thank you.

I want to ask you about your work on Eurasian organized crime and begin with your tenure [REDACTED] You mentioned one of the investigations that you had conducted there. Did that involve a Russian crime boss named Tutakhanov?

[REDACTED]: Tutakhanov. Yes.

MR. SCHIFF: Tutakhanov. Can you give us a general overview of how that case came about and the kind of criminal activity that he was involved?

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]: Can I just interrupt for a second? I apologize. Is this going to be in some way related to the Steele reporting and the Russian active measures investigation?

MR. SCHIFF: Well, that's what I'm asking to try to determine, yes.

[REDACTED] Because we are not prepared to have [REDACTED] talk about all of the different investigations that he may have been involved in.

MR. SCHIFF: Well, I'm not going to ask him about all of the different investigations he was involved in. But he was involved in an investigation involving a Russian crime boss in Trump Tower, someone who showed up at the Miss Universe Pageant in Moscow, and an issue which is very much of interest to this committee.

So, back to my question, can you give me a general overview of this case?

[REDACTED] It was an illegal gambling-slash-money-laundering investigation where this individual, Tutakhanov, also known as, his nickname, as Taiwanchik – he had been indicted in the Southern District in the early 2000s as a result of a bribery scheme involving one of the figure skating competitions in the Salt Lake City Olympics. And he was a fugitive, and still is, out of Southern District.

We learned from other independent source information that he had ties to individuals in New York City who were running an illegal gambling operation, which in and of itself, illegal gambling, not a major threat; however, it was a massive gambling operation done internationally with betters internationally, domestically here in the States, being controlled by two individuals who resided in Trump Towers, being controlled ultimately by this individual, Taiwanchik, who was overseas in Russia.

[REDACTED]

MR. SCHIFF: So, at the time that this organized crime ring was operating in Trump Tower -- tell me how you pronounce his name again.

Tutakhanov.

MR. SCHIFF: -- Tutakhanov was out of the country and remained out of the country. He was not --

Yes.

MR. SCHIFF: -- present in Trump Tower or present in the United States.

No.

MR. SCHIFF: But these were his people.

Yes.

MR. SCHIFF: And what was the nature of the crime ring that he was operating at Trump Tower?

Again, it was the two individuals at Trump Tower who ran a gambling -- large-scale international gambling operation online, taking bets from all over the world on sports, a sports gambling operation, from all over the world.

MR. SCHIFF: Now, you mentioned to my colleague that it involved money laundering as well, or was that a reference to other parts of your work?

No, that -- yes and yes. This case was -- obviously, the money that was generated, once it was put through the financial system, whether it was done here in the States or overseas, that is now money laundering. So that was an attendant part of this case.

MR. SCHIFF: And to the degree that the crime ring involved money laundering, this particular ring operating in Trump Tower, was all of the money laundered through the gambling operation, or were they also involved in laundering money through real estate?

[REDACTED] Again, as far as the specifics, the case agents would know better, but there was a real estate investment aspect to it.

MR. SCHIFF: And what, to your knowledge, did that involve?

[REDACTED] Ultimately, funds that were generated through this operation that came from overseas worked its way to the U.S., where real estate was purchased.

MR. SCHIFF: And was any of the money that was raised through this gambling ring used to -- was any of that money laundered by buying real estate in Trump Tower?

[REDACTED] I don't believe so. I can't answer 100 percent, but I don't believe so.

MR. SCHIFF: And, to your knowledge -- and, again, just within your knowledge -- was any of the money raised in this particular gambling ring laundered by the purchase of real estate in any other Trump Organization properties?

[REDACTED] I don't know.

MR. SCHIFF: In your other organized crime work [REDACTED] did you find in other cases that Russian organized crime money had been laundered through Trump properties?

[REDACTED] No.

MR. SCHIFF: Now, tell me, if you would, a little bit about Mr. Tutakhanov.

[REDACTED] Okay.

MR. SCHIFF: Tell me a little bit about him.

[REDACTED] As far as we know and understand from sources and from our wiretaps, he is a high-ranking member of Russian organized crime. He is a

businessman and is well-known over in Moscow.

MR. SCHIFF: And when you say "well-known," is this someone that has connections to Putin and those around him?

I can't say.

MR. SCHIFF: Isn't this someone who, after the imposition of sanctions, was called upon, along with other organized crime figures and oligarchs, to essentially pony up and help out the Kremlin with financial resources?

I don't know that. I mean -- I don't know that.

MR. SCHIFF: What are you aware of in terms of his connection to the Kremlin or those close to Putin? Is there anything you can tell us about that?

In terms of his relationship with people in the Kremlin and Putin, I can't, just because I don't know it.

MR. SCHIFF: Can you tell us more generally of the nature of the relationship between organized crime figures at that level and the Kremlin?

Generally speaking, as I mentioned earlier, you know, there is a connection at a certain level regarding these high-profile businessmen, some high-profile organized crime figures, and the intelligence services over there as well as politicians.

MR. SCHIFF: Are we in a classified or unclassified setting in this interview?

Classified.

MR. SCHIFF: Classified setting, okay.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

MR. SCHIFF [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

MR. SCHIFF: And during the course of the investigation, again, to your knowledge -- and I realize the case agents would have better familiarity with this. But during the course of that investigation, through the wiretaps or other means, was there any evidence that The Trump Organization was knowing of the operations of the crime ring in any way?

[REDACTED] No.

MR. SCHIFF: In your work on Eurasian organized crime and money laundering, particularly in New York, can you tell us a little bit about how the Russians laundered money through real estate in New York?

[REDACTED] I can speak generally in terms of the idea of laundering and the involvement of real estate in the States, which may include New York also.

Real estate in the United States is the end goal for a lot of this money that's been generated illegally. You know, it's safe. It's in the United States. It's a solid place to put money by these individuals -- and this is their thinking -- that they've generated either -- most of it overseas, whether it be illegitimately, at times legitimately, and it all gets kind of confused and mixed together.

But real estate in the States, Miami and any of the high-profile areas, is an end goal for a lot of this money because it's a solid investment and it's a safe place to put your money. That's the consideration of these individuals.

MR. SCHIFF: And the way that real estate is useful in that

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

money-laundering process is you can take ill-gotten gains, use it to buy real estate, and once you sell the real estate, that money is clean?

[REDACTED] So, generally speaking, the real estate and the money used at the time of the purchase may have been legitimized through washing it or moving it through numerous shell corporations, covering up transfers through loan agreements. Ultimately, you know, the entity that owns the real estate is not, at least on paper, the entity where the money generated from.

MR. SCHIFF: And so, if there's a value in being able to launder the money, you don't necessarily have to make a profit on the real estate, you could take a significant loss on the real estate, as long as the money you get out of it is clean.

[REDACTED] So, at times -- so, like I said, it's an end goal. It's a place to rest the money. And, yes, you know, they always want to make money. Everybody wants to make money. But, frankly speaking, in terms of a money-laundering perspective, it's more important that the investment is safe, you know, that the asset is safe, that it's there, it's not going to be seized by the government one day. You know, that's not going to happen in the United States. So that it's there, it's safe, and they have it.

And if they do it in areas such as Miami and such as Vegas and New York, you know, this real estate, for the most part, is not going to -- the value is not going to decrease, for the most part.

MR. SCHIFF: Now, I understand that when you see real estate that's flipped in short order -- quick sale following a quick purchase -- it can often be an indicia of money laundering. Is that because the property is really not held for investment or anything else, the goal is the transaction because the transaction

[REDACTED]

cleanses the money?

[REDACTED] It's a -- in and of itself, as a transaction to cleanse the money, is not necessarily, in terms of money laundering, the goal. Because, you know, it involves attorneys, it involves a process, it's not quick and easy in terms of -- if you're just trying to move money from here to here, you know, doing a real estate transaction in the middle kind of gums things up. It's not quick.

So it's not necessarily a means of money laundering. It may, if somebody's trying to do it over a long period of time and, you know, try to really kind of diffuse the money and hold the money and hide the money.

A quick turnaround of flipping houses is indicia, frankly speaking, of other types of fraud more so than, I think, of money laundering, because that's actually an indicator to regulators, to people, to investigators that, wait a minute, we should be looking in this direction. And these guys who are trying to hide the money don't want to raise red flags.

So, in and of itself, it's not necessarily, you know, a great way to launder the money.

MR. SCHIFF: Did you see that -- I think within the last year Deutsche Bank has been fined several hundred million dollars by the State of New York for engaging in a massive money-laundering scheme out of Russia. Are you familiar with that case?

[REDACTED] Only seeing it in the news somewhat.

MR. SCHIFF: During the time that you were [REDACTED] [REDACTED] did certain financial institutions have a reputation based on the number of cases they generated or evidence from your investigations as being more conducive to or more willing to engage in financial

transactions without doing much due diligence?

[REDACTED] You know, really, our focus at the time was overseas. There are -- you know, there were more then, but -- you know, havens, money-laundering havens, areas where these individuals know that the banking system can be utilized and there's not going to be much review at all. Or they may own the banks or have a relationship with the owners of the banks so they can move the money in and out. There were areas and there were certain areas that are known for this.

In terms of --

MR. SCHIFF: Is Cypress one of those?

[REDACTED] Cypress comes to mind. You know, however, we have had success in dealing with, in some instances, Cypriot authorities. We've had success with authorities in some other areas -- for example [REDACTED] [REDACTED] it wasn't so helpful, but, you know, where these areas are trying to evolve into, you know, an advanced regulatory system to establish confidence and trust in those systems.

But, yes, in terms of individual banks, you know, I can't go down the list of any domestically that, you know, would kind of be on a warning list.

MR. SCHIFF: Well, did Deutsche Bank come to your attention as a bank that was implicated in a number of money-laundering cases?

[REDACTED] Mine? No.

MR. SCHIFF: When you say "mine" --

[REDACTED] Me, personally?

MR. SCHIFF: Yeah.

[REDACTED] No.

MR. SCHIFF: All right. Let me yield to Mr. Swalwell.

MR. SWALWELL: Thank you.

And thank you, Special Agent, for spending time with us today.

Were you aware of other agents who were investigating Deutsche Bank, to follow up on Mr. Schiff's questioning?

I was not.

MR. SWALWELL: Going back to the Tutakhanov investigation, were the two individuals in Trump Tower, were they Russian nationals that you referred to?

Yes.

MR. SWALWELL: Okay. And were they living in a condo in Trump Tower?

They owned apartments in Trump Tower.

MR. SWALWELL: Okay. How many apartments, if you recall?

I don't know if they owned more than the apartments they lived in. They each lived in separate apartments.

MR. SWALWELL: In addition to the wire that you referenced, was there physical surveillance at the time at Trump Tower?

Not inside of Trump Tower. I know outside I believe there was.

MR. SWALWELL: Okay.

At any point, did you seek cooperation during this investigation from the Trump family or anyone there before it became public? Did they --

The family?

MR. SWALWELL: Yes.

No.

MR. SWALWELL: How about anyone at The Trump Organization?

[REDACTED] So, prior to the arrests, we reached out to the head of security for Trump because we were going to need to go into the building to physically arrest the individuals in their apartments. We did not want to make a big show. We were not looking to, you know, embarrass anybody. We wanted it to be very quiet. And so we reached out to the head of security, who had been a member of our Joint Terrorism Task Force in New York, to discuss and say, without specifics, "Look, on this date and time, we have to get into the building without any issues, and we're not looking to make a big show. We just want to get in and get out."

MR. SWALWELL: Was that Mr. Keith Schiller?

[REDACTED] Yes.

MR. SWALWELL: Okay.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] I was not aware.

MR. SWALWELL: Okay.

Going back to Mr. Steele, why was he closed out in November 2016?

[REDACTED] So, in October -- no, it was -- I think it was November 2nd or 3rd, there was an article in Mother Jones online magazine that was clearly problematic. Basically, the source, the individual, who wasn't named, I think, in that article, but who we all knew was Steele, had went to the press to talk about what he had been doing.

It was either that day or the very next morning I called him to confront him

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

and ask him if he was the source in that article. So I said, "Was that you in the article?" And he goes, "Yes, it was." At which point I said, "Why on Earth would you do that?" And I said, "Everything is going to change here on out."

I told him a couple of things. I told him, you know, you are no longer considering -- don't consider yourself being tasked by us. You are not working on our behalf. You are not to collect any information on behalf of the FBI. I said, you know, the relationship will end.

You know, this was because of his violation of the agreement that we had made back on October 3rd, which I don't believe we got into, but because he clearly didn't follow directions, because he clearly went against what he was instructed to do, and because he went public, the relationship was then ended that day.

But then, officially, on paper, a few weeks later, we actually shut the file down. And that was -- and I also told him he was not being paid. There was a payment that he was expecting at that point, and I said that that's not going to happen.

MR. SWALWELL: How much was that payment?

[REDACTED]

MR. SWALWELL: And had he received any payments prior to that for the dossier investigation?

[REDACTED] No.

MR. SWALWELL: Did he express to you why he had been the source to the press?

[REDACTED] So I asked him, I said -- I assumed because -- so, going from October 3rd to that point, at the meeting on October 3rd [REDACTED], the

[REDACTED]

counterintel guys offered him [REDACTED] for his efforts in coming down and talking about what he had come up with and then moving forward.

[REDACTED] Five minutes.

[REDACTED] I'm sorry?

MR. SWALWELL: He's telling me I have 5 minutes left.

[REDACTED] Oh, okay.

But during that month, from October 3rd to the end of the month, the actual process of trying to get the money was [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] It was taking a long time.

So I assumed he was angry because of the money. He hadn't been paid. He had made a comment maybe once or twice during the month like, you know, when is it going to happen, this and that. Nothing unusual. You know, very usual.

However, you know, frankly speaking, on the Bureau's part, when you offer to make a payment to an individual for information or something they've done, it's good to back it up with the payment. [REDACTED]

So, anyway, I assumed it was because of the money. So I asked him, I said, "Was it because of the money?" And he goes, "No. The money is secondary." And then I said, "Okay. Why?" And this was over the phone. He goes, "I'm very upset with the actions of your agency and with the actions of your agency on Friday."

The Friday before was when Director Comey came out and announced that he was reopening the email investigation. And so that was the first time I had heard anything of any type of leaning whatsoever in terms of his attitude or bias

[REDACTED]

towards what was going on.

MR. SWALWELL: Did he ever express concern that he didn't believe that enough was being done or that there wasn't a sense of urgency about what he was providing?

[REDACTED] So he was -- no, he wanted to make sure that, you know, somebody has to see this, somebody has to see this. And I told him, it's not for me to tell him exactly what's going on.

You know, in the meeting on October 3rd [REDACTED] the counterintel guys kind of described a little bit about what was going on and the scene and what was happening in their investigation. But, you know, other than, you know, truly wanting to make sure something was being done about it, you know -- and it's not for us, as investigators, to tell a source and update a source and brief a source as to what we're doing. That's not the way we work.

You know, he had never said, "You better do something with it, or I'm going to the press." He wasn't that type. Up until that moment, he had been a complete professional. And so, when I see that in the article, I was just -- that's when I was taken aback. And then when I confronted him, he said, "Yes, I did it." And then he makes this comment about being upset about the actions of the Director on the Friday before.

MR. SWALWELL: You referenced how things worked back in 1995, and then you talked about, you know, once a new system was put in place, it didn't seem like, you know, information flowed as fast.

Is it your belief, just based on what you did in this investigation and what you've seen in other investigations, that, ideally -- and putting aside, as you mentioned, it's a big organization, there's a lot of individuals, a lot of cases -- but,

[REDACTED]

ideally, that, upon receipt of the information, that you would've been able to put it in the most relevant person's hands as soon as possible?

█ Ideally, without a doubt, you know, because I, as the person who received those, I did not want to hold on to those. And I was certainly not in a position to assess, investigate, and do something with those documents, other than to get them to somebody who could.

So, yes, ideally, it would have been wonderful for me to come back the next day, put it in the system, and it gets to right where it has to go.

But, again, the individuals who were engaged in that investigation, ultimately, you know, they didn't advertise themselves. This was a counterespionage investigation, in one part, and you don't know who these people are, you know, even internally in the Bureau. They don't advertise themselves, so you have to find them.

MR. SWALWELL: And, ideally, as soon as individuals who were your colleagues in counterintelligence learn about potential espionage threats, that allows them to move faster on surveillance, wiretaps, the reviewing of tolls. Is that right?

█ I mean, in terms of this case and what they were doing, I don't know. When you receive additional information from -- as an investigator, you want to receive as much information from as many varied sources as you possibly can, because that's what moves the case.

In this case and those individuals, I had no idea what they were motivated by, how they were working, and how they were investigating.

MR. SWALWELL: You know, part of what we're responsible for in this investigation is, you know, looking at the government response and just making

[REDACTED]

sure that, you know, should this happen again -- because it is assessed that the Russians probably would like to do this again to our elections -- that we're better equipped to handle it.

What would you recommend that we could do to make sure that, as soon as intelligence like this is received, that we could assess it more swiftly and put coverage up on individuals faster, just based on what you've seen now in the last year?

[REDACTED] Right. I mean, I've never done a FISA, I've never done a national security investigation. So, you know, I have a general idea of how they operate. And I know there's a review system in place, and there has to be, obviously.

In terms of the intelligence, you know, this is such a unique situation where you have a generally credible and reliable source -- not generally -- a reliable and credible source who gives you this type of information. So how do you deal with that? Again, you know, the delay in getting that to those people was trying to figure out who those people were. That's part of the issue.

Again, you know, I could've very easily put it into that intelligence system and pipeline and [wipes hands] gone like that. And then, who knows who sees it? Who knows what anybody is doing with it, if anything at all? And, ultimately, if nobody does anything with it, that one day when this all comes to light, they're going to say, Hey, Agent [REDACTED] you know, all you did was stick it in the system, and it went nowhere.

And so now, you know, instead, I made a conscious effort to get it to somebody who had to see it. If it took a few weeks, it was because I was trying to be discrete and appropriate with it because it was such a -- you know, it was such

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

a unique, crazy situation.

MR. SWALWELL: Right.

Thank you. I do have more questions. I'll yield back.

And thank you, Agent [REDACTED], for your service.

[REDACTED] Thank you.

[REDACTED] Why don't we take 5?

[Recess.]

[REDACTED] All right. We're going to do 15-minute rounds, alternating.

BY [REDACTED]

Q I want to get back to the Steele stuff. There's just a couple of quick matters I'd like to -- miscellaneous matters I'd like to really clear up.

I don't want to ask you about the details of the Trump Tower gambling investigation. Can you just bookend that time period of that investigation for me by year?

A It was probably about, from beginning to end, maybe a year, year and a half. I think the indictments were in -- the arrest and indictments might have been in the spring of 2013.

Q Okay. So we're talking at least 2 or 3 years before Donald Trump announced his Presidency --

A Oh, yeah.

Q -- campaign.

A Yes.

Q And your investigation, I believe you said, in that gambling outfit in Trump Tower, did not have any information that would support a claim that Donald Trump or his family were involved in any illegal activities.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

A Correct. It did not.

Q Okay. And that investigation, you said it was around the spring, summer of 2013.

A The investigation was the year before --

Q Yeah.

A -- and then we did the indictments and the arrests.

Q Okay. And that closed the investigation.

A Yes.

Q All right.

I want to talk to you generally about being a handler of a source. So it is seems like it's been an up-and-down ride with Christopher Steele for a little bit. He was a very reliable and good source in [REDACTED] investigation and prosecution, but what would you say are the two main ways to, quote/unquote, "get fired" from being a source to the FBI? Justifications.

A I mean, there are numerous justifications.

Q Top ones.

A The top ones: Not following instructions, making the relationship between the Bureau and the source public, engaging in criminal activity is probably the top --

Q The top three.

A -- frankly speaking. Those are the general ones. Advising somebody else that you're a source; not following instructions; and then, obviously, engaging in criminal activity.

Q So an individual like Steele, who had no doubt assisted the FBI successfully, and the DOJ, in [REDACTED] prosecution, proved himself useful during

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

that time. Is it possible that, later on, even someone of his caliber could prove himself to be violative of the FBI's, you know, three most sacrosanct rules about sources?

A Well, in this case, he did. He went public and did not follow instructions.

Q So is it also possible or is it also the case here that Christopher Steele, a proven source in the past, provided you with the information in the dossier that you and he discussed was unverified at the time, but it was still through the process of him being a source to the FBI?

A Could you clarify that? I'm sorry.

Q Sure. Was he a source to the FBI when he, Christopher Steele, gave you the information back in July [REDACTED] about the contents of the dossier?

A Yes.

Q And, at that time, you and he, Christopher Steele, he had said to you that the information was still unverified?

A I told -- I asked -- yes. I asked him if it was unverified. He said he had no independent corroboration from any other sources.

Q Okay. So it's possible -- I guess what I'm getting at -- one, to be a good source and provide the FBI as a good source with unverified, uncorroborated information?

A Well, that's actually what happened in this case.

Q That's what happened with Christopher Steele. And that doesn't make him a bad source. It just means the information he's received he thinks merits your attention -- you, the FBI.

A Yes.

[REDACTED]

Q And that's what happened in this case.

A At that time, yes.

Q And at that time and through the summer of 2016, from your understanding, that information that Christopher Steele provided you remained unverified and uncorroborated.

A I had no independent knowledge, I hadn't spoken to anybody at headquarters about any verification of that information. The only information I had regarding that was in September in the email from the unit chief at headquarters.

Q Did he, Christopher Steele, in any subsequent communications to you during that same time period, the summer of 2016, inform you that, hey, I have information to corroborate or verify the information I have given you?

A No.

Q So the first instance that you were informed of any instance of corroboration or verification -- although be it you did not know the specifics -- was in September of 2016.

A Yes.

Q Okay.

And would it be fair to say that you were, for lack of a better term, Christopher Steele's criminal handler?

A Source handler.

Q Source handler. Do you know if Christopher Steele every had a separate handler in the FBI for the counterintelligence portion of this investigation?

A He did not.

Q Okay.

[REDACTED]

A And if he did, I did not know about it. And that would not -- you do not have -- if there were two separate handlers, they would know, each, that --

Q Right. That's what I'm driving it.

A Yeah.

Q And if you weren't aware that there was a separate handler in the FBI of Christopher Steele --

A Right, then there should not have been.

Q Okay.

Focusing on the first meeting you had with Christopher Steele through September of 2016, did it ever come to your attention that Christopher Steele was meeting with Glen Simpson and Bruce Ohr in the United States during that time period?

A So I knew that he met with Glen Simpson. And this was from July 5th, when he told me Glen Simpson contracted him to do this. Thereafter, I did not know and he did not say that he was meeting with Glen Simpson or speaking to him. I assumed he was, because he told me he was continuing his efforts on behalf of Glen Simpson.

In mid- to late August of '16, I received a call from Bruce Ohr, who said, hey, have you seen this stuff from Chris? And I said yes. He goes something to the effect of, we or me and my bosses want to make sure that the FBI is handling this and addressing it.

Q Can you just tell me the time period again? Sorry. Ballpark.

A Again, mid- to late -- maybe the second, third week of August.

Q So let's just go with August 2016, Bruce Ohr contacts you, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED], at the FBI.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

A Yes.

Q And does he call you? Email?

A No, called me.

Q And you were back in --

A No, I was [REDACTED].

Q You're still [REDACTED]

A Yeah. Yeah, yeah.

Q So he reaches out to you [REDACTED], and he says -- he, Bruce Ohr, the then-Associate Deputy Attorney General at the Department of Justice -- tells you, or asks you, have you, the FBI, seen this information that Steele had given?

A Right. So --

Q Was there an assumption that -- or did Bruce Ohr tell you that he, himself, Bruce Ohr, had already seen that information?

A So it was clear from the conversation that he had the information. I don't know if it was the exact information I received. I didn't ask him. I assumed, because I knew he had a relationship with Christopher Steele. He had introduced me to Christopher Steele years ago. And I know that on a policy level he would talk to Christopher Steele. I don't know how often. I don't know when. I just know that they did. And he would talk to Steele on a policy level to get higher-level Eurasian, Russian -- have policy discussions.

In terms of this information, so August he calls me and says, have you seen this stuff from Steele -- Chris or Steele, whatever he says. I said yes. And so now I assume he had either spoken to Steele or had seen him. I didn't know, and I didn't ask. And he goes, we just want to make sure -- we, or me and my bosses want to make sure the FBI is handling it and doing something about it.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

This was after I had been told that there was a unit at headquarters who was going to review this information. So my response to him was, listen, I am putting it in the hands of this unit at headquarters who's going to look at it. And he goes, okay, good, we just want to make sure.

Q And so just --

A That was it.

Q Sorry. Go ahead.

A No. That was the whole conversation.

Q So, just to clarify, when ADAG Ohr called you in August of 2016, had you already sent that information, the Steele information, to the unit at FBI HQ?

A Not yet, but it had been sent to the ASAC in New York --

Q Okay.

A -- who had sent it to the AD at headquarters.

Q And that had already been done by the time you talked to ADAG Ohr.

A Yes.

Q And on that conversation with Associate Deputy Attorney General Ohr, he related to you that he, the ADAG Ohr and his boss, presumably then Deputy Attorney General, wanted to make sure you, the FBI, were viewing this information.

A He either -- my understanding at the time -- and he either said we, and it was we, or me and my bosses. And I can't say exactly which it was.

Q Okay.

A But that's what he said. We want to make sure the FBI is handling this, addressing this, doing something about it.

[REDACTED]

Q And in reference to -- you knew that Bruce Ohr was then the ADAG at the Department of Justice?

A I knew he was at some high level at DOJ. I wasn't exactly sure of his title, but I knew he was --

Q He was pretty high-level?

A Yes.

Q Okay. Did you document that phone call with ADAG Ohr in any way?

A No, I did not.

Q Have you since documented that phone call with ADAG Ohr in any way?

A No, but I advised the -- once I had learned of the team, I advised them of that conversation.

Q So you advised the FBI team at headquarters handling this investigation about your call with ADAG Ohr?

A Yes.

Q So did you have any other communications with ADAG Ohr from that phone call in August of 2016 through September of 2016?

A September? No.

Q October 2016?

A Right after the article came out in Mother Jones --

Q Which article? Thanks.

A The Mother Jones article -- and after I had spoken to Steele, I called Bruce just to say, did you see this article? And so you know, going forward, because I know you talked to Steele, you have to know that this happened. So

just to let him know. Because I don't think -- he was unaware and he hadn't read the article at the time. And he goes, okay, thanks for letting me know.

Q So the Mother Jones article, I think we can agree, was October of 2016?

A Late October or early November.

Q Okay.

A Like, the 1st maybe or the 2nd.

Q And you had the conversation with Bruce, was it immediately after the article?

A It might have been -- it was probably the day after I spoke to Steele after that article.

Q So, if you could help me out sequentially, the Mother Jones article comes out, you speak to Christopher Steele, and then you speak to ADAG Ohr.

A Yes.

Q Okay. When you spoke to Christopher Steele, if we could just return to that phone call, right after the Mother Jones article was published --

A Yes.

Q -- in October of 2016, what did he say to you?

A So I asked him, I said, is it because of the money? You know, at first, I said, is this you? Did you do this? He goes, yes, I did.

Q And when say, "Is this you? Did you do this?", what were you referring to?

A The article, as being the source that's reported in the article.

Q Okay.

A And he said, yes, I did. I said, why would you do that? And he

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says, I'm very disappointed with the actions of your agency, particularly -- something to the effect, particularly with the actions of your agency on Friday.

Q What had happened on Friday?

A Director Comey announced that he was reopening the investigation into the email servers.

Q Of Hillary Clinton.

A Yes.

Q And so, after Christopher Steele informs you that he's upset with the FBI and Director Comey's reopening of the Hillary Clinton email investigation, Christopher Steele relayed to you that that's the reason he was upset.

A Yes. Right. And I asked him, again, I said, is it because of the money? He said, no, the money is secondary.

Q So the money was a factor but not a primary factor.

A He said, you still owe me the money, but that's secondary. I am upset because of what your agency did on Friday.

Q And after he said that to you, what happened next on that call?

A Then I told him, I said, everything is going to change now. I said, you're no longer working to get information on our behalf, you're no longer to go out, and we are no longer tasking you. In addition, you're not going to be paid, and the relationship is going to end.

Q But there had been an agreement or decision by the FBI to pay Steele; it's just that that money was not yet given to Steele for his work on the dossier.

A Correct.

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Q I think you had alluded to this earlier, [REDACTED] but correct me if I'm wrong. That phone call in October of 2016 between you and Christopher Steele was the first time he had demonstrated any sort of political bias?

A Yes.

Q And the political bias, as best you understand it, was because he relayed -- he, Christopher Steele -- relayed to you that Director Comey announced the decision to reopen the investigation into then-candidate Hillary Clinton.

A Yes.

Q And he, Christopher Steele, was upset with Director Comey and the agency for reopening that investigation into Hillary Clinton.

A Yes.

Q And in terms of political bias, how did you take Christopher Steele's political bias to be?

A Again, up until that point, the bias was anti-Russian, anti-Russian-efforts-to-compromise-our-process. But at that point, you know, clearly, he's upset because this was going to negatively affect Hillary Clinton's campaign at that point in time. And so, you know, he didn't come out and say "I support Hillary," you know, but he was upset because of that action and it would negatively affect her campaign.

Q And you, being his handler for such a long time and knowing him for such a long time, could make that assessment with credibility.

A Yes. Yeah. I was --

Q And --

A I'm sorry. Again, I was completely taken aback at that point

because it was so unprofessional, and up until that point, he had been professional.

Q But that was your assessment at that time in October of 2016, that Steele's conduct, to go to the media after the revelation of the reopening of the Hillary Clinton investigation, was an unprofessional act by Christopher Steele.

A Well, going to the media was against instructions, and he revealed his relationship with the FBI. And, yes, it was unprofessional.

Q So Christopher Steele did two of the three things that you're not supposed to do as a source to the FBI: one, went public; and, two, discussed an ongoing investigation in which he was a source.

A Yes.

Q That phone conversation with Christopher Steele, did you document that anywhere?

A Yes.

Q How did you do that?

A In a 1023.

Q And in the 1023, is there any other information captured in that document that you haven't told me about today about that phone call?

A No.

Q And 1023 is still --

A It's in the file.

Q Is there any 302 that you're aware of that contain that information, that you're aware of?

A Just the 1023.

Q Okay.

[REDACTED]

MR. ROONEY: What's the time?

[REDACTED] We have 2 minutes.

MR. ROONEY: You referenced before we went on break an October 3rd meeting that you hadn't talked about yet. Can you tell us about that meeting? And who was it with?

[REDACTED] So, in late September, the unit chief at headquarters contacted me to say, can we meet with Christopher Steele? We have investigators who want to talk to Christopher Steele.

So I facilitated a meeting [REDACTED] between Christopher Steele and [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] Christopher Steele.

We held a meeting [REDACTED], and my role was just to facilitate the meeting. He, Christopher Steele, came to the meeting, and the [REDACTED] from the counterintel division conducted the meeting. I was there, but they ran the meeting.

MR. ROONEY: What was it about?

[REDACTED]

Ultimately, the counterintel people tasked him to continue to get information. And they said, at that point, to do so, you would be only doing so on behalf of the Bureau, meaning any relationship with anybody else where he was providing information to any other private source was to end at that point and that the information he was collecting thereafter would be on behalf of the Bureau and

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

the Bureau only. And for his efforts of coming down from London to spend time to meet with them, they offered [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] I'll throw it over to the minority.

Thank you.

Over to you guys.

MR. SCHIFF: Special Agent, in [REDACTED] investigation, when Mr. Steele first brought you information, it sounds like he had different sources for you to talk to that might provide initial leads that something was amiss [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Correct.

MR. SCHIFF: And did Mr. Steele at that time have verification of his sources, or he was providing you information that he was receiving for you to evaluate and pursue?

[REDACTED] In [REDACTED] case, in particular, he said he had individuals who we should meet with who had information about activity [REDACTED] So he made the introduction to these individuals to whom we spoke, who provided information, one in particular who provided an interesting lead that ended up really jump-starting the investigation.

MR. SCHIFF: But as with the initiation of many investigations, the first sources of information are unverified. The purpose of the investigation is to verify the information or --

[REDACTED] Well, correct.

MR. SCHIFF: And so, when you're asked about the initial information Christopher Steele is providing to you, that's unverified because it's the beginning of the information, is it not?

[REDACTED] So, in this case, again, he had two individuals in particular

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

who he wanted to introduce us to. When we met with them, he made the introductions and actually got them before us, and then we spoke to those individuals, who provided some perspective and information. Again, one piece of information, particularly, from one of those individuals developed into the big investigation.

MR. SCHIFF: And had you received this information, this initial information from Christopher Steele and said, well, this is unverified, we're not interested, there never would have been [REDACTED] investigation, potentially?

[REDACTED] Correct.

MR. SCHIFF: Now, Christopher Steele had multiple sources for the Russian information he was providing, correct?

[REDACTED] Throughout the course of the relationship or the -- which are we -- any information specifically?

MR. SCHIFF: Well, let's start out when he initially approached you with information, did it come from a single source, or did he say he had [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] No, he stated he had a source network of [REDACTED]

MR. SCHIFF: And to the degree that -- so do you know whether on certain allegations there was more than one source?

[REDACTED] No, I don't know. I don't know.

MR. SCHIFF: So it's possible that there was some verification, from his perspective, and that he had more than one source on more than one fact.

[REDACTED] As to the particular facts, I'm not sure. It would depend on the particular facts. But he would rely on his network, and he would at times also

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

talk about multiple sources in regards to a fact.

MR. SCHIFF: He wasn't suggesting, was he, that you take this information and accept it without any investigation?

[REDACTED] No.

MR. SCHIFF: He fully expected that you would have to vet the information and determine what you could rely on and what you couldn't.

[REDACTED] Yes. And I told him as much.

[REDACTED]

[3:46 p.m.]

MR. SCHIFF: And as [REDACTED] he was deeply concerned, it sounds like, what it would mean if it were proven to be accurate, that the Russians had compromising information over a potential President of the United States?

[REDACTED] He was definitely concerned about that.

MR. SCHIFF: But why was he concerned about that? Did that spring from [REDACTED] and the unique Five Eyes relationship between the United States and Britain?

[REDACTED] [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] What I can say is, from the moment I met him, throughout, his main concern was the Russian threat worldwide. And, you know, in speaking with him, clearly he was a professional and a subject matter expert on it, and he was clearly, at all stages, regardless of the subject matter, concerned about that threat.

MR. SCHIFF: And that threat would be magnified if the Russians had leverage over a future President of the United States, would it not?

[REDACTED] He certainly said that, yes.

MR. SCHIFF: And so when he expressed to you a concern about what the Bureau had done in October that made clear a bias against Mr. Trump or for Secretary Clinton, that would be consistent with his being concerned that the Russians may have leverage over Donald Trump, should he become President?

[REDACTED] Again, yes, his concern was the threat of Russia to compromise our process. He did not come out and say, I support this candidate or that candidate, but he was certainly concerned with their ability, potential ability, to compromise our process.

[REDACTED]

MR. SCHIFF: Well, more than that, he was concerned, was he not, that the Russians may be able to compromise Donald Trump?

[REDACTED] Yes.

MR. SCHIFF: In the -- I think you said in the spring of 2013 that Mr. Tutakhanov was a fugitive?

[REDACTED] Yes.

MR. SCHIFF: And the indictments in that case out of Trump Tower were returned in the spring of 2013?

[REDACTED] Either the winter or the spring of 2013, yes.

MR. SCHIFF: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] that would've been only months after he was indicted involving a scheme in the Trump Tower.

[REDACTED] [REDACTED]

MR. SCHIFF: But the timing would be such that if he did attend the Miss

[REDACTED] that would've been only months after the indictments in New York.

[REDACTED] So, yes, he's a fugitive from 2013 out of Southern District and a fugitive from, I believe, 2004 out of Southern District. Two separate indictments.

MR. SCHIFF: Was he named in the indictment involving the scheme in Trump Tower?

[REDACTED] Yes.

MR. SCHIFF: Do you know who Simeon Mogolevich is?

[REDACTED] Yes.

MR. SCHIFF: And who is he?

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] He's a Russian oligarch.

MR. SCHIFF: Did his organization engage in organized crime?

[REDACTED] He controlled an organization that definitely engaged in varied criminal activity.

MR. SCHIFF: Did some of that criminal activity also involve money laundering?

[REDACTED] Yes.

MR. SCHIFF: And did he have a presence in New York?

[REDACTED] As far as I know, no.

MR. SCHIFF: Do you know who Vadim Trincher is?

[REDACTED] Yes.

MR. SCHIFF: And who is he?

[REDACTED] He's one of the individuals who worked for Tutakhanov and resided in Trump Tower.

MR. SCHIFF: And he was one of the ones indicted in the --

[REDACTED] Yes.

MR. SCHIFF: -- gambling ring in the spring of 2013?

[REDACTED] Yes.

MR. SCHIFF: Do you know an individual Anatoly Golubchik?

[REDACTED] Yes.

MR. SCHIFF: And who is that?

[REDACTED] He's the second individual who I was referring to who worked with Trincher underneath Tutakhanov who resided in Trump Tower.

MR. SCHIFF: And how about David Bogatin?

[REDACTED] That name is not familiar.

[REDACTED]

MR. SCHIFF: Hillel Nahmad?

[REDACTED]: Yes.

MR. SCHIFF: And who is that?

[REDACTED]: One of the individuals who was indicted in that case.

MR. SCHIFF: Did he also reside in Trump Tower?

[REDACTED]: I'm not sure.

MR. SCHIFF: There were media reports that Mr. Trump himself had sold some of these units to David Bogatin and Mogolevich officials. Do you know whether that reporting is accurate?

[REDACTED]: I have no idea.

MR. SCHIFF: And do you know how much they were paying, the two individuals with units in Trump Tower, how much they were paying for that property?

[REDACTED]: I do not, no.

MR. SCHIFF: Was Aras Agalarov involved in any of the investigations you were conducting in New York?

[REDACTED]: Agalov?

MR. SCHIFF: Agalarov.

[REDACTED]: Agalarov. I don't think I'm familiar with that name.

MR. SCHIFF: There are reports that 65 units in Trump Tower were owned by Russians or East Europeans. Did that emerge as any aspect of your investigation [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]: No.

MR. SCHIFF: Are you familiar with Felix Sater?

[REDACTED]: Yes.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Sater. That didn't come to your attention?

[REDACTED] Bayrock? No.

MR. SCHIFF: Okay. And how about Tarek Arif?

[REDACTED]: Could you just pronounce that name again?

MR. SCHIFF: Well, I'm not sure I'm pronouncing it correctly, but Tarek

Arif.

[REDACTED] A-r-i-f?

MR. SCHIFF: Yes.

[REDACTED] I'm not sure I know that individual.

MR. SCHIFF: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Can I speak to --

MR. SCHIFF: Sure.

[Discussion off the record.]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

MR. SCHIFF: And do you know what period of time it existed?

[REDACTED] I don't.

MR. SCHIFF: It seems there's some discomfort in talking about this topic.

He is being interviewed by this committee, so we're going to be or already have asked him these questions, if that makes it any easier for you to answer.

[REDACTED] It's not -- no, it's not because of that. You know, it's just --

[REDACTED] I'm just trying to advise him to answer specifically as to what

he's familiar with in his own personal capacity, rather than just speaking for the

[REDACTED]

before it went on beyond that and so forth.

Did anyone ever explain to you why it took so long -- not implying that that's too long, but just took the time it did?

One minute.

Nobody really explained, other than that everybody was trying to search for the right group or right people. And, again, you know, my only explanation -- I can speak for myself. I didn't know who those people are or would have been, so I was trying to reach out to people who could lead me in that direction.

MR. QUIGLEY: Is that your educated guess as to why it took the time it took --

Yes.

MR. QUIGLEY: -- or that's what people told you?

That's my educated guess. That's just my understanding as to --

MR. QUIGLEY: You had no sense that anybody was slow-footing this or --

No.

MR. QUIGLEY: -- holding it for any particular reason other than just deciding what's the best way to handle this?

Exactly.

MR. QUIGLEY: Given our time, we yield back.

BY

Q I just have a couple miscellaneous clean-up questions. There was a few names mentioned. I'm not going to pronounce them right. Maybe help me out. Tutakhanov, Simeon, Vadim, Anatoly. Do you recall those names?

[REDACTED]

A Yes.

Q Can you repeat them in --

A Tutakhanov. Vadim Trincer. Anatoly Golubchik.

Q Yeah. Simeon --

A Simeon Mogolevich.

Q And those were individuals involved in your prior investigation of a gambling outfit in Trump Tower. Is that correct?

A Mogolevich? No.

Q Okay. What was Mogolevich involved in?

A He was just a well-known Russian oligarch criminal, who had -- at one point, he was a fugitive also.

Q Do you have any information about any of those four individuals during the course of your investigation that would show Donald Trump undertaking any illegal activities with those individuals or other Russians?

A No.

Q Do you have any information during the course of your investigations that any of the other Russian individuals named during the course of these proceedings had -- would show that Donald Trump had any illegal activities with them or the Russian Government?

A No.

Q Flipping back to our matter here, Steele, when you either met or spoke with Christopher Steele, were you aware of any times that he brought someone to the meeting or had someone with him?

A When I met with him?

Q Yes.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

A One time I met with him in his office, and he had an analyst or a cyber -- his cyber guy there to talk about a particular matter that they were working on. I also met his partner, Christopher Burrows, a couple of times. And then the individuals that he introduced us to he brought with him to these meetings.

Q When you say "these meetings" --

A So, referring [REDACTED]

Q Oh. I'm not talking [REDACTED] I'm talking about Steele as it relates to the dossier.

A Oh. No.

Q Anytime you met or talked to Christopher Steele, did he have anyone else around?

A No. Face-to-face was the one meeting in July. The second time was [REDACTED] in October. If he had somebody on the other end of the phone -- it didn't seem like he was on a speakerphone -- I wouldn't have known.

Q But not that you're aware of.

A Not that I'm aware of.

Q Was the last communication, contact you had with Christopher Steele?

A That day in October when I called him to ask if he was the source of the Mother Jones article and I told him everything was going to change after that, that was the last time I spoke to him.

Q Has he, Christopher Steele, tried to reach out to you by phone, text, email, whatever?

A Him, no. His partner reached out once, you know, maybe a few months later, just to say, hey, you know, I hope everything's all right. And that

[REDACTED]

was it.

Q Okay.

How many 302s and 1023s would you say, ballpark, you produced in relation to the Steele dossier matter?

A So, from July -- it would've been from July through October. I mean, a ballpark figure? It would be the one substantive 1023 from my meeting with him on July 5th. Every report he gave me thereafter, what I did was prepare a 1023, which stated, "On such-and-such a date, he provided the attached report." That was it.

So however many reports there were, I don't know, I'm just guessing right now, five or so, six maybe, ultimately, that he ended up providing. And then the last 1023 where I document my discussion with him over the phone after the Mother Jones article.

Q And all those documents would be in the Steele source file?

A Yep.

Q Are you aware of any other 302s or 1023s prepared by your colleagues at the FBI that involved Steele and the dossier?

A Personally, no. I know at one point there was a discussion that some investigative team was going to go reach out and speak with him. This was months later. I wasn't involved in that.

Q So you don't know the result of that.

A So I don't know the results of that. I don't know if they ever did.

I did not have access to that file after maybe the end of 2016, beginning of 2017, after it was shut down and I was -- I had no access to it.

Q Returning quickly to the September 2016 time period, did Steele ever

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relay to you that ADAG Ohr had been informed by Steele that Steele had met with multiple news organizations in September of 2016?

A No.

Q Did that come as a surprise to you?

A Yes.

Q Is this the first time you're hearing this?

A Second time. I think last night in my preparation with OGC something was mentioned about that. I had never heard that.

Q So fair enough. I don't want to get into your preparation with OGC.

A Yeah, no, no, no. I'm just saying --

Q For our purposes, today is the first time you're hearing of that information?

A Yes.

Q When was the last time ADAG Ohr reached out to you on these matters involving Steele and this investigation?

A That would've been the day of the election, actually, here in Washington. I happened to be in Washington for a meeting.

Q What did he say to you?

A So the first thing he said was -- he apologized for introducing me to Steele because --

Q He -- sorry?

A He apologized for introducing me to Steele, kind of like half-joking, because of all the stuff that was happening at that point. And, you know, I wasn't looking to delve into any substantive conversation with him about it, and I don't think he was. But at a certain point in that conversation -- the whole conversation

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was short, it didn't last long -- but he mentioned something about his wife working for GPS.

Q He, who? Sorry.

A Bruch Ohr.

Q Bruce Ohr mentioned in a phone call to you --

A No, it was in person.

Q Oh, in person. Sorry.

A In Washington.

Q So, in Washington, in D.C., you met Bruce Ohr. Do you know where?

A It was right across the street from J. Edgar and DOJ.

Q So not, like, an office building.

A No, no, no. It was in a restaurant right on -- right at the corner.

Q And in that exchange with Bruce Ohr, in that meeting on election day, he informed you that his wife, Nellie, had worked for who?

A GPS.

Q Fusion GPS?

A He said GPS.

Q Okay. What did you take that to mean?

A I was -- at that point, I didn't know what he meant by it. I wasn't sure. And I wasn't going to start delving into it. I just kind of shook my head. And that was really it.

Q How long did that meeting last?

A That was 15 minutes, 20 minutes.

Q Did he get into the details of his wife -- Ohr's wife's work for GPS?

[REDACTED]

A No.

Q Did he get into any other details about Steele, Simpson, or anything like that?

A No. He didn't, and I didn't ask.

Q Did you document that meeting in any way?

A No.

Q Have you heard from Bruce Ohr since then?

A Since then, I spoke to him maybe a month and a half ago just to advise him that I was now -- [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] and knowing he was the head of OSCEDEF, so just from that perspective, and did not talk about Steele or this investigation, GPS, or anything like that.

Q So, from that time through this period today, you have not spoken to Bruce Ohr --

A No.

Q -- about this matter, Steele, the investigation, anything like that?

A No.

Q Did you, Special Agent [REDACTED] create any 302s or investigative reports involving Bruce Ohr?

A No.

Q Do you know if anybody at the FBI did?

[Discussion off the record.]

[REDACTED] Independently, no, I have no knowledge.

BY [REDACTED]

Q Would it surprise you to learn that Bruce Ohr had been meeting the

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

entire time that you had been meeting with Christopher Steele with agents of the Federal Bureau of Investigation regarding this matter?

A I know that the agents who came [REDACTED] had spoken to Bruce Ohr at a certain point. I don't know the length of their discussions, the number of meetings, or anything like that.

Q You don't have any of the details on it?

A None.

Q Okay. That's all I want to know, what you know.

And so you haven't reviewed any of the investigative reports from the FBI that involved Bruce Ohr.

A No.

Q Fair enough.

[REDACTED] Over to my colleague, [REDACTED] for 6 minutes, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Six minutes.

I think I'm the only guy in the room that's not a lawyer here. I'm [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

MR. QUIGLEY: That's 5.

[REDACTED] Yeah.

And I'm proud of that.

BY [REDACTED]

Q I just wanted to drill down on some of the intel stuff here. You mentioned that you spent [REDACTED] doing criminal work with FBI. Did you ever get any of the HUMINT training from FBI or from another agency?

A No, I never took any of the -- I never was sent or took any of the -- you know, I know they have the cross-programmatic training. I never did

[REDACTED]

any of that. My experience is really from a case, street-level experience of dealing with sources and --

Q Right, right, which is -- intel is just kind of a different flavor --

A Yes.

Q -- but it's the same skill set, in many regards.

A Exactly.

Q Did you ever have a chance to work with the [REDACTED]

A No.

Q I'm curious about why you would trust Mr. Steele. And you actually talked quite a bit about that in the beginning. You talked about this work with [REDACTED] that he gave you --

A Right.

Q -- some introductions that allowed you to get a criminal case. So there was some success there in the information he had provided.

I am curious, though, about -- you also mentioned that he was a

[REDACTED] Does him having worked for the [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] does that make you trust him more or trust him less?

A [REDACTED]

Q Okay.

A He was told to me to be an [REDACTED]

You know, that immediately brings the credibility level up a little bit than your average introduction to somebody else.

And then in the course of discussion and meetings, you recognize, you

know, the professionalism, you recognize the intelligence that he's providing to you. When others say, yes, that's good stuff, that's valid, that's interesting, it just lends to the credibility of the individual.

Q Uh-huh. Okay.

We can move a little more to Steele's motivation. You said he'd done the past work with the FBI, so he's got a relationship with the Bureau. You mentioned that he was concerned about the Russian threat to the West.

A Yes.

Q And then there's another motivation of money that appeared to be secondary.

A Correct.

Q When the Mother Jones incident happened and he tells you that he's angry with the FBI Director because he's reopening a Clinton email scandal instead of doing something else, I mean, he basically -- he betrayed your trust. He ended a relationship and his chance to work with the FBI against the Russians. Do you see this as -- does this in any way change your view of his motivation?

A It changes my view of how I would interact with him going forward, which was I wouldn't interact with him going forward because of that. Because, yes, he betrayed a trust, personally less so, but, really, you know, because of the relationship with the Bureau. He didn't follow specific directions, went against that, and then made his work public.

And, at that point, to me, again, as a source handler, you cannot -- then, going forward, you cannot trust the relationship going forward. At least, you know, I couldn't. So, yeah, that activity -- which, again, up until that point, to me, he had been professional -- was unprofessional and changed everything.

Q What do you think about his taking this source network that allegedly is providing important information on Russian covert influence operations and giving it to the media?

A As a source handler -- and that also was a shock to me. I couldn't understand why you would do that and put a source network at risk like that.

Q The FBI -- the FSB -- sorry. I'm not meaning to equate them -- so they would be launching the polygraphs and rounding folks up, if the information was true and it was sensitive --

A They would -- yeah. The risk, you know -- I mean, there's two risks. One is the personal risk from a life perspective for these individuals who are over there. And then the second is to his business. You know, me, as somebody who wants to develop people and their trust so they can speak to me, I don't want them thinking I'm going to tell the world who they are at the end of the day. That's bad for business as an investigator. It's certainly bad for business, I would think, as someone who's running a business of corporate intelligence. It just made no sense to me.

Q So let me ask the same question I asked you just a little bit ago. Do you think now maybe his motivation was something other than fighting the Russian threat and making money?

A I mean, look, he was upset. I can't say exactly what his motivation was. I haven't confronted him with that. So I really couldn't tell you exactly what it was.

Q I read an interview in the Guardian, I think it was, in which he said that -- or allegedly said that the FBI was doing the wrong investigation. They should've been investigating Trump, and instead they were investigating the

[REDACTED]

Clinton emails. What's your reaction to that?

A That's his opinion. I certainly did not tell him what we were doing. I certainly didn't even know what was going on in the investigation. And as a source of information and as a professional, he should understand it's not for him to be in a position to say what we should or should not be doing. That's not the way it works.

[REDACTED] One minute, [REDACTED]

BY [REDACTED]

Q Last question. Now that you know what you know now, not what you knew on 5 July, but going all the way back there and seeing what this guy was doing and how he did with the Mother Jones, do you think that maybe this [REDACTED] [REDACTED] was trying to manipulate you or the FBI?

A You know, there's a lot of theories out there and my thoughts, it's -- look I have to be realistic. Is it a possibility? Certainly. Did I think at the time? No. Am I naive? You know, generally, I spent [REDACTED] I haven't been naive on many things. It is a possibility. Certainly, I can't -- I don't think that was what was going on.

Q From your experience, you know, I mean, the criminal work, you do intel there, you are running informants, you've had informants try to manipulate you to go after a rival gang or something else?

A Yes.

Q I mean, thinking back, do you think you see any of that with --

A Thinking back, look, you know, between the relationship between -- again, what you said, knowing now, you know, as opposed to what I knew then, it's a whole different ball game, a whole different environment, you

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

know, knowing now what I would have done then? Who knows. It would have been -- but it certainly would have been a lot different. So --

[REDACTED] Mr. Schiff.

MR. SCHIFF: Agent, I want to go back to the folks that I asked you about earlier, Trincher and Golubchik. I think you mentioned you were also familiar with Hillel Nahmad, who was Trincher's son.

[REDACTED] I don't believe he was Trincher's son. He was another individual who was indicted in that investigation.

MR. SCHIFF: You mentioned that Trincher and Golubchik both owned units in Trump Tower.

[REDACTED] Yes. And let me just repeat, actually Hillel Nahmad was not -- was definitely not Trincher's son.

MR. SCHIFF: Okay. The press reported -- but Nahmad was involved in one of the rings?

[REDACTED] He was a tangential part of it, yes.

MR. SCHIFF: And Trincher's son was as well?

[REDACTED] Yes.

MR. SCHIFF: There is public reporting that -- and I don't know whether it's Trincher's son or Nahmad -- but beyond owning a unit, owned an entire floor of Trump Tower. Is that correct?

[REDACTED] I don't recall. I don't know.

MR. SCHIFF: The indictment that Preet Bahrara (ph) filed set out a sophisticated money laundering scheme to move tens of millions of dollars from the former Soviet Union through shell companies in Cyprus and into other investments and shell companies in the United States. Does that sound familiar

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

in terms of what you understood about the case?

[REDACTED] Yes.

MR. SCHIFF: If folks involved in that ring had purchased an entire floor of Trump Tower, is it likely that they used proceeds of that money laundering ring to purchase an investment of that size?

[REDACTED] I couldn't say. The investigation would have identified and did identify numerous assets that were the end result of these proceeds being invested. Whether those apartments were purchased with those proceeds, I don't think we identified. I just couldn't say right now.

MR. SCHIFF: And did these individuals have any legitimate business or were they -- was their entire business this illicit criminal ring?

[REDACTED] In terms of Trincer and Golubchik, it was the ring, the illegal gambling. Hillel Nahmad owned, I believe, art galleries. His father, who I think resides in Switzerland, is a very well known art dealer, I think in Switzerland. That was the family business.

MR. SCHIFF: And would they have used the family business also to launder their money?

[REDACTED] All I can speak to is, is in this case where Hillel Nahmad was caught up in one instance in -- it was a scam regarding one -- a painting in exchange for cash by somebody in terms of a way to hide a certain amount of money.

MR. SCHIFF: Do you know whether there were asset forfeiture proceedings in connection with this case?

[REDACTED] Certainly, yes.

MR. SCHIFF: And do you know whether there was any effort to forfeit

[REDACTED]

assets in Trump Tower?

[REDACTED] I believe the -- so, yes, the apartments, I believe, by -- that were owned by Trincer and Golubchik, they did not forfeit the apartments. I believe -- I think they exchanged or agreed upon a certain amount of forfeiture and provided that amount.

I don't believe they sold their apartments to fund that amount. It was millions for each. In terms of the actual apartments, I don't think they sold the apartments off to satisfy the forfeiture.

MR. SCHIFF: And how would they arrive at the forfeiture amount?

[REDACTED] In this case, basically the amount of illegal gambling and proceeds that were produced that we were able to trace via the wiretaps and the bank records was probably, I think, anywhere from 75 to 100 million.

And then their role, the actual nature of their role is a calculus that's made by the district as to how much they should be responsible for. And then they say, okay, you're responsible for whatever I was just speaking, 25 million of the forfeiture for the total amount.

MR. SCHIFF: So then they would be required to come up with that as a part of their sentence rather than necessarily forfeiting assets that were directly attributable to the money laundering or gambling ring?

[REDACTED] Yes.

MR. SCHIFF: So even if the units were purchased through the Russian money laundering operation, they wouldn't necessarily be forfeit if they put up cash instead.

[REDACTED] That would be -- so, for example -- and, again, I'm not speaking specifically because I'm not sure as to the situation for these

gentleman -- but if those apartments were direct proceeds of or the end result of proceeds being invested in those apartments from the illegal activity and we could identify that, we would certainly seize the apartments and put liens on the apartments.

Thereafter, what happens oftentimes is there's an agreement made between the defense attorneys and the prosecutors and the FBI. Instead of taking the apartments, we'll give you the value in cash or whatever other type of asset they may have. And that agreement may be made.

If the activity, for example, you know, in this case the activity did happen in those apartments, sometimes they will just take the apartments because the criminal activity happened in the apartments.

In this case, again, I'm pretty sure that the apartments were not sold or forfeited, but they did -- they did pay a significant amount of forfeiture, each of them.

MR. SCHIFF: In those cases the criminal activity in fact did occur in those units?

So in these cases, yeah, they were doing -- they were online running the organization from inside their apartment.

MR. SCHIFF: That case was prosecuted by Preet Bahrara (ph)?

Well, in the Southern District he was the U.S. attorney at the time.

MR. SCHIFF: And he was subsequently fired by the President.

Whatever the press says. I don't know exactly what transpired.

MR. SCHIFF: Mr. Heck?

[REDACTED]

I'll yield back.

BY [REDACTED]

Q Just a couple of quick miscellaneous wrap-up questions. I think my colleagues has a couple of minutes. We'll be done soon.

I think I already asked you this, and if I did, I apologize. All of Steele's meetings in America after you met him [REDACTED] in July, were you aware of any of those meetings?

A No.

Q Not until after the fact?

A I really don't know anything about him.

Q Oh, you don't know? Even to this day you still are unaware of them?

A Right.

Q Did you have any involvement with the counterintelligence component of the case once that took off?

A Other than to just facilitate the actual -- any reports that he provided --

Q Uh-huh.

A -- to them? That was it.

Q That was it.

A I had nothing to do with the investigation.

Q You never worked on the FISA or any of that stuff?

A No.

Can I just go back to your prior question about Steele being in the States?

So I didn't know specifically. I did know -- I knew he had a relationship with

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Bruce Ohr. But I also -- he informed me prior to October 3rd that he had provided the dossier, the reports, to Jonathan Wiener (ph), who was, I believe, under secretary at Department of State. And I knew he had a relationship with Jonathan Wiener (ph) going back a number of years.

So he said he had provided it to them. I don't know if he did it in person, email. I don't know how that happened, so I don't know if he was here when he did that. But I know that happened.

Q Yeah. And just to get a time stamp on that. When Steele gave the reports that would become the dossier to Jonathan Wiener (ph) at the State Department, that was what month, year?

A That was the end of September. He told me that.

Q Of 2016?

A '16.

Q And you knew or Steele knew that Jonathan Wiener (ph) was a State Department employee?

A He had a relationship with him going back a number of years.

Q But did Steele inform you he gave it to Jonathan Wiener (ph) as a State Department employee or just --

A While Jonathan Wiener (ph) was still at the State Department, and he advised me that he gave it to Jonathan Wiener (ph). This happened, he called me, it was the Friday before the meeting was scheduled with the guys coming from counterintel [REDACTED]

Q Do you know what happened with that information once it went over to State Department?

A No. I immediately told -- that morning, when they arrived, the guys

[REDACTED]

from counterintel, I said, oh, by the way, you need to understand he also gave this stuff to this guy at State Department. And their response to me was like, good, we're glad he told you, because we knew that.

Q We knew that? Who knew that?

A The counterintel guys.

Q They had known that Steele had already provided a copy of the dossier to Wiener (ph) at State?

A Yes.

Q And this was in September of 2016?

A Late September, early October.

Q Thank you.

Did you know anything during your relationship with Steele on this matter? Did you have any idea or any information about the details of who had hired Fusion GPS and that that money had come from a DNC – the DNC via a law firm?

A No.

Q Last question that I have for you. Did you ever receive any information from Christopher Steele about George Papadopoulos?

A No. And I'm just trying to remember, because there was some information about Greek -- something completely unrelated. I don't think that was the same individual.

Q And did you ever receive any information about George Papadopoulos from Bruce Ohr or anyone else at DOJ?

A No.

Q How about anyone else at the FBI?

A If it's the individual I'm thinking of, very generally about some

individual in London who had something to do with this, but I don't know the specifics. And this would have been from the counterintel guys, like, at that time.

Q About whether would they have told you that?

A End of September.

Q But nothing beyond that?

A No.

Q I mean, there's no details that you can recall that stick out about that individual?

A No.

Q Fair enough.

Thank you, sir.

BY [REDACTED]

Q Thank you very much. We really appreciate your time and your perspective on these matters?

Just want to maybe hopefully not repeat, but kind of tie a few things together to make sure I understand and then move into one other topic areas.

If I recall your testimony correctly, at the October meeting there was an effort to -- or -- sorry. At your July meeting you told, informed Mr. Steele that whatever he was doing was not on behalf of FBI. Is that correct?

A Correct.

Q At your October meeting you or others at FBI attempted to encourage Steele to collect information on this topic on behalf of FBI. Is that correct?

A Others at the FBI then tasked him to engage him in collecting information regarding this topic going forward.

Q And you were a witness to that tasking?

A Yes.

Q And that tasking also involved the beginning of payment to Mr.

Steele for this information?

A The offer [REDACTED] for his efforts in coming down to meet with them [REDACTED] and potentially going forward.

Q And was part of that discussion also him providing information exclusively to FBI going forward?

A Yes.

Q And what was the reason, to the best of your knowledge or understanding, that those at FBI who made that request would have wanted Steele to provide the information exclusively?

A I don't know. I wasn't involved in that -- in those discussions. But what was said then and there is if -- and going forward we are tasking you with this. However, one of the conditions is that you provide information only to us and nobody else.

Q And is, based on your knowledge and experience, is a possible reason for that condition that given the sensitivity of the information there could be some negative consequences from its dissemination outside FBI?

A Yes.

Q And what could those negative consequences have been?

A Well, discovery of the relationship, confusing of who's tasking who for what, who's paying who for what, all that potential.

Q And so at the time of this early October meeting, I believe it's your testimony that -- just a moment ago -- that you knew that Steele had previously

[REDACTED]

provided this information to John Weiner (ph) at the State Department, is that correct, or Wiener (ph)?

A Yes.

Q And you knew that he had provided it to Glenn Simpson for passage to a D.C. law firm?

A Yes.

Q But at the time of this October meeting you didn't know that the beneficiary of that information was -- beneficiary of that information was the Democrat National Committee and the Hillary for America campaign. Is that correct?

A No.

Q And you didn't know that --

[REDACTED] It is that correct or did you --

[REDACTED] It is correct that I did not know.

[REDACTED] Thank you.

BY [REDACTED]

Q And you did or did not know that Steele had been in Washington, D.C., in September?

A I didn't know.

Q And did you know that Steele had met with Bruce Ohr and discussed this information in September?

A No. I assumed there was some discussion between he and Bruce Ohr in August, only because by virtue of the phone call with Bruce Ohr, but I had no idea about any of the travel.

Q And you didn't know that he had briefed The New York Times in

[REDACTED]

September?

A Definitely not.

Q And you didn't know that he had briefed The Washington Post in

September?

A Nope.

Q And didn't know that he had briefed Yahoo News in September?

A No, I did not. The guys from counterintel made some reference to a Yahoo news article. That's the only thing I know about Yahoo news.

Q And you didn't know he briefed The New Yorker in September?

A No.

Q And you didn't know he had briefed CNN in September?

A No.

Q So to sort of echo [REDACTED] question earlier, knowing all of that and how widespread that information had been disseminated even before that October meeting, are there any different either steps you'd have taken or different ways you would have evaluated Steele's motivations or information?

A Well, without a doubt if I had known beforehand that he with a going to go to all -- every major media outlet, I certainly would have done things much differently.

Q With respect to the payment, can you just tell us about -- a little bit more about your understanding of who authorized it, who recommended it, who communicated it, sort of how that process worked? The payment for the -- for that -- or the offer of payment for dossier-related work.

A So the offer was made there at the meeting by the special agent who was kind of running the meeting from counterintel. He made the offer and said,

look, thank you for coming here. In exchange for your efforts in getting down here and in good faith in going forward, we'd like to offer [REDACTED]

Now, he cannot authorize that and make that statement on his own without somebody above him making -- giving him the okay. I don't know who it was, who did that. You know, directly in his chain it would have been probably higher than unit chief or section chief or above. But I don't know who it would have been.

Q And did you -- did you concur in or have an opinion about whether he should be paid this amount for that information?

A [REDACTED]

Q [REDACTED]

A [REDACTED]

Q [REDACTED]

A [REDACTED]
It really was, in the words of the CI guys, as a good faith for him coming down to meet with us and talk about this and going forward. It was not conditioned on anything else. There was no conditions.

Q So there was no specific condition that he had to meet in exchange for [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

A Exactly.

Q And other than [REDACTED] are you aware of any other payment that was made, offered, proposed, put in the pipeline for the dossier-related work?

A For the dossier-related work? No. However, at the end of the summer he was paid, I [REDACTED] for something he had done about a year and a half ago that he was long overdue for payment.

Then I put in a request for payment going forward based on information he had provided of a criminal nature. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] But as soon as the offer [REDACTED] was made, that request was removed. We canceled that request.

In that request, I believe, was also, you know, when you make a request for money for a source you have to justify why. Part of the reason why was for provision of this potential information, not that it was conditioned upon it, but it was a compendium of the things that he had provided, part of a compendium of the things he had provided over the last couple of months. But that request was then canceled once counterintel made their offer [REDACTED]

Q So just so I'm clear, [REDACTED] in the pipeline that was canceled, [REDACTED] that was offered, but you're not aware that he -- you're not aware of any other additional offers for dossier-related payments?

A Other than what I just described, other than [REDACTED] No.

Q And did he get [REDACTED]

A No.

BY [REDACTED]

Q Sorry, one last question. Are you aware that there was a source validation report prepared after Steele's termination.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

A I'm aware that it was done and a report was done. I wasn't advised until after it had been completed.

Q So you had no involvement in that?

A No.

Q Fair enough.

[REDACTED] Do you know when, do your recall when the source validation report was done?

[REDACTED] Early 2017, I think, February or so.

[REDACTED] Mr. Heck?

MR. HECK: No thanks.

[REDACTED] Thanks for your time, sir. Appreciate you coming in.

[REDACTED] Thank you for having me.

[REDACTED] We're adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 4:36 p.m., the interview was concluded.]

[REDACTED]

