

Following the identification of Steele's Primary Sub-Source as Igor Danchenko, a former Brookings Institute analyst residing in northern Virginia, nearly all commentary has focused on the Danchenko's ramshackle Russian network of sources. Lindsay Graham and others quickly told one and all that it was "Russian disinformation" that had deceived the FBI, as though the only fault of the Dudley Do-Right straight-shooters of the FBI was that they were, if anything, too honest to see through the disinformation from Danchenko's dastardly network.

However, the lurid Steele dossier allegations of collusion between the Trump campaign and Russian leadership<sup>1</sup> did **not** originate as bar talk or gossip in Russia. **Nor** were they "Russian disinformation" planted to Danchenko's sources in Russia.

The truth is much more troubling: the collusion allegations were not "**Russian** disinformation", but "British disinformation" or "US disinformation".

### **Collusion and Source E**

As Horowitz observed, the collusion allegations were set out "most descriptively" in report 95, undated, but approximately July 26-27<sup>2</sup>. It stated that, according to Source E, "speaking in confidence to a compatriot in late July 2016", there was a "well-developed conspiracy of co-operation between [Trump and his team] and the Russian leadership", with Putin motivated because he "hated and feared" Hillary Clinton – a phrase repeated in the ICA.<sup>3</sup>

1. 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.

Source E described an unholy bargain between Trump campaign and the "Russian regime" in which Russia would hack and leak the DNC emails through Wikileaks in exchange for Trump campaign soft-pedaling confrontation with Russia over Ukraine:

2. Inter alia, Source E, acknowledged that the Russian regime had been behind the recent leak of embarrassing e-mail messages, emanating from the Democratic National Committee (DNC), to the WikiLeaks platform.

The reason for using WikiLeaks was "plausible deniability" and the operation had been conducted with the full knowledge and support of TRUMP and senior members of his campaign team. In return the TRUMP team had agreed to sideline Russian intervention in Ukraine as a campaign issue and to raise US/NATO defence commitments in the Baltics and Eastern Europe to deflect attention away from Ukraine, a priority for PUTIN who needed to cauterise the subject.

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<sup>1</sup> As Horowitz noted, these are set out most descriptively in Report 95, undated but apparently ~July 26, 2016.

<sup>2</sup> Steele Dossier. Version <https://www.documentcloud.org/documents/3259984-Trump-Intelligence-Allegations.html>, as linked by Ken Bensinger, Buzzfeed on Jan 10, 2017. <https://www.buzzfeed.com/kenbensinger/these-reports-allege-trump-has-deep-ties-to-russia>

<sup>3</sup> ODNI, Assessing Russian Activities and Intentions in Recent US Elections, January 6, 2017. [https://www.dni.gov/files/documents/ICA\\_2017\\_01.pdf](https://www.dni.gov/files/documents/ICA_2017_01.pdf)

Many similar allegations were attributed to Source E in report 97 (dated July 30) and report 102 (dated August 10).

On October 3, 2016, Steele identified Sergei Millian, a Russian-speaking US citizen originally from Belarus, a Trump supporter with tenuous connections to Trump world, to the FBI as Source E<sup>4</sup>. Steele also told the FBI that Millian was Source D in Report 80<sup>5</sup>, who, in June 2016, had supposedly “confirmed” allegations that the Kremlin had “feeding intelligence” to Trump “for several years”, as well as being source for notorious “golden showers” story, through having “been present” in Moscow on the occasion.

2. In terms of specifics, Source A confided that the Kremlin had been feeding TRUMP and his team valuable intelligence on his opponents, including Democratic presidential candidate Hillary CLINTON, for several years (see more below). This was confirmed by Source D, a close associate of TRUMP who had organized and managed his recent trips to Moscow, and who reported, also in June 2016, that this Russian intelligence had been “very helpful”. The Kremlin’s cultivation operation on TRUMP also had comprised offering him various lucrative real estate development business deals in Russia, especially in relation to the ongoing 2018 World Cup soccer tournament. However, so far, for reasons unknown, TRUMP had not taken up any of these.
3. However, there were other aspects to TRUMP’s engagement with the Russian authorities. One which had borne fruit for them was to exploit TRUMP’s personal obsessions and sexual perversion in order to obtain suitable ‘kompromat’ (compromising material) on him. According to Source D, where s/he had been present, TRUMP’s (perverted) conduct in Moscow included hiring the presidential suite of the Ritz Carlton Hotel, where he knew President and Mrs OBAMA (whom he hated) had stayed on one of their official trips to Russia, and defiling the bed where they had slept by employing a number of prostitutes to perform a ‘golden showers’ (urination) show in front of him. The hotel was known to be under FSB control with microphones and concealed cameras in all the main rooms to record anything they wanted to.

It was allegations from source E, not the gossip from Danchenko’s Russian network, that was at issue in the ICA (Intel Community Assessment, Jan 6, 2017)<sup>6</sup>, that were relied upon in the Carter Page FISA warrant<sup>7</sup> and which ultimately led to the Mueller inquiry.

### Millian’s Version

Millian denies that he was the “anonymous caller” or that he **ever** talked to Danchenko.

Millian’s Facebook (which, unlike Danchenko’s remains online and visible) shows that he arrived in Seoul, Korea on July 14<sup>8</sup> and was in Dubai on July 26<sup>9</sup>. He was provably overseas when Danchenko received the supposed anonymous call and, on July 26, when Danchenko went to New York to try to encounter Millian.

<sup>4</sup> Horowitz Report, p 110. <https://www.justice.gov/storage/120919-examination.pdf>, in which Millian is designated as Person 1. Millian was publicly identified as the supposed Source E on January 24, 2017 by Mark Maremont in the Wall St Journal (<https://www.wsj.com/articles/key-claims-in-trump-dossier-came-from-head-of-russian-american-business-group-source-1485253804>), which, by coincidence or not, was the first day of Danchenko’s FBI interview.

<sup>5</sup> Horowitz Report, fn 344 (page 191).

<sup>6</sup> ODNI, Assessing Russian Activities and Intentions in Recent US Elections, January 6, 2017. [https://www.dni.gov/files/documents/ICA\\_2017\\_01.pdf](https://www.dni.gov/files/documents/ICA_2017_01.pdf)

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.judiciary.senate.gov/download/04/16/2020/fisa-warrant-application-for-carter-page-1>

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/sergio.millian/posts/10153975079843229>

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/sergio.millian/posts/10154005698433229>

Subsequent to Danchenko's identification, we asked Millian to search his records from summer 2016 for emails from Millian. Millian reported, both privately to us by DM and later publicly on Twitter, that he receives that he received two emails from Danchenko – on July 21 and August 18.

In the first (July 21) email (in Russian)<sup>10</sup>, Danchenko pretended to have an inquiry from a Swiss construction company, claimed to have “nothing to do with media” but also wanted to ask Millian about Trump's travel to Russia:

Hello Sergey!

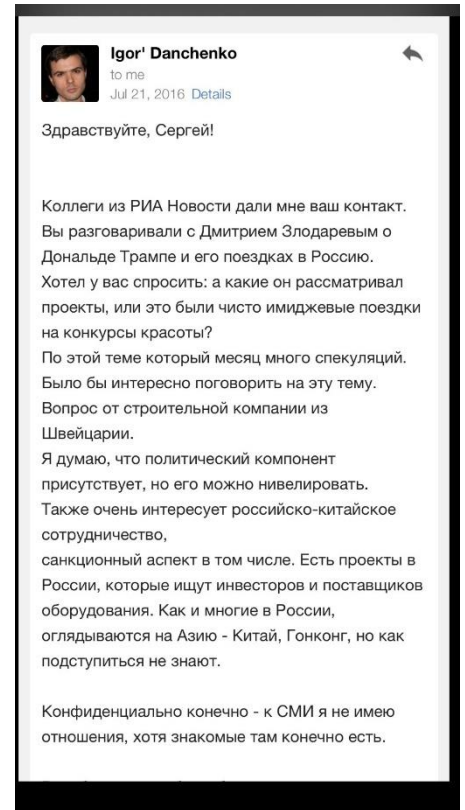
Colleagues from RIA Novosti gave me your contact. You spoke with Dmitry Zlodorev about Donald Trump and his travels to Russia. I wanted to ask you: what projects did he consider, or were they purely fashion trips to beauty contests? There has been a lot of speculation on this topic for a month. It would be interesting to talk about this topic.

Question from a construction company in Switzerland. I think there is a political component, but it can be leveled. I am also very interested in Russian-Chinese cooperation, the sanctions aspect including. There are projects in Russia that are looking for investors and equipment suppliers. Like many in Russia, they look back at Asia - China, Hong Kong, but they don't know how to approach.

Confidentially, of course - I have nothing to do with the media, although there are certainly acquaintances there. In any case, it would be interesting if possible to talk to you by phone or meet for coffee/beer in Washington or New York where I will be next week. I myself am in Washington. You can also by email. mail in Russian or in English.

I sent you a request on LinkedIn - my work is clearer there.

Igor Danchenko  
Business Analyst  
Target Labs Inc.



On July 26, while still traveling in Asia, Millian sent an email inquiry to Zlodorev, asking who “Igor” was, also mentioning that he (Millian) would be returning on July 29<sup>11</sup>. This is presumably how Zlodorev knew that Millian would be “hard to reach” when Danchenko, in New York on July 26, sought his assistance in locating Millian.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>10</sup> Published by Millian on July 25, 2020: <https://twitter.com/SergeiMillian/status/1287119778302263296>

<sup>11</sup> DM from Millian

<sup>12</sup> Interview, pdf 38. USPERS2 is convincingly identified by context and character counts as Dmitri Zlodorev of RIA Novosti.

On August 18, Danchenko sent a second email to Millian, this time attempting pitch a land deal near Moscow.

Subject: A question about the land in the Kaluga region, a short meeting in NY or DC.

“Hello Sergey.

I wrote to you a few weeks ago. We are in touch on LinkedIn.

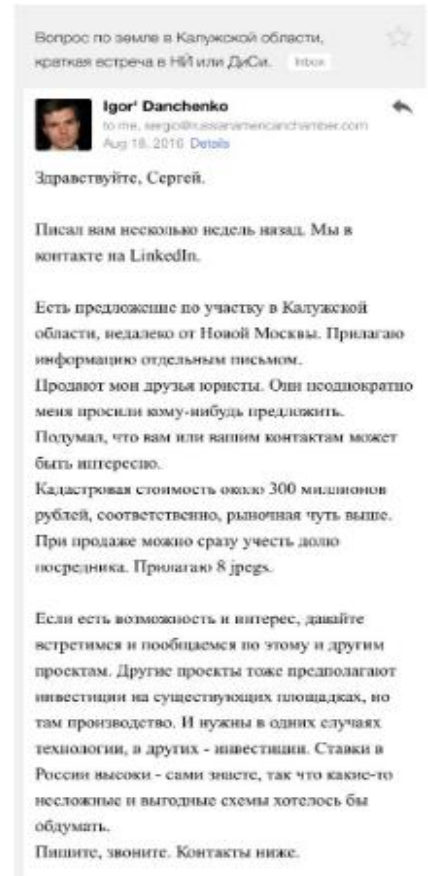
There is a proposal for a site in the Kaluga region, not far from New Moscow. I am attaching the information in a separate letter. My friends are lawyers. They repeatedly asked me to suggest someone. I thought that you or your contacts might be interested.

The cadastral value is about 300 million rubles, respectively, the market value is slightly higher. When selling, you can immediately take into account the share of the intermediary. Attached are 8 jpegs. If there is an opportunity and interest, let us meet and talk about this and other projects. Other projects also involve investments in existing sites, but production is there. And, in some cases, technology is needed, in others - investment.

The stakes in Russia are high - you know it yourself, so I would like to consider some simple and profitable schemes.

Write, call. Contacts below.

Respectfully,  
Igor Danchenko  
Business Analyst  
Target Labs Inc.



Millian paid no attention to this email. His explanation to us was that a real estate deal in Russia was simply irrelevant to him: his broker’s licence was in the US, not in Russia. Danchenko’s idea of “bait” for Millian was misconceived.

For the purposes of understanding Millian’s supposed connection to the Steele dossier, this email is an important fixed point: it verifies that, as of August 18, 2016, Danchenko and Millian had not been in contact with one another.

## Danchenko’s Narrative

In the recently released Danchenko Interview<sup>13</sup>, Millian’s name was redacted, but, based on context and character count, is named as Source 6.

## The Anonymous Call and the Collusion Narrative

Danchenko told the FBI that he emailed Millian twice, but his **only**<sup>14</sup> actual contact with Source 6 was a single “very strange” 10-15 telephone conversation with an anonymous

<sup>13</sup> FBI, Electronic Communication, Feb 9, 2017. Interview of [Igor Danchenko], pdf 22.

<https://www.judiciary.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/February%209,%202017%20Electronic%20Communication.pdf>

<sup>14</sup> Interview, 22, 39:

(U//FOUO) Besides the 10-15 minute conversation, [Primary Subsource] had no further contact with [Source 6] (or the person he believed to be [Source 6]).

Russian male who did not identify himself, but who Danchenko “believed” to be Millian, at the end of which they “tentatively” agreed to meet in New York<sup>15</sup> later in July.

(U//FOUO) Primary Subsource reached out to Source 6 via email twice. He never received a response from the first attempt, but after the second attempt, he received in circa late 2016 a very strange phone call from a Russian male who he believed to be Source 6, but who never identified himself. The individual on the other end of the call never identified himself. The two of them talked for a bit, and the two of them tentatively agreed to meet in person in US City at the end of July.

From the context, this single anonymous call (if it is real) was received prior to July 26, the date when, according to his Facebook, Danchenko traveled to New York<sup>16</sup>, and after July 21, the date on which Millian received the first email from Danchenko.

Danchenko told<sup>17</sup> that the FBI that he and the anonymous caller had a “general discussion about Trump and the Kremlin”, that the anonymous caller said that there was an ongoing relationship and “ ‘exchange of information’ between Trump and the Kremlin” but that “there was ‘nothing bad about it’”, that the “Kremlin might be of help to get Trump elected”, but Danchenko “did not recall any discussion or mention of Wikileaks”.<sup>18</sup> It cannot be sufficiently emphasized that this single anonymous telephone call stands as the **only** support for the collusion allegations cited in the ICA and resistance narrative.

On July 26, Danchenko traveled to New York with a companion<sup>19</sup>, supposedly to rendezvous with the anonymous caller, but it seems to have been, at least in part, a sightseeing trip. The FBI, unaccountably, does not seem to have pressed Danchenko for details on how, when and where he planned to meet with Millian/the anonymous caller. It seems more plausible that Danchenko, perhaps under pressure from Steele progress, went to New York in the hope of obtaining a meeting with Millian once he was there. After arrival in New York, Danchenko contacted Dmitry Zlodorev, the RISA Novosti reporter who had interviewed Millian in April 2016<sup>20</sup>. But Zlodorev told Danchenko that Millian would be “hard to reach” [because he was in Asia]<sup>21</sup>. Danchenko told the FBI that he informed Steele of Millian’s “whereabouts” [Asia],<sup>22</sup> presumably on or about July 26, the approximate date of the crucial Report 95.

The FBI did not ask Danchenko how, or even whether, he had briefed Steele on the anonymous telephone call. They asked detailed questions about how Steele de-briefed

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<sup>15</sup> Redacted, but easily interpolated as New York.

<sup>16</sup> Saved by Hans Mahncke,...

<sup>17</sup> Interview, 39.

<sup>18</sup> FBI Supervisory Intel Analyst [Brian Auten] told the OIG that he was concerned that the PSS “could have been minimizing his relationship with the sub-source [Millian]”: Horowitz, 192 (pdf 231)

<sup>19</sup> Interview of [Igor Danchenko], 22. Danchenko was accompanied to New York by a companion whose identity was redacted, but the redaction can plausibly be interpreted as “his daughter”. Facebook, ...

of July. At the end of July, Primary Subsource traveled with SIA to US City, but the meeting never took place and no one ever called

<sup>20</sup> redacted, but convincingly identified by @walkafyre

<sup>21</sup> Zlodorev was aware of Millian’s location, because, earlier on Jul 26, Millian had emailed Zlodorev, seeking information on the “Igor” who had emailed Millian five days earlier. ‘

<sup>22</sup> Interview of [Igor Danchenko], pdf 39. Danchenko then spent a few days sightseeing in New York: FB archived by Hans Mahncke.

Danchenko after his trips to Russia (orally in Steele's office in London)<sup>23</sup>, but neglected to ask Danchenko about the most critical de-briefing – the de-briefing on Danchenko's purported espionage in the US. Steele was in Washington DC (close to Danchenko's residence) at the time. On July 29, Steele (accompanied by a young man, perhaps Kieran Porter) had breakfast with Bruce and Nellie Ohr. Later in the day, Steele met with Michael Sussmann of Perkins Coie (the DNC and Clinton campaign) lawyers, who briefed Steele on the supposed secret communications between Trump Tower and Alfa Bank.<sup>24</sup>

One presumes that the FBI would have carried out the routine police work required to verify the existence of the anonymous call to Danchenko and to identify the caller. This was, after all, the only provenance of the most important and explosive allegation of the ICA. But, in this case, nothing can be taken for granted. At present, no information is available on the results of FBI investigation of the anonymous call. If they were able to identify an anonymous call, who was the caller? If not, was this reported to senior levels of the FBI and DOJ? If not, why not?

#### Golden Showers

In addition to attribution as the source of collusion allegations, Millian (Source D/Source 6) had also been named as the source of the "golden showers" (Report 80 paragraph 3).

However, Danchenko told<sup>25</sup> the FBI that the paragraph 3 information came, not from Source 6 (Millian), but from Source 2, a Russian friend who persistently hustled Danchenko to find paying gigs and who got Danchenko to bring him Scottish banknotes through customs. In response to Danchenko's inquiry on "whether he knew of any compromising materials on Trump", Source 2, who had no personal knowledge of the supposed incident, had told Danchenko that there was a "well-known story" that "Trump was 'into water sports'". Danchenko asked managers at the Ritz Carlton about "this stuff about Trump at the hotel", but they "laughed it off", saying that "all kinds of things happen at the hotel". Danchenko was unable to confirm anything.

Steele switched the attribution from Source 2 to Source D (Millian), who Steele described as "hav[ing] been present" and in possession of first hand knowledge. Steele's fabrication ought not to have passed even an initial smell test: Millian was not even in Moscow for the 2013 Trump beauty pageant; Steele confused Millian's story about a 2008 real estate business trip with the more famous 2013 trip. Steele's claim that the hotel management had "confirmed" the story was pure embellishment and fabrication; they had done nothing of the sort.

#### **The ICA**

Except for their use in the ICA, none of this would have mattered. But because these allegations were cited in the ICA, they became as damaging a "poison pill" to the incoming administration as can be contemplated.

The ICA did not disclose that, at best, the collusion allegations came from a single anonymous call to Danchenko, attributed to someone that Danchenko had never met, who was in Asia at the time and who vehemently denied the call. Nor did the ICA disclose that Steele had falsely attributed Millian as the origin of the 'golden showers' story and falsely

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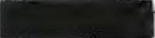
<sup>23</sup> Interview, 47-49.

<sup>24</sup> Sussmann was running a sort of parallel influence campaign on this issue. In October, he briefed FBI General Counsel James Baker, a personal friend, on the topic.

<sup>25</sup> Interview: 41-42

claimed confirmation, when the story was nothing more than internet rumor and/or bar talk or gossip in Russia.

The ICA stated, **without caveat**, that Steele's information came from a "layered network of identified and unidentified subsources, some of which has been corroborated in the past".

-  The source is an executive of a private business intelligence firm and a former employee of a friendly foreign intelligence service who has been compensated for previous reporting over the past three years. The source maintains and collects information from a layered network of identified and unidentified subsources, some of which has been corroborated in the past. The source collected this information on behalf of private clients and was not compensated for it by the FBI.

This claim was about as false as one could imagine. At best, the collusion allegations originated with an anonymous call, supposedly from a US citizen to Danchenko then in northern Virginia. Even if this call took place (which seems dubious), the information in the call did not come from Danchenko's Russian network, but arose because of Danchenko's espionage activities in the US.

The collusion allegations did not originate with bar talk or gossip in Russia by Danchenko's Russian network, that were given too much credence by US intel. Nor were they a conflation of "analytic conclusions" and source information. Nor did they originate with false information planted to Danchenko's sources in Russia.

The truth is much less convenient and much more disturbing: rather than "Russian disinformation", the false collusion allegations were "British disinformation" and/or "US disinformation".

July 30, 2020.