

Our Man in London: The Scandal of the 35-Page ‘Intelligence Dossier’ Directed against Donald Trump

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During the past weeks and months, the US media have been agog over one revelation after another of supposed Kremlin skullduggery in tipping the US presidency—the rightful inheritance, needless to say, of Hillary Clinton—into the unsavoury lap of Donald Trump.

Some critics have been ungrateful enough to suggest that claims published without the least scintilla of supporting evidence by intelligence agencies which have a rich history of lying to the American people as well as everyone else, and which are in addition led by James Clapper, (image right) the Director of National Intelligence, may not be above suspicion.[1]



But the latest revelation, a 35-page sequence of linked texts published on January 10 by *BuzzFeedNews*, gives what simpletons are expected to interpret as unimpeachable evidence of soundness and credibility. The document is authored “by a person who has claimed to be a former British intelligence official,” and its sources, identified by letters of the alphabet, include a “senior Russian Foreign Ministry figure,” “a former top level Russian intelligence officer still active inside the Kremlin,” as well as another “senior Kremlin official.”[2] (How could one fail to doff one’s cap in acknowledgment of the spy-craft of those Brits, who are able so deftly to penetrate the inner counsels of the wicked Mr. Putin and induce his close associates to sing like canaries?)

The texts which make up this document propose that Mr. Trump and his entourage had routine treasonous contacts with Russian state authorities over a long period leading up to

the election, and that Mr. Putin was interfering in that election in every way possible—including by exploiting “TRUMP’s personal obsessions and sexual perversion in order to obtain suitable ‘kompromat’ (compromising material) on him.”[3]

The document’s most lurid claim—certified by Sources B, D, E and F—is made on its second page. It’s not clear what form of perverse pleasure Mr. Trump was supposed to have obtained by having “a number of prostitutes” urinate on his bed in the Moscow Ritz Carlton’s presidential suite. The explanation given for the motivation behind this command performance—that the same bed had previously been slept in, on one of their official visits to Russia, by Barack and Michelle Obama (“whom he hated”)[4]—seems bizarre.

After all, on the night in question, whose soggy bed was it now?

By way of comparison: What harm would I be doing to a champion heavyweight boxer, however much I loathed him, if I were to lace on one of his boxing gloves and punch myself in the face with it?

Summary

- Russian regime has been cultivating, supporting and assisting TRUMP for at least 5 years. Aim, endorsed by PUTIN, has been to encourage splits and divisions in western alliance
- So far TRUMP has declined various sweetener real estate business deals offered him in Russia in order to further the Kremlin’s cultivation of him. However he and his inner circle have accepted a regular flow of intelligence from the Kremlin, including on his Democratic and other political rivals
- Former top Russian intelligence officer claims FSB has compromised TRUMP through his activities in Moscow sufficiently to be able to blackmail him. According to several knowledgeable sources, his conduct in Moscow has included perverted sexual acts which have been arranged/monitored by the FSB

The most immediate concern raised by this literally filthy story may be humanitarian. It seems well attested that Mr. Trump is not merely fastidious, but germaphobic:[5] where is he supposed to have slept out the rest of the night? On the perhaps undefiled sofa, or on the carpet? And what are we to make of the claim by trolling posters at 4Chan that this “golden showers” story was a hoax they had foisted onto a Republican operative known to despise Trump, who then shopped it around to news media, other politicians, and intelligence agencies?[6]

If this story is a fiction, then are the document’s Sources B, D, E and F, who confirmed it, also fictional? And if some of the document’s sources are made up, what kind of fool would want to believe that any of the rest are authentic?

Other aspects of the document have also run into trouble. Michael Cohen, Donald Trump’s special counsel, whom the document says was a key figure in “the ongoing secret liaison relationship between the New York tycoon’s campaign and the Russian leadership,” and who is supposed to have met secretly with Kremlin officials in Prague in August 2016, has declared that he has never visited the Czech Republic or Russia and was in New York and

Los Angeles during the time in question.[7] (It does not seem to have occurred to mainstream media journalists who have described the document's claims as generally unverifiable that a private, first-hand inspection of Mr. Cohen's passport would provide one important test of this narrative's truth or falsity.)[8]

As Russian journalist Andrei Soldatov observes, writing at *The Guardian*, the document implausibly makes Igor Diveikin responsible for dealings with the US election: in fact, he was in charge of Russian elections, and in October 2016 "was moved to the apparatus of the state Duma." And it confuses Department K of the FSB, which was not gathering material on Hillary Clinton because it "has nothing to do with eavesdropping or cyber investigations," with Department K of the Interior Ministry, which is indeed "in charge of cyber investigations." [9]

In addition to problematic features such as these, the document also contains lesser errors of fact, such as the misspelling of the name of a Russian banking corporation, and the incorrect claim that Moscow's Barvikha suburb is "reserved for the residences of the top leadership and their close associates"[10]—not to mention swathes of inside dope about the machinations and anxieties of Putin and his closest advisors that have a distinct feel of having been woven out of thin air.

Within a day of *BuzzFeed's* publication of the document, the author's identity was revealed by the *Wall Street Journal*. [11] He is one Christopher Steele, a former MI6 agent who is now co-principal of a consulting firm, Orbis Business Intelligence—and who has gone into hiding, leaving his neighbour in Surrey to feed the family cats and his partner in Orbis to make unrevealing statements to the press. [12]

According to Julian Borger of *The Guardian*, Steele's writings about Trump "were initially commissioned as opposition research"—a polite term for scandal-mongering—"during the presidential campaign, but its author was sufficiently alarmed by what he discovered to send a copy to the FBI." [13]

It seems more likely that his employers invited him to pass it on. The Democratic Party and the Clinton campaign inherited work by Steele that was initially paid for by Jeb Bush, who was steamrolled by Trump in the Republican primaries. They were desperate to divert attention away from the scandalous substance of the emails of the Democratic National Committee and of John Podesta, the chair of Hillary Clinton's presidential campaign, that *Wikileaks* was releasing to the public—the DNC emails in two batches on July 22 and November 6, and the Podesta emails on a daily basis beginning on October 7. They had fixed on a McCarthyite smearing of 'Trump-the-Kremlin-puppet' as the most efficacious way of doing so; [14] and they must have been sufficiently impressed by Steele's work to hope that it might induce the FBI to give further momentum to their own previous claims. [15]

That may be speculation, but Steele's documents, which achieved no more in the public sphere before the election than an article by David Corn in *Mother Jones*, [16] were certainly given an emphatic push after the election by Republican Senator John McCain. Julian Borger writes that McCain, "who was informed about the existence of the documents separately by an intermediary from a western allied state"—this seems a coy reference to Her Majesty's Government—"dispatched an emissary overseas to meet the source and then decided to present the material to [FBI Director] Comey in a one-on-one meeting on 9 December...." [17]



In his best deferential Rosencrantz-and-Guildenstern style, Borger informs us that “McCain is not thought to have made a judgment on the reliability of the documents but was sufficiently impressed by the source’s credentials to feel obliged to pass them to the FBI.”[18] He then reveals that McCain thought highly enough of their reliability that, having been denied a special Senate committee to investigate connections between Trump’s campaign and Moscow, he told *NBC* that three other committees—Armed Services (which he chairs), Foreign Relations, and Intelligence—would examine the matter, and if they produced “enough information,” a special committee would be struck after all “to attack the issue.”[19] This sounds less like a withholding of judgment than a full-court press.

Other news outlets—notably *CNN*—and intelligence operatives have sought to put some distance between themselves and the dossier. James Clapper, for instance, issued a statement on January 11 denying that the US “intelligence community” had produced the document published by *BuzzFeed*.^[20] But the English newspaper *The Guardian* has worked stubbornly to sustain the validity of Steele’s document.

This attempt might be said to epitomize *The Guardian’s* decline from its former eminence. Writing in its columns on January 12, Andrei Soldatov, whose exposure of some of Steele’s factual errors I have quoted above, maintains that despite “factual confusion”; despite problems with the conspiratorial bias of the document’s analysis; despite “unverifiable sensational details”; despite “questionable evidence”; and finally, despite “big questions” about the “high-placed Kremlin officials [who] seem a little too keen to talk to a former British spy, and feed him damaging information about the most sensitive Kremlin operation in the 21st century—right in the middle of the operation”;—despite all these failings, Steele’s representation of Kremlin procedures and motivations “sounds about right,” and “looks entirely plausible.” “And that,” Soldatov concludes, “whatever the truth of Putin’s connections with Trump, makes it all pretty scary.”^[21]

I would describe this reasoning—according to which a document whose analytical method is problematic and whose evidential basis is variously confused, unverifiable, highly questionable, or wholly absent, can nonetheless be accepted as plausible—as mental debris. If any categorical distinction can be made between thinking of this order and the kind of arguments that sent accused witches to the stake in the 16th and 17th centuries, I should like to know what it might be.

In another article published on the same day, January 12, Nick Hopkins and Luke Harding of *The Guardian* doubled down on their newspaper’s support for Christopher Steele. They pose the question of why, if the claims made in the 35-page dossier prepared by Steele were as mendacious as President-Elect Trump claimed during his January 11 news briefing, “had America’s intelligence agencies felt it necessary to provide a compendium of the claims to Barack Obama and Trump himself?”^[22]

Their answer is that Steele's former colleagues described him as "'very credible'—a sober, cautious and meticulous professional with a formidable record"; and as

"an experienced and highly regarded professional [...]. If he puts something in a report, he believes there is sufficient credibility in it for it to be worth considering. Chris is a very straight guy. He could not have survived in the job he was in if he had been prone to flights of fancy or doing things in an ill-considered way."

"That," Hopkins and Harding declare, "is the way the CIA and FBI, not to mention the British government, regarded him too." [23]

In their praise of "the credibility" of Christopher Steele, "the quality of the sources he has, and the quality of the people who were prepared to vouch for him," Hopkins and Harding exceed even their colleague Julian Borger in obsequiousness. They describe Steele as a friend and contemporary of Alex Younger, the current head of MI6, and speculate (apparently on their own bat) that he might perhaps have had the top job himself were it not that his area of specialization, Russian espionage, "was taking a back seat to Islamic terrorism and non-state threats." [24]

But anyone with experience of composing and interpreting letters of reference and recommendation within a large organization will understand nuances in what Steele's former colleagues said about him that seem to have escaped these journalists. With the exception of "formidable record," the terms applied to Steele suggest an all-round good egg, experienced, hard-working and conscientious in a straightforward way—but they abstain from any hint that he was either exceptional or brilliant, or some kind of T. E. Lawrence of the Russia desk.

It's not evident, for that matter, that the former colleagues consulted by Hopkins and Harding were themselves among the sharper knives in the drawer, since they seem not to have reflected on reasons for incredulity about Steele's work that should have occurred to insiders like themselves. Steele's document claims that he became aware that for years (first five, then eight) Vladimir Putin had schemed to run Trump, with the latter's knowledge and connivance, as a 'Manchurian Candidate.'

It would follow, as former UK ambassador Craig Murray has lucidly observed, that

A private company [Orbis Business Intelligence] had minute by minute intelligence on the Manchurian Candidate scheme and all the indictable illegal activity that was going on, which the CIA/NSA/GCHQ/MI6 did not have, despite their specific tasking and enormous technical, staff and financial resources amounting between them to over 150,000 staff and the availability of hundreds of billions of dollars to do nothing but this.

It would follow as well that

A private western company is able to run a state level intelligence operation in Russia for years, continually interviewing senior security sources and people personally close to Putin, without being caught by the Russian security services—despite the fact that the latter are brilliant enough to install a Manchurian Candidate as President of the USA. This private western company

can for example secretly interview staff in top Moscow hotels—which they themselves say are Russian security service controlled—without the staff being too scared to speak to them or ending up dead. They can continually pump Putin’s friends for information and get it. [25]

* * * * *

Despite all these criticisms listed here, does there remain a sense in which Christopher Steele’s document can be understood as participating in well-established traditions of British intelligence?

I am thinking, in particular, of striking parallels between Steele’s work and that of two celebrated British secret agents, one of them deservedly illustrious, and the other even better known to a wide public: Juan Pujol García, M.B.E., and James Wormold, O.B.E.

Pujol, a Spanish citizen, decided after the fall of France in 1940 to contribute to “the good of humanity” by helping Britain resist Nazi Germany.[26] Adopting the identity of a fiercely pro-Nazi Spanish government official, he was taken on by the Abwehr as an agent, given instruction in spy-craft, and ordered to move to Britain and recruit a network there. But like Steele, who as Hopkins and Harding inform us is unable to travel to Russia and has not set foot in that country for twenty years, Pujol preferred to act at a distance. He moved to Lisbon, where he invented a network of fictitious agents living in different parts of Britain, and began to provide the Abwehr with a stream of misinformation, the plausible coloration for which he derived from newsreels, a tourist guide, and magazines and reference books in the public library. The Germans accepted the story that his dispatches were being sent from the UK to Lisbon by a courier, a KLM pilot.

In the spring of 1942 Pujol succeeded in being taken up by the British secret service and moved by them to the UK; his ensuing mystifications of German intelligence were carried out by radio. He was able to contribute to the work of the Bletchley Park code-breakers in penetrating successive versions of the German Enigma codes, and in June 1944 played an important role in helping to persuade the German High Command that the D-Day landings in Normandy were merely a feint, and that the principal landings would be carried out in the Pas de Calais by a army of 150,000 men under the command of General George Patton. To resist this nonexistent force, the Germans held back twenty-one divisions that might otherwise have intervened in the Normandy fighting. It appeared from postwar analysis that during the period of this deception, from June to August 1944, no less than 62 of Pujol’s radio reports—based on information gathered by his very substantial network of some two dozen purely imaginary sub-agent sources—had been quoted in the German High Command’s intelligence summaries.[27]

On July 29, 1944, in recognition of his services to the German war effort, Pujol was by Hitler’s personal authorization awarded the Iron Cross, Second Class—by radio, of course. King George VI presented him in person with an M.B.E. on November 25th of the same year.

James Wormold’s deceptions were of a more reflexive nature, since they were directed solely at his own employers. Recruited in 1957 by MI6 in Havana, where he ran a business selling vacuum cleaners, Wormold was initially stumped as to how he could satisfy the demands of his handler and the authorities in London for intelligence, let alone manage, as a single parent, the out-of-control extravagances of his teenage daughter Milly.

He resolved the two problems together by inventing, as Pujol had done before him, an expanding network of fictional sources—who of course ran up expenses and needed payments of various kinds. MI6 headquarters was impressed by the volume and the breadth of Wormold's dispatches (which like Pujol's were derived from publicly available sources and his own fertile imagination)—and went into a particular tizzy over his major intelligence coup, the 'discovery' in Cuba's Oriente province of strange and frightening installations that appeared to represent some hitherto undreamt-of form of military technology. The fears of Wormold's MI6 handler that the sketches one of his sources produced looked rather like enlarged images of the latest model Atomic Pile Suction Cleaner were dissipated when agents of a foreign power, who had taken note of Wormold's activities, launched aggressive action against him and his supposed network. How could Wormold be a fake when foreign intelligence agencies were going to the trouble of bumping off people they thought were his agents?

But the supposed Oriente installations were indeed made up of vacuum-cleaner parts.

When MI6 folded up Wormold's operation and recalled him to London, however, it was recognized that a man who had never had any secrets but had simply made them up wholesale couldn't be prosecuted under the Official Secrets Act, and that MI6's loss of prestige if Naval Intelligence or the War Office, let along the press, ever got wind of what had transpired would be intolerable.

In the concluding chapter of Graham Greene's novel—for of course this spy, "our man in Havana," is himself no less a fiction than all of the intelligence sources he invented and the reports that flowed from his burgeoning imagination—the head of MI6 himself informs James Wormold of the outcome:

'We thought the best thing for you under the circumstances would be to stay at home—on our training staff. Lecturing. How to run a station abroad. That kind of thing.' He seemed to be swallowing something very disagreeable. He added, 'Of course, as we always do when a man retires from a post abroad, we'll recommend you for a decoration. I think in your case—you were not there very long—we can hardly suggest anything higher than an O.B.E.' [28]

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The sequence here may be instructive. Juan Pujol was unambiguously a heroic figure, a man of stunning initiative, boldness, and imagination who took decisive and inventive action at a time when the likelihood that any one person could contribute meaningfully to averting geopolitical catastrophe must have seemed vanishingly small. Over a period of five years he successfully deceived—and with significant consequences—the military intelligence service of what when he began had been the dominant military power in Europe.

Graham Greene's satirical novel—the product of a man with some experience of intelligence work—flowed from a mood of cynicism generated by Cold-War preparations for global war and the pervasive McCarthyism of the 1950s. When Beatrice Severn, the secretary provided to Wormold by MI6, defiantly tells an interrogation committee that she'd happily have been his accomplice if she had known what he was up to, she responds to an interruption by adding,

'Oh, I forgot. There's something greater than one's country, isn't there. You taught us that with your League of Nations and your Atlantic Pact, NATO and UNO and SEATO. But they don't mean any more to most of us than all the other letters, U.S.A. and U.S.S.R. And we don't believe you any more when you say you want peace and justice and freedom. What kind of freedom? You want your careers.'

She adds, to Wormold:

They haven't left us much to believe, have they?—even disbelief. I can't believe in anything bigger than a home, or anything vaguer than a human being.[29]

A kind of motto for this novel, with its merciless mockery of the world of 'intelligence,' is provided by the Noel Coward-ish song of a dinner-jacketed performer in the Havana nightclub where Wormold and Beatrice first meet: "Sane men surround / You, old family friends. / They say the earth is round— / My madness offends. / An orange has pips, they say, / And an apple has rind. / I say that night is day / And I've no axe to grind. / Please don't believe...."[30] Wormold's operation does result in the violent deaths of several people, one of whom he shoots. But there's no doubt, in this world, that the nincompoops of MI6 richly deserve the deceptions he practises on them.

What, finally, of Christopher Steele? It doesn't seem very risky, at this point, to propose that his *modus operandi* in compiling his Trump 'dossier' followed the examples of Pujol and Wormold. As in their cases, it can be said that the people most thoroughly deceived by his labours—a large gaggle of Clintonite Democrats, noisy cheerleaders for World War Three like John McCain, and journalistic incompetents like *The Guardian's* team—richly deserved to be fooled.

But Pujol displayed nobility of character—and courage, for had his operation been exposed by the Abwehr while he was still working out of Lisbon, he would certainly have been killed. Greene imparted to his James Wormold a kind of unassuming stubborn integrity appropriate to the age of existentialist philosophy. It's hard, by comparison, to find anything praiseworthy in Steele's work as a merchant of sleaze—dangerous sleaze too, since its obvious purpose was to contribute to the heightening of New-Cold-War tensions between the USA and Russia.

Notes

[1] See for example "The Hacking Evidence Against Russia Is Extremely Weak," *WashingtonsBlog* (18 December 2016), <http://www.washingtonsblog.com/2016/12/hacking-evidence-russia-extremely-weak.html>; "'US intel community lost professional discipline': Ex-NSA tech director on 'Russia hacking' report," *RT* (7 January 2017), <https://www.rt.com/op-edge/372874-us-intelligence-lost-professional-discipline/>; John Wight, "On Washington's hacking hysteria—what would Freud say?" *RT* (7 January 2017), <https://www.rt.com/op-edge/372915-hacking-us-russia-hysteria-democracy/>; Mike Whitney, "US Intel Agencies Try to Strong-Arm Trump into War with Russia," *Information Clearing House* (10 January 2017), <http://www.informationclearinghouse.info/46193.htm>; and Glenn Greenwald, "The Deep State Goes to War With President-Elect, Using Unverified Claims, as Democrats Cheer," *The Intercept* (11 January 2017),

<https://theintercept.com/2017/01/11/the-deep-state-goes-to-war-with-president-elect-using-unverified-claims-as-dems-cheer/>. On Clapper's perjury, see Paul Campos, "How James Clapper will get away with perjury," *Salon.com* (12 June 2013), http://www.salon.com/2013/06/12/how_james_clapper_will_get_away_with_perjury/.

[2] "These Reports Allege Trump Has Deep Ties to Russia," *BuzzFeedNews* (10 January 2017), https://www.buzzfeed.com/kenbensinger/these-reports-allege-trump-has-deep-ties-to-russia?utm_term=.dijWKzxZ4#.ygWnrNKQL. The defamatory documents have also been published by *Slate Magazine*—see Joshua Keating, "These Salacious Memos Allege Russian Efforts to Compromise Trump," *Slate.com* (10 January 2017), http://www.slate.com/blogs/the_slatest/2017/01/10/these_salacious_memos_allege_russian_efforts_to_compromise_trump.html—and by *Wikipedia*: see "File: 2017 Trump dossier by Christopher Steele, Ex-MI6 Russia Desk Intelligence Agent.pdf," *Wikipedia*, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:2017_Trump_dossier_by_Christopher_Steele,_Ex-MI6_Russia_Desk_Intelligence_Agent.pdf.

[3] "These Reports Allege Trump Has Deep Ties to Russia."

[4] *Ibid.*

[5] Kevin Drum, "Donald Trump Is a Germaphobe," *Mother Jones*, (23 December 2015), <http://www.motherjones.com/kevin-drum/2015/12/donald-trump-germaphobe>; Carolyn Gregoire, "Trump Is Right About One Thing: Shaking Hands is Kinda Gross," *Huffington Post* (7 April 2016), http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/hand-shaking-germ-exposure_us_5702c1cee4b0daf53af06a8f; Matt Frei, "Proof That Donald Trump Is Indeed a Germaphobe," *LBC* (12 January 2017), <http://www.lbc.co.uk/radio/presenters/matt-frei/proof-that-donald-trump-is-indeed-a-germaphobe/>.

[6] The Republican in question is Rick Wilson, whose description of Trump supporters as "single white males who masturbate to anime" apparently prompted a *4Chan* user to troll him. See The_Real_Fly, "How 4Chan Fooled McCain, BuzzFeed, and the CIA Into Believing Trump's Golden Showers," *Zero Hedge* (11 January 2017), <http://www.zerohedge.com/news/2017-01-11/how-4chan-mcfooled-john-mccain-buzzfeed-and-cia-believing-trumps-golden-showers>. For a dissenting view, see Gideon Resnick and Ben Collins, "Despite Weak Stream of Proof, 4chan Claims It Invented the Trump Golden Showers Story," *The Daily Beast* (10 January 2017), <http://www.thedailybeast.com/articles/2017/01/10/4chan-claims-they-invented-the-trump-golden-showers-story.html>.

[7] Rosie Gray, "'It is Fake News Meant to Malign Mr. Trump,'" *The Atlantic* (10 January 2017), https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2017/01/michael-cohen-it-is-fake-news-meant-to-malign-mr-trump/512762/?utm_source=feed. Wikileaks has declared that "35 page PDF published by BuzzFeed on Trump is not an intelligence report. Style, facts & dates show no credibility," <https://twitter.com/wikileaks/status/818992803829137408>.

[8] Cohen has intimated as much by posting an image of the passport's front cover online; for obvious reasons, he has refused to circulate online images of its inner contents.

[9] Andrei Soldatov, “The leaked Trump-Russia dossier rings frighteningly true,” *The Guardian* (12 January 2017), <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2017/jan/12/donald-trump-russia-dossier-frighteningly-true>.

[10] Julian Borger, “John McCain passes dossier alleging secret Trump-Russia contacts to FBI,” *The Guardian* (11 January 2017), <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2017/jan/10/fbi-chief-given-dossier-by-john-mccain-alleging-secret-trump-russia-contacts>.

[11] See ZeroPointNow, “Dead Giveaway The 35 Page Dossier Was A Hoax?” *Zero Hedge* (11 January 2017), <http://www.zerohedge.com/news/2017-01-11/dead-giveaway-35-page-dossier-was-hoax-british-dont-use-confidential-they-use-offici>.

[12] Gordon Rayner, Patrick Sawyer, and Ruth Sherlock, “Former MI6 officer Christopher Steele, who produced Donald Trump Russian dossier, ‘terrified for his safety’ and went to ground before name released,” *The Telegraph* (11 January 2017), <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2017/01/11/former-mi6-officer-produced-donald-trump-russian-dossier-terrified/>.

[13] Borger, “John McCain passes dossier....” Steele also told David Corn in October 2016 that “near the start of July [2016] on his own initiative—without the permission of the US company that hired him—he sent a report he had written for that firm to a contact at the FBI”; see Corn, “A Veteran Spy Has Given the FBI Information Alleging a Russian Operation to Cultivate Donald Trump: Has the bureau investigated this material?” *Mother Jones* (31 October 2016), <http://www.motherjones.com/politics/2016/10/veteran-spy-gave-fbi-info-alleging-russian-operation-cultivate-donald-trump>.

[14] For examples of this smear-tactic, see Glenn Greenwald, “Democrats’ Tactic of Accusing Critics of Kremlin Allegiance Has Long, Ugly History in U.S.,” *The Intercept* (8 August 2016), <https://theintercept.com/2016/08/08/dems-tactic-of-accusing-adversaries-of-kremlin-ties-and-russia-sympathies-has-long-history-in-us/>. As Greenwald observes, this smear was used against Democratic candidate Bernie Sanders in 2015, and subsequently against Green Party candidate Jill Stein, before being turned against Donald Trump in the summer of 2016. He notes as well that there are powerful ironies to the use of this smear by Hillary Clinton and her supporters: in April 2015 she was revealed to have approved, as Secretary of State, a 2013 deal that “gave the Russians control of one-fifth of all uranium production capacity in the United States.” The Clinton Foundation received donations totalling \$2.35 million from a Russian foundation linked to the deal, and Bill Clinton was paid \$500,000 by a Russian bank involved in promoting the deal for a speech he gave in Moscow. See Jo Becker and Mike McIntire, “Cash flowed to Clinton Foundation Amid Russian Uranium Deal,” *The New York Times* (23 April 2015), <https://www.nytimes.com/2015/04/24/us/cash-flowed-to-clinton-foundation-as-russians-pressed-for-control-of-uranium-company.html>.

[15] Evidence is emerging that the British government gave Steele approval for his contacts with the FBI: see Gordon Rayner, Claire Newell, and Ruth Sherlock, “Britain dragged into Donald Trump

'dirty dossier' row amid claims Whitehall knew of the file," *The Telegraph* (13 January 2017), <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2017/01/12/britain-dragged-donald-trump-dirty-dossier-row-amid-claims-whitehall/>.

[16] David Corn, "A Veteran Spy Has Given the FBI Information...."

[17] Borger, "John McCain passes dossier...."

[18] Ibid. For McCain's explanation, see Kyle Feldscher, "McCain confirms he sent Trump allegations to FBI," *Washington Examiner* (11 January 2017), <http://www.washingtonexaminer.com/mccain-confirms-he-sent-trump-allegations-to-fbi/article/2611498>.

[19] Borger, "John McCain passes dossier...."

[20] Anna Giaritelli, "Clapper: 35-page dossier didn't come from intelligence community," *Washington Examiner* (11 January 2017), <http://www.washingtonexaminer.com/clapper-35-page-dossier-didnt-come-from-intel-community/article/2611620>.

[21] Soldatov, "The leaked Trump-Russia dossier rings frighteningly true."

[22] Nick Hopkins and Luke Harding, "Donald Trump dossier: intelligence sources vouch for author's credibility," *The Guardian* (12 January 2017), <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2017/jan/12/intelligence-sources-vouch-credibility-donald-trump-russia-dossier-author>.

[23] Ibid. A more plausible answer to the question posed by Hopkins and Harding might be that powerful members of the Senate, among them John McCain and Harry Reid, were chomping at the bit to get Steele's claims into public circulation, and the US intelligence services were actively complicit in the program to defame and discredit the incoming Trump administration.

[24] Ibid.

[25] Craig Murray, "The Steele Dossier or the Hitler Diaries Mark II," *Craig Murray* (11 January 2017), <https://www.craigmurray.org.uk/archives/2017/01/hitler-diaries-mark-ii-hope-changed-mattress/>.

[26] The following account of Pujol is based on "Juan Pujol García," *Wikipedia*, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Juan_Pujol_Garc%C3%ADa. That article's principal sources are Juan Pujol and Nigel West, *Operation GARBO: The Personal Story of the Most Successful Double Agent of World War II* (New York: Random House, 1985); Tomás Harris and Mark Seaman, *Garbo: The Spy Who Saved D-Day* (Toronto: Dundurn, 2004); Hervie Haufler, *The Spies Who Never Were: The True Story of the Nazi Spies Who Were Actually Allied Double Agents* (New York: Open Road Integrated Media, 2006); and Thaddeus Holt, *The Deceivers: Allied Military Deception in the Second World War* (New

York: Skyhorse, 2010).

[27] Pujol and West, *Operation GARBO*, p. 196; cited in "Juan Pujol García."

[28] Graham Greene, *Our Man in Havana* (1958; rpt. London: Vintage, 2004), p. 177.

[29] *Ibid.*, p. 179.

[30] *Ibid.*, p. 80.

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