

(colloquially known as “Team R”).<sup>1007</sup> Following the meeting, Mueller Supervisory Special Agent-1 believed that the team was supportive of continuing to investigate Charles Dolan and what connection, if any, he had to the Steele Reports.<sup>1008</sup>

On September 1, 2017, Mueller Supervisory Special Agent-1 drafted a case opening document for Dolan. The opening document detailed, among other things, (i) Dolan’s connections to Danchenko and Galkina, (ii) Dolan’s connections to the Democratic party, and (iii) Dolan’s connections to the Kremlin.<sup>1009</sup> The document also summarized Danchenko’s June 15, 2017 conversation with Helson about Dolan.

Nevertheless, on September 7, 2017, Auten instructed Mueller Analyst-1 to cease all research and analysis related to Dolan.<sup>1010</sup> Later that day, Supervisory Special Agent-2 informed Mueller Analyst-1 that she was being transferred from “Team R” to the Mueller team investigating Paul Manafort (colloquially known as “Team M”).<sup>1011</sup> In her interview with the Office, Mueller Analyst-1 recalled that she asked Supervisory Special Agent-2 for permission to continue researching Dolan before moving to “Team M,” but that her request was denied.<sup>1012</sup> Nevertheless, as discussed more below, following her transfer, Mueller Analyst-1 continued to refine her memorandum regarding Galkina’s connections to, among others, Danchenko and Dolan.<sup>1013</sup>

As noted above, in September 2017, Mueller Supervisory Special Agent-1 participated in the two-day interview of Christopher Steele in which Steele admitted that Dolan “had drinks” with Danchenko and was responsible for at least one allegation in the Steele Reports (regarding

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<sup>1007</sup> OSC Report of Interview of Mueller Analyst-1 on Aug. 16, 2021 at 2, 3; OSC Report of Interview of Mueller Supervisory Special Agent-1 on Aug. 31, 2021 at 4.

<sup>1008</sup> OSC Report of Interview of Mueller Supervisory Special Agent-1 on Aug. 31, 2021 at 4.

<sup>1009</sup> SCO-FBIPROD\_022274 (Opening Communication dated 12/14/2017).

<sup>1010</sup> It should be noted that this information provided by Mueller Analyst-1 is corroborated by a contemporaneous timeline she kept of the events at issue during her time with the Mueller Special Counsel team. In her interview with the Office, Mueller Analyst-1 stated that she prepared the contemporaneous timeline in the event she were later interviewed about her role on the Mueller Special Counsel investigation. See OSC Report of Interview of Mueller Analyst-1 on Oct. 29, 2021 at 2-3.

<sup>1011</sup> OSC Report of Interview of Mueller Analyst-1 on Oct. 29, 2021 at 2.

<sup>1012</sup> *Id.* at 2

<sup>1013</sup> In her interview with the Special Counsel, Mueller Analyst-1 stated that Auten had made edits to her memorandum, some of which removed information regarding Dolan. Mueller Analyst-1 recalled being frustrated by many of these edits and wondered if the edits were being made by individuals other than Auten and with a political motive. However, Mueller Analyst-1 was unable to provide any evidence to support this speculation. See OSC Report of Interview of Mueller Analyst-1 on Aug. 16, 2021 at 5. When interviewed by the Office, Auten recalled that his edits were reflective of his belief that some of the information regarding Dolan was too speculative. See OSC Report of Interview of Brian Auten on July 26, 2021.

Manafort's resignation as Trump campaign manager.)<sup>1014</sup> Mueller Supervisory Special Agent-1 stated that they did not probe Steele further about Charles Dolan because the FBI did not want to "show their hand" to Steele.<sup>1015</sup>

On September 22, 2017, Mueller Supervisory Special Agent-1 and Mueller Analyst-1 attended a meeting with Supervisory Special Agent-2, Auten, and attorney Rhee to discuss, among other things, the recently completed interview of Steele.<sup>1016</sup> At various times in September 2017, Mueller Analyst-1 recalled that Rhee opined, in sum, that there was no longer a need to investigate the Steele Reports, because the Reports were not within the scope of the Mueller Special Counsel mandate.<sup>1017</sup> Similarly, Auten told the Office he recalled that in September 2017 Deputy Assistant Director David Archey informed the team that they should cease work on attempting to corroborate the Steele Reports.<sup>1018</sup> This directive given by the Mueller investigation leadership is somewhat surprising given that Director Mueller's broad mandate was to investigate, among other things, Russian election interference in the 2016 presidential election – parameters that clearly would seem to include the Steele Reports. Indeed, as Mueller Analyst-1 noted in her interview with the Office, the Mueller Special Counsel team continued to investigate cases involving non-Russian persons and entities. Thus, Mueller Analyst-1 disagreed with the contention that Dolan fell outside of the Mueller mandate.<sup>1019</sup> In her interview with the Office, Mueller Supervisory Special Agent-1 stated that while she did not recall the "outside the mandate" justification for the denial of the Dolan case opening, it would "surprise" her if that was the reason provided by Mueller team leadership.<sup>1020</sup> This purported position also is curious given that the Steele Reports underpinned, in a significant way, the probable cause contained in the Page FISA applications.

Mueller Supervisory Special Agent-1 also recalled that attorney Rhee, while initially favorable to investigating Dolan, gradually soured on the idea.<sup>1021</sup> In that same vein, in a meeting on October 17, 2017, Supervisory Special Agent-2 informed Mueller Supervisory Special Agent-1, Mueller Analyst-1, and Auten that (i) Dolan fell outside of the Mueller investigation's mandate, (ii) the investigators had too much work and too few resources to focus on Dolan, and (iii) WFO could task Danchenko regarding Dolan.<sup>1022</sup> In fact, Mueller Analyst-1's contemporaneous notes explicitly state that Mueller investigation leadership directed Mueller Analyst-1 and Mueller Supervisory Special Agent-1 to "dedicate no resources to CD

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<sup>1014</sup> SCO-006313 (Interview of Christopher Steele on Sept. 18, 2017) at 3, 16-17.

<sup>1015</sup> OSC Report of Interview of Mueller Supervisory Special Agent-1 on Aug. 31, 2021 at 2.

<sup>1016</sup> OSC Report of Interview of Mueller Analyst-1 on Oct. 29, 2021 at 3.

<sup>1017</sup> *Id.* at 3-4; Timeline prepared by Mueller Analyst-1.

<sup>1018</sup> OSC Report of Interview of Brian Auten on July 26, 2021 at 19.

<sup>1019</sup> OSC Report of Interview of Mueller Analyst-1 on Oct. 29, 2021 at 7.

<sup>1020</sup> OSC Report of Interview of Mueller Supervisory Special Agent-1 on Aug. 31, 2021 at 5.

<sup>1021</sup> *Id.* at 4.

<sup>1022</sup> OSC Report of Interview of Mueller Analyst-1 on Oct. 29, 2021 at 4; Timeline prepared by Mueller Analyst-1, entry dated Oct. 17, 2017.

[Dolan].”<sup>1023</sup> Nevertheless, Supervisory Special Agent-2 stated that tangential work on Dolan could be continued, although it was unlikely that a case opening on Dolan would be approved.<sup>1024</sup>

Ultimately, Supervisory Special Agent-2 informed Mueller Supervisory Special Agent-1 that her request to open a case on Dolan had been denied and that it was a “higher level decision.”<sup>1025</sup> Supervisory Special Agent-2 directed Mueller Supervisory Special Agent-1 to delete the case opening from Sentinel.<sup>1026</sup> Despite repeated inquiries, neither Mueller Supervisory Special Agent-1 nor Mueller Analyst-1 was ever provided a specific rationale for the denial of the case opening.<sup>1027</sup> Similarly, Mueller Supervisory Special Agent-1 never learned who ultimately denied the case opening.<sup>1028</sup> In a December 21, 2017 Lync message exchange, Mueller Analyst-1 and Helson discussed the case opening on Dolan. In one message, Mueller Analyst-1 stated, “yeah . . . it isn’t good what EM [FBI Executive Management] decides to do with it, is beyond my pay-grade, I’ve made arguments in person – and that’s all I can do . . . and serialize the relationship.”<sup>1029</sup>

During an interview with the Office, Supervisory Special Agent-2 opined in retrospect that it was an “oversight” not to open on Dolan, and that Dolan should have been, at a minimum, interviewed.<sup>1030</sup> It should also be noted that in his interviews with the Office, Auten stated that he was supportive of opening an investigation of Dolan.<sup>1031</sup> This recollection was corroborated by both Mueller Supervisory Special Agent-1 and Mueller Analyst-1.<sup>1032</sup>

viii. *Mueller Supervisory Special Agent-1 and Mueller Analyst-1 expressed concerns about the appearance of political bias in the decision not to open on Charles Dolan*

In her interview with the Office, Mueller Supervisory Special Agent-1 recalled that she and Mueller Analyst-1 discussed whether the decision not to open on Dolan was politically motivated, given Dolan’s extensive connections to the Democratic party.<sup>1033</sup> Mueller Supervisory Special Agent-1 stated that she did not believe the decision not to open on Dolan

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<sup>1023</sup> Timeline prepared by Mueller Analyst-1, entry dated Oct. 17, 2017.

<sup>1024</sup> OSC Report of Interview of Mueller Analyst-1 on Oct. 29, 2021 at 4.

<sup>1025</sup> OSC Report of Interview of Mueller Supervisory Special Agent-1 on Aug. 31, 2021 at 5.

<sup>1026</sup> *Id.* at 3.

<sup>1027</sup> *Id.* at 5.

<sup>1028</sup> *Id.*

<sup>1029</sup> SCO\_FBIPROD\_026627 (Lync message from Mueller Analyst-1 to Helson dated 12/21/2017).

<sup>1030</sup> OSC Report of Interview of Supervisory Special Agent-2 on May 5, 2021 at 7.

<sup>1031</sup> OSC Report of Interview of Brian Auten on July 26, 2021 at 19.

<sup>1032</sup> OSC Report of Interview of Mueller Supervisory Special Agent-1 on Aug. 31, 2021 at 3; OSC Report of Interview of Mueller Analyst-1 on Aug. 16, 2021 at 6.

<sup>1033</sup> OSC Report of Interview of Mueller Supervisory Special Agent-1 on Aug. 31, 2021 at 4-5.

was political, but that she did worry about the optics of the decision, given that Dolan was a prominent Democrat.<sup>1034</sup> Mueller Supervisory Special Agent-1 further stated that she did not witness any explicit political bias during her work with the Mueller Special Counsel team.<sup>1035</sup> Nonetheless, at the time, Mueller Supervisory Special Agent-1 believed that the decision not to open on Dolan would eventually be reviewed by the OIG.<sup>1036</sup>

When interviewed by the Office, Mueller Analyst-1 did speculate that the decision not to open on Dolan was politically motivated. Mueller Analyst-1 speculated that the information on Dolan ran counter to the narrative that the Mueller Special Counsel investigators were cultivating given that Dolan was a former Democratic political operative.<sup>1037</sup> However, Mueller Analyst-1 was unable to provide the Office with definitive evidence to support her belief. Like Mueller Supervisory Special Agent-1, Mueller Analyst-1 believed that the decision not to investigate Dolan would eventually be reviewed by the OIG.<sup>1038</sup> In fact, Mueller Analyst-1 informed the Office that she uploaded her Galkina memorandum to three separate case files on the FBI Sentinel system to ensure that the OIG would have access to the document.<sup>1039</sup>

ix. *The FBI's failure to investigate Dolan*

In sum, save for efforts by Auten, Helson, Mueller Supervisory Special Agent-1, and Mueller Analyst-1, the FBI's failure to complete logical investigative steps concerning what, if any, role Dolan played in the Steele Reports was troubling. As discussed above, the Office has determined that Dolan was a source for at least one allegation in the Steele Reports, and was one of only three U.S. persons named by Steele (in both his October 2016 and September 2017 interviews) who had more information about the reports. If the FBI had learned nothing more about Dolan, Steele's statements alone would have been an ample basis to interview Dolan. Moreover, Mueller Supervisory Special Agent-1, Mueller Analyst-1, and others had uncovered significant information about Dolan – independent from what the Office subsequently unearthed – that potentially connected him to the Steele Reports; this was information that plainly warranted further investigation. In summary, the evidence possessed by the FBI and later elicited during the *Danchenko* trial showed that:

- Dolan maintained a relationship with Danchenko, Steele's primary sub-source for the Steele Reports;
- Dolan maintained relationships with various Russian government officials, including Dimitry Peskov and Alexey Pavlov, both of whom feature prominently in the Steele Reports;

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<sup>1034</sup> *Id.*; OSC Report of Interview of Mueller Analyst-1 on Aug. 16, 2021 at 7.

<sup>1035</sup> OSC Report of Interview of Mueller Supervisory Special Agent-1 on Aug. 31, 2021 at 4-5.

<sup>1036</sup> *Id.*

<sup>1037</sup> OSC Report of Interview of Mueller Analyst-1 on Aug. 16, 2021 at 7.

<sup>1038</sup> *Danchenko* Tr. 10/14/2022 AM at 956:1-957:23.

<sup>1039</sup> *Id.*

- Dolan was present in Moscow in June 2016, met with the General Manager of the Moscow Ritz Carlton, toured the premises, including the Presidential Suite, and had at least one meeting with Danchenko who also was in Moscow;
- Dolan was present in Moscow with Danchenko in October 2016 – during the time frame Danchenko was gathering information for the Steele Reports;
- Dolan maintained a relationship with Galkina, allegedly a sub-source for Danchenko, and met with Galkina in Cyprus on two occasions in the summer of 2016;
- Dolan performed work for Galkina's former employer, who would later appear in the Steele Reports;
- Galkina admitted to the FBI that she provided Dolan with information that would eventually be in the Steele Reports; and
- Dolan was a prominent and longtime Democratic political operative who vocally supported candidate Clinton;

The FBI interviewed hundreds of individuals through the course of the Crossfire Hurricane and Mueller Special Counsel investigations, and yet, they did not interview Dolan or the other two U.S. persons identified by Steele as early as October 2016. The Office interviewed Dolan on several occasions and he denied being a source of information for the Steele Reports, save for the Manafort campaign-related allegation he provided to Danchenko in August 2016 – an allegation he acknowledged to the Office that he fabricated. Although both Steele and Galkina suggested that Dolan may have information related to the Steele Reports, our investigation was not able to definitively prove that Dolan was the actual source for any additional allegations set forth in the Steele Reports. That said, in light of the foregoing, there does not appear to be an objectively sound reason for the decision that was made not to interview him.

f. Sergei Millian

A particularly disturbing example of the unsupported narratives regarding Trump and Russia – created and pressed by Fusion GPS and Steele – involved a Belarussian-American named Sergei Millian. At the time of his purported involvement in Trump-related matters, Millian was a New York-based real estate broker who from 2006-2016 served as president of the Russian-American Chamber of Commerce. In the course of his employment, Millian had occasion to be involved in some relatively minor listings of Trump Organization properties.

As discussed more fully below, Danchenko claimed to have sourced several of the most serious allegations in the Steele Reports to Millian, including allegations of an ongoing conspiracy between the Trump campaign and Russian officials. Several of these allegations were included in the Page FISA applications. In particular, and perhaps most importantly, Steele Report 2016/095 stated, in part:

*Speaking in confidence to a compatriot in late July 2016, Source E, an ethnic Russian close associate of Republican US presidential candidate Donald TRUMP, admitted that there was a well-developed conspiracy of co-operation between them and the Russian leadership. This was managed on the TRUMP side*

by the Republican candidate's campaign manager, Paul MANAFORT, who was using foreign policy advisor, Carter PAGE, and others as intermediaries. The two sides had a mutual interest in defeating Democratic presidential candidate Hillary CLINTON, whom President PUTIN apparently both hated and feared.<sup>1040</sup>

During several interviews with the FBI, Danchenko said that he believed "Source E" in Report 2016/095 referred, at least in part, to Millian. According to Steele, Danchenko was the only one communicating with Millian, and Steele stated that Danchenko had had direct contacts with Millian in New York City and Charleston, South Carolina. On the other hand, Danchenko told the FBI that, although Steele believed that he (Danchenko) had met with Millian, he never did.<sup>1041</sup> Further, Danchenko did not correct Steele in his mistaken belief that Danchenko had met directly with Millian.<sup>1042</sup>

As explained in greater detail below, the spectacular claim contained in Steele Report Number 2016/095 of a "well-developed conspiracy of co-operation" between the Trump campaign and Russian leadership is based entirely on a purported anonymous telephone call Danchenko said he received from someone he had never spoken to before. In particular, the information about the conspiracy was conveyed to him by an anonymous caller who Danchenko told Crossfire Hurricane investigators he believed might have been Millian based on Danchenko's claimed comparison of the caller's voice to a known *YouTube* video featuring Millian.<sup>1043</sup> Yet this unvetted, completely uncorroborated allegation was included in the Page FISA applications, both before and after the FBI learned its provenance from Danchenko himself.

*i. Danchenko's statements to the FBI regarding Millian*

When interviewed by the FBI in January 2017, Danchenko was twice asked to review Steele Report Number 2016/095 and explain where the information came from concerning a well-developed conspiracy between the Trump campaign and Russian leadership and the roles allegedly being played by Manafort and Page. Danchenko told the FBI that the "Source E" information sounded as though it were from a call he had received in late July 2016 from an anonymous caller who Danchenko believed was Sergei Millian. In particular, Danchenko described the following "strange" event:

Danchenko told the FBI that in June or July 2016, he communicated with Alexey Bogdanovsky, a U.S.-based Russian national employee of RIA Novosti (a Russian state-run media outlet) about reaching out to Millian, who Danchenko had never met or spoken with.<sup>1044</sup> Bogdanovsky indicated that his colleague at RIA Novosti, Dmitry Zlodorev, had a relationship

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<sup>1040</sup> SCO-105084 (Documents Known to the FBI Comprising the "Steele Dossier") at 9 (Company Intelligence Report 2016-095) (capitalization in original; emphasis added).

<sup>1041</sup> SCO\_105287 (CHS Reporting Document dated 11/14/2017).

<sup>1042</sup> *Id.*

<sup>1043</sup> *Id.*

<sup>1044</sup> SCO-005801 (Interview of Igor Danchenko Electronic Communication dated 02/09/2017 at 35-36).

with Millian and had previously interviewed Millian about Trump.<sup>1045</sup> Bogdanovsky ultimately provided Danchenko with Millian's contact information.<sup>1046</sup> Thereafter, Danchenko told the FBI that he reached out to Millian via email twice, but did not receive a response back from him.<sup>1047</sup> Danchenko did not provide the FBI with copies of these emails, despite explicit requests to provide any records of communication with Millian.<sup>1048</sup>

Danchenko next told the FBI that, in late July 2016, after receiving no email response from Millian, he (Danchenko) received a 10-15 minute phone call from an anonymous individual who he believed to be Sergei Millian.<sup>1049</sup> During this purported phone call, the caller, who did not identify himself, reportedly informed Danchenko about (i) Trump and the Kremlin, (ii) "communications" and an ongoing relationship between the parties, and (iii) Manafort and Page.<sup>1050</sup> The unidentified caller also supposedly said that while there was nothing bad about the "exchange of information" between Trump and the Kremlin, the information could be good for Russia and damaging to Trump, although deniable.<sup>1051</sup> Danchenko said that he and the person he believed to be Millian agreed to meet at a bar in New York City in late July 2016.<sup>1052</sup> Danchenko also told the FBI that he traveled to New York in late July 2016, but that Millian, or the person he believed to be Millian, never showed up for the meeting.<sup>1053</sup> As discussed in detail below, Danchenko's versions of events regarding his trip to New York conflict with the relevant record. Nevertheless, Danchenko did admit to the FBI that he had, in fact, never met with Millian in person,<sup>1054</sup> although, as noted above, Danchenko knew that Steele mistakenly thought that they had met on several occasions and Danchenko intentionally did not correct him on that point.<sup>1055</sup>

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<sup>1045</sup> *Id.* at 35-36.

<sup>1046</sup> *Id.* at 36.

<sup>1047</sup> *Id.* at 20. In the January 2017 interviews with the FBI, Danchenko first told the FBI that he received the late-July 2016 anonymous call from the individual he believed to be Millian following his initial email to Millian. Danchenko later told the FBI that he received the anonymous call after his second email to Millian. As discussed below, given the date of his second email to Millian, Danchenko's shifting version of events is inconsistent with the documentary evidence obtained during the investigation.

<sup>1048</sup> *Danchenko* Tr. 10/13/2022 AM at 700:23-701:09.

<sup>1049</sup> SCO-005801 (Interview of Igor Danchenko Electronic Communication dated 02/09/2017 at 36-37).

<sup>1050</sup> *Id.* at 20, 37.

<sup>1051</sup> *Id.* at 37.

<sup>1052</sup> *Id.*; SCO\_105287 (CHS Reporting Document dated 11/14/2017).

<sup>1053</sup> SCO-005801 (Interview of Igor Danchenko Electronic Communication dated 02/09/2017 at 36).

<sup>1054</sup> SCO\_105286 (CHS Reporting Document dated 11/13/2017).

<sup>1055</sup> SCO\_105287 (CHS Reporting Document dated 11/14/2017).

Instead, Danchenko told the FBI that the damaging allegations contained in Steele Report 2016/095 stemmed from the single telephone call from the anonymous individual he believed to be Millian.<sup>1056</sup> The Office did not find any evidence, or uncover any motive, that would explain why Millian, a vocal Trump supporter,<sup>1057</sup> would call a complete stranger and provide damaging information about Trump.

In any event, Danchenko was not able to produce phone records or other evidence to corroborate this alleged call, despite explicit requests by the FBI to do so.<sup>1058</sup> Nor does it appear from FBI records that Crossfire Hurricane personnel pulled and reviewed Danchenko's toll records in an attempt to corroborate his statements regarding an anonymous call. Danchenko surmised during one interview that the purported call may have been received on an encrypted phone "app,"<sup>1059</sup> although a review of his email messages to Millian reflect that he made no mention of having or using any phone apps. Consistent with his inability to keep his narrative straight, Danchenko also later told the FBI that he had a "couple" of calls with Millian.<sup>1060</sup>

Danchenko also told the FBI that "Source D" in Steele Report 2016/080, relating in part to the scandalous Moscow Ritz Carlton allegations against Trump, "could be" referring to Millian.<sup>1061</sup> Danchenko's efforts to partially attribute the Ritz Carlton allegations to Millian support the notion that he fabricated his interaction with Millian. Indeed, as noted above, Danchenko told the FBI that the information he obtained from Millian came from a single, 10-15-minute anonymous phone call that took place in late-July 2016 and was the only time that Danchenko allegedly communicated with Millian. Given that the Steele Report containing those sexual allegations was dated June 20, 2016 – *over a month prior* to Danchenko's alleged call with Millian, the above-described "Source D" (Millian) allegation concerning the Ritz Carlton is highly probative of the fact that there was never such a phone call between Danchenko and Millian.<sup>1062</sup> It would have been impossible for Millian to confirm the Ritz Carlton allegations (and other information) to Danchenko in June 2016 because, as Danchenko repeatedly informed the FBI, the *first* time he allegedly communicated with Millian was late July 2016.

*ii. Steele's statements to the FBI about Millian*

On September 18 and 19, 2017, FBI personnel from the Mueller Special Counsel investigation interviewed Steele. Steele stated, in part, that Danchenko had collected election-

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<sup>1056</sup> SCO-005801 (Interview of Igor Danchenko Electronic Communication dated 02/09/2017) at 37.

<sup>1057</sup> *E.g., Sergei Millian: Donald Trump will improve relations with Russia*, RIA Novosti (Apr. 13, 2016).

<sup>1058</sup> SCO\_105282 (CHS Reporting Document dated 06/01/2017).

<sup>1059</sup> Transcript of March 16, 2017 interview of Danchenko at 106-107.

<sup>1060</sup> SCO\_105286 (CHS Reporting Document dated 11/13/2017).

<sup>1061</sup> SCO\_105282 (CHS Reporting Document dated 06/01/2017).

<sup>1062</sup> SCO-105084 (Documents Known to the FBI Comprising the "Steele Dossier") at 2-4, (Company Intelligence Report 2016/080).