SENATE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE
U.S. SENATE
WASHINGTON, D.C.

INTERVIEW OF: RINAT AKHMETSHIN

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 14, 2017
WASHINGTON, D.C.

The interview in this matter was held at the U.S. Capitol Building, , commencing at 9:42 a.m.
APPEARANCES:

SENATE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE:

1 Jason A. Foster, Chief Investigative Counsel, Chairman Grassley
2 Patrick Davis, Deputy Chief Investigative Counsel, Chairman Grassley
3 Katherine Nikas, Investigative Counsel, Chairman Grassley
4 Joshua Flynn-Brown, Investigative Counsel, Chairman Grassley
5 Daniel P. Parker, Investigative Assistant, Chairman Grassley
6 Lee Holmes, Chief Counsel, Senator Graham
7 Brian Privor, Senior Counsel, Senator Feinstein
8 Heather Sawyer, General Counsel, Senator Feinstein
9 Molly M. Claflin, Counsel, Senator Feinstein
10 Jennifer Piatt, Counsel, Senator Feinstein
11 Lara G. Quint, Chief Counsel, Senator Whitehouse
12 Caitlin Meyer, Professional Staff Member, Senator Feinstein
1 APPEARANCES (Cont'd):
2 FOR THE WITNESS:
3 Michael Tremonte, Esq.
4 Michael Gibaldi, Esq.
5
6 ALSO PRESENT:
7 Senator Richard Blumenthal
8
9
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MR. DAVIS: Good morning. This is the transcribed interview of Rinat Akhmetshin. On October 18, 2017, Chairman Grassley sent Mr. Akhmetshin a letter stating that the Judiciary Committee was seeking information related to a meeting held on June 9, 2016, at Trump Tower, as well as related matters. The letter requested an interview and certain categories of documents.

In response, Mr. Akhmetshin has through his counsel agreed to this voluntary interview and yesterday provided 13 pages of documents.

Would the witness please state your name for the record.

MR. AKHMETSHIN: Rinat Akhmetshin.

MR. DAVIS: On behalf of the Chairman, I want to thank Mr. Akhmetshin for appearing here today. My name is Patrick Davis, and I'm the Deputy Chief Investigative Counsel with the Committee's majority staff.

I'll ask everyone else from the Committee who is here to introduce themselves as well, and we'll get to Mr. Akhmetshin's counsel in just a few moments.

MR. FOSTER: I'm Jason Foster. I'm the
Chief Investigative Counsel for the Chairman,
Chairman Grassley's staff.

MR. HOLMES: Lee Holmes, Chief Counsel to
Lindsey Graham.

MS. QUINT: Lara Quint, Chief Counsel for
Senator Whitehouse.

MS. MEYER: Caitlin Meyer, Senator
Feinstein's office.

MS. CLAFLIN: Molly Claflin, Counsel for
Senator Feinstein.

MS. SAWYER: Heather Sawyer, General Counsel
for Senator Feinstein.

SENATOR BLUMENTHAL: Richard Blumenthal,
U.S. Senator, Connecticut.

MR. PRIVOR: Brian Privor, Senior Counsel
for Senator Feinstein.

MR. PARKER: Daniel Parker, Investigative
Assistant, Chairman Grassley.

MS. NIKAS: Katherine Nikas, Investigative
Counsel, Chairman Grassley.

MR. FLYNN-BROWN: Josh Flynn-Brown,
Investigative Counsel for Senator Grassley.

MR. DAVIS: The Federal Rules of Civil
Procedure do not apply to any of the Committee's
investigative activities, including transcribed
interviews. There are some guidelines we follow, and I'll go over those now.

Our questioning will proceed in rounds. The majority staff will ask questions first for one hour. Then the minority staff will have the opportunity to ask questions for an equal amount of time. We will go back and forth until there are no more questions and the interview is over.

We typically take a short break at the end of each hour, but should you need to take a break at any other time, please just let us know. We can discuss taking a break for lunch whenever you're ready to do that.

We have an official reporter taking down everything we say to make a written record, so we ask that you give verbal responses to all questions. Do you understand?

MR. AKHMETSHIN: Yes, I do, sir.

MR. DAVIS: So that the court reporter can take down a clear record, we'll do our best to limit the number of people directing questions to you during any given hour to those whose turn it is. It's also important that we don't talk over one another or interrupt each other if we can help it. That goes for everybody present at today's
1 interview.

While Senators on the Committee may
2 observe, the Chairman and Ranking Member have
3 agreed that only staff will ask questions.
4
5 We encourage witnesses who appear before
6 the Committee to consult freely with counsel if
7 they so choose. You are appearing here today with
8 counsel. Counsel, please state your name for the
9 record.

10 MR. TREMONTE: My name is Michael Tremonte.
11 MR. GIBALDI: And Michael Gibaldi.
12
13 MR. TREMONTE: And as we have indicated to
14 the court reporter, we're from the same firm,
15 which is Sher Tremonte in New York.
16
17 MR. DAVIS: We want you to answer our
18 questions in the most complete and truthful manner
19 possible, so we will take our time. If you have
20 any questions or if you don't understand any of
21 our questions, please let us know. If you
22 honestly don't know the answer to a question or
23 don't remember, it's best not to guess. Just give
24 us your best recollection. It's okay to tell us
25 if you learned information from someone else if
26 you indicate how you came to know the information.
27 If there are things that you don't know or can't
remember, we ask that you inform us to the best of
your knowledge who might be able to provide a more
complete answer to the question.

This interview is unclassified, so if any
question calls for information that you know to be
classified, please state that for the record as
well as the reason for the classification. Then
once you've clarified that, to the extent
possible, please respond with as much unclassified
information as you can. If we need to have a
classified session later, that can be arranged.

It is this Committee's practice to honor
valid common law privilege claims as an
accommodation to a witness or party when those
claims are made in good faith and accompanied by
sufficient explanation so that the Committee can
evaluate the claim. When deciding whether to
honor a privilege, the Committee weighs its need
for the information against any legitimate basis
for withholding it. The Committee typically does
not honor contractual confidentiality agreements.

You should understand that although the
interview is not under oath, by law you are
required to answer questions from Congress
truthfully. Do you understand that?
MR. AKHMETSHIN: Yes, I do, sir.

MR. DAVIS: Specifically, 18 U.S.C. Section 1001 makes it a crime to make any materially false, fictitious, or fraudulent statement or representation in the course of a congressional investigation. That statute applies to your statements in this interview. Do you understand that?

MR. AKHMETSHIN: Understood, sir.

MR. DAVIS: Witnesses who knowingly provide false statements could be subject to criminal prosecution and imprisonment for up to five years. Do you understand this?

MR. AKHMETSHIN: I do understand, sir.

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

MR. AKHMETSHIN: There is no reason.

MR. DAVIS: Finally, we ask that you not speak about what we discuss in this interview with anyone else outside of who's here in the room today in order to preserve the integrity of our investigation. We also ask that you not remove any exhibits or other Committee documents from the interview.
Is there anything else that my colleagues from the minority want to add?

MS. SAWYER: No, thank you.

MR. DAVIS: The time is now 9:47, and we will get started with our first hour of questions.

EXAMINATION BY COUNSEL FOR THE MAJORITY

BY MR. DAVIS:

Q. Please state your full name for the record.

A. Rinat Akhmetshin.

Q. Where do you currently reside?

A. I reside in Washington, D.C., [redacted].

Q. Where are you from originally?

A. I was born in Kazan, Russia, actually Soviet Union at that time.

Q. When did you move to the United States?

A. I arrived to United States in 1994.

Q. When did you become an American citizen?


Q. Are you a dual citizen of the Russian Federation or any other country?

A. I am.

Q. Is it the Russian Federation?

A. Russian Federation, correct.
Q. What is your educational background?

A. I have a Ph.D. My highest -- I have several degrees. My highest degree is a Ph.D. in bioorganic chemistry.

Q. And what is your professional background?

A. I am a consultant, media consultant, and lobbyist sometimes.

MR. DAVIS: Okay. I'd like you to take a look at a document. This is your sworn declaration from the Egiazaryan v. Zalmayev lawsuit. We'll label this Exhibit 1.

MR. AKHMETSHIN: Okay.

BY MR. DAVIS:

Q. I'd like you to look at paragraph number 5 in which you stated, "Some of my clients are national governments or high-ranking officials in those governments."

Mr. Akhmetshin, which governments have
1 been your clients. Please list every one.
2 A. I have represented Government of
3 Kyrgyzstan, and I also worked for the Government
4 of Kazakhstan.
5 Q. What was the context of your work for
6 each government client?
7 A. Government of Kyrgyzstan, I was working
8 on a number of issues for the office -- through
9 the law firm for the Office of Prosecutor General
10 of Kyrgyzstan after their revolution. And for
11 Government of Kazakhstan, I worked on issues of
12 recovering stolen money.
13 Q. And when did the work for each of those
14 countries occur?
15 A. Kyrgyzstan, I believe it was in 2005,
16 around-- I don't remember exactly, sir, but
18 Q. And for Kazakhstan?
19 A. For Kazakhstan, it was around 2009, 2010.
20 Q. How many clients do you have in an
21 average year?
22 A. Not as many as I want, but maybe one or
23 two.
Q. Have you ever worked, directly or indirectly, for the Russian Government, whether the Russian Federation or the Soviet Union?
A. I never worked for Russian Federation, and I served in the military for Soviet Union.

MR. DAVIS: Okay. I'd like you to take a look at another document. This is your deposition from the Egiazaryan v. Zalmayev lawsuit. This will be Exhibit 2.

[Pause.]

MR. DAVIS: Don't worry. We won't be going through the whole thing.

MR. TREMONTE: Good.

BY MR. DAVIS:

Q. First I'd like you to take a look at pages 58 and 59.

MR. TREMONTE: I'm sorry. Can you just give a little context on this? You said it's a deposition transcript from --

MR. DAVIS: That's right. It's from the Egiazaryan v. Zalmayev case. This was a deposition of Mr. Akhmetshin in March of 2012.

MR. TREMONTE: Thank you. Which page? 58?

MR. DAVIS: 58 and 59.

BY MR. DAVIS:

Q. The deposition contains this exchange
between the attorney and you: "Did you participate in the war in which Russia was engaged in Afghanistan before coming to the United States?"

"Answer: In some capacity."

"Question: "In what capacity?"

"Answer: Soldier."

"Question: Have you ever worked for the Russian Government other than as a soldier?"


Then a bit later on page 59, there's the following exchange:

"Question: When you served as a soldier, who did you serve for?"

"Answer: I served for the Soviet Army. I did not work."

"Question: Okay. Did you -- you work in a specific division or department when you served for the Soviet Army?"

"Answer: I was -- every soldier served in a specific department. I did serve in my unit."

"Question: What unit was that?"

"Answer: Do you need the number?"

"Question: What was the -- yes, the unit
"Answer: 1 - - 12129."

If you'll turn to pages 144 and 145, there's another passage I'd like you to review before I ask a few questions.

In this exchange, the questioner references a book by Steve LeVine titled "The Oil and the Glory." That book mentions you. The deposition has this exchange:

"Do you recall that it also refers to you as a former Soviet Army counterintelligence officer?"

"Answer: It does."

Then on line 20 of that page, "Is the statement that you are former Soviet Army counterintelligence officer a correct statement?"

"Answer: It's not, uh, exactly correct statement."

"Question: Do you know what the term 'Osobist' means?"

"Answer: Osobist, Osoby Otdel, Osobist? Yes, it's called 'Special Service.'"

"Question: And is -- is that -- were you an Osobist in the Soviet Army?"

"Answer: Our service had -- was -- has been loosely associated with these services."
"Question: Can you describe for us what you understand the term 'Osobist' to mean?"

"Answer: It's called the special department. Osoby Otdel, Special Department."

"Question: And it -- does it -- it have -- play a role in counterintelligence?"

"Answer: Some parts of it does -- do, yes."

"Question: Okay. Is the characterization of you as a counterintelligence officer accurate?"

"Answer: It's not accurate."

"Question: Did you tell him you were a counterintelligence officer?"

"Answer: I told him I was a commandant, this person."

Mr. Akhmetshin, you said in this deposition that the statement that you are a former Soviet Army counterintelligence officer is not "exactly correct." Is it partially correct?

A. It's not correct at all.

Q. Okay. What was incorrect about it?

A. I was never a -- I was served -- I served-- let me use my words carefully here. I served in a unit as a Soviet soldier of the -- as an army -- enlisted army officer, sergeant at that time. I served in a unit which provided support
for Osoby, for counterintelligence unit.

Q. Have you ever served in an intelligence or counterintelligence capacity for the Soviet Union or the Russian Federation?

A. I have not.

Q. Have you ever worked with the GRU?

A. I have never worked with GRU.

MR. FOSTER: What was your answer to the last question? I never worked with?

MR. AKHMETSHIN: I never served with GRU.

BY MR. DAVIS:

Q. Did you ever work with them informally?

A. I never worked with them informally.

Q. Have you ever worked with Osoby Otdel?

A. I served in a unit which provided support for Osoby Otdel. Army unit.

Q. Mr. Akhmetshin, have any of your family members worked for Russian intelligence?

A. They have not.

Q. Have any of your family members worked for U.S. intelligence, including the FBI?

A. No, sir.

Q. Moving on, regardless of where they are registered, which Russian companies and Russian-owned companies have you worked for?
A. I worked for -- I'll try to put it chronologically. I worked for oil company called Severnaya -- S-E-V-E-R-N-A-Y-A -- Neft -- N-E-F-T. It was in early 2000s. I worked for a hedge fund which was associated -- owned by the same person who used to own that company, which started proceedings of sale of that oil company. I have worked for -- in legal proceedings, I worked for a Russian company called EuroChem. And I think that's pretty much what comes to my mind so far.

Q. As part of your work, have you ever paid journalists to publish stories that were in your clients' interest?

A. I never paid journalists.

Q. I'd like to move on to your relationship with Ms. Veselnitskaya.

MR. TREMONTE: May we have just one moment, please?

MR. DAVIS: Of course.

[Counsel confers with witness.]

MR. AKHMETSHIN: Oh, I'm sorry. It's a Cyprus company but owned by Russian individual, Prevezon. Sorry. P-R-E-V-E-Z-O-N.

MR. TREMONTE: Yeah, and just to clarify the record, I believe Mr. Akhmetshin stated in
response to that question that he worked for at least one -- I believe it's actually two companies in a legal capacity, and I believe in those instances Mr. Akhmetshin was employed by a law firm that was in turn retained by the company, so I don't think the employment relationship is direct.

MR. DAVIS: Thank you for clarifying.

MR. TREMONTE: Sure.

BY MR. DAVIS:

Q. Did you have any other indirect employment relationships with Russian companies?

A. Not with Russian.

Q. When did you first have communications with Natalia Veselnitskaya?

A. Could you clarify? When did I meet her first?

Q. When did you interact with her first, whether it was via email or phone --

A. Understood.

Q. -- or in person?

A. I met Natalia Veselnitskaya for first time in late 2015.

Q. How did you first connect with her? Did you initiate the contact? Did she? Or did a
A. A third party initiated contact.

Q. And who was that third party?

A. A partner in a law firm.

Q. Was it a partner from BakerHostetler?

A. It was a partner in BakerHostetler.

Q. And was it Mark Cymrot or --

A. It was Mark Cymrot.

Q. To the best of your knowledge, is Ms. Veselnitskaya an attorney for the Russian Government?

A. I don't believe so.

Q. Do you know if she ever has been an attorney for the Russian Government?

A. She served as assistant Russian -- she served in an office of -- Russian prosecutor's office.

MR. TREMONTE: Okay. Just again, so the record's clear, you were asked do you know. Do you have firsthand knowledge of that or is that something you --

MR. AKHMETSHIN: I learned it from the media.

BY MR. DAVIS:

Q. From the media, okay. Not from Ms.
Q. When you first interacted with Ms. Veselnitskaya, what did you understand her business to be?
A. My understanding was and she was introduced to me as a co-counsel, Russian co-counsel for the civil forfeiture case in Southern District of New York.

Q. And as far as you understood it, was she representing -- was she Prevezon Holdings' attorney or a personal attorney for Mr. Katsyv? Or both?
A. I'm not sure.

Q. What is your understanding of her relationship with Prevezon Holdings?
A. My understanding that she first of all was a close personal friend of the owner of Prevezon, but also she was a co-counsel. I would believe that -- I never -- to be honest, I never kind of made that distinction. She was there always. But my understanding that she was a co-counsel for Prevezon in those proceedings.

Q. And what's your understanding of her
1 relationship with Denis Katsyv?
2     A. I believe that she also represented him
3 on a previous -- she told me that she represented
4 him in previous legal proceedings in Russia, and I
5 know for a fact that they're very old friends.
6     Q. What's your understanding of her
7 relationship with Pyotr --
8     MR. FOSTER: Before you go on, what were
9 those previous legal proceedings, if she told you?
10 What were they about?
11     MR. AKHMETSHIN: She mentioned to me that
12 there was an extortion case. There was -- Denis
13 Katsyv, there was an attempt to extort him, and
14 they kind of fought that case, and the people who
15 tried to extort him were imprisoned.
16 BY MR. DAVIS:
17     Q. What is your understanding of Ms.
18 Veselnitskaya's relationship with Pyotr Katsyv?
19     A. I'm not aware of that. I'm sure they're
20 -- I might have seen them together once, but I'm
21 not sure about the extent of their relations.
22     Q. All right. What's your understanding of
23 her relationship with Aras Agalarov?
24     A. I'm not aware of this.
25     Q. With Emin Agalarov?
A. I'm not aware of this relations.

Q. And what about her relationship with Yuri Chaika?

A. I'm not aware of this relations.

Q. Has Ms. Veselnitskaya ever directly paid you for your services?

A. She has never paid me directly.

Q. Were you ever paid by Prevezon Holdings or its affiliated companies?

A. I have never been paid by Prevezon Holdings.

Q. What was your relationship, if any, with Prevezon Holdings?

A. I worked as a consultant for the law firm, which -- U.S. law firm which represented Prevezon in civil forfeiture proceedings in Southern District of New York.

Q. Was that BakerHostetler?

A. It was BakerHostetler, yes, sir.

Q. Did you continue as a consultant on that case after Baker and Hostetler ceased to be attorney of record?

A. No.

Q. So is it correct then that you were paid for this work by BakerHostetler?
A. That is correct, sir.

Q. Okay. Do you know Ed Lieberman?

A. I do know Ed Lieberman.

Q. When did you first meet him?

A. I met Ed Lieberman first in the fall of 1998.

Q. As far as you know, what is Mr. Lieberman's business?

A. Mr. Lieberman is an attorney.

Q. And what is the nature of your relationship with him?

A. He was -- he was an attorney for my first employer here in -- one of my first employers here in Washington, D.C., while he was a partner at Coudert Brothers, C-O-U-D-E-R-T Brothers, law firm. And after he left that practice, he and I, we represent a number of clients together.

Q. And who was your first employer here?

A. My first employer was Zurich-based foundation called Kazakhstan 21st Century Foundation.

Q. What did you understand Mr. Lieberman's role to be in the Prevezon- and Magnitsky Act-related work?

A. It is my understanding that Mr. Lieberman
provided legal opinion for proceedings in -- in connection with the civil forfeiture case in Southern District of New York on Prevezon.

Q. What was your involvement with Mr. Lieberman in the course of the Prevezon-Magnitsky work?

A. I never worked directly with him. I had my own -- he is a tax attorney, so he -- I believe he provided -- he's actually very well established and well-respected tax attorney. And so he was invited to provide a legal opinion on and he had done extensive work in Russian -- in Soviet Union and Russian Federation. So he is an expert on both Russian and U.S. taxation.

Q. Can you please explain how and why the Human Rights Accountability Global Initiative was created?

A. That foundation was created to advance a number of issues here in Washington, D.C., and its ultimate goal was to restart adoption of Russian orphans by U.S. citizens.

Q. And was the predicate for that restoration removing the Magnitsky Act?

A. No, sir.

Q. What actions did you view as necessary to
A. As I mentioned -- if I may explain, as I mentioned, there were like ultimate goal and a few intermediate goals around that, so I will give you the historic background.

In the course of my work for BakerHostetler, I was invited to analyze some documents and -- both in Russian and English, documents from the docket in the civil forfeiture case. And while reviewing these documents, I discovered that some of the English translations which were filed -- of some documents which were filed with the court in Southern District are inaccurate and falsified. So, for example, there will be a deposition, protocol deposition of a witness, for example, actually Mr. Magnitsky, and that protocol was -- and it had this -- it's all handwritten, and then there would be an English translation, since I speak both Russian and English, and I read them side by side. And in the English translation, I've seen like large paragraphs of text which did not exist in the Russian original. They had PDF Xerox copies of -- Xerox copies of those documents. And it was interesting. The parts where it absolutely --
like not even related to these things, and then
the description of the document was -- for
example, the document would be deposition of the
interrogation of someone who is suspected in like
tax case, but in English translation it will say
like this is the first report, whistleblowing
report of thing where not even like where these
like policemen were indicated. And there are not
even names of policemen in Russian documents.
They’re not even mentioned by name or nothing of
any whistleblowing activity was even existed in
that thing.
So I find it shocking, and so -- and I
discovered a number of inconsistencies in the
process of reviewing documents in the docket in
Southern District, and I alerted partners, partner
from BakerHostetler to those inconsistencies.
In addition to that, I also reviewed
these video interviews of one of the persons who
was initiated -- who initiated that case in
Southern District and also reviewed his
testimonies to Congress. At least at that time
there were two testimonies which I studied
carefully, and I found the completely different
descriptions of events in each case. And then,
you know, there were like other kind of explanations of those events in other things. So the story was ever changing.

Q. Was that Mr. Browder's testimony?

A. That is correct, sir. Yes.

Q. I didn't mean to cut you off. Continue.

A. Yes, sir. So I alerted Mark Cymrot from BakerHostetler of this thing, and he suggested me to present these findings to his clients. And so having said that, I also looked into this Magnitsky law. So when I see, and it was very often, it's written that, you know, just I worked to overturn sanctions to please Kremlin, that's absolutely not true. In the process of my work, I -- the only thing I -- I circulated two documents to the members and staff on the relevant committees and subcommittees, and at no point, at no time did I ask to overturn sanctions. I actually supported passage of this global law. But I encouraged Members of U.S. Congress to check the facts, because I also discovered that the facts of Magnitsky story which were presented by Mr. Browder to the U.S. Congress were never checked, factually checked for accuracy. And also I discovered that he was convicted of tax fraud
for which Mr. Magnitsky was interrogated, so the only thing I ever asked in the process of my lobbying work in connection with that bill was to investigate the facts of this thing, and just it wasn't very difficult, and I provided examples of inaccuracies of these things.

Q. So was that action undertaken as part of the Human Rights Accountability Global Initiative, or was that as part of your work as a consultant for Baker and Hostetler --

A. No, it was done for --

Q. Or both?

A. No, sir. It was done explicitly in my capacity as working lobbyist for HRAGI. HRAGI, H-R-A-G-I. That's interchangeable with Human Accountability.

MR. FOSTER: I'm sorry. So could you just back up then and explain generally speaking what your -- the nature of your consultant work for BakerHostetler and Prevezon was? What was your role? What were you doing?

MR. TREMONTE: So Mr. Akhmetshin will do his best to provide an answer that doesn't tread on the attorney-client privilege, but I think at a general level he can give an explanation.
MR. FOSTER: I'm not asking for communications with the client. I'm asking what was the nature of his work.

MR. TREMONTE: Okay.

MR. AKHMETSHIN: Yeah, thank you. I was brought in to -- and I do that work I would say frequently, but I've done that work before. I was brought in to review documents in run-up to -- BakerHostetler was about to conduct a number of depositions of both -- of people, people in connection with that civil forfeiture case. And some of them were like U.S. agents, Treasury agents, Homeland Security agents. There was Mr. Browder and some number of other people. So I was invited to review their statements and things they said and check those statements for accuracy or find some inconsistencies, which I found many.

BY MR. DAVIS:

Q. Whose idea was it to start HRAGI?

A. It was my suggestion to Mr. Katsyv to start HRAGI.

Q. And when did you formally begin HRAGI?

A. I did not start HRAGI. HRAGI was set up by Mr. Katsyv's lawyers. So I only worked for HRAGI in a capacity of lobbyist. I was paid by
1 HRAGI for -- to provide advice and some research
2 and lobbying activities.
3 BY MR. FOSTER:
4 Q. With whom did you discuss the idea to
5 start HRAGI?
6 A. I discussed that idea to start HRAGI with
7 Mr. Katsyv and Ms. Veselnitskaya.
8 Q. Anyone else?
9 A. It was first time when I met them, that
10 was kind of thing -- I alerted them to these
11 inconsistencies, and that's -- and they asked what
12 can be done. I said that, you know, just this has
13 to be publicized, but there should be a forum in
14 which these facts should be kind of exposed or
15 addressed. So that was -- and they asked me what
16 was my advice, and as a long-time D.C. resident, I
17 know there's nothing better like taking these
18 things to the Hill.
19 BY MR. DAVIS:
20 Q. Did Mr. Lieberman have a role in HRAGI?
21 A. Mr. Lieberman was legal adviser to HRAGI.
22 Q. And what was HRAGI's relationship with
23 Prevezon Holdings?
24 A. I am not aware of any relations with
25 HRAGI with Prevezon.
MR. DAVIS: Okay. I'd like to look at a document Bates-stamped RA-SEN-JUDICIARY-000001. This will be Exhibit 3.

[Akhmetshin Exhibit 3 was marked for identification.]

BY MR. DAVIS:

Q. This is one of the documents your attorneys provided us. This is an email from a Bloomberg News reporter to you in December of 2015. He states that he was told, "you were handling media calls for Denis Katsyv and his Prevezon companies." Were you handling media relations for Denis Katsyv and the Prevezon companies at this time?

A. I approached Bloomberg with some of my findings. I approached their courts editor whom I have known before from other cases, and I alerted them about some of the inconsistencies in the docket. I never represented Mr. Katsyv in a public relation capacity, but I've done this work in my capacity of working for Prevezon for BakerHostetler.

Q. Okay. So you were providing information to the journalist but not acting as -- what did you say, public --
A. Public -- I was not a public affairs consultant for Mr. Katsyv.

Q. Okay. Your response email states in part, "I am traveling this week, but my colleague Glenn Simpson, cc'd, will be able to brief you on the particulars of the case." So is it correct that Mr. Simpson was handling media relations for Denis Katsyv and Prevezon?

A. I believe at that time Prevezon was seeking consultant, public relation consultant, and they eventually hired PR firm. But in the interim, that role was played by some people. In some capacity I reached out, and then Glenn Simpson was providing some also work in that case for -- I mean, his firm was working in that same case, and since he's a former journalist, he knew the particulars of the case, and I thought he will be a good person to brief. And I previously asked him whether he'll be comfortable doing that, and he agreed to kind of step in.

Q. What was HRAGI's relationship with Fusion GPS?

A. There were no relationship with HRAGI and Fusion GPS.

Q. Okay. And you'll --
MR. AKHMETSHIN: Excuse me. Do you mind, could I have some water?

MR. TREMONTÉ: Water? I'll get it for you.

No problem.

MR. AKHMETSHIN: I don't talk that much.

[Pause.]

MR. DAVIS: I'd like you to take a look at the document Bates-stamped RA-SEN-JUDICIARY-000005. This will be Exhibit 4.

[Akhmetshin Exhibit 4 was marked for identification.]

BY MR. DAVIS:

Q. This is another email provided by your counsel. It's an email from Glenn Simpson to Natalia Veselnitskaya, you, and Murat Glashev. It was sent on February 4, 2016. Mr. Simpson writes, "Natalia, I understand the meeting is tonight at 9:00, but Rinat suggested we get together beforehand. Are you free later this afternoon or for dinner?"

What is the meeting at 9:00 he refers to?

A. I don't remember exactly. Maybe dinner?

Q. Did you meet with Mr. Simpson and Ms. Veselnitskaya along with the legal team working on the Prevezon case at any time?
A. I have, yes.

Q. Is it correct then that you had a relationship with Fusion GPS in the course of your consultant work for BakerHostetler on the Prevezon case?

A. I did not have relations with them. They were co-consultants.

Q. So you were working together on the same project?

A. Not together. Again, as I mentioned, I had very narrow kind of scope of work. Their work was different. But I never worked directly with them.

Q. Okay. Do you have any idea why Mr. Simpson would have been suggesting that you meet before the 9 o'clock meeting?

A. I don't remember.

Q. Okay. Fusion GPS provided research that HRAGI used in its lobbying efforts; is that correct?

A. Fusion GPS, let me explain it correctly. It is my understanding that there is some research which Fusion GPS have done for the Prevezon case, in the civil forfeiture case, and that research was later recycled for some of the
work which was done on behalf of HRAGI.

Q. Okay.

A. HRAGI has never retained Fusion GPS or other way around.

BY MR. FOSTER:

Q. So how did it come to be recycled?

A. Once you learn the facts, it's hard to unlearn them, so...

Q. So you mean you learned them in the course of working on the Prevezon case, and then you used that information for HRAGI's purposes?

A. Correct.

Q. Without paying Mr. Simpson directly for it?

A. He was -- I never paid Mr. Simpson. But the results of this research were reflected in the filings in the court, so it's a docket containing pretty much every single thing which they did, so I could tell that I researched -- I used the research from docket in that civil forfeiture case. So let's put it -- that will be more correct so to say that I used the HRAGI -- HRAGI used the research of Global GPS will not be correct, or used these facts which came out as a result of that work which was reflected in the
docket in the civil forfeiture case.

BY MR. DAVIS:

Q. NBC News recently published an article based on an interview with Ms. Veselnitskaya titled, "Trump Dossier Firm Also Supplied Info Used in Meeting of Russians, Trump Team," which I'll label as Exhibit 5.

[Akhmetshin Exhibit 5 was marked for identification.]

MR. AKHMETSHIN: A picture of Mr. Simpson.

[Pause.]

BY MR. DAVIS:

Q. I'd like to go over a somewhat lengthy excerpt from this article. The article states, "In an interview with NBC News" --

A. Which -- I'm sorry. Which -- can I find it?

Q. Oh, sure.

A. The second paragraph you started quoting, right?

Q. It is the second paragraph. "In an interview with NBC News, Russian lawyer Natalia Veselnitskaya says she first received the supposedly incriminating information she brought to Trump Tower-- describing alleged tax evasion
and donations to Democrats -- from Glenn Simpson, the Fusion GPS owner."

Farther down in the article, on the next page, actually, the article states: "Months before she met in June 2016 with Trump Jr., Veselnitskaya said she turned the information she got from Simpson over to Russian Prosecutor General Yuri Chaika, who she said sought to verify it through his own investigation."

"In May 2016, the Russian prosecutor general issued a statement seeking U.S. help in investigating what he described as a tax evasion scheme involving the Ziff brothers, American investors, and British investor Bill Browder."

"Veselnitskaya said that statement was based in part on information she provided in the fall of 2015."

"I was in effect, the primary source of this information for the Russian Prosecutor General's office. They then published the facts I uncovered."

"She got the information from Fusion GPS, which prepared detailed reports in 2014, she said."
your understanding of the role of Fusion GPS' research in this project?

A. I'm not aware of Fusion GPS research of Ziff Brothers. I have no independent knowledge of that.

Q. Okay. So when you reference information being recycled, you aren't referencing the process that she describes here?

A. I'm not aware of those things.

Q. You stated that your role with HRAGI was as a lobbyist; is that correct?

A. Lobbyist and public affairs adviser.

Q. Did you have any other role with HRAGI?

A. No. No, I did not.

MR. DAVIS: Now let's take a look at one of HRAGI's lobbying disclosure forms. This one is from May 8, 2017. We'll label that Exhibit 6.

[Akhmetshin Exhibit 6 was marked for identification.]

BY MR. DAVIS:

Q. Towards the bottom of page 2, it lists you as a previously reported individual who is no longer expected to act as a lobbyist for the client. Why did you cease lobbying for HRAGI in May of 2017?
A. Because I think that -- I filed, I think, later disclosure as an individual lobbyist.

Q. Okay. And what was the basis for that change in filing status?

A. Legal advice.

Q. Under No. 19 on page 2, the section on the interest of each foreign entity in the lobbying issues, the document states, "Mikhail Ponomarev, Albert Nasibulin, Denis Katsyv, Vladimir Lelyukh, and Berrylye Trading, Inc. support policies that would reinstate the ability for U.S. citizens to adopt Russian children."

Who is Mikhail Ponomarev?

A. I don't know.

Q. Who is Albert Nasibulin?

A. I don't know.

Q. Do you know who Vladimir -- I'm not pronouncing --

A. Lelyukh.

Q. -- Lelyukh is?

A. Yes.

MR. TREMONTE: Let's spell that for the court reporter.

MR. AKHMETSHIN: L-E-L-Y-U-K-H.

MR. TREMONTE: Thank you.
MR. AKHMETSHTIN: It's Belarussian name.

BY MR. DAVIS:

Q. Do you know who he is?
A. I do not.

Q. Do you know if he works for Sberbank?
A. I don't know.

Q. Okay. What is Berryle Trading, Incorporated?

A. I don't know, sir.

Q. Were you ever paid by Berryle Trading, Incorporated?

A. No.

Q. Did you ever have any relationship at all with Berryle Trading, Incorporated?

A. Not that I'm aware of.

Q. Have you ever worked with Ms. Veselnitskaya abroad?

A. Could you be more specific, please?

Q. Outside of the United States?

A. I did a small project with Ms. Veselnitskaya in Brussels, Belgium.

Q. And was that related to the showing of the film "The Magnitsky Act"?

A. That is correct, sir. Yes.

Q. Can you describe the circumstances
surrounding that work?

A. Sometime in the spring of 2016, Ms. Veselnitskaya informed me that she was approached by a movie director who shot a film which was commissioned to him by the German television company called ZDF. It's like their PBS. It's a taxpayer-supported television station. And that movie director, who previously have done very prominent films which were screened in Cannes Movie Festival and Sundance Movie Festival, I believe he has some of his documentaries on Netflix. So he researched the story of Mr. Browder and Magnitsky Act, and she introduced me to him in New York. And at that meeting he presented that film. We watched that film together, and one of the kind of suggestions for Ms. Veselnitskaya was that we should make that film -- should make people aware of that film, existence of that film.

At that moment the film was scheduled to be screened in ZDF. Actually they have this ARTE -- A-R-T-E -- it's the sub-channel which shows those documentaries, opera. It's very kind of nice, channel which goes both in French and German. It was scheduled to be screened in two
1 nights in May of 2016, and there are already like
2 promos running for it on those channels, but I
3 thought that it will be very helpful if that film
4 will be seen by people before screening. And Mr.
5 Nekrasov, who is the director of that film, also
6 had some longstanding relations with people in
7 European Union, in European Parliament, and one of
8 these -- so together we tried to organize a
9 screening of the film in European Parliament in
10 Brussels.
11 Q. And were you able to show the film?
12 A. No. The screening was canceled 20
13 minutes before.
14 Q. When did you first interact with Denis
15 Katsyv?
16 A. I met Mr. Katsyv the same time when I met
17 Ms. Veselnitskaya. It was at the end of 2015.
18 Q. And what is your relationship with him?
19 A. He was a client of the law firm I was
20 working for.
21 Q. Prior to the June 9, 2016, meeting at
22 Trump Tower, had you ever met or did you know Ike
23 Kaveladze?
24 A. I've never met him before June 9.
25 Q. And what do you understand Mr.
Kaveladze's business to be?

A. It was my understanding that he is an employee of a real estate development firm out of Russia.

Q. Have you ever worked with Mr. Kaveladze?

A. I have never worked with Mr. Kaveladze.

Q. To the best of your knowledge, has Mr. Kaveladze had any role in the Prevezon or Magnitsky work?

A. I'm not aware of that role.

Q. Do you have any reason to believe he has ties to the Russian Government?

A. I am not aware of those ties.

Q. Prior to the June 9th meeting, did you know Rob Goldstone?

A. I never met him before.

Q. When did you first meet him?

A. I met him -- I'm not even sure I was ever introduced to him. I deduced that he was the person who was in attendance in that meeting.

Q. What is your understanding of Mr. Goldstone's work?

A. I don't have independent knowledge other than which was reported in the newspapers.

Q. Do you have any reason to believe he has
1 ties to the Russian Government?
2     A. I'm not aware of those ties.
3     Q. Do you know Anatoli Samochornov?
4     A. I do know Anatoli Samochornov.
5     Q. When did you first meet him?
6     A. I believe actually at the same time that
7     I met Ms. Veselnitskaya and Katsyv.
8     Q. What was his role in the Prevezon case,
9     if any?
10    A. He is an interpreter, very talented
11    interpreter, and he was serving that capacity in
12    Prevezon case.
13    Q. What was his role with HRAGI?
14    A. He is someone who went through attempts
15    to adopt kids from Russia, and so he had personal
16    interest in this. And he have served as one of
17    the advisers, also as a translator. I think that
18    was his work. I'm not aware of like direct his
19    duties, but he was associated with her, yes.
20    Q. Do you know Ed Baumgartner?
21    A. I do know Ed Baumgartner.
22    Q. What was his role in the Prevezon
23    litigation, if any?
24    A. I believe he was one of the researchers
25    in that case.
Q. Do you know if he was working for Fusion GPS in that context?

A. I'm not aware of -- I'm not sure. I don't know.

Q. What role, if any, did he have in the HRAGI lobbying or HRAGI in general?

A. I am not aware of any of his roles in HRAGI matters.

Q. Who first contacted you about a meeting between Ms. Veselnitskaya and Donald Trump, Jr.?

A. Ms. Veselnitskaya contacted me.

Q. When did she contact you?

A. She first contacted me to ask to meet for lunch, and at lunch she informed me or invited me to attend the meeting.

Q. Do you remember the date of that lunch?

A. I believe it was June 9th, the day of the meeting.

Q. What did she tell you the purpose of the meeting was to be?

A. She did not state exact purpose of the meeting at that point. She said, "I got a meeting with Donald Trump's son," and at some point she said, "Do you want to come along?"

Q. When did she invite you for that lunch?
A. It was sometime in the morning of that day, of June 9th.

MR. DAVIS: I'd like to introduce another document. This will be Exhibit 7.

[Akhmetshin Exhibit 7 was marked for identification.]

BY MR. DAVIS:

Q. This is an email chain between Ms. Veselnitskaya and Rob Goldstone. It was sent on June 9, 2016. If you look at the email in the chain with the time stamp of 9:24, Ms. Veselnitskaya writes, "Dear Mr. Goldstone, I am writing to ask you to pass by Mr. Trump my request to include our trusted associate and lobbyist, Mr. Rinat Akhmetshin, who is working to advance these issues with several Congressmen. He has invaluable knowledge about the positions held by the members of the Foreign Relations Committee that will be very important to our discussion. Mr. Akhmetshin has signed an NDA with us, as did Mr. Samochornov. I will be awaiting your decision."

To the best of your memory, had Ms. Veselnitskaya contacted you prior to 9:24 in the morning on June 9th about attending the lunch?
A. I don't remember exact time. I remember it was in the morning. I don't remember exact moment.

MR. FOSTER: But the question was had she contacted you prior to that.

MR. AKHMETSHIN: I don't remember. I think it was the first time she invited me -- first time I heard about the meeting was at the lunch. So she did not tell me -- she said, "I want to discuss something with you," and did not say what the matter was.

BY MR. DAVIS:

Q. When did you travel to New York around the June 9th time? Was it on June 9th? Was it earlier?

A. I have taken morning Acela train to New York on June 9th.

Q. On June 9th? Did you travel with anyone?

A. I might have been there with Lieberman or I might be traveling alone.

Q. And what was the purpose of your travel?

A. It was a personal matter in New York.

Q. And were you aware of Ms. Veselnitskaya's planned trip to the United States in June prior to her arrival?
A. In retrospect, while kind of reviewing the documents, I discovered or I saw that there was some exchange between me and her. She just obtained her U.S. visa, and she was eager to travel to United States. I do not remember specifically whether I was specifically aware of her presence in New York at that day, but now in retrospect, I think I had some general kind of understanding she might be in New York because she informed me -- like literally I've seen some things where she informed me that she issued for U.S. visa.

Q. Did Mr. Lieberman attend the lunch you were invited to?

A. He did not.

Q. Do you know what he did while you were at that lunch?

A. Actually, let me tell you a bit more so to give the context. I traveled, Mr. Lieberman and I, we traveled to New York kind of -- we had one shared goal and one kind of -- we had our own things. I have a relative who is an actress, theater actress in Russia, and she at that night performed in a theater play.

MR. TREMONTE: She?
MR. AKHMETSHIN: She, yes. She performed in
theater play in New York, and so my sister
encouraged me to go to attend that play, and so I
purchased tickets for me and Mr. Lieberman a
couple days before. And so Mr. Lieberman's wife
had passed like a few months before that, and both
he and she are art collectors and kind of like
art, and in her memory he established a -- and she
got this honorary degree from one of the
universities in New York, so he established in her
memory a scholarship in art history, and he was in
New York that day to discuss arrangements with
Metropolitan Museum with kind of taking care of
that scholarship award, like some regents who
would kind of host the students with these things.
So -- and he actually kind of suggested to me, if
I remember correctly, I want to go, but he said it
will be not much fun there, so it will be
meetings. But it was an opportunity also to see
maybe like, you know, the Met has paintings there,
but they have a lot of storage stuff and some
interesting things there. So kind of I remember
we discussed something to that effect at the time,
but I don't remember now, but I think I had some
other plans. And so we agreed to meet in the
1 evening to attend a play, and while there, I
2 remember Ms. Veselnitskaya called me. I was
3 actually in the store shopping. So I remember I
4 was holding a shirt, and I kind of had to manage
5 the phone and shirt. And so he was not even aware
6 of the meeting or lunch at that time.
7 BY MR. DAVIS:
8 Q. Who attended the lunch other than you and
9 Ms. Veselnitskaya?
10 A. By the time I arrived to that lunch,
11 lunch was already ongoing, and even before. So I
12 joined them for a cup of coffee, and when I went
13 there, I saw Ms. Veselnitskaya. I saw Anatoli
14 Samochornov, the translator. And there was
15 another gentleman there who later I realized was
16 Ike Kaveladze.
17 Q. What was discussed at the lunch?
18 A. It was more of kind of history of
19 Russian-- I remember a number of things. They
20 already were in conversation, which I kind of did
21 not follow. I mean, they had already been there
22 probably for a while by the time I arrived there.
23 But I remember there was a discussion about the
24 tax schemes in Russia, these criminal tax schemes,
25 and how people employ foreigners and some Russians
employ those tax schemes, and it was related to, I believe, at that time to this scheme which Ziff Brothers hedge fund, Ziff Brothers used to evade taxes and make super profits there.

Q. Had you heard this type of information before, or were you already familiar with this --

A. I was familiar with that scheme before because Ms. Veselnitskaya kind of developed this knowledge with help of some private researcher and with her own study of this tax case in Russia. And so I heard about this scheme before. I was aware of it.

Q. And who was the private researcher that was working --

A. I don't know exactly. I know that she had-- because some of the stuff she -- I know that she -- she told me that she obtained through analysis of this tax case, and then that some of the stuff was obtained through Cyprus, and I believe that she employed someone to obtain this Cyprus banking and corporate information.

Q. What else was discussed at the lunch?

Did you discuss the meeting that was to occur?

A. Not really.

Q. Were any other -- did any other topics
come up?

A. You know, we talked a little bit about this adoption issue, and she asked me, "What do you think I should tell this Trump's son?" And I actually cautioned her, you know, the Russians are -- they kind of attack you first thing, there's no like small talk, so I told her, "Don't do that."

I said like be polite, you know, just don't kind of throw all your stuff at him. I mean, she just -- I believe at that time they just won the nomination with the primaries. And I said, you know, congratulate them with this primaries win and, you know, just kind of -- don't just dump all of it right away. So kind of do some small talk.

Q. Prior to the meeting on June 9, 2016, did you tell anybody about the meeting?

A. I was not aware of the meeting.

Q. Between finding -- between when you were invited at lunch and the meeting itself, did you discuss it with anybody other than the lunch attendees?

A. No, no. I was on my own. I wasn't even aware that -- when she called me, I was not aware of that she will be inviting me. And actually, you know, I also wasn't dressed for the meeting.
I was wearing jeans and T-shirt and things, so I actually was -- when she invited me, I was slightly hesitant. I said, like, "You sure?" kind of thing. And she looked at Ike, and he kind of like said yeah, kind of.

Q. Did Ms. Veselnitskaya give you any reason to believe that the meeting was to be kept secret?
A. I don't remember her being specific about that.

Q. Did you get any general impression from her?
A. I don't remember this issue of secrecy being discussed explicitly.

MR. DAVIS: All right. I think that's it for my hour. We'll take a -- we'll go off the record and take a short break. It's now 10:47.

[Recess at 10:47 a.m. to 10:55 a.m.]

MS. CLAFLIN: All right. So we're back on at 10:55.

EXAMINATION BY COUNSEL FOR THE MINORITY

BY MS. CLAFLIN:

Q. Mr. Akhmetshin, I'm Molly Claflin. I'm counsel for Senator Feinstein, and I thank you again for coming here today to speak with us.
A. Good morning. I'm glad I could be of
Q. I'm going to pick up a little bit around where Patrick was. I think you've testified that Ms. Veselnitskaya invited you to the meeting that very morning on June 9th.

A. Correct.

Q. Did she tell you anything about why she wanted you to come to the meeting?

A. Not on the phone call. I learned about the meeting only at lunch, and she -- you know, it was not really clear to me what -- that she wants me to be there. She told me in the beginning, she said, "I'm having this meeting with Trump's son. And what do you think I should tell him?" So she kind of -- and I told her that, you know, it's a good opportunity because, you know, as I mentioned earlier, I discovered that the Magnitsky law was based on a falsification and a lie and the story was never checked. And I said that -- and already in the process of primaries at that time, this whole issue of U.S.-Russia relationship came upon, and I said that it would be a good example of how at least some small step forward and restoring adoptions could be a good sign. And at that time I already met some of these American families who
1 were stuck in this legal limbo. They adopted kids
2 but they cannot take them out of Russia. There
3 were a number of families like that. So I said
4 this will be meaningful to many people, and it
5 also would expose how, you know, this U.S.-Russian
6 relation deteriorate. Sometime there are
7 objective reasons for deterioration in the
8 relations, but sometimes it's based on someone
9 just making up the story and then U.S. Government
10 not checking that story correctly.
11 Q. Okay.
12 A. So I said that will be a good opportunity
13 to tell, and then she looked at me and said, "Why
14 don't you come with me?" And I told her, like,
15 "You sure?" You know, stressed, and she looked
16 into Ike, and Ike said yeah, and that's kind of --
17 that's how I kind of came in. And I believe that
18 she wanted my advice on both kind of to present at
19 that meeting.
20 Q. She didn't give you any indication of
21 your expected role there?
22 A. She did not.
23 Q. And you yourself, it sounds like, didn't
24 have a particular goal in attending?
25 A No.
Q. Were you paid to attend?
A. I was not paid to attend.

Q. Actually, that's Exhibit 7. Yes, Exhibit 7. I don't think you're copied on this email, but in the email Ms. Veselnitskaya says, "Mr. Akhmetshin has signed an NDA with us, as did Mr. Samochornov." Do you know who "us" is that she's referring to?
A. To which? I'm sorry.

MR. PRIVOR: Here, it says "signed NDA with us."

MR. AKHMETSHIN: NDA, us. You know, I --

MR. TREMONTE: First, do you know who she's referring to?

MR. AKHMETSHIN: "Us," I don't know.

MS. CLAFLIN: Okay.

BY MS. CLAFLIN:

Q. So as far as you know, you didn't have a client at the meeting, and you weren't paid to go to the meeting.
A. I was not.

Q. Okay. So you were not working, as far as you know, on behalf of any particular entity at the meeting?
A. No, I was not aware that this was on
1 behalf of a meeting she asked me for and advise
2 in. I was, quite frankly, curious. I was
3 surprised that she got this meeting, and I'm
4 curious, like, what's going to happen.
5 MR. TREMONTÉ: Right, and just by way of
6 clarification, did you -- had you signed an NDA in
7 connection with anything that also --
8 MR. AKHMETSHIN: I have no recollection of
9 signing any NDA in connection with this meeting,
10 but I have signed general NDA when I started
11 working as a court order, actually. So I sign
12 these like general NDA when I started working for
13 this case in Southern District.
14 BY MS. CLAFLIN:
15 Q. On the Prevezon case?
16 A. Correct, yes.
17 Q. But that was not an NDA with
18 Veselnitskaya herself?
19 A. No, I don't remember that.
20 Q. Okay.
21 A. That's the only NDA --
22 MR. TREMONTÉ: And that's also a matter --
23 MR. AKHMETSHIN: -- which I remember.
24 MS. CLAFLIN: Sure.
25 BY MR. PRIVOR:
Q. Mr. Akhmetshin, did she give you a reason why she wanted you to go to the meeting?

A. I think it kind of happened like on spur of the moment. You know, when we were talking, as I explained earlier, she said, "What do you think I should tell?" And, you know, we're talking, and then she said, "You know, why don't you come?" So that's kind of literally what happened right there at the table, so she said.

Q. So she asked for your advice. You gave her advice on what to say.

A. Correct.

Q. But then she followed that up with, "Why don't you also come to the meeting?"

A. Correct, yes.

Q. And was there an added purpose for why you should also come to the meeting?

A. It was not -- never spelled out or specified. She never told me, like, "Come here and say this." It was, "Do you want to come along?" I go, "Yeah, sure."

Q. Did she suggest that you were going to have a role at the meeting?

A. She did not suggest any role.

Q. Did she ask you to repeat anything you
1 had said to her at the meeting?
2 A. No, she did not. It kind of was very
3 light-hearted, not -- no specific, "You say this,
4 I will go 5 minutes and you go 3 minutes." None
5 of it.
6 Q. So were you expecting to be just an
7 observer at the meeting?
8 A. Yes. But also during the meeting, I
9 thought that if the turn will come for me to
10 speak, I was thinking what should I say, and I was
11 trying to say it very -- in a short, succinct way.
12 BY MS. CLAFLIN:
13 Q. Did you discuss at the lunch how you
14 might present at the meeting?
15 A. No.
16 Q. I believe you said at the lunch that you
17 discussed Russian relations generally and some
18 other related issues. Was there anything about
19 strategizing for the meeting that came up at the
20 lunch?
21 A. As I mentioned earlier, I told her like
22 how to present and how not to, kind of in the
23 form, it should be like light-hearted and not to
24 speak too long, because she kind of tends to speak
25 long. I said like keep your sentences short and
kind of don't waste people's time and kind of
that's -- but not like specific, "I will say this,
you say that." None of it was discussed, just
really kind of normal lunch. It was conducted in
Russian, and we kind of talked about general
things. And I don't remember any specific
planning or strategizing for that.

Q. Okay. You testified, I think, that you
told her to congratulate the Trump campaign on the
primary.
A. Correct.

Q. Did you tell her to say anything about
Hillary Clinton?
A. I don't remember. I don't remember me
mentioning Hillary Clinton at all.

Q. And also at the lunch, did you see any
documents or other information that was being
discussed as being passed out at the meeting?
A. At the lunch I saw she had this like
clear plastic folder which had these papers which
I have seen before about the Ziff Brothers, like
summary of Ziff Brothers' actions, and -- but we
did not discuss the documents specifically, and
she -- I kind of -- I don't remember even scanning
for it, but I've seen that document before.
Q. So you didn't discuss it in depth, but you did look at it?

A. I kind of -- I don't remember exactly, but I might have kind of browsed, but I was familiar with the document, so I never -- I did not go into details of it.

Q. Okay. Can you tell me a little bit more about the document?

A. It's -- it was a short memo, maybe five, six pages, about this -- which described how this American hedge fund entered Russian securities market and how they violated both Russian and U.S. securities and tax laws. Actually the fund purchased, I mean, billions of dollars in -- at that time there was a company called Gazprom, and so they were buying specifically Gazprom shares through like illegal schemes and taking them -- I mean, the issue was that there are different prices, internal-external prices for securities in Russia at that time. So Gazprom was listed at the external markets through ADR, and Russian companies and individuals could purchase the same shares for much lower price, sometimes like twice as cheap. So there was like real benefit; you make like 200 percent profit right away. And plus
it is my understanding they also violated taxes,
so they filed in different way, some like 30
percent, also savings some tax scheme there. So
it was described there, and then kind of in -- I’m
not big expert on those things, so I kind of -- I
understood the general way how this law was
evaded, but I don’t -- I’m not sure about the
details of it.

Q. And do you know why Ms. Veselnitskaya
believed that the tax scheme information would be
interesting to the Trump campaign?

A. Because actually I remember at the end of
this memo, it was mentioned that hedge fund is one
of the large contributors to DNC.

Q. Did the memo also say anything about the
Magnitsky Act? Was that also mentioned?

A. I don’t remember Magnitsky Act was
mentioned there at all.

Q. So the written document you saw was
primarily about the tax evasion in Ziff Brothers?

A. It was exclusively about.

Q. Exclusively?

A. Yes. There’s no -- any written record of
Magnitsky matter there at all.

Q. Was the document that you saw in English
1 or Russian?
2      A. I believe it was in English.
3      Q. Okay.
4      A. But I don't remember exactly, because
5 I've seen a Russian version of that document as well.
6      Q. Interesting. Do you know where the
document was produced?
7      A. I don't know exactly, no.
8      Q. And you don't know who translated it for
9 her then?
10     A. I don't know.
11     Q. Okay. You had mentioned that that
morning Ms. Veselnitskaya had said that she was
going to have a meeting with Don, Jr. Did she
mention anyone else that might be in the meeting?
13     A. She didn't mention it in the morning. In
the morning she asked me to join her for lunch,
and meeting was brought up only at lunch.
15     Q. And who did she tell you to expect to be
there?
16     A. She did not mention anyone other than
Trump's son.
18     Q. Trump's son, and the individuals that
were at lunch with you.
A. I assumed they will be there, but she said, "I have a meeting with Trump's son," and that's -- pretty much that was the only description of the participants I received.

Q. Did you know that Mr. Manafort would be there?

A. I was not aware of that.

Q. I think at some point you told the media that you were a long-time acquaintance of Paul Manafort. Can you explain how you know Mr. Manafort?

A. I met Mr. Manafort for first time at the meeting at the Trump Tower.

Q. Okay.

A. I am not a long-time acquaintance of Mr. Manafort. That's an incorrect statement.

Q. All right. Thank you.

MR. TREMONTE: If there's a media report to that effect, it would be interesting to know what it is. I'm not aware of one.


MR. TREMONTE: Unless it's the Times article.

[Laughter.]
MS. CLAFLIN: I don't need to put it in if you--

MR. TREMONTE: May I see it?

MS. CLAFLIN: Sure.

MR. TREMONTE: Just because your question indicated that -- or suggested that Mr. Akhmetshin was himself quoted --

MS. CLAFLIN: I can find the line.

MR. TREMONTE: -- as opposed to someone else saying that he said it.

MS. CLAFLIN: Yeah, it's just the one line.

MR. AKHMETSHIN: I don't remember -- first of all, I have never met Mr. Manafort before that meeting, and I don't remember ever telling anyone about this. And, you know, for the record, I must say that I am appalled and upset about this New York Times coverage of me personally because there are a lot of factual mistakes there or sometimes like things which are utterly inaccurate.

MS. CLAFLIN: Okay. That's fair. And just for the record, I'm not going to enter this as an exhibit, but it's a New York Times article dated August 21, 2017, entitled "Lobbyist at Trump Campaign Meeting Has a Web of Russian Connections." But I don't think there's a need to
1 use it today.
2 BY MS. CLAFLIN:
3 Q. Let's move on then to the actual meeting
4 itself. Can you tell us what happened after you
5 left the lunch?
6 A. After we left the lunch, we -- lunch took
7 place Madison and 62nd, 63rd Street, and so we
8 walked south on Madison until 57th Street. We
9 turned west on 57 and turned south on Fifth
10 Avenue, and we walked into this Trump Tower
11 building, took an elevator, went-- exited at the
12 reception area, and we were met there by this
13 British person, who I later deduced was Mr.
14 Goldstone.
15 Q. And you had not met him before?
16 A. I have never met him before. So we were
17 there at that reception area for a short period of
18 time, and then we were -- reception area opened
19 into this conference room.
20 Q. Did you speak to anyone else in the
21 reception area beyond the people who came to
22 lunch?
23 A. No. We had like small -- actually, on
24 our way there I mentioned to Mr. Samochornov that
25 I am here to attend a theater performance, and I
actually invited him and Ms. Veselnitskaya to join, because they were not aware of that, and so I later bought them tickets, and they attended with us. But it was like small talk, you know, nothing of this -- of substance at all.

Q. I'm sorry. And then you went into the meeting.

A. So we were -- and then after really not for a long time, very short time, we were invited to conference room, which was really large with very impressive views. And soon after, the other participants in meeting joined us.

Q. And who were the other participants?

A. At that time I recognized only two people there. It was Trump, Jr., and it was this Jared Kushner. These are two people whom I recognized because I've seen them on television.

Q. Was Mr. Manafort there as well?

A. There was this gentleman who identified himself as Mr. Manafort at some point, yes.

Q. But you just didn't recognize him at first?

A. I did not recognize him.

Q. I see. So just to be entirely clear, who attended the actual meeting at Trump Tower? Was
it everyone that you went to lunch with -- Mr. Goldstone, Ms. Veselnitskaya --
A. Correct.
Q. Mr. Kaveladze.
A. Correct. Samochornov.
A. Correct, yes.
Q. Is there anyone else I'm leaving off?
A. You know, it's interesting because I've been asked this question before. There might have been someone else. I just don't remember. But these are the people who I cannot remember distinctly. It felt like there were more people there, but it might be that was just an impression.
Q. Okay. So you're not sure if there was anyone else?
A. I'm not sure.
Q. And just to go back very quickly, did you recognize anyone else in the reception area before you walked into the meeting?
A. I didn't see anyone I would recognize.
Q. Okay. So you're not sure if there was anyone else?
one or two people. But I just don't remember anyone distinctly.

Q. Okay. And none of them came to join you for the meeting?

A. No.

MS. SAWYER: What about Mr. Goldstone? Did he also come into the meeting?

MR. AKHMETSHIN: Yes. He was in the meeting, yes.

BY MS. CLAFLIN:

Q. And who led the meeting?

A. Trump, Jr., led the meeting.

Q. So how did the meeting start?

A. With small talk. It started with small talk. You know, they invited us. There's like little chatter, like, okay, what a beautiful room, what a beautiful view. You know, just -- then Ms. Veselnitskaya, prompted by me, congratulated them on this win in the primaries. And then Mr. Trump, Jr., said, "So I believe you have some information for us." And then Ms. Veselnitskaya presented -- made a presentation about Ziff Brothers, and --

Q. Can you go into a little more detail on that? What did she present?

A. She described the story which I described
1 to you. I don't remember in great details what
2 was said, because I actually thought at some point
3 that I might be -- actually, in the beginning we
4 went around and introduced ourselves.
5         Q. Okay.
6         A. That was the --
7         Q. How did you introduce yourself? Do you
8 remember?
9         A. "I am Rinat Akhmetshin. I work for this
10 organization in Washington that is trying to
11 restart adoptions."
12         Q. Do you remember how she introduced
13 herself?
14         A. I think she said she's a legal counsel.
15         Q. And how about Mr. Kaveladze?
16         A. I don't remember, to be honest. It's
17 been a while, so I don't remember exact details of
18 this thing. But when Ms. Veselnitskaya actually --
19 - in the beginning she said that, you know, she
20 came upon the information about Ziff Brothers as a
21 part of her work for her client, and that came up.
22 That's what -- she said that was kind of -- she
23 knows it just because she studied the case.
24         Q. And you said that Mr. Donald Trump, Jr.,
25 was leading the meeting, so to speak.
A. He was definitely in charge.

Q. And remind me, say again what he said when he started the meeting?

A. Again, I cannot tell that verbatim, but something to the effect like, you know, so welcome. After this small talk, he said, "I believe you have some information for us." And Ms. Veselnitskaya said, "Yes, indeed, I do have information," and kind of --

Q. Did he give any indication what sort of information he thought they had?

A. I don't remember exactly what was said, but, again, so something to the effect of like, "I believe you have some information for us."

Q. Just information generally.

A. Because I don't remember exact words which were said.

Q. Okay. And he didn't give any impression in his opening in terms of what sort of issues he was expecting to have a conversation about?

A. No.

MS. SAWYER: Was Ms. Veselnitskaya speaking in English or Russian?

MR. AKHMETSHIN: Her English is not good to carry conversation, so the -- she spoke through
BY MS. CLAFLIN:

Q. How long did she speak for?
A. For a while. She tried to kind of wrap it up. I could tell that she's making an effort
not to drag it on for long. But I don't remember, like 5, 7 minutes, 10 minutes.
Q. Okay.
A. It wasn't a long presentation, and kind of-- that's what I remember.
Q. Was the bulk of her presentation on the
Ziff Brothers issue again?
A. Yes, Ziff Brothers and Mr. Browder.
Q. Okay.
A. Because Mr. Browder actually was someone who run that Ziff Brothers scam.
Q. Did she also speak about the Magnitsky Act?
A. Not at that point.
Q. Okay. Did that come in later? So I guess I've interrupted you. She spoke for a few
minutes on the Ziff Brothers thing.
A. Correct.
Q. What happened next?
A. So then -- and then she kind of wrapped
it up saying, like, and -- you know, the amount of
money she mentioned was about like $880 million,
which is not a small amount of money, coming just
from this Russian transaction. And so she said,
"And some of this money ended up in" -- they are
large contributors to DNC, and, therefore, this is
like, you know, that kind of information. I don't
remember how she said it, but, "And these are the
people who are big contributors to DNC."

Q. Were there any questions from the people
in the room about that when she made these
statements?

A. Yes. So Mr. Trump, Jr., said, "So can
you show us how does this money go to Hillary?"
Like specifically, do you have paperwork? Or just
indicate how money goes to Hillary. And she kind
of said, "No. I am just a Russian lawyer. I
traced this money from Russia through Cyprus to
bank" -- I don't remember which bank. It's one of
the bigger ones, either Citi or Chase. But she
was specific on 53rd Street here in Midtown, you
know, just in Manhattan. You know, here, you guys
should kind of find out. I don't have that
capacity to trace it down, but I could tell you
that bad money from -- criminal money came back to
New York. And that kind of -- that's where she left it.

Q. And your recollection was how did this money get to Hillary or the DNC?

A. DNC. She was very specific about DNC.

Q. She was specific.

A. She was specific.

Q. But you said there was a question.

A. And Trump, Jr., said, "So can you show me how does this money goes to Hillary?" And she said, "Hell, I don't know." Just pretty much like -- I remember this like moment, like especially -- I don't know, like, "You guys find out." You know, "I could only trace it up to here."

Q. Were there any other questions about that piece?

A. You know, there were no questions. I could tell like he -- Trump, Jr., he just instantly lost interest about these things. And then she probably felt this, and she said, "But, you know, this money, like this adoption stuff," and then she kind of jumped through this whole adoption presentation.

Q. So it sounds like the adoption presentation was not what she led with and may not
have been her initial purpose.

A. No, it was not. At least -- at least it did not appear to me that way.

Q. And what did she say about the adoptions piece?

A. And then, you know, I think it could almost like palpable that he was kind of -- lost interest and, you know, just -- you could kind of see it, and, you know -- I mean, what's his name? Kushner left at some point. And then she kind of said, but, you know, because with this thing, you know, just this bad guy, they also -- in order to cover up this crime, they made up this story about this heroic accountant, heroic lawyer, who actually was never a lawyer, this guy. And then he just -- and that kind of triggered just -- it's always just to cover up this thing, and kind of to discredit these people who were pursuing them in that crime. And -- but beginning was just-- you could tell that Trump was interested, and then she said, and then it's like adoption, there's like American families, and she went all of these things, but -- and it was also fairly a long presentation, probably even longer than -- or maybe it felt that way, but you could tell that
they were not interested, and they were like looking at their phones or like, you know, just looking the other way, their watch. And so I kind of had to jump in with my 90 seconds and kind of just to stop her. And then I said, yes, this is like it's a good issue, you know, U.S.-Russia relationship, you know, sometimes like there are reasons for that, you know, deterioration by backing out, or sometimes they're based on a lie in which the U.S. Government has never done this thing, and there's a constituency for that, and this would be great, like election campaign, you know, the issue for debates and you could check those facts very easily. If we find out them easily, anyone could check them and form an opinion about this. And that pretty much was the end of the meeting.

Q. How long did you speak for?
A. Probably 90 seconds.
Q. Okay.
A. I tried to be very kind of short and -- because I could feel that, you know, they're already like uneasy about this whole meeting.
Q. In English, I assume?
A. In English, yes.
Q. What was the reaction to the presentation about the adoptions?
A. Oh, they were not interested at all.
Q. Were there any questions?
A. I don’t think there were questions.
Q. So you mentioned that Don, Jr., asked one question earlier.
A. Yes.
Q. Did anyone else speak? Did Mr. Manafort ever speak?
A. I don’t remember, to be honest. He might have. Actually, you know, at some point there's like-- I mean, those who spoke said, you know, you should understand we are not in the government, so it's like we're trying to get to the government. Something was said to that effect, I don't remember if it was by Manafort or by Junior.
Q. Okay.
A. Manafort was like on his - I believe it's a BlackBerry, so he was just sitting in the chair which kind of goes back. He was almost like lying there, like, you know, on his phone, and it's throughout the whole meeting.
Q. Do you recall if Mr. Kushner ever said anything?
A. I don't remember him saying anything. He left actually at some point.

Q. Was the only question from the Trump campaign the one that you related earlier?

A. That's what I remember. They asked us, "Could you show us how it goes to Hillary?" And she said, "I don't know." So that's kind of -- that's something which I remember distinctly.

Q. So on --

A. But there was -- but there might have been-- I mean, I'm sure there was some back-and-forth on some issues, but I don't remember anything like particular.

Q. But you don't recall any specifics?

A. No.

Q. So was there any back-and-forth during the discussion for this --

A. There wasn't much -- it's very short meeting, so there's not that kind of --

Q. How long did the meeting last?

A. I don't know. Maybe 20 minutes.

Q. Okay.

A. But I might be wrong, so...

Q. But that's your best estimate?

A. Because it was -- that's my assessment,
Q. Okay. So you mentioned that the DNC issue came up in terms of the funding.

A. Correct.

Q. I think you mentioned that Hillary Clinton came up in terms of Mr. Trump, Jr.?

A. Correct.

Q. Was she discussed in any other context?

A. I don't remember.

Q. Okay. Were sanctions discussed, do you recall?

A. Not sanctions, per se. I mean, there's like Magnitsky law was -- but, again, not in the capacity of sanctions but in the capacity of, you know, just U.S. Congress not checking the facts of the story, and running with this law without checking the facts.

Q. So the adoption issue also included discussion of Magnitsky?

A. It did, yes, because he, you know, just had mentioned that adoptions -- you know, Russians retaliated by -- I mean, in my personal view, in a very unfair and cowardly way by stopping these adoptions.

Q. Did anyone ask for the campaign's support
in reinstating the adoptions?

A. I don't remember. So Ms. Veselnitskaya wanted kind of some support. I think that, you know, at that time there was a hearing which was supposed to happen at that time to examine the facts, which later Mr. Browder's lobbyists were able to quash, and kind of -- and it was turned from the subcommittee in the House Foreign Relations Committee, like the hearing was canceled, and they kind of -- that was the end of the story.

Q. Okay.

A. But she -- I mean, she might have asked for some assistance in that, and then again they told like, look, we're just in campaign, we have no capacity of helping.

Q. Was there any discussion of helping at a later time?

A. I don't remember exact words which were said, but I remember at the end, Donald, Jr., said, you know, "Come back see us again when we win." Not "if we win," but "when we win." And I kind of thought to myself like, "Yeah, right."

But it happened, so -- but that's something, see, he's very kind of positive about, "When we win,
come back and see us again." Something to that
effect, I guess.
Q. Did she say anything to that? Was there
a discussion of whether there would be a future
meeting?
A. I don't remember. It's kind of -- she
felt-- she looked kind of disappointed, and whole
thing, I don't know what she expected from that.
I don't remember any discussion of follow-up.
Q. Just to make sure I've gone through all
of the possible topics, do you recall if John
Podesta was ever discussed?
A. I don't remember.
Q. How about Hillary Clinton's deleted
emails?
A. I don't remember any discussion of
emails.
Q. Russian support of Donald Trump?
A. I don't remember that discussed. It was
a very short meeting, at least, or like two
subjects, I think, which the only two subjects
which were discussed, I mean substantive subjects.
Q. In one news article, Ms. Veselnitskaya
told reporters that Donald Trump, Jr., asked for
written evidence illegal proceeds went to Hillary
Clinton's campaign. Is that also your recollection? It sounds...

A. I don't remember. I know that she had the memo with her, and -- but I think it was established that she has no information about Hillary, so I'll be surprised that -- what was referred -- I don't remember specifically.

Actually, the answer is I don't remember specifically that statement.

Q. Okay. Were any documents exchanged?

A. I am not sure. I know that she brought in those -- that clear plastic folder where she had this-- you know, it's almost like a sleeve where you -- it's very Russian, actually. So -- but I don't remember whether she left those documents or not.

Q. But you know she walked in the room with them?

A. It was in front -- I believe it was in front of her at the desk.

Q. Okay. You don't recall that being passed out?

A. I have not seen that, no.

Q. Okay. But it may have been left there, you're not sure?
A. I am not sure. Just, you know, there's like--it's a rather large room so everyone was like sitting right in this thing, so it was just maybe something -- I am not personally -- I have not seen any documents exchanged.

BY MR. PRIVOR:

Q. Do you recall very specifically what she did with the documents? You said they were on -- were they on the table?

A. On the table, yes.

Q. In front of her?

A. Correct, yes.

Q. Did she ever touch them, make a gesture toward the documents?

A. It's been a long -- I honestly don't remember.

Q. Do you remember if she ever held them up and showed them that she had them?

A. No, she did not. Or at least I don't remember that.

Q. Did she ever make any reference to the documents in any way that you can recall?

A. I don't remember. You know, I kind of heard that story before, so I didn't kind of pay attention, and I was kind of thinking what I would
1 say about -- if my turn comes, so I kind of did
2 not focus on that.
3 BY MS. CLAFLIN:
4 Q. Did you expect that your turn would come?
5 A. I expected maybe just at some point, I
6 might be it, so it was by necessity stop her.
7 Q. So you said you jumped in to kind of cut
8 her off a bit.
9 A. Correct.
10 Q. Did she ask you to speak, or you just did
11 that on your own?
12 A. No, she did not ask me to speak.
13 Q. Did anyone else at the meeting speak?
14 Did Mr. Kaveladze say anything to the group?
15 A. I don't remember him speaking.
16 Q. Okay. And Mr. Samochornov only
17 translated?
18 A. Translated, yes.
19 Q. Okay. So as far as you recall, the only
20 people that spoke at the meeting were you, Ms.
21 Veselnitskaya, and Mr. Trump, Jr.?
22 A. Manafort, possibly.
23 Q. Possibly Manafort. Did you take any
24 notes at the meeting at all?
25 A. I did not.
Q. Did you see anyone else taking notes?
A. I don't remember.

BY MS. SAWYER:

Q. Do you happen to recall -- were you guys sitting at a table, one table all together?
A. Correct, yes.

Q. Do you recall where people were seated?
A. I do, actually.

Q. Can you tell us where?
A. Kind of roughly, yes, I remember something specifically. Again, it's really a large conference room. It's almost like basketball court size with beautiful views of Manhattan, and it's a rather large table. So it's pretty far, seated far, but I remember I was sitting -- so it's a table like this. Manafort was sitting at the end, and then on this side was me, Ms. Veselnitskaya, Samochornov, Ike I think was also on our side. And on the opposite side was Kushner, because I remember Kushner was sitting right in front of me because I remember looking at him when he was talking about Ziff Brothers, I had some thoughts about it. And then, you know, Donald, Jr., was like in the middle. So Junior was sitting directly across from Ms.
Veselnitskaya. It might have been someone else also there, because it felt -- but, again, I'm not sure. So there might have been -- it felt like there were more people sitting on opposite side.

Q. Do you recall where Mr. Goldstone was sitting?

A. He might have sat at this like very end, on the opposite side, or maybe on our side.

Q. And you feel like there were additional people beyond those that you've just described?

A. I'm not sure, again. But for some reason it felt like there were more people there on the opposite side. It wasn't just Kushner and Trump. So there's some other like American faces.

Q. And you said you --

MS. CLAFLIN: And you don't recall anything about them?

MR. AKHMETSHIN: I don't remember anything about them.

BY MS. SAWYER:

Q. And you said you were watching Mr. Kushner--

A. Correct.

Q. -- while Ms. Veselnitskaya was speaking.

Did he have a reaction?
A. No. He actually kind of -- he didn't have reaction, but I was thinking to myself, you know, she talks about the Ziff Brothers and they're billionaire kids, and he's a billionaire kid, Jewish billionaire kid himself. I thought that maybe they seem like they are buddies, and I was just thinking should she like say all these things without knowing exact context. So that's -- that I remember because Kushner was seated there, and because I was asked before when did he leave, but I remember he was there when -- at least for part of Ziff Brothers discussion because I looked at him and I thought that there are not that many billionaires in New York of that age. So he probably knows them well.

Q. And do you recall at all whether he stayed for that entire part of her presentation that had to do with the Ziff Brothers and the tax fraud?

A. I don't remember exact time of his departure, but I remember he was at least for part of it because that's what was in my head when I looked at him when she was discussing Ziff Brothers and all this dropped.

Q. And did he say anything when he got up
1 and left?

2 A. I don't think he did. I don't remember.

3 Q. And did anyone else leave with him?

4 A. I don't remember. Sorry.

5 BY MS. CLAFLIN:

6 Q. Everyone else stayed for the whole meeting, as far as you recall?

7 A. I think so, yes.

8 Q. And started at the same time? Did anyone come late?

9 A. I don't remember. I don't think -- I don't think so. I think they started at same time, and Kushner left for sure at some point, but I don't remember anyone else leaving.

10 Q. Okay. How did the meeting end?

11 A. The end, you know, I think Trump, Jr., said, look, we're not in power, you know, just running to be in power, and -- but when we win -- I remember distinctly. It was not "if we win." "When we win, come back and see us again." That was kind of the thing.

12 Q. Okay. And then you all left together?

13 A. We were like leaving the room, and it's a large room, so we kind of walked -- I was walking next to Manafort, and they were walking -- like
Ms. Veselnitskaya walking, and at the end they shook hands and kind of went to the elevator.

Q. Okay. Did you run into anyone else on your way to the elevator?

A. We have, yes.

Q. Okay. Who was that?

A. Ivanka Trump.

Q. Okay. Did you speak to her?

A. For like 3 seconds. We were just -- actually, we run into her right at the elevator, so we were waiting for the elevator to come, and she just came like probably few seconds later, and we kind of had this little chat. I don't even think that we introduced ourselves. We kind of like had this little exchange, like small talk, and she got into elevator and went up, and we went down.

Q. Anyone else?

A. No one I could remember.

Q. Okay. And where did you go when you got off the elevator?

A. We exited into lobby of Trump building, and we went -- there's like coffee shop like Starbucks or something or other, like coffee shop down there, and we went there just -- I think I
1 had tea, and they got coffee, and I left very
2 quickly. And then I actually -- Mr. Kaveladze
gave me his business card, so that's how I kind of
3 figure out who he is. I wasn't sure who he was
4 until that point.
5 Q. Did you have any discussion with any --
6 with Ms. Veselnitskaya, Mr. Kaveladze, or Mr.
7 Goldstone about the meeting?
8 A. I don't think Mr. Goldstone with us --
9 was with us.
10 Q. Okay.
11 A. It was the same thing, four people --
12 Kaveladze, Ms. Veselnitskaya, I, and translator.
13 Q. Okay.
14 A. We were -- and I did not stay for long
15 time, so I had this little chat with Ike, you
16 know, and that's pretty much it. And I left, and
17 then later that evening I kind of -- I told him to
18 come -- I'll get you tickets. The tickets came
19 in. We watched play, and then we just parted
20 ways.
21 Q. Did you speak to any of the meeting
22 participants after the meeting about what had
23 happened at the meeting?
24 A. I saw -- not that day. I saw Ms.
Veselnitskaya a couple days later in Washington, and kind of, you know, it was -- it's really nothing happened, and it's kind of almost like -- I feel like she was a little embarrassed almost to talk about these things. But --

Q. Why do you think she was embarrassed? I think before, you also testified that she seemed disappointed.

A. Yes.

Q. Why do you think she felt that way?

A. You know, I think that, you know, she -- she's a hardworking woman. Actually, I personally do like her very much. I think she's too intense sometimes at the time, but she's -- she's a smart person and, you know, to be a woman prosecutor is not easy in Russia. And I know that, for example, later on I have explained something to me, so, I mean, for her to kind of be in a position that she's hardworking, she's single mother, she has four kids, she had --

And I met her children once, good kids.

So she really kind of has a lot on her plate, and I think that -- but knowledge of American political system is not her strength, and I think
that, you know, just she thought that we'll come there and, you know, just will tell the truth about this, like Browder being a liar, and now, you know, just all of a sudden, he's, aha, you know, just -- and, look, it doesn't happen. I mean, I tried to tell these things, and then no one wants to hear this. So I think she had higher expectations from the meeting.

Q. What do you think she expected from the meeting? What kind of --
A. I'm not sure.
Q. -- response do you think she expected?
A. I'm not sure. But it's -- she clearly was not kind of happy with this outcome. So we really didn't even talk until like much later about this.

Q. So she may have expected them to be more interested in the Ziff Brothers issue than they appeared to be?
A. Correct, yes.
Q. Okay.
A. So just they were -- really had no interest in this, or any of it.
Q. And you said you left the coffee shop early. Did you talk to anyone else before you left
1 about their reactions?
2 A No. It was like, you know, just -- I
3 really stayed there for a very short time because
4 I had to be somewhere, and I wasn't even planning
5 on being there. So I was meeting someone later
6 that evening for a drink before the theater. And
7 then later I had, you know, Mr. Lieberman.
8 Q. How long did you stay at the coffee shop?
9 A. Maybe 5 minutes. You know, it's -- by
10 the time you get something, you pay, you kind of --
11 I have actually -- I don't -- if I remember
12 correctly, the only person I talked to was this
13 Ike Kaveladze. So I spoke a little bit about him,
14 and things like, look, if you need any help, you
15 know, kind of -- I'm always looking for new
16 clients, so if that's really -- I mean, this -- I
17 don't remember exact interaction, but something to
18 that effect, and he gave me his card, I looked at
19 it, and I kind of realized who he was.
20 Q. Did you and Ike speak at all about the
21 meeting?
22 A. Not at all. Not that I could remember.
23 Q. Okay. Did you speak with anyone else
24 besides the meeting participants after the meeting
25 about the meeting?
A. In what period of time?

Q. Shortly after it happened. Did you tell friends or colleagues?

A. I told a couple of my friends about it, journalist friends, because I thought it was amusing. That's the only like people -- I might have mentioned to -- I did mention to my wife. She was amused, too.

Q. Was there any follow-up at all from the meeting with Ms. Veselnitskaya or any of the others?

A. Not that I'm aware. Not from me. I'm not aware of any other.

Q. But you have had further contact with her?

A. Ms. Veselnitskaya, yes.

Q. Was it all in the context of the Preseznon case, or were there other --

A. Preseznon case was on hold at that time because there were the Second Circuit proceedings, and so it didn't go far. But I was in contact with her because I was trying to propose her as a witness at that hearing which we were trying to organize. And also we did the screening of this film, this Magnitsky film here in Washington,
D.C., so she was in town for that. So we were kind of busy. And, actually, the screening was very dramatic and so there’s a lot of stuff later on came in, and hearing was also dramatic, you know, just this was canceled like 2 days before or day before, so that they changed the hearing. They took it to the full committee. So there was a lot of drama around that.

Q. Okay. And any more follow-up on this meeting with her then?

A. No.

Q. No.

BY MS. SAWYER:

Q. Just could I briefly ask, so at the play that night, you attended, Mr. Baumgartner --

A. Not Mr. Baumgartner. Mr. Lieberman.

Q. Mr. Lieberman, Ms. Veselnitskaya, and --

A. Mr. Samochornov, yes.

Q. Did the meeting come up at all at the play?

A. Not at all, no. It was a very beautiful play, and it kind of -- I had a few drinks before in the intermission, so it is a very nice -- we talked about play and kind of things. We did not discuss meeting at all, actually. Not that I
1 could remember.

2 BY MR. PRIVOR:

3 Q. You mentioned that you had dinner

4 beforehand with Mr. Lieberman. Did the subject of

5 the meeting ever come up?

6 A. I didn't mention to him.

7 Q. Had you ever met any -- had you ever met

8 the Trumps before June 9th?

9 A. No.

10 Q. Had you ever met anyone from the campaign

11 before June 9th?

12 A. No.

13 Q. Was it a significant event to you to meet

14 Donald Trump, Jr.?

15 A. No, I was amused, and I'm not a fan of

16 the whole family, so -- I was kind of curious and

17 amused mostly.

18 Q. And having been amused, it just never

19 came up? You never thought to say something to

20 Ed, "This is what I've been doing all day"? I

21 mean, it seems like it would be a fairly

22 significant event that you met Donald Trump, Jr.

23 No?

24 A. You know, I try to be discreet so just,

25 you know -- and I understand it wasn't my meeting.
It was her meeting. I was invited there, and, you know, you don't go and run your mouth about it.

Q. Did Ed at dinner ever ask what you had done that day?

A. No. He was kind of in a somber mood because, you know, he -- I mean, when his wife died, it was-- there are only two of them. They have no kids, and they kind of -- and she was very involved -- she was very close confidante of Hillary Clinton, and so -- and for him it was like kind of somber moment to go and then to talk about the scholarship and her memory. So I think he was a little bit down. He actually brought his -- he has like a niece, his cousin's daughter. She's a girl. is very, very talented mathematician, and very nice girl. She actually joined us for dinner, and he bought her a ticket as well. So she's young girl. She just joined us for dinner.

Q. I'm sorry. I'm not sure if I understood you. Did you say that Ed Lieberman was a close confidant of Hillary Clinton?

A. His wife was close confidante of Hillary Clinton.
Q. And do you know if Ed Lieberman had a relationship with Hillary Clinton or just his wife?

A. Oh, he knew her well, I'm sure.

Q. And did you know that before June 9th that he was a confidant of Hillary Clinton, or his wife?

A. Yeah, I knew all the time. I mean, from the first time I met him.

Q. And so knowing that, it never occurred to you to say, "Hey, I just had a meeting where Hillary Clinton's name came up"?

A. Again, I try to be discreet.

Q. You also said that you met somebody for drinks beforehand. Who was that?

A. I don't even remember now.

Q. Was it a friend of yours?

A. A friend of mine, yeah.

Q. So you have no idea who it was?

A. I don't remember. I don't even remember whether -- honestly, it's been such a long time ago. It's not uncommon for me to meet people or...

Q. Can I take you back for just a moment? When you were leaving the meeting, you mentioned you saw Ivanka Trump in the reception area?
A. Yes, sir.

Q. Did she seem like she was there because of the meeting or some other reason?

A. No, at least I had no impression that she was there for a meeting at all. I mean, she was kind of -- she came in from somewhere else, like took elevator up, we took elevator down. So it was literally like 3-second interaction. She's very beautiful young lady and kind of -- it was really like 3-second thing by the time.

Q. Did you have any sense that she knew there was a meeting taking place?

A. At least it did not strike me that way.

Q. Did you see whether anyone -- you said you had a very brief interaction with her, but did you see if anyone else had any interaction with her?

A. No. She was on her own, actually, so she kind of -- she walked from somewhere, like it's big office there, just very -- there are no walls. So she kind of -- we didn't even see her until she got to the elevator. But she came from somewhere, the elevator on her own, and she rode elevator up.

Q. And so did you see her speak to anyone
else or no?

A. The only -- 3 seconds is not a very long period of time, so she was there, and we kind of said hi, and then she said like -- I don't remember what she said exactly. It's very like short, meaningless greeting, I would say.

Q. And did you immediately get on the elevator, or was there some more --

A. It's almost like simultaneously hers came up and maybe ours, maybe a couple seconds later came down. And so we took the elevator down. I don't see-- at least in my understanding or feeling, but I don't think she had anything to do with that meeting or was even aware of that or who we were. Actually, I don't think she even knew who we were. I'm sure there are a lot of people come through that office.

BY MS. SAWYER:

Q. Did Ms. Veselnitskaya ever mention to you or request that you keep the meeting confidential?

A. Not explicitly, no.

Q. Did you surmise or infer that from her in any way? You said "not explicitly." Did she indicate it in any other way?

A. I don't remember. You know, in general,
1 in general I kind of try not to discuss other
2 people's affair with some who are not those
3 people. And I think that by that time we knew
4 each other well enough to expect this from each
5 other.
6 Q. Did she ever raise with you the issue of
7 the nondisclosure agreement?
8 A. I do not remember. When, you know, my
9 counsel and I were kind of discussing this issue,
10 I really tried to dig deep and search my notes and
11 my documents. I have never seen anything other
12 than this court-ordered nondisclosure form, which
13 I signed.
14 BY MR. PRIVOR:
15 Q. I'm sorry to circle back again. You
16 mentioned also that you raised this issue or
17 discussed the meeting, your reaction that it was
18 amusing, with some journalist friends?
19 A. Correct.
20 Q. Who was that, do you recall?
21 A. Two of my close friends, yeah, long-time
22 friends.
23 Q. Do you recall who they were?
24 A. Yes.
25 Q. Who were they?
A. One is journalist for -- former department editor for Associated Press, is a very old friend of mine. And another one is another old friend of mine who has been in many other press outlets.

Q. And do you recall what you said to them?
A. I said like, you know, I -- you know, guess what? Something funny. I was in a meeting. It was like such bullshit, and that kind of -- but -- and they said, "Can we write about this?"

Of course, journalists are always interested. I said, "Absolutely not. It's not my secret, and you cannot write about this."

Q. And you thought it was okay to tell the journalists about something you found amusing, but you didn't think to discuss this with Ed Lieberman? You thought you needed to maintain that discretion?
A. At some point I might have mentioned it to him, but not like right away.

Q. Not at the dinner?
A. Not at dinner, not even like -- I do not remember. At some point I might have -- he also serves as a legal counsel to me so -- on a number of issues. So, you know, I'm almost certain at
some point he knew about it, but not immediately.

Q. Do you recall when you might have brought it up to him?

A. I don't remember.

BY MS. SAWYER:

Q. Do you think it was before the news broke in the press about the meeting?

A. It's been over a year. Yes, before the news broke.

Q. So sometime between June 9, 2016, and July of 2017?

A. Correct, yes.

BY MS. CLAFLIN:

Q. Can you go back a minute? Were you under the impression that the meeting was Ms. Veselnitskaya's own idea, or was she working with others on her advocacy?

A. I don't know. I cannot say that.

Q. So you have no --

A. I was surprised that she -- I was honestly surprised that she got a meeting.

Q. Okay.

A. Because she's so out of like American political narrative. I found that surprising.

Q. Interesting. So as far as -- you were
not aware of her working for anyone else, though, with her work on the Ziff Brothers?

A. No. I know that --

Q. Do you know -- sorry. Go ahead.

A. No, I think she -- I know that she worked very hard and she was very proud of this, finding these kind of facts and -- because they were not -- they're not known, at least in Russia at that time. So it was her own legal research which she conducted for a long time, as she told me, to kind of find these facts. And I know that she later reported them to law enforcement in Russia, and I don't -- she definitely was the reason why she did it, and it was very good reason and it was important.

Q. So what is the reason that she did it? Do you know why she was interested in that issue?

A. Because the person who kind of perpetrated that, was mastermind, the person who run was not Ziff Brothers, were people who gave money to Bill Browder, and Bill Browder kind of -- I mean, I'm sure he's like he's from New York, they know these intricacies of this Russian offshore company, hiring these mentally disabled people to claim 35 percent tax cut on all those
1 things. I'm sure they had no idea what -- how the
2 money works, but they made a lot of money there.
3 So I'm sure they were happy. But she wants to
4 kind of expose Mr. Browder I guess in this thing.
5 Q. Okay. So you understand that her
6 interest stems entirely from Browder?
7 A. Correct.
8 Q. Okay. And as far as you know, she wasn't
9 working on that with Prevezon?
10 A. Prevezon - Prevezon case was brought to
11 Southern District by Mr. Browder. He was the sole
12 source of it. He tried to sell this case to the
13 FBI, to the Treasury, to many other things. At
14 the end of the day, the case was picked up by
15 Homeland Security Office in New York, and that I
16 find ironic, and I'm sure some of you, certain
17 litigations. The first civil forfeiture complaint
18 contained this long chunks of website, Browder's
19 website. You know, they pretty much plagiarized
20 chunks of text and graphs, schemes, everything was
21 just copy-pasted from that site. And then later
22 in the film, I saw the deposition of the Homeland
23 Security agent, and the lawyers for Prevezon
24 asking like, "Have you checked this?" He said,
25 "No. It wasn't necessary." I find those kind of
interesting. So -- and, clearly, it was -- the
case would not have been brought up, and at the
end, Southern -- person in Southern District
couldn't kind of present that case to the court,
and they offered settlement to Prevezon.

MR. TREMONTE: Excuse me just for a second.

[Counsel confers with witness.]

MR. AKHMETSHIN: And, you know, I was also,
you know, as a part of that, disclosing specifics,
but one of the work I've done for BakerHostetler
in that case was to prepare for deposition,
Browder deposition, so that's everything, what how
I knew a lot of these facts.

BY MS. CLAFLIN:

Q. Do you know if Prevezon had asked her to
have this meeting?

A. I'm not sure. I'm not sure at all how
the meeting came together. I have no knowledge.

Q. You don't know if the Katsyvs asked her
to have this meeting?

A. I don't know.

Q. Or the Agalarovs?

A. I don't know.

MS. CLAFLIN: Okay.

BY MS. SAWYER:
Q. Just one quick question. You said she reported her findings on the Ziff Brothers to law enforcement in Russia. Do you know specifically who she took the complaint to?

A. I don't know, but she at some point mentioned to me that Russia sent several MLATs to U.S. Justice Department in connection with this matter.

Q. Do you know if she met with Yuri Chaika about her complaint?

A. I'm not sure. I don't know.

BY MS. CLAFLIN:

Q. Did you have any further contact with Mr. Goldstone after the meeting?

A. No. I don't even think I had conversation with him.

Q. At the meeting?

A. At the meeting or before the meeting.

There was that little small talk between him and Ike. They seemed to know each other before. But I may have shaken hands with him.

Q. How about Mr. Samochornov?

A. Me?

Q. Did you speak to him after the meeting at all?
A. I did, yes.
Q. In what context?
A. He was involved in this HRAGI work, so I don't remember discussing meeting per se. We might have said like what a bullshit it was. But other than that, I don't think -- he's a very nice person. I like him very much, and he's a great kind of conversationalist, and, you know, we talked with him with other things.
Q. Did you have any further contact with anyone from the Trump campaign, like Don, Jr., Mr. Manafort, Mr. Kushner?
A. No, I did not.

Miss CLAFLIN: We're at a decent stopping point if you guys want to break now.

Mr. FOSTER: Okay.

Ms. CLAFLIN: Off the record at 11:52.

[Recess at 11:52 a.m. to 12:03 p.m.]

Mr. DAVIS: Okay. We'll go back on the record. It's 12:03.

FURTHER EXAMINATION BY COUNSEL FOR THE MAJORITY

BY MR. DAVIS:

Q. Unfortunately, as a byproduct of the format of the interview, I'll be going over some areas my colleagues already addressed a little bit
and other times be jumping around when they've already asked questions I was going to.

So turning to the meeting itself on June 9, 2016, during that meeting did anyone state that the Russian Government was engaged in an effort to support Donald Trump's Presidential campaign?

A. No, I don't remember any discussion to that effect.

Q. Did anyone state that the Russian Government opposed Hillary Clinton's campaign?

A. I don't remember any of this.

Q. Did anyone at the meeting offer to release hacked emails to aid the Trump campaign?

A. No.

Q. Did anyone offer to manufacture and distribute fake news to aid the Trump campaign?

A. No.

Q. Did anyone offer to hack State voter registration systems to obtain voter data to aid the Trump campaign?

A. No.

Q. To the best of your recollection, was there any discussion of anything that might reasonably be considered collusion between the Trump campaign and the Russian Government?
A. Not to way I understand it, no.

Q. You mentioned the manner in which everyone was introduced. I have a few questions to ask about that for clarification. How did you say Ms. Veselnitskaya introduced herself?

A. I think she's a lawyer, introduced herself as a lawyer. I don't remember exactly, sir, but --

Q. Did she clarify who her client was when she introduced herself as a lawyer? Or did she --

A. She mentioned that she got this information about Ziff Brothers through her work for her client, and she might have mentioned the client.

Q. Would that client have been Prevezon or Mr. Katsyv?

A. I don't remember exactly.

Q. Okay. Did she or any other attendee claim that she was working for or speaking on behalf of the Russian Government?

A. Not at all. I don't even barely remember it.

Q. And did it appear to you that anyone else in the meeting from the Trump campaign had ever previously interacted with Ms. Veselnitskaya? Did
anyone seem like they knew her already?

A. No, I don’t think so.

Q. I believe you said that you introduced yourself as associated with HRAGI. Is that correct?

A. Correct, yes.

Q. Okay. And did you or any other attendee claim that you were working for or speaking on behalf of the Russian Government?

A. Oh, definitely not.

Q. Did you say you don’t recall if or how Mr. Kaveladze was introduced?

A. I don’t remember, no.

Q. What about Mr. Goldstone? Was he introduced?

A. I don’t remember. He seems to be familiar with Trump’s people, so it was certain sense of familiarity, but I don’t remember exactly how he introduced himself.

Q. And was Mr. Samochornov introduced?

A. I don’t remember. He must have been.

Q. At the meeting did anyone ask that Donald Trump, Sr., take any action regarding the Magnitsky Act or the Global Magnitsky Act if elected?
A. No, I don't remember that.

Q. Did anyone mention the Justice Department's lawsuit against Prevezon Holdings?

A. I don't remember that.

Q. Did anyone ask that Trump, Sr., take any action regarding the Justice Department's lawsuit against Prevezon Holdings if elected, such as firing Preet Bharara, dropping the case, or settling?

A. No, I don't -- I would remember that.

No.

Q. Okay.

A. Definitely not.

Q. What, if anything, did you or Ms. Veselnitskaya offer to the Trump campaign?

A. Nothing but advice.

Q. And that was just the information you've already gone over with my colleagues; is that correct?

A. That is correct, yes.

Q. Okay. What, if anything, did you or Ms. Veselnitskaya ask of the Trump campaign?

A. I did not ask anything. Ms.

Veselnitskaya -- I don't remember her asking anything explicitly or specifically.
Q. Okay. Did Mr. Kaveladze speak during the meeting?
A. I don't remember him speaking.
Q. Did Mr. Goldstone?
A. Maybe in the beginning, like in a small talk, but nothing of substance I could remember.
MR. DAVIS: Okay. I'd like you to take a look at an email chain. This is Bates-numbered DJTJR-00454 to 56, which we'll label Exhibit 8.

[Akhmetshin Exhibit 8 was marked for identification.]

BY MR. DAVIS:
Q. This is an email chain from Mr. Goldstone to Dan Scavino, copying Donald Trump, Jr., Rhona Graff, and Konstatin Sidorkov. You are not on this email chain.
A. Okay.

MR. TREMONTE: Give us a second.

MR. DAVIS: Sure.

[Pause.]

BY MR. DAVIS:
Q. So this email was sent on June 29, 2016. It states in part -- again, this is Mr. Goldstone. It states, "Dan, I am following up an email awhile back of something I had mentioned to
Don and Paul Manafort during a meeting recently.

There are believed to be around 2 million Russian American voters living in the USA and more than 1.6 million of these use the Russian Facebook site VKontakte, VK, as their preferred social media outlet. As I mentioned to you guys through Emin and my contact at VK, they want to create a Vote Trump 2016 promotion aired directly at these users, people who will be voting in November. At the time Paul had said he would welcome it, and so I had the VK folks mock up a basic sample page, which I am resending for your approval now."

To the best of your recollection, did Mr. Goldstone discuss a VK proposal during the June 9, 2016, meeting?

A. No. I would have remembered that.

Q. Okay. Am I correct that you said you had seen the document that was at the lunch and taken to the meeting? You had seen that document beforehand; is that correct?

A. That's correct, yes.

Q. In what context had you seen it previously?

A. At some point she mentioned to me about the Ziff Brothers and her research and those
She said like -- she really worked on developing this. She was very proud of -- and I also think it's quite impressive. She was able to find like $880 million like in profits moved out of Russia.

Q. And was this document prepared as part of her role in representing Prevezon?

A. I would believe so. I'm not certain in which capacity she developed it, but I would assume it was in connection with that litigation.

Q. And do you know how she had used this document prior to the June 9th meeting?

A. I don't know.

Q. Had she shared it with anyone else or presented it to anyone?

A. She mentioned to me that she reported her findings to Russian law enforcement.

MR. FOSTER: So to the best of your recollection, when did she first provide you a copy of the document?

MR. AKHMETSHIN: I don't think I had a copy of the document, but she mentioned to me -- I saw the Russian version of the document maybe sometime in April, because I saw it -- might be even in Brussels. Or maybe I got a copy in Brussels or
1 something. I don't remember, sir.

2 BY MR. DAVIS:

3 Q. Do you know if you have a copy of it now?

4 A. I do have a Russian copy of it.

5 Q. Would you be willing to provide a copy of that document?

6 MR. TREMONTE: We'll take the request under advisement, and we can discuss it when we're done with the interview.

7 BY MR. DAVIS:

8 Q. Was the information in that document relevant to HRAGI's work?

9 A. I wouldn't say so, no. It's relevant just to show that the person who behind this Magnitsky law is a con man and a fraudster and criminal. But other than that, no.

10 Q. So relevant to Bill Browder's --

11 A. Relevant to the picture, correct.

12 Q. When you spoke -- to make sure I have it right, you spoke about the adoption issue and HRAGI's efforts in general; is that correct?

13 A. Correct, yes.

14 Q. Was the presentation or speech you gave to the Trump campaign similar to the HRAGI pitch that you made to Members of Congress in the
1 congressional setting?

2 A. It was slightly different because I suggested that this could become a campaign issue and, you know, something which could be brought up during the debates and other things. But the stuff which I asked for from the Members of Congress is that just simply to investigate the facts. And I provided these points which showed that original facts are fabricated or incorrect.

3 Q. So after the June 9th meeting, when did you return to Washington, D.C.?

4 A. Next morning. Or next afternoon probably.

5 Q. Okay. And did you travel to Washington, D.C., with Ms. Veselnitskaya?

6 A. I'm not sure.

7 Q. Did you travel to Washington, D.C., with Mr. Lieberman?

8 A. I'm not sure. I found my ticket coming in and coming out, but I don't -- I purchased it by myself, but I don't remember other people.

9 Q. What interaction did you have with Ms. Veselnitskaya during the rest of her trip to the United States in June of 2016?

10 A. I had dinner with her, but could be later
in Washington. And then we tried to -- I think at the same kind of -- part of the same visit, I brought her to the hearings, and I tried to kind of -- brought her to the hearings, and she also attended screening of the film at the Newseum.

Q. Did you accompany her on any other activities during that time?

A. Not that I remember.

Q. You mentioned attending a dinner with her. Do you recall the date of that dinner?

A. I believe next day or day after.

Q. So June 10th or 11th? Is that --

A. Something like that, yes.

Q. Who else attended that dinner?

A. The rest of the legal team from BakerHostetler.

Q. Did that include Mark Cymrot?

A. Correct, yes, and his spouse. They're more like a family there.

Q. What about Glenn Simpson? Was he there?

A. He was, yes.

Q. What was the purpose of the dinner, if any?

A. Just social thing. Mr. Cymrot's wife is Peruvian. Actually, there was someone there who
1 had nothing to do with this affair. It's a
2 neighbor of mine. She lives across the street
3 from me, and she's Peruvian writer, and she used
4 to be a book editor for Washington Post.
5 MR. FOSTER: You said Mr. Simpson was there.
6 Was there anyone else there from Fusion GPS?
7 MR. AKHMETSHIN: I don't remember. His wife
8 was there. I was actually seated next to his
9 wife.
10 BY MR. DAVIS:
11 Q. Do you recall if Ed Baumgartner was
12 there?
13 A. I don't remember.
14 Q. What about Ed Lieberman?
15 A. Ed Lieberman must have been there, yes.
16 Q. To the best of your recollection, did Ms.
17 Veselnitskaya and Mr. Simpson interact at that
18 dinner?
19 A. It was rather large dinner, so just, you
20 know, it was a nice -- you know, there's several
21 near Macomb Street, it's loud, and so we -- I
22 remember we were waiting for a table for a long
23 time, just took so many people, there was like
24 some side room there. So it's been a while. And
25 there was this like in a big dinner, loud place, I
I remember I was seated next to Glenn's wife, whom I've known for years, so we were chatting with her.

Q. Was Mr. Samochornov at that dinner?
A. I don't remember him there.

Q. Do you know if she had any translator there with her?
A. I don't remember.

BY MR. FOSTER:
Q. You said you had known Glenn Simpson's wife for years. How do you know her?
A. She used to be bureau chief for Wall Street Journal in Brussels.

Q. And so how did you --
A. And I've done many like work -- also not just in U.S. Congress lobbying work, but I've done lobbying work in European Parliament in EU, and I met her in Brussels, and actually I met her first, and I met Simpson through her.

Q. And so what was the nature of the -- what led you to meet her?
A. For example, I would organize hearings in European Parliament, and I want someone to cover those hearings and explain why it's important for them to write about it and, you know, like always
MR. DAVIS: Okay.

Q. To the best of your knowledge, did you or Ms. Veselnitskaya mention the Trump Tower meeting during this dinner?

A. I don't remember. I was not seated next to her. She was like somewhere else, and so I don't remember -- or I don't know what she discussed with people.

Q. And did you discuss it?

A. I did not discuss it at that dinner.

Q. Can you walk us through your activities with Ms. Veselnitskaya on June 12th? Do you recall what you did on that day?

A. I don't remember.

Q. Okay. And did you attend the June 13, 2016, screening of Mr. Nekrasov's film at the Newseum?

A. I did, yes.

Q. And what role, if any, did you have relating to that?
A. I helped to organize it, you know, just secure-- there was a lot of drama about that screening, and Mr. Browder tried to sabotage it and tried to kind of close it down. So there was a lot of -- it was a very tense moment, and we also tried to get a lot of publicity about it, so we got this New York Times article. There was a lot of kind of attention to that screening, so I also worked with -- where this person who was helping us with the arrangements, but I also worked directly with the Newseum staff, but when we needed to -- there were threats, so we needed to kind of pay for like metal detector, for police presence. So it was rather dramatic. And I also was very busy with just inviting people, creating a list, because we didn't want the Browder people to sabotage it, which ended up happening, and I tried to secure a person who would present it. So there were a lot of -- it was very busy time for me.

Q. Who was the person who was assisting you in organizing that screening?

A. We engaged public relations company to help us. It's called Potomac Square. And the person who helped us, Chris Cooper.
Q. And then am I correct you stated you
2 attended a congressional hearing with Ms.
3 Veselnitskaya on June 14th; is that correct?
4 A. I believe it was next day, yes.
5 Q. Okay. Did you attend a dinner with Ms.
6 Veselnitskaya, Congressman Rohrabacher, and others
7 at the Capitol Hill Club on June 14, 2016?
8 A. I did. Yes, sir.
9 Q. Who attended that dinner?
10 A. There were people from Congressman
11 Rohrabacher's staff. There was a guy -- or
12 someone actually was -- I remember that event he
13 came to, because I met -- his name escapes me.
14 He's a very, very impressive old man. He used to
15 be a U.S. Ambassador to Russia under Reagan. The
16 name escapes me. He testified previously at the
17 hearing that day, and I really have great sense of
18 admiration for him because I remember growing up
19 as a kid he kind of was very instrumental in these
20 kind of end of communist rule, and I remember this
21 one Reagan came to. I was in tenth grade. Reagan
22 came to Moscow, you know, very exciting times.
23 And he -- and I share also his views about U.S.-
24 Russia relations, and he tried to express those
25 views at the hearing. And, unfortunately, you
know, he was like yelled over. It was very ugly.
And I was very upset. But, you know, I came a
little bit earlier for the dinner so we had this
interesting conversation.
Q. Okay. So other than Ms. Veselnitskaya,
Congressman Rohrabacher, his staff, you, and the
former Ambassador, was anyone else in attendance?
A. There was a Russian translator for
Veselnitskaya. He was there, because I remember
we were talking, and then he was like very
impressed by this old gentleman. He was
interpreting for her, and he was present, and we,
I remember, had this conversation. He was very
also -- I mean, everyone knew that gentleman.
It's embarrassing I don't remember his name now.
Q. And was that translator Mr. Samochornov
or someone else?
A. No, it was not Mr. Samochornov. It was
this guy, Murat Glashev.
Q. What is the nature of your relationship
with Congressman Rohrabacher?
A. I have communicated with Mr.
Rohrabacher's office on issues of Central Asia,
because I've done-- you know, despite the fact
what New York Times writes about me, a majority, a
1 vast majority of my work in Washington, lobbying
2 work, was connected to supporting these opposition
3 movements and political parties and independent
4 press in Central Asia. So Congressman Rohrabacher
5 always served on this committee, subcommittees
6 which had jurisdiction over those issues, and he
7 was extremely instrumental in helping political
8 prisoners. He's a very good guy, and I have a
9 great respect for him.
10 Q. At that dinner was the Prevezon
11 litigation discussed?
12 A. I don't remember, no.
13 Q. What about the Magnitsky Act?
14 A. Yes, it was discussed.
15 Q. Was Mr. Browder discussed?
16 A. I don't remember specifically.
17 Q. And was the June 9th meeting at Trump
18 Tower mentioned?
19 A. I don't think so.
20 Q. What other interaction did you have with
21 Ms. Veselnitskaya prior to her departure from the
22 U.S. on June 18, I believe it was, 2016?
23 A. That might be it because, you know, I
24 have a child, and her school ends like sometime
25 like mid-June, and I usually take her to Russia
1 for summer. And I left with her, and I haven't
2 been back until probably like August or September.
3 So I was out of the country, myself with my
4 child.
5
6 Q. Regarding the lobbying efforts related to
7 HRAGI during Ms. Veselnitskaya's June trip, which
8 offices and officials did HRAGI and its associated
9 lobby then?
10 A. I don't think I've ever taken Ms.
11 Veselnitskaya on -- my lobbying engagement was
12 rather short, so I might have taken two or three
13 visits on the Hill in connection with that work.
14 And then I don't think I've ever taken her like to
15 the offices.
16 Q. Okay. So she was not with you during
17 that lobbying effort?
18 A. She was not.
19 Q. Which offices did you visit during that
20 time?
21 A. I visited the office of Dana Rohrabacher,
22 his counterpart, his Ranking Democrat in that
23 subcommittee. Again, his name escapes me. He is
24 a Congressman from Queens, New York. I worked
25 with -- I visited the office of Congressman Hill,
26 and I also visited lawyers for this Adoption
1 Caucus. And we have run into a number of other --
2 I asked for assistance. There's a gentleman who's
3 a former Congressman, who is also very old, is
4 actually a gym buddy of mine. He used to be a
5 Congressman here for many years. Congressman Ron
6 Dellums, he used to be Chairman of Armed Services
7 Committee, is former Marine, and is very, very
8 interesting gentleman. And we've been attending
9 same gym for many years, and we kind of talk. He's
10 a very interesting guy and former Marine, has like
11 very impressive head of hair, and he's actually
12 very impressive. He has a six-pack. He just
13 turned 70 last year. He boxes, and it's very
14 impressive guy. But he likes all these stories,
15 and he traveled to Russia many times. So we -- I
16 mean, old people like to talk, and I'm not young
17 anymore, so kind of -- so I asked him to assist me
18 with -- I explained to him this whole issue of
19 adoption, and so at one of those visits, we went
20 with him, and he knew this -- so we spoke about
21 this issue, this angle, and maybe couple more
22 people, because, you know, with him you walk on
23 the Hill in Rayburn, and people just come to him,
24 like give him a hug. He was well loved, I assume.
25 I only knew him in his capacity as a gym member.
So we mentioned -- we met with along the way -- I don't remember. I have notes somewhere, but not that many people, we didn't.

Q. Aside from those visits on the Hill, what other lobbying efforts has HRAGI undertaken in the course of its existence?

A. None. Just its existence was rather short.

Q. Did you participate in lobbying a congressional delegation during a visit to Russia in April of 2016?

A. That's true. That was my first congressional contact, lobbying contact. It was in early April 2016.

Q. Can you describe the context of that?

A. I met Ms. Veselnitskaya that morning for breakfast at the hotel where CODEL was staying, and we --

Q. Sorry. Which city was it?

A. Moscow. Moscow, Russia. And so we had breakfast, and after breakfast, we're hoping to kind of run into the CODEL people there. But there were only like staffers there. So that morning in the lobby, we run into Congressman Rohrabacher, whom I know, and so I kind of mention
1 to him that there's this issue we'd like to
2 discuss, and this is lawyer who has some
3 information about these things. But they didn't
4 have time at that time. They were departing for
5 service in a church. But they suggested -- he
6 directed me to his staffer, and staffer later I
7 think texted me the address and time for meeting.
8 It was on Sunday. So CODEL had I think it was
9 like five or six people, bipartisan CODEL, and
10 they were having an event in Zamoskvorechye, on
11 this other part of Moscow, at some think tank.
12 And so we had this kind of presentation where we
13 explained this issue at that time, at that
14 meeting, or before that event.
15   Q. And what issue was the presentation?
16   A. It was about this Magnitsky law and about
17   these facts that, you know, there are inaccuracies
18   in that factual story or forgery in that story,
19   and we asked for Congress, Members of Congress to
20   investigate and find the facts or check that
21   story.
22   Q. Did you provide any documents to any of
23   the Congressmen or Congresswomen or staff?
24   A. I developed for this effort -- I
25   developed these two documents, and I presented --
I believe -- I don’t remember exactly, but I must have given one of these kind of -- actually, it's called a Request for Investigation. So, no, not like overturning sanctions so Putin will not be upset. But it was like a Request for Investigation, and I might have given that document.

Q. Okay. During the Moscow CODEL.

A. Yes. And I also mentioned existence of the film, which I later on shared with staff.

MR. FOSTER: I'm sorry. Did you just say something about so Putin would not be upset?

MR. AKHMETSHIN: No, no, no. It was sarcastic statement because everyone tried to describe my lobbying effort as like to please Putin, so he doesn't like Magnitsky law, so they directed me to overturn that. That's not true. I asked to investigate facts, so Request for Investigation. That's the only thing I've ever done in that --

MR. TREMONTE: Sarcasm doesn't make for a good record.

MR. AKHMETSHIN: Thank you.

MR. TREMONTE: I just want to caution you against making sarcastic statements.
MR. AKHMETSHIN: Thank you.

MR. DAVIS: Okay. I'd like you to take a look at a document that's Bates-stamped RA-SEN-JUDICIARY-000008. This will be Exhibit 10, I believe.

MR. FOSTER: Exhibit 9.

MR. DAVIS: 9, sorry.

[Akhmetshin Exhibit 9 was marked for identification.]

BY MR. DAVIS:

Q. This email exchange was from April 24 and 25, 2016, and has the subject line Prevezon. Glenn Simpson writes, "Please circulate a dial-a-number."

To the best of your recollection, was this call related to the April lobbying effort of U.S. Congressmen visiting Moscow?

A. I don't remember exact facts which were discussed, but I'm nearly certain that it was not.

Q. And why are you certain that it was not?

MR. TREMONTE: Nearly certain.

MR. DAVIS: Nearly certain.

MR. AKHMETSHIN: Because the subject line is Prevezon. It's clearly -- and the people who are in there are lawyers.
BY MR. DAVIS:

Q. To the best of your knowledge, was Mr. Simpson aware of the lobbying effort in Moscow?

A. I doubt it.

MR. TREMONTE: Do you know one way or the other?

MR. AKHMETSHIN: I don't know, no.

BY MR. DAVIS:

Q. You mentioned that you developed the documents that you used during that April lobbying effort. Was that information derived from information obtained by Fusion and put onto the Prevezon docket, the process you've sort of described earlier?

A. I would say that, you know, I had already some wealth of knowledge about the case, and some of it was actually derived from just watching all this media interviews by Mr. Browder and other things, inconsistencies. Also it was a reference to a film which was not a part of the docket, but there's no direct -- there's no direct input from Global GPS into that document.

Q. Did you meet with Congressman Rohrabacher in Berlin in April of 2017?

A. I had a drink with him in the spring of
1 this year, yes.
2 
3 MR. DAVIS: I'd like to refer to a CNN article. This will be Exhibit --
4 
5 MR. FOSTER: 10.
6 
7 MR. DAVIS: -- 10.
8 [Akhmetshin Exhibit 10 was marked for identification.]
9 
10 BY MR. DAVIS:
11 
12 Q. This article is titled, "U.S. Congressman talks Russian money laundering with alleged ex-spy in Berlin." The article is dated May 4, 2017.
13 
14 Mr. Akhmetshin, can you describe your interaction with Mr. Rohrabacher in Berlin in April 2017?
15 
16 A. It was a very late night, a drink. I was in Berlin on my own matters, and I was aware of the CODEL's presence. I believe it just arrived to Berlin. Congressman Rohrabacher is also Chairman of this Cannabis Caucus here, and there was this event related to marijuana. I don't remember exactly which one it was. I was aware of their presence in Berlin, and I was staying nearby, and I stopped by for a drink. It was around probably 11 o'clock in the evening, very late. And he bought his own drinks. I bought my own drinks. His wife was there and a couple of
1 staffers. I think there was another Member there.
2 And in a process of that evening, he said, "Oh,
3 do you know what's happening with the Prevezon
4 case and Browder?" And I said -- I never
5 specifically ever asked him to do anything on
6 Prevezon case because there's nothing he can do.
7 There's a separation of powers here. So even
8 Prophet Muhammad won't help Prevezon if they want
9 to. So a suggestion that I was ever doing
10 something for Prevezon in Congress are absurd and
11 inaccurate, and so we had this friendly chat.
12 This was one of the questions, and he asked me
13 what's going on in the case. I said they got a
14 new judge, and trial is going to happen. That was
15 the extent of the discussion. And then he said,
16 yes, this Mr. Browder is such a -- like a liar,
17 because he has his own view of Mr. Browder, and
18 kind of that was the exchange. I believe that one
19 of the staffers who was present there alerted Mr.
20 Weiss, and I also do believe that Mr. Weiss or at
21 least have reasons to believe that he is directly
22 financially compensated by Mr. Browder, and Mr.
23 Weiss had written a lot of lies about me before.
24 Q. Were you still working as a consultant on
25 the Prevezon case at this time?
A. I was not. I didn't.

BY MR. FOSTER:

Q. I'm sorry. Did you just allege that Mr. Browder compensated Mr. Weiss, the author of the article?

A. There are reasons to believe so, yes.

Q. And what are they?

A. There's some analysis and research.

Q. Some what?

A. Some analysis and research which indicate that Mr. Weiss might have been improper -- have improper relationship with Mr. Browder or he worked for Mr. Browder in the past.

Q. So what is this analysis and research? Where does it come from?

MR. TREMONTE: Can you give us a minute?

[Counsel confers with witness.]

MR. TREMONTE: I think the answer to that question necessarily implicates both the attorney-client privilege and the work product doctrine, so I think we're not going to answer that one.

BY MR. FOSTER:

Q. So you're saying there's no non-privileged basis for your allegation that Mr. Weiss was compensated by Mr. Browder for his
journalistic activities?

MR. TREMONE: I think that's the answer for now. We can circle back to this after the next break, but that's the answer for now.

MR. AKHMETSHIN: I just want to state for the record that Mr. Weiss have written several articles about me which are utterly inaccurate and incorrect or derogatory.

BY MR. DAVIS:

Q. Mr. Akhmetshin, have you ever met with any Russian Government officials regarding the subject of -- subjects of HRAGI's work, the Magnitsky Act, adoptions, Bill Browder?

A. I did not.

Q. Do you know if anyone else affiliated with HRAGI or the Prevezon litigation team has met with Russian Government officials about these issues?

A. I'm not aware of those contacts.

Q. Pardon?

A. I'm not aware of those contacts.

Q. Between the June 9, 2016, Trump Tower meeting and the public reporting about the meeting that happened in the summer of this year, with whom did you communicate about the June 9th
A. I mentioned to a couple of my buddies, and I recently -- in the spring of this year, I contacted Ms. Veselnitskaya and Mr. Kaveladze as well about this meeting.

Q. What prompted you to contact them?
A. Because the media have taken great interest in these contacts of Trump campaign with Russians, and I was nearly certain that this meeting would become public.

Q. When you contacted them, what did you discuss?
A. I mentioned -- I contacted them separately and -- because they are not in D.C., but I told both of them that really in these kind of level of scrutiny, I mean, it's only a matter of time when this meeting will become public. And I encouraged them to get ahead of the story and tell the story ourselves.

Q. Did you compare your recollections of the meeting with Mr. Kaveladze and Ms. Veselnitskaya?
A. I don't remember this issue of discussion was ever brought up. I just said that it's a matter of time and it's always to tell your own story yourself than have other than -- let others
1 to define it.
2 Q. I think you’ve mentioned to my colleagues
3 that you had mentioned the meeting to two of your
4 journalist friends, but I’m not sure if I caught
5 the names. Did you say who they were?
6 A. Yes, I did.
7 Q. Okay. And what were their names again?
8 A. It's Desmond Butler and Aram Roston.
9 Q. And at any point prior to this story
10 becoming public, did you discuss the meeting with
11 anybody else?
12 A. Not that I remember.
13 Q. Do you recall if you ever mentioned it to
14 Mr. Lieberman?
15 A. By that time he knew that, yes.
16 Q. Do you know how he came to know it?
17 A. I mentioned to him. As I mentioned to
18 you, he also serves as a legal counsel for me.
19 Q. Did you ever discuss the meeting with
20 Glenn Simpson?
21 A. I don’t remember ever discussing with
22 him.
23 Q. Do you have any reason to believe that he
24 knew of the meeting prior to its publication in
25 the press?
A. I'm not aware of that knowledge.

Q. Okay. Do you know if Ms. Veselnitskaya attempted to connect with the Trump transition team or other Trump associates after the 2016 election?

A. I don't know.

Q. To the best of your knowledge, did Ms. Veselnitskaya ever have a second meeting with Trump associates beyond the June 9, 2016, meeting?

A. I don't know.

Q. You may have answered this already, but have you had any contact with any associates of Mr. Trump since the June 9, 2016, meeting?

A. No, never.

Q. Have you had contact with Mr. Kaveladze since then?

A. I met with Mr. Kaveladze in June of this year.

Q. Since the public reporting about the June 9, 2016, meeting, have you had communications directly or indirectly with any of the other people who attended the meeting?

A. Only with -- only with Veselnitskayas.

BY MR. FOSTER:

Q. I'd like to circle back to the
1 conversations with your journalist friends again.
2 So how long have you known them?
3 A. Known?
4 Q. The two journalists that you spoke to.
5 A. Many years; 15, 20 years maybe.
6 Q. Each of them?
7 A. About 15 years, I would say.
8 Q. And how do you know them?
9 A. Through their work. I was just pitching
10 them stories when they were writing stories about
11 stuff. But I -- it's developed into a personal
12 relationship.
13 Q. And these are separate contacts, not
14 together?
15 A. Separate contacts, yes.
16 Q. And in what time frame was it that you
17 told them about the meeting?
18 A. I don't remember. It's probably a few
19 weeks after, maybe.
20 Q. So it was closer to the meeting itself --
21 A. Closer to meeting.
22 Q. -- than to when it was publicly reported?
23 A. Yes.
24 Q. And can you recount separately as to each
25 of them your best recollection of your
1 conversation with them about the meeting?
2 A. Just at one point I mentioned like, hey,
3 you know, I was just at this meeting, it was like
4 total bullshit it was. That's pretty much the
5 extent of it.
6 Q. I believe you mentioned earlier that they
7 asked to report on it?
8 A. Yes, they said, "Can we write about it?"
9 They were kind of excited about that, at that
10 time probably not as excited they would have been
11 like a year later. But, again, no one believed
12 that it would ever go anywhere, that campaign.
13 But I said like, no, it's not my secret, guys.
14 I'm just telling it to you kind of on the -- and
15 they said like when the time is right, would you
16 let us know, and I said yes, I would let you know.
17 BY MR. DAVIS:
18 Q. Do you recall if those conversations were
19 before or after the hacked DNC emails started --
20 MR. TREMONTE: Excuse me?
21 BY MR. DAVIS:
22 Q. Do you remember if those conversations
23 with your journalist friends about the meeting
24 occurred prior to or after the public release of
25 hacked DNC emails?
A. I don't remember. I don't remember even
caring that much about this.
Q. I have a series of questions about your
relationship with Fusion GPS. How long have you
known Glenn Simpson?
A. Ten, 12 years, probably.
Q. When did you first meet him?
A. Maybe 10, 12 years ago. I don't remember
exactly.
Q. And you've mentioned before that you met
his wife first. What was the context of your
first interactions with Mr. Simpson?
A. With Mr. Simpson, probably he was writing
story about corruption in Kazakhstan. I think
that was one of the first stories I worked with
him on.
Q. Did you pitch stories to Mr. Simpson
while he was a journalist?
A. I did.
Q. And were you a source for him otherwise
while he was a journalist?
A. I might have.
Q. Have you ever received payments from
Fusion GPS?
A. Never.
1 Q. Have you ever made payments to Fusion
2 GPS?
3 A. Never.
4 Q. What interactions have you had with
5 Fusion GPS?
6 A. Other than social interaction with
7 Simpson, none.
8 Q. Have you and Fusion ever worked for the
9 same client on an issue beyond working for
10 BakerHostetler on the Prevezon litigation?
11 A. No.
12 Q. When did you first learn about Fusion's
13 research into Donald Trump's alleged ties with
14 Russia?
15 A. When it was reported in the media.
16 Q. So according to press reports, knowledge
17 of the dossier was circling around the
18 journalistic community in D.C. prior to its
19 publication. Had you heard journalists talking
20 about a dossier or related matters prior to
21 BuzzFeed publishing it?
22 A. I had.
23 Q. Do you recall when you heard that?
24 A. Maybe in the summer of that year.
25 Q. And what was the context of what you
1 heard, the content and context?
2 A. You know, there was like rumors in D.C.
3 and other journalists -- you know, everyone who
4 writes about Russia, they kind of know each other.
5 Either they've rotated from Moscow or, you know --
6 - it's a fairly small group of people who kind of
7 cover those issues, and they all know each other.
8 Q. Okay. So you had heard rumors of the
dossier or dossier-type claims in the summer of
9 that year. Were you aware that Fusion was tied to
10 that?
11 A. I was not.
12 BY MR. FOSTER:
13 Q. Where did you hear about the dossier?
14 From whom?
15 A. Just some journalists will ask me for
16 lunch, a drink, and they'll mention, hey, you
17 know, there's this kind of documents are floating,
18 there's this jaw-dropping, like perverse sexual
19 things, and there are tapes of it. And, you know,
20 something to that effect.
21 Q. You don't recall who first told you that?
22 A. Maybe someone from New York Times.
23 There's this guy, Stephen Lee Miller. He was
24 editor at that time, so I remember --
Q. Who?
A. Stephen Lee Miller.
Q. And did any of these journalists ever show you copies of the memos that were --
A. I've never seen copies. I've heard there's like they say, like what do you think? I say like unlikely, that would be too stupid.
Q. Do you know Christopher Steele?
A. I never met him.
Q. Christopher Burroughs?
A. Never met him.
Q. Sir Andrew Wood?
A. I don't know him directly, but I was at events with him.
Q. Which event was that?
A. I kind of -- as part of my program work, I am affiliated with this thing called Halifax Security Forum. And so I attempt -- when I can, I go up maybe five, six times. It's in Halifax that one weekend where actually some of your colleagues go as well. It's an interesting event, intellectually stimulating and kind of good. And I know he -- he comes like every year, I guess.
Q. Did you attend the Halifax International Security Forum in 2016?
A. I did, yes. He was there for sure.

Q. It has been reported that at this forum Orbis Associate Sir Andrew Wood connected with Senator McCain and David Kramer to inform them of the dossier's existence. Did you have any part in that contact?

A. I had no part in the contact. I was not aware of it.

Q. Did you have any contact with Sir Andrew Wood during the 2016 Halifax International --

A. I did not talk to him.

Q. What about Senator McCain?

A. I might have said hi to him. I know him personally.

Q. You know him personally?

A. Yeah.

Q. What about David Kramer?

A. I also know him well. I might have spoken with him.

Q. Did you discuss the dossier with Senator McCain or David Kramer?

A. I wasn't aware of existence of dossier.

Q. You weren't aware of --

A. I was not aware of the existence of dossier at that time.
Q. Okay. But you had heard the rumors about the --

A. Yeah, but it was not -- in other words, it was kind of -- at that time rumors were like what you do think, there's like rumor, there's like tape exists, and --

Q. Did you discuss those rumors with --

A. No, I did not. And we -- we have different opinions about Russia with both David and Senator McCain. So that's one issue we agree to disagree.

Q. Do you know anyone else from Orbis Business Intelligence?

A. I was not even aware of existence of company.

Q. All right. Were you involved in the creation of any of the information that ended up in the dossier?

A. I was not.

Q. Other than what you've read in the media, do you know who was involved in the dossier's creation?

A. I don't know. I don't have any knowledge.

Q. Okay. Did you ever provide information
1 directly or indirectly to Steele for potential
2 inclusion in the dossier?
3 A. No, sir.
4 Q. Did you ever provide information directly
5 or indirectly to Glenn Simpson or Fusion GPS for
6 potential inclusion in the dossier?
7 A. I did not.
8 Q. Did you ever encourage anyone else to
9 provide information to Steele or Fusion for
10 potential inclusion in the dossier?
11 A. No, sir.
12 Q. Did you ever discuss dossier allegations,
13 whether tied to the dossier or the allegations
14 themselves, with Ms. Veselnitskaya?
15 A. No.
16 Q. With anyone on the Prevezon litigation
17 team?
18 A. No.
19 Q. With anybody from HRAGI?
20 A. No.
21 Q. Do you know who any of the sources are in
22 the dossier?
23 A. I have no idea.
24 Q. Do you know Mikhail Kulagin?
25 A. No.
Q. Ambassador Kislyak?

A. No. I know of him but never met him.

Q. Were you in any way involved in the distribution of the dossier or in pitching it to the media?

A. No, sir.

MR. FOSTER: Okay. Now I'd like to take a look at your second declaration from the International Mineral Resources litigation. This will be Exhibit 11.

[Akhmetshin Exhibit 11 was marked for identification.]

[Pause.]

BY MR. DAVIS:

Q. This is a declaration dated June 14, 2015, which you've signed. I'd like you to take a look at page 5. On page 5, you have a section titled "The London Information Bazaar." Paragraph 14 states in part, "One of my most important resources was the vibrant exchange of financial, political, social, and cultural news or information that exists in London. I call this the London Information Bazaar or London Information Exchange. In London, journalists, businessmen, entrepreneurs, stockbrokers and traders, corporate
officers and directors, politicians and workers at nongovernmental organizations and interest groups attempt to obtain some financial or other advantage by being the first to know certain facts that could affect corporate strategies, commercial outcomes, social pecking orders, political fortunes or futures, or other kinds of data. Because London fancies itself as the financial capital of the world, one can find information on the London Information Bazaar about almost any part of the world."

Then in paragraph 15, you state, "Information passes on the London Information Bazaar by barter, particularly among journalists. If one is interested in a given topic and has news to share, one can quite frequently discover information on the topic of interest by sharing information with the source of that information. The unique mix of finance, politics, journalism, and geopolitics that exists in London makes it a very lively information bazaar."

I'd like you to take a look at a related document before I ask you some questions about these. This will be Exhibit 12. This is part of your deposition in the IMR litigation.
BY MR. DAVIS:

Q. On the last page of this, which is marked 263, it appears you're describing this activity in London some more, stating, "There's a certain information kind of exchange, barter of information, which is connected to pretty much everything. I'm aware of Russian situation matters." And then later you state, "So I must say that there's -- in addition to information, there's a lot of misinformation and a lot -- a lot of forgeries as well actually that's circulating. So people -- it's very informal, and it's not an entity which kind of guarantees any kind of accuracy of those."

Mr. Akhmetshin, can you describe this London Information Bazaar in more detail? Is it entirely informal? Or is it facilitated by any websites or physical locations?

A. It's a place to -- it's very -- you know, there's no sign: information bazaar, but, you know, I use it best to describe this situation in London. From my experience, it's full of exchange
of that kind of information which probably I'm not aware of existence for any other place in world which will have that kind of concentration of interest and documents and information. And so a lot of people, people are trying to kind of use or barter their information to obtain advantage there.

Q. So is this your own conceptualization of how the London Information Exchange works? Or is this some sort of actual entity?

A. It's not an actual entity. It's my kind of -- in order to describe it, that's how I kind of -- I chose the term. It's not a formal term.

Q. You note that it is one of your most important resources and that you are aware of Russian matters in it. In 2016, were you aware of any efforts or -- efforts in the London Information Bazaar to gather information relating to Donald Trump's relationship with Russia?

A. I was not active at that time, you know, just this litigation drained me, so I had no business in London at that time.

Q. Okay. To the best of your knowledge, does Fusion GPS participate in this London Information Exchange?
A. I'm not aware of their direct involvement in that.

Q. Okay. Does Christopher Steele, to the best of your knowledge?

A. I don't know him.

Q. Do you have any reason to believe that intelligence agents plant disinformation in this exchange?

A. Oh, absolutely.

Q. Would that include Russian intelligence agents, to the best of your knowledge?

A. I'm not aware of specific cases, but I'm quite sure that a lot of misinformation also kind of is being circulated there.

MR. FOSTER: Why do you think that?

MR. AKHMETSHIN: Because, you know, some of the things which are -- actually, there's a very important thing, which I don't know whether it's mentioned in the number of participants. There are also -- London is -- has a number of private business firms, which those firms are usually staffed by former intelligence officers who were retired or just left the jobs. And sometimes they provide due diligence, and very often, at least in my past work, I've observed work products of those
agencies, and they often were inaccurate or incomplete or just completely false.

BY MR. DAVIS:

Q. In light of your familiarity with business in Russia and related matters, what is your evaluation of the Steele dossier?

A. I did not put a lot of effort in analyzing it. I kind of scan for this thing, and I think it's total rubbish.

MR. DAVIS: All right. I think we're at a good stopping place for our side right now. We'll go off the record. It is 12:58.

[Recess at 12:58 p.m. to 1:08 p.m.]

MS. CLAFLIN: All right. So we are back on at 1:08.

FURTHER EXAMINATION BY COUNSEL FOR THE MINORITY

BY MS. CLAFLIN:

Q. Mr. Akhmetshin, you just testified that the dossier was, in your opinion, "rubbish." But you also testified a few minutes before that you had nothing to do with it. So what is the basis for your opinion?

A. Because I think things which are described there are quite incredulous.

Q. Do you have any sources?
A. I have no sources. Just personal opinion.

Q. You didn't do any research on it?
A. I did not.

Q. And you have no independent knowledge about it?
A. No.

Q. We're going to turn back to the June 9th meeting. You testified that you didn't know if the second meeting ever took place. Do you know of any--

MR. TREMONTE: What's the second meeting?

MS. CLAFLIN: A follow-up meeting to the June 9th meeting.

MR. TREMONTE: Oh, that is just a definite article. I don't know. Have we established that there was a second meeting?

MS. CLAFLIN: Sorry.

MR. TREMONTE: Okay.

BY MS. CLAFLIN:

Q. I think you testified earlier that you were not sure if a second meeting to the June 9th meeting ever took place.
A. I have no knowledge of any of it.

Q. Do you have any recollection of any
discussions about a follow-up meeting?

A. No.

Q. Was the matter ever raised to you by Ms. Veselnitskaya or others about having a second meeting?

A No.

MS. CLAFLIN: I'm marking this as, I guess, Document 13.

[Akhmetshin Exhibit 13 was marked for identification.]

BY MS. CLAFLIN:

Q. This is not your phone bill. This is Mr. Kaveladze's phone bill. If you would turn to what is Bates-stamped as page 303, November 14th at 8:35 a.m.

A. Yes.

Q. Is that your phone number?

A. It is my phone, yes.

Q. So it looks like you had a 19-minute with Mr. Kaveladze on November 14th of 2016.

MR. TREMONTE: I apologize. I'm not seeing it. Where is this one? 8:34 a.m.?

MR. AKHMETSHIN: Yes.

MR. TREMONTE: Okay.

BY MS. CLAFLIN:
Q. Do you recall anything about that call?
A. Yes.
Q. Can you tell us about that?
A. I called him to follow up on this business— as I mentioned to you, I have a conversation with him that I would like to do some work for him. He was with this big organization, and I was asking him if possible to kind of—if there is anything I could do to help him, either any issues that he would like to—I mean, his organization to address them if they need some help.
Q. So the June 9th meeting didn’t come up at that call?
A. Not at all.
Q. Did the election?
A. No.
MS. CLAFLIN: Okay. I’m marking this as Exhibit 14.
[Akhmetshin Exhibit 14 was marked for identification.]
BY MS. CLAFLIN:
Q. If you’ll turn to page 324 on the Bates stamp.
MR. TREMONTE: Can you tell us what this is?
MS. CLAFLIN: This is a document which was prepared by Mr. Kaveladze's attorneys and produced to the Committee.

BY MS. CLAFLIN:

Q. And it looks like there's another text with you on July 8th of 2017.

A. Okay.

Q. Is that your number?

A. That is my number, yes.

Q. It appears that you texted Mr. Kaveladze at 19:16 with the message, "Quick call."

A. Correct.

Q. Do you remember what that call was about?

A. I think it was about this getting story out.

Q. Getting the story out? Is this after the story had broken?

A. No. I believe it's not. I don't remember, but it was about this story, and I kind of, you know, was still trying to get a story out.

Q. So do you recall what day the story came out in the press?

A. I don't know.

Q. Would you be surprised to learn it was July 8, 2017?
A. Probably. Maybe I want to talk about the story.

Q. Okay. Do you recall anything that was discussed? Did you have that call?

A. I don't think so.

Q. Okay.

A. I don't remember. I remember having breakfast with him in June. I kind of encouraged him to do that, and he said, look, it's not my kind of thing, but, you know, I just wanted to -- I don't even remember whether we had -- I think I produced that one as well at some point.

Q. A breakfast with him in June of 2017?

A. Correct, yes.

Q. Okay. Can you kind of walk through maybe other communications you may have had with Mr. Kaveladze about that?

A. About?

Q. About the June 9th meeting.

A. I don't think we discussed the substance of the meeting ever, but already at the end of the -- I mean, like in June when this -- as I mentioned to you, I approached both Ms. Veselnitskaya and Kaveladze, saying, I mean, it's important to tell the story ourselves, and kind of
he told me like it's not my kind of story to tell, and she didn't want to do it.

Q. So you texted him. You don't think there was a call that day.
A. I don't remember talking to him.

Q. Do you recall any other calls around the same time?
A. I don't remember talking to him at that time.

Q. And then you say you had an in-person meeting in June, a breakfast.
A. Correct, yes.

Q. Any other communications with him --
A. Not that I can remember.

Q. -- that would be of interest? Okay.
A. There's one -- I remember this one fairly long conversation I had about this, what kind of possible business work. He was asking, "What did you work on?" You know, we just -- I really hardly knew the guy. And then kind of nothing came out of this.

BY MR. PRIVOR:

Q. Mr. Akhmetshin, you just said you hardly knew the guy, but you're exchanging text messages with him. You knew him well enough to send him an
informal text that says, "Time for a call."

A. Time for a quick call.

Q. For a quick call, so you're friendly enough with him that just a quick call, just that kind of introduction is good enough to spark a conversation. So did you know him before then?

A. No, I did not.

Q. And so you just had one June 9th meeting with him. Then you had a breakfast meeting with him another time?

A. Yes.

Q. And based on that --

A. I had a long conversation with him.

Q. A long conversation when?

A. The one which reflected in that bill.

Q. On the phone bill in July?

A. Correct, yes.

Q. But this text is from before or after?

MR. TREMONTE: November, right?

MR. AKHMETSHIN: November. It was like several months after the -- after June 9 meeting.

BY MR. PRIVOR:

Q. Okay. So based on that 19-minute telephone call, you know him well enough now to send him a casual text message asking him for a
A. I think so, yes.

Q. And you don't think you talked to him any other time?

A. I don't remember. At least I tried to locate my communication. Other than what I saw, I don't remember any.

Q. You said you tried to locate your conversations. What do you mean by that? Did you search your records?

MR. TREMONTE: We've had conversations that are obviously privileged about efforts that --

BY MR. PRIVOR:

Q. Well, setting aside conversations with counsel, what did you do to search your conversations or look for conversations?

A. I searched my phone bill, and I searched my email.

Q. And did you look at text messages as well?

A. I did, yes.

Q. And did you specifically look for text messages with Mr. Kaveladze?

A. I did.

Q. And did you find any?
A. I did.

Q. And you haven't produced those to the Committee.

A. This one, "quick call."

Q. The one that we're looking at from Mr. Kaveladze's documents. But you haven't produced that document.

MR. TREMONTE: I don't know that you know what-- I don't know that he knows what -- we can revisit this at the end, what was produced and what the subpoena called for.

MR. PRIVOR: Yeah, we would ask you to take another look again at your communications. Okay.

BY MS. CLAFLIN:

Q. In the same document, if you'll turn to page 328, there's another call on July 14th at 12:11, again, something that Mr. Kaveladze identified as your number. Is that your number?

A. Which one?

MR. TREMONTE: I think this one, July 14 at 12:11?

MS. CLAFLIN: Yes.

MR. AKHMETSHIN: Yes.

BY MS. CLAFLIN:

Q. Is that your number?
A. Yes.

Q. So it appears you texted Mr. Kaveladze on July 14th, it looks like regarding Alan Futerfas. Do you know who Alan Futerfas is?

MR. TREMONTE: Hold on just one second.

[Pause.]

MR. TREMONTE: 328.

MR. AKHMETSHIN: Yes.

MR. TREMONTE: The next page. Do you have it?

MR. GIBALDI: You know, I think this document is just incomplete. That's why. It ends on 327. But if you have it there, that's fine.

MR. TREMONTE: Where are we again? Here?

MS. CLAFLIN: Sorry about that.

MR. GIBALDI: That's okay.

[Pause.]

MR. AKHMETSHIN: This was the excerpt from this text with -- after this news broke, you know, there's a lot of -- that barrage of like news inquiries, and I was actually traveling at that time. So someone texted me this thing, and I thought that since it had any relevance to him, I forwarded it to him.

BY MS. CLAFLIN:
Q. So why did you think to text it to him?
A. Because, you know, so he has heads up. You know, I was very upset by the way media treated me. It was like comedy circus, or at least it will give him some heads up because media, I'm sure they contacted him. So at least that was something which--which was like friendly gesture or something.

Q. So do you understand Mr. Futerfas is describing Mr. Kaveladze in this?
A. I believe so, yes.

Q. He says, "He is a U.S. citizen. He told me specifically he was not working for the Russian Government, and I in fact left when I asked him that question." So you think that was regarding Mr. Kaveladze?
A. I think so, yes.

Q. Did Mr. Futerfas ever contact you?
A. No. I don't know who he is. At least at that time.

Q. Did you get any response from Mr. Kaveladze about this text?
A. Nothing.

Q. Did you send a similar text to anyone else--Ms. Veselnitskaya, Mr. Samochornov?
A. No.

Q. So the only person you corresponded with about the meeting when the news broke was Mr. Kaveladze?

A. Correct, yes.

Q. Not Mr. Goldstone?

A. No. I don't have his contacts or I wouldn't care about him.

Q. Did you ever speak with Ms. Veselnitskaya after the news broke at all about the meeting?

A. I helped her to arrange for NBC interview.

Q. Okay.

A. When the news broke, I thought that, you know, finally, you know, I call her, I was like, "I told you so, but at least try to tell it in your own words." And I helped to arrange this. She did this very long interview with NBC.

Q. And you helped her prepare for that interview?

A. I did not help her to prepare. I arranged for, you know, just NBC Moscow office, they sent in someone from their London office to interview her, and so I kind of helped arrange this.
Q. Okay. Did you help her decide what she
was going to say? Did you just do the logistics?
A. I did logistics, and I also told her like
be relaxed, don't be aggressive, just general
things. But nothing about this, like what you say
and how you say it. It's more of like how you say
things. But, really, there's nothing of substance
there. So I told her like dress nice, you know,
just kind of -- some practical suggestions.
Q. Were you ever contacted by
representatives or attorneys from any of the Trump
campaign people about the meeting in July?
A. I was not. I personally was not.
Q. Okay. I think we'll switch gears then.
MR. TREMONTE: Are we at the end of sort of
this section of questioning?
MS. CLAFLIN: Yes. You can put that aside.
MR. TREMONTE: So just so the record's
clear, we produced everything that's nonprivileged
in response to this Committee's request to us. In
our view -- and we can go back and look at that,
look at your request and have a discussion about
it. But these text messages were not responsive
to your request. If you want to make a follow-up
request to which these are responsive, obviously
we will take that into consideration. But I just want the record to be clear that these text messages were not, in counsel's view, responsive to your requests.

MR. PRIVOR: I don't think there's any need to argue now.

MR. TREMONTE: Yeah.

MR. PRIVOR: I mean, we view those as responsive to the extent they related to the June 9th meeting. So we certainly ask you to produce anything related to that.

MR. TREMONTE: Okay.

BY MS. CLAFLIN:

Q. A quick discussion about your work for some various entities. Have you ever done any work for Emin or Aras Agalarov or any of their affiliates?

A. I have not, no.

Q. Or the Crocus Group?

A. No.

Q. I think you testified earlier that you have not done any work for the Russian Government or representatives of the Russian Government?

A. Not knowingly, no.

Q. What about former Soviet countries or
1 their representatives?
2 A. I'm sorry?
3 Q. Former Soviet countries?
4 A. I have worked with some former Soviet countries or some citizens of those countries.
5 Q. And you said Kazakhstan, I believe?
6 A. Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan.
7 Q. Any others?
8 A. No, not the governments.
9 Q. This is going to be a long list and forgive me, but hopefully it will be quick.
10 During the 2016 Presidential campaign, did you have any contact with any of the following people:
11 Oleg Deripaska?
12 A. No.
13 Q. Pyotr Katsyv?
14 A. '16? I was -- I saw him once at the birthday party for Denis Katsyv. But I'm trying to remember what year was it. So we are talking about what time frame?
15 Q. It would be late 2015 through the whole of 2016.
16 A. I saw Pyotr Katsyv at that birthday party of his son.
17 Q. Okay. And that would be Denis?
A. Denis Katsyv's party, yes.

Q. Did you have any contact with Denis Katsyv?

A. I have, yes.

Q. And can you describe those contacts?

A. I believe that, you know, just some of the work I've done for HRAGI, and I wanted to kind of continue that work, and I met with him after -- in 2015 and 2016. I met him in capacity as someone who worked on the Prevezon case, and I also worked with him in the capacity of HRAGI staff because he was one of the contributors. And afterwards, after this work ended, I encouraged him to continue this HRAGI work because I do believe that we kind of have an opportunity to set the record straight, but he unfortunately didn't have money or maybe desire to do that. So I discussed with him HRAGI relief matters, yes.

Q. So do you talk to him fairly regularly?

A. Not regularly. When I was in -- I'll meet him for lunch, maybe. Maybe have a couple --

Q. When you're in Moscow?

A. When I was in Moscow, yes.

Q. He's Moscow-based?

A. He is Moscow-based, yes.
Q. How often do you make it back to Moscow?
A. I still have a sister living there, and sometime I travel for work, so could be five, six times a year.

Q. Okay. Back to our list, Sergey Lavrov?
A. Never met him.

Q. Sergey Kislyak?
A. Never met him.

Q. Sergey Gorkov?
A. Never met him.

Q. Igor Sechin?
A. Never met him.

Q. Konstantin Kilimnik?
A. I met him once.

Q. Can you tell me a little bit about that meeting?
A. Probably it was 2014.

Q. Okay. In what context?
A. I was trying to -- he accompanied a member of Ukrainian Parliament to Washington, and they were, I believe, to attend State of the Union address. And I had maybe 15-minute tea with that member of the Parliament, and Konstantin Kilimnik was present at that meeting.

Q. Okay. How about Sergei Millian?
1. A. Say again?
2. Q. Sergei Millian.
3. A. Doesn't sound familiar, no.
4. Q. Dmitry Peskov?
5. A. I never met him.
6. Q. Sergei Ivanov?
7. A. Never met him.
8. Q. Igor Divyekin?
10. Q. Konstantin Kosachev?
11. A. Never met him.
12. Q. Mikhail Kulagin?
14. Q. Mikhail Fridman?
15. A. Never met him.
16. Q. Oleg Govorun?
17. A. Never met him.
18. Q. Petr Aven?
20. Q. Herman Kahn?
22. Q. Len Blavatnik?
23. A. Never met him.
24. Q. Rinat Akhmetov?
25. A. Never met him. I should.
1    [Laughter.]
2    Q. The same initials. Yuri Chaika?
3    A. I never met him. Wait a minute. Yuri
4    Chaika I met once.
5    Q. Okay. Can you tell me a little bit about
6    that meeting?
7    A. At the same birthday party for Katsyv's
8    son.
9    Q. Okay. And you said that party was in
10   2015?
11   A. I believe so, yes -- 2016, I think.
12   Q. And do you know Denis Katsyv just through
13   business, or did you have a social relationship
14   with him, too?
15   A. For business, but kind of friendly. He's
16   a nice man. I feel sorry for him to be dragged
17   into this thing, but -- and it took a serious toll
18   on him. He's a good young man, in my view, so nice
19   person.
20   Q. You met him originally through business
21   ties?
22   A. For business, correct, yes.
23   Q. Okay.
24   A. We're now friends, though.
25   Q. Carrying on, Andrei Bondarev?
A. Again?

Q. Andrei Bondarev, B-O-N-D-A-R-E-V?

A. No.

Q. Oleg Solodukhin?

A. Never met him.

Q. And Anton Vaino?

A. How do you spell the name?

Q. V-A-I-N-O.

A. Well, no, I did not meet him.

Q. Okay.

BY MR. PRIVOR:

Q. Just so we're clear, Mr. Akhmetshin, when you say you've never met them, do you mean that to include you don't know them at all?

A. I know of them. Anton Vaino is, I think, chief of staff to presidential administration in Russia.

Q. But have you ever had any personal contact?

A. Never personal contact, never met them. I heard of some of the people in that list. They are quite prominent. But some names I have never even heard before. But I never had any personal contacts with these people.

Q. So not any telephone calls --
A. No telephone calls.

Q. -- no emails?

A. No exchange, no emails, nothing. The couple people I mentioned there, I explained the context in which -- it was not business or it was social.

MR. PRIVOR: Very good.

BY MS. CLAFLIN:

Q. Okay. Do you know Suleyman Kerimov?

A. I met him.

Q. Who is he?

A. He's a businessman from Russia.

Q. Would you describe your relationship with him?

A. I had a client who had similar interests with Suleyman Kerimov.

Q. So you never worked directly for him?

A. I never worked directly for Suleyman Kerimov.

Q. You worked with associates of his that were representing him while you were representing another client? Is that fair?

A. Correct. We have joint interests.

Q. Okay. Have you met him?

A. I met him once, yes.
Q. What's his relationship to Vladimir Putin?

A. I'm not aware of his relations with Putin.

Q. And you, as far as you know, have never been paid by Mr. Kerimov?

A. I have never been paid by Mr. Kerimov. I had lunch in his -- very nice lunch in his office once. He procured his own sheep. He's from the Muslim Republic of Dagestan, and so he was very proud of this. He said this sheep is like from my village, and they bring it to me regularly. So it was like a very memorable lunch. He's also interesting character.

Q. Okay. Thank you. Can you describe your work for EuroChem?

A. I was working EuroChem in connections with their legal proceedings, both research and arbitrations, in Netherlands and Switzerland.

Q. And you were working with them as a lobbyist? As a researcher? What was your role?

A. I was working as researcher for the lawyers for EuroChem. I never had direct relations with EuroChem. I worked for their litigation through the law firm.
Q. Okay.

A. For the law firm which represented them.

Q. Do you know who Andrey Melnichenko is?

A. I heard of him.

Q. Have you met him?

A. I never met him in person.

Q. So you never had any meetings with him during your representation for EuroChem?

A. Never.

Q. Who paid for your work on EuroChem?

A. I was paid by a law firm.

Q. And which law firm is that?

A. It's Salisbury & Ryan.

Q. Is it correct that you were accused of computer espionage in a Federal court lawsuit related to your work for EuroChem?

A. I'm aware of this allegation, yes.

Q. Did you know about any efforts to hack the computers of International Mineral Resources?

A. I never -- I'm not aware of any efforts or have never participated in any hacking.

Q. Were you involved in any efforts to leak documents that were stored on International Mineral Resources computers to the press?

A. I was not involved in this thing.
Q. Do you know Viktor Ivanov?
A. I met him once, yes.
Q. Can you describe that meeting?
A. I did a pro bono work for Russian drug enforcement agency's efforts to strengthen U.S.-Russia fight against heroin coming from Afghanistan.
Q. And what was the nature of your role there?
A. So I'll give you a little background. It was a while go, probably 8, 9 years ago. I knew a journalist here in Washington, Russian journalist. Her name is Svetlana Babaeva, and she -- I knew her well. I knew her husband also quite well. So she once asked me for an advice. She said that -- and it was the time during this U.S.-Russia reset, so there was -- I mean efforts. I mean, Obama administration really tried in the beginning to kind of make things better, and so there was this -- from Babaeva, I knew that there was a special like U.S.-Russia working group to fight narcotics, you know, just full of narcotics, and she mentioned to me that her boss tasked her with kind of getting stories about it stronger. And since I have general interest in Afghanistan and things,
so she kind of explained to me that they do have — and actually had several visits by Mr. Ivanov to Washington, but, you know, their efforts to kind of strengthen this cooperation and fighting drugs in Afghanistan were not successful. And she said like, "What do you think could be kind of done?" And I feel very strongly about heroin coming from Afghanistan. I have two very close friends in my life who died because of heroin, and I also think that, you know, just every year in Russia hundreds of thousands of people die of heroin because it's cheaper than beer or vodka. So I told her that, you know, just it's very important, even if this administration doesn't respond to this thing, but awareness, because United States, at that time it was not such a big problem as it's now, but, you know, there's a lot of Afghan heroin now ends up in the United States. So I learned a bit more about the issue, so she explained to me what the issues are, and so I suggested to them to maybe at the time next time Ivanov comes to publish an article, op-ed article by Mr. Ivanov to underline those issues. And at the time when she will be meeting with this official, that will be very helpful, and
that's also to maybe to eventually get some congressional support of this issue or attention to this issue.

So together with Ms. Babaeva, I helped Ms. Babaeva draft that op-ed, and I helped to place that op-ed. And during this Mr. Ivanov's visit to Washington, I also helped -- I talked to someone at this think tank I know at the Carnegie Endowment, and I helped to organize event at which he spoke. This effort was pro bono. I never charged any money, so I did not view it as a work but, rather, as a social service, and it's my personal interest.

Q. Okay. So you weren't paid for the work you did with that?

A. I was not paid. I specifically actually, you know, this -- so she asked, "So what do you want for this?" I said, "Really, I am happy if this will get traction." Unfortunately, it did not gain any traction, and so that's -- but op-ed actually was quite interesting, and I still believe that -- I wish these things were done at the time.

BY MS. SAWYER:

Q. Did you travel to Afghanistan at all as
1 part of that work?
2     A. No, I have never traveled to Afghanistan
3 as part of that work.
4     Q. Okay. So you traveled there independent
5 of that?
6     A. I traveled there independent of that,
7 yes.
8     Q. Okay. And when you were -- when was
9 that?
10     A. It was a long time ago, actually. I
11     MS. SAWYER: Okay.
12     BY MS. CLAFLIN:
13     Q. Do you know anything about Mr. Ivanov's
14 role with the FSB?
15     A. He is a former officer, and he's a
16 veteran of Afghan campaign.
17     Q. Do you know if he held any other
18 positions within the Russian Government?
19     A. I'm sorry?
20     Q. Do you know if he held other positions
21 within the Russian Government?
22     A. I don't know his exact biography. I know
23 that he was -- he was a FSB officer, a general,
24 FSB general, and he then was -- you know, this
Russian drug enforcement agency was created, and it existed actually for a very short time. And it was not -- it was more of a law enforcement agency. And so he was appointed to be head of that agency. Unfortunately, he was not very successful, so he was fired. And I don't even know what happened to him. I haven't been in touch with him.

Q. Okay. Do you know Viktor Yanukovych?
A. Yanukovych. I never met him.
Q. Have you ever attempted to work with Mr. Yanukovych?
A. I tried to kind of work for his party, yes.
Q. And can you tell me a little bit about that?
A. You know, just I am interested, just anyone who is doing communication work. I approached through Ukrainian citizen. He's actually American citizen as well.
Q. Who was that?
A. His name is Peter Zalmayev, Z-A-L-M-A-Y-E-V. And so he was from the same region of Ukraine where Yanukovych was, and he has some contacts among his party, and it was also a very long time
ago, probably 2002, 2003. So I traveled to Ukraine. We met with someone at this thing, and we made a proposal to kind of conduct some work. And -- but it was never accepted, and I never worked for Ukraine. Actually, that's one country I wanted to work for but never did.

Q. It wasn't tied to a particular event or issue that was happening? It was general work for Ukraine?

A. I think they were in opposition at the time, so, you know, just I thought that it would be good opportunity kind of tell the story in the West.

Q. And I think you testified that you had, before June 9th of 2016, not met Paul Manafort.

A. I did not meet him, no.

Q. So you hadn't done any work with Paul Manafort--

A. I never worked --

Q. -- for Yanukovych?

A. For Yanukovych or anyone else.

Q. Okay. Have you ever met Vladimir Putin?

A. I never met him.

MS. CLAFLIN: Do my colleagues have any
1  questions?
2      MS. SAWYER: Just a quick question.
3  BY MS. SAWYER:
4      Q. You had talked with us and then our
5  colleagues about the document that was at the
6  lunch that you remember Ms. Veselnitskaya bringing
7  to the meeting.
8      A. Yes, ma'am.
9      Q. And you had referred to having seen a
10  similar version in Russian.
11      A. Correct, yes.
12      Q. And I think your lawyers were taking
13  under advisement whether you had it and would
14  produce it to the Committee. Do you recall the
15  version that you saw in Russian, did it have at
16  the end of the document the point that you had
17  indicated the English version had, which said that
18  -- which mentioned the hedge fund was a
19  contributor to the DNC, meaning the Democratic
20  National Committee?
21      A. I'm not sure I've ever seen English
22  version of that document. I kind of scanned for
23  it, don't remember those exact words, but I
24  remember Ms. Veselnitskaya's presentation. At the
25  end she concluded that -- she finished with that
1 conclusion. But I don't remember specifically
2 seeing the English. I might have scanned for this
3 thing because it kind of looked familiar to me. I
4 don't remember the exact line about DNC in that.
5 I don’t have a copy of the English document she
6 brought to that meeting.
7         Q. Okay. And had you seen that particular
8 point in the Russian version?
9         A. I don't remember now. I need to check.
10        MS. SAWYER: Okay.
11        MS. CLAFLIN: Okay. I think we'll go off
12 the record at 1:40.
13 [Recess at 1:40 p.m. to 1:45 p.m.]
14        MR. DAVIS: Okay. We'll go back on the
15 record. It is 1:45.
16        FURTHER EXAMINATION BY COUNSEL FOR THE MAJORITY
17 BY MR. DAVIS:
18         Q. Again, I'll be going over some topics
19 that my colleagues did, but I have a few other
20 questions.
21         A. Of course.
22         Q. And I want to introduce some documents.
23 So on the topic of hacking, Mr. Akhmetshin, when
24 did you first learn that the Democratic National
25 Committee had been hacked?
A. I probably saw it from the media reports.

Q. When did you first learn that John Podesta's emails had been hacked?

A. To be honest, I didn't follow that closely, but probably it's from the same reports.

Q. Were you involved in the hacking of the DNC or John Podesta?

A. Absolutely no.

Q. Were you involved in the distribution of materials obtained through the hacks of the DNC or John Podesta?

A. No, sir.

Q. Other than what you've read in news reports, do you know who hacked the DNC or John Podesta?

A. I don't know.

Q. I have to ask whether you were involved in the hacking of the DNC, in part given the history of allegations that you've been involved in hacking before, which my colleagues addressed. I'd like you to take a look at a few documents, and then I'll ask some related questions.

First, please take a look at a sworn declaration by Akis Phanartzis, which is from the International Mineral Resources litigation in
BY MR. DAVIS:

Q. According to the declaration, Mr. Phanartzis was a senior manager with the company hired to investigate allegations that you had organized the hacking of IMR in an attempt to collect information that could be used in a smear campaign against the company. The declaration explains that Mr. Phanartzis conducted physical surveillance of you and an unidentified businessman at a coffee shop in London. If you could turn to paragraphs 13 and 14. Paragraphs 13 and 14 of the declaration state, "After exchanging pleasantries, Mr. Akhmetshin handed the businessman an external hard drive and stated that it contained internal documents and emails from IMR. Mr. Akhmetshin explained that the hard drive contained memos, emails, and stuff, and that they are all these folders and documents about transactions, memos, statements, and stuff. There are email attachments."

"Mr. Akhmetshin further stated there are directories and subdirectories. There are folders
1 for different things. Mr. Akhmetshin described
2 how the documents were obtained. Mr. Akhmetshin
3 stated that he organized the hacking of IMR's
4 computer systems specifically on behalf of
5 EuroChem, which was in a dispute with IMR over a
6 mining project near the Russian city of
7 Kotelnikovo."
8 "Mr. Akhmetshin further stated that he
9 used a group of Russians to do the actual hacking
10 and that I had to pay a lot of money to get this
11 stuff."
12 Then on paragraph 18, the declaration
13 states, "Mr. Akhmetshin explained that one of the
14 persons he was dealing with at EuroChem was the
15 company's head of security who he described as a
16 former KGB agent."
17 After referencing the lawyers for
18 EuroChem, paragraph 21 states, "Mr. Akhmetshin
19 added that he was hired because there were certain
20 things that the law firm could not do."
21 Now, Mr. Akhmetshin, in the litigation
22 between IMR and EuroChem, you were subpoenaed but
23 withheld documents, alleging various privileges.
24 However, after an in camera review in 2015, Judge
25 Kessler of DDC found there was sufficient evidence
of illegal hacking to rule that the crime fraud
exception applied. Her opinion will be Exhibit
16.
[Akhmetshin Exhibit 16 was marked for
identification.]

BY MR. DAVIS:

Q. On page 14, Judge Kessler wrote, "IMR's
claims that Mr. Akhmetshin organized the hacking
of IMR-related computers and searched for specific
information there are supported by emails between
Mr. Akhmetshin and ECVK's counsel." She quotes
your emails to ECVK's counsel: "Mr. Akhmetshin
writes the project is already up and running and
it is turning up the info. Patrick, the indexing
is done. Can you please send me a list of terms,
names for a scan? Dear Patrick, it looks like the
work is finally completed. Just spoke with the
guy. He said they pulled everything that was
available. Need to go collect it sometime after
the holidays."

Judge Kessler then noted your emails
referencing an object, mentioned only as "the
thing," which must be dropped off. She quotes
your email stating, "I really hope to be able to
have the thing in the next day or two. Plan to
get that thing in London tomorrow. Can take it anywhere. Please advise where I should go. I plan to collect the thing in London on Wed. this week and be traveling to MSK after that. Can drop the thing with you afternoon December 10th."

In fact, a few months after Judge Kessler's opinion, IMR then sued you for the hacking. I won't ask you to read any particular portions of the complaint, but I do want to make that Exhibit 17.

[Akhmetshin Exhibit 17 was marked for identification.]

MR. TREMONTE: While you're getting the documents, I can't remember exactly how you characterized the judge's statements in the order, but the nature of the finding I think is important. What the judge found specifically is in the sentence immediately following the last sentence that you read, which is, "A reasonable fact finder could conclude that this object is the thumb drive containing sensitive IMR files that IMR's agents later recovered in London." And then she goes on to say that the Movant has made the requisite showing. None of the facts alleged had been established by the court. It's simply a
finding that the requisite showing to have the
next step performed had been met.

MR. DAVIS: Agreed. Thank you for that
clarification.

BY MR. DAVIS:

Q. Mr. Akhmetshin, did you work with Russian hackers to hack IMR?

A. Absolutely not, sir. No.

Q. Did you otherwise organize the hacking of IMR?

A. I did not.

Q. Were you involved in any way in the hacking of IMR?

A. I was not involved in hacking of IMR or anyone else ever.

Q. Were you involved in the distribution of information obtained by hacking IMR?

A. I am not aware of any information or distributing information obtained from the hacking, sir.

Q. Have you ever worked --

MR. FOSTER: I'm sorry. Is that a "no"?

MR. AKHMETSHIN: No. No.

BY MR. DAVIS:

Q. Have you ever worked with hackers?
A. I don't know any hackers, never worked with--

Q. You don't know any hackers. What happened to the lawsuit filed against you over the IMR hack?
A. I was never even -- even after -- many months after it was filed, I was never even served in that lawsuit, and it was an allegation which they never follow through -- that they -- it is my understanding they never have any intention to kind of prosecute that lawsuit, and that was at least one of the tactics in billion dollar litigation.

Q. Were you involved in any settlement relating to these claims?
A. I think I was part of the settlement at some point, yes.

Q. Do you recall what the terms of the settlement were?
A. I do not remember terms of settlement. I think nondisclosure was one of those for sure.

Q. As part of the settlement, did you admit to any of the facts IMR alleged?
A. Absolutely not.

Q. The declaration that outlined the
1 physical surveillance of you at the cafe in London
2 claimed that you stated you can perform services a
3 law firm cannot do. What services do you provide
4 that a law firm cannot do?
5       MR. TREMONTE: Well, the question assumes
6 that you agree with the allegation.
7       MR. AKHMETSHIN: I strenuously dispute those
8 allegations.
9       MR. DAVIS: Fair enough.
10      MR. AKHMETSHIN: And as I disputed them as a
11 part of this lawsuit.
12 BY MR. DAVIS:
13      Q. Okay. A New York Times article about you
14 which my colleagues referenced earlier titled
15 "Lobbyist at Trump Campaign Meeting Has a Web of
16 Russian Connections," which I will make an
17 exhibit--
18       MR. TREMONTE: Do we need these or --
19       MR. DAVIS: I think we're done with this.
20 This will be Exhibit 18.
21 BY MR. FOSTER:
22      Q. So before we move on to Exhibit 18, let's
23 go back to the question I asked in an earlier
24 round. So what services -- without regard to the
25 claim that you provide services that law firms
1 can't do, what services do you provide for law
2 firms when you are hired as a consultant? I think
3 you earlier described that you reviewed documents
4 to find inconsistencies, and those are services
5 that lawyers can do for themselves. So what
6 unique -- how do you market yourself to these
7 lawyers? How do you get -- what services do you
8 provide?
9 A. I have a good eye, and I think that's
10 worth something. And I charge people to find
11 something which might stand out which is not
12 trivial. Lawyers know facts, and I'm sure there
13 are plenty of Russian-speaking lawyers as well.
14 But I think I'm very good in just seeing some
15 patterns and for reading documents, and it's a
16 skill I developed, and as a researcher, I have a
17 Ph.D., and so I think that, you know, it's a
18 combination of my knowledge of business and
19 political/geopolitical issues, plus ability to
20 read and kind of synthesize the information. I
21 think I charge people money for that.
22 Q. So you have no formal legal training?
23 A. I have no formal legal training, no.
24 Q. And do you have any formal training in
25 this type of -- in any type of financial research
or business research?

A. I have -- I developed it.

MR. TREMONTE: Do you have formal training?

MR. AKHMETSHIN: I don't. I don't. Thank you.

[Akhmetshin Exhibit 18 was marked for identification.]

BY MR. DAVIS:

Q. Referring to this New York Times article, it raises allegations or at least implies that you may have been involved in an attempted hacking of lawyers working for Mr. Ashot Egiazaryan. Did you hack or attempt to hack anyone as part of your work against Mr. Egiazaryan?

A. Absolutely not, sir, no. And let me state for the record this allegation is so far-fetched and inaccurate, such I can't even like describe how upset and angry I am over this absolute lie.

Q. Understood. Mr. Akhmetshin, have you ever provided any documents or information to WikiLeaks, whether directly or indirectly?

A. Never, sir, no.

Q. I'd like to also address your work with Mr. Viktor Ivanov. I believe my colleagues
already in your discussion with them discussed the placing of the op-ed in the Washington Times and your work with the Carnegie Endowment --

A. Correct.

Q. -- to prepare his public presentation.

I'd just like to introduce this email chain from your deposition in the Egiazaryan case, and it's just the email, the documents, the placing of that op-ed.

MR. DAVIS: This will be 19.

[ Akhmetshin Exhibit 19 was marked for identification.]

MR. DAVIS: And I don't have any further questions about it. I just want to, since it was referenced, get it in there.

MR. TREMONTI: So you are just making this part of the record.

MR. DAVIS: That's right.

BY MR. DAVIS:

Q. And you've already clarified that in your work with Mr. Ivanov, you helped place this op-ed.

A. Correct, yes.

Q. Okay. Then I'd like to briefly at least reference your deposition from the Egiazaryan case and just note that on page 71 you described
working with Mr. Ivanov and the Carnegie Endowment in relation to his public presentation there.

A. Correct.

Q. All right. So as you clarified with my colleagues, Mr. Ivanov was the director of the Federal Drug Control Service for the Russian Federation; is that correct?

A. Correct, sir.

Q. Okay. If I could return more briefly to your declaration from the Egiazaryan case, which I believe was Exhibit 1, if I can still find it.

On page 2, paragraph 5, you say, "Some of my clients are national governments or high-ranking officials in those governments. These are the most sensitive communications in which I engage."

And later in that paragraph, you state, "On a separate issue, other communications involved the head of the Russian drug enforcement agency. Topics included and communications on this task range from narcotrafficking and terrorism in Afghanistan to surveillance of undercover agents, suspected undercover agents and their identities. Disclosure of such data could put individual lives at risk, potentially
including American lives."

Is that a reference to your work for Mr. Ivanov?

A. You know, some of these issues, which I learned in the process of preparing this op-ed, involve knowledge of those activities.

Q. So that was things you had learned while preparing the op-ed; is that correct?

A. Correct, yes.

Q. Okay.

MR. FOSTER: So the answer to his question is no?

MR. AKHMETSHIN: What was the question? Can you repeat it, please?

MR. FOSTER: The question was: Is this a reference to your work for Mr. Ivanov?

MR. DAVIS: I believe it would be yes because it was a reference to the op-ed he placed.

MR. AKHMETSHIN: Yes, I learned those facts as a -- in order to address that op-ed, I needed to know a little bit more what they are doing in Afghanistan and that those kind of tasks -- I learned a little bit more about what they did.

BY MR. DAVIS:

Q. So we previously referenced your Second
1 Declaration in the IMR litigation when we talked
2 about the London Information Bazaar, but I'd like
3 to refer to your First Declaration in that case.
4 This will be Exhibit 20.
5 [Akhmetshin Exhibit 20 was marked for
6 identification.]
7 BY MR. DAVIS:
8 Q. On page 3, there's a somewhat similar
9 statement to the last one. On page 3 you state,
10 "Other matters that my private consulting practice
11 has worked on include issues relating to
12 narco trafficking, drug eradication, and terrorism
13 in Afghanistan and surveillance of undercover
14 agents and suspected undercover agents. I have
15 been told that our efforts have helped save
16 American lives, particularly in theaters such as
17 Afghanistan, and reduced the flow of narcotics
18 originating in Afghanistan worldwide."
19 Is that also a reference to your work for
20 Mr. Ivanov?
21 A. Yes. I learned this and also read news
22 reports. I haven't had communication with Mr.
23 Ivanov after that encounter in Washington, but,
24 you know, I later learned that some of these
25 efforts were not futile.
MR. TREMONTE: The answer to that question is yes.

MR. AKHMETSHIN: Yes.

BY MR. DAVIS:

Q. And did you personally work on surveillance of undercover agents and suspected undercover agents?

A. I never worked on this, no.

Q. When did your work for Mr. Ivanov conclude?

A. It was probably the time when he left.

Q. Do you recall which year that was?

A. I don't remember. It's a long time ago.

MR. DAVIS: Okay. I'd like you to refer to one more document. This is a press release from the Treasury Department from March of 2014. This will be Exhibit 21.

MR. TREMONTE: March 20, 2014.

BY MR. DAVIS:

Q. This is the announcement that the U.S. was, pursuant to Executive Order 13661, sanctioning Viktor Ivanov and other Russian Government officials relating to the Russian
invasion of Ukraine. This release states, "Victor Ivanov has been director of the Federal Drug Control Service of the Russian Federation since May 15, 2008; he was appointed as a member of the Security Council of the Russian Federation on May 25, 2008. Ivanov has served in a number of other government positions prior to that; he was Assistant to the President of the Russian Federation from 2004 to 2008; and Deputy Chief of the Administration of the Russian Federation from 2000 to 2004. Ivanov joined the KGB in 1977 and eventually rose to become the Deputy Director of the Federal Security Service. Ivanov is a close ally of Putin and served alongside Putin as the chief of staff of the St. Petersburg Mayor's office in 1994 when Putin was first deputy head of the city's administration."

Mr. Akhmetshin, did you perform any work for Mr. Ivanov after March 20, 2014?

A. No, I never even -- I haven't heard from him in years.

Q. Okay. Did you ever register under the Foreign Agents Registration Act for your work for Mr. Ivanov?

A. Never.
Q. Have you ever registered under the Foreign Agents Registration Act?
A. I did not, no.
Q. Have you ever received a letter of inquiry from the Justice Department regarding the potential need to register under the Foreign Agents Registration Act?
A. I did receive one this spring.
Q. This spring?
A. Yes.
Q. And what work was that relating to?
A. It referred to my work for HRAGI.
Q. Did you respond to that DOJ letter of inquiry?
A. Yes, sir.
Q. Can you state in general what your response was?
MR. TREMONTE: Hold on a second.
[Counsel confers with witness.]
MR. AKHMETSHIN: Yes, sir, I would like to clarify. I was involved in these matters which required -- because I was working with the council at that time, and I worked on matters which required FARA registration, but the council filed this exemption request, and those were granted.
1 BY MR. DAVIS:
2 Q. Was that in reference to your HRAGI work
3 or previous work?
4 A. Previous work.
5 Q. Previous work, okay. So you received --
6 your counsel filed an exemption request? Is that
7 the context?
8 MR. TREMONTE: Excuse me.
9 [Counsel confers with witness.]
10 MR. TREMONTE: Go ahead.
11 BY MR. FOSTER:
12 Q. So, I'm sorry, I didn't understand the
13 last answer. So you're saying there's previous
14 work not related to HRAGI that you had
15 interactions with the FARA unit about, and you --
16 A. Correct.
17 Q. Your attorney requested and you received
18 an exemption so that you would not have to file?
19 A. Correct, sir.
20 Q. And what was that in relation to?
21 A. It was in relation representing
22 Government of Kyrgyzstan on this air force base
23 work.
24 Q. Could you be a little more specific?
25 What do you mean on "air force base work"?
A. You know, we represented Government of Kyrgyzstan on a number of issues, the air force lease and recovering of their assets and other things. And that work would have required registering under FARA, but I worked for the law firm at that time, and the law firm filed a request for exemption from registering, and that exemption was granted.

Q. On what basis?

A. I'm not sure. I was told by the law firm that it was --

MR. TREMONTE: You don't want to get into privileged communications.

BY MR. DAVIS:

Q. Which law firm was it?

A. It was BakerHostetler.

Q. •

MR. TREMONTE: You don't want to get into privileged communications.

BY MR. DAVIS:

Q. Which law firm was it?

A. It was BakerHostetler.
Q. Do you know Secretary Clinton?
A. I do know her, yes.

Q. You know Hillary Clinton? What's the -- how do you know her?
A. Personal.

Q. How long have you known her?
A. Probably I met her first like in late '90s.

Q. Was that through Ed Lieberman?
A. Through his wife.

Q. And how would you describe your relationship with her now?

A. Nonexistent. Last time I saw her, at the funeral of Evelyn Lieberman.

MR. DAVIS: Okay. Now my colleague Ms. Nikas I think has some additional questions for you.

BY MS. NIKAS:

Q. Going back to the time when you first came to the U.S., I just have a few questions. You became a citizen in 2009; is that correct?

A. That is correct.

Q. Okay. And how did you first come to the U.S.?

A. I entered United States to attend graduate school.

Q. Okay. And which visa did you apply for?

A. I think F-1 visa. It's a student visa.

Q. Do you remember which year that was?

A. A visa was granted to me in late 1993, and I remember arriving to United States on January 1, 1994.

Q. Had you traveled to the U.S. before you came in '94?
A. No.

Q. And for what purpose did you seek a student visa?

A. To continue my graduate studies in chemistry.

Q. Was that at Catholic University?

A. Correct.

Q. And what brought you to Catholic University specifically to study?

A. I applied to several schools. They were the ones who have -- gave me better terms and want me.

Q. Did you complete your degree program?

A. Correct, yes. I obtained Ph.D. from Catholic.

Q. Did you pursue a specialty area within the field of chemistry?

A. Yes.

Q. What was that specialty area?

A. Bioorganic chemistry.

Q. Upon graduation, did you ever practice in the field of chemistry or pursue employment based on your Ph.D. in chemistry?

A. I was a postdoctoral fellow for a while, and I was actively looking for a job in chemistry.
1. But in D.C. it's not that easy to find.

2. Q. Okay. You previously stated that you're from Kazan, Russia, and the Times article mentioned, which is Exhibit 18 that's already been introduced, that you pursued a degree in chemistry at the Kazan State University before you came to the U.S. Is that correct?

3. A. Correct, ma'am.

4. Q. And why did you choose the Kazan State University?

5. A. Because I lived there.

6. Q. And to the best of your knowledge, is the university a publicly funded or privately funded organization?

7. A. It was still U.S.S.R. at that time, so it was -- there are no private universities, so it's public university, state university. It's actually one of the oldest schools in Russia.

8. Q. To the best of your knowledge, is it still publicly funded, or is it now a private --


10. Q. And did you pursue a similar course of study to what you pursued at Catholic University?

11. A. My degree, my undergrad degree in Kazan University was in physical chemistry, and
A professor at Catholic University was interested in having someone in her lab team with this experience of the kinetics, you know, it's measuring the speeds of reactions and kind of -- she was actively seeking someone with that kind of capacity and knowledge, and as I mentioned, again, it's probably one of the oldest and most prestigious universities. The only chemical element which was discovered in Russia was discovered in Kazan. It's Ruthenium. And so she was actually looking for a graduate student with that qualifications, and -- but when I entered this, I still used some of the stuff I did in Kazan in physical chemistry, but my degree was in bioorganic chemistry. So it was about these enzymes, mostly blood enzymes. Majority of my Ph.D. thesis about the kinetics of blood enzymes.

Q. Okay. And you said that a professor at Catholic was seeking someone with your credentials.

A. Correct.

Q. So did Catholic University pursue you?

A. There was a professor at Kazan University who had a relationship with this professor in Catholic University, so she asked her do you know
any like interesting people who are interested in joining my lab, and I was kind of was her recommendation. But I applied as everyone else. But she definitely was instrumental with hundreds of people apply, so she was interested in having me.

Q. Do you recall her name?
A. My professor at Catholic?

Q. Your professor.

Q. And the professor at Kazan State, do you recall her name? It's a her?
A. Yeah. She passed away a few years ago. Her name was Rose, R-O-S -- Rosa. Rosa. Last name, Arshinova, A-R-S-H-I-N-O-V-A. She later left academia and worked for Monsanto Company. She passed away a few years back.

Q. While you were pursuing a chemistry degree at Kazan State, did you work?
A. I did work, yes.

Q. What was the nature of your work?
A. I was a night guard. You know, I had just came out of the army. It was my grandmother and my sister, so I needed money, so I worked as a
night guard. And I also got into this -- some, you know, used parts, this new business. I was trading scrap metal.

Q. Did you work for the university at all?
A. I might have had like, you know, like lab-- you know, university tries to support students, and I might have gotten some little money, like 20 rubles here and there, but just for -- from the research work. But nothing significant.

Q. For research. Do you recall what type of research you conducted?
A. It's in my lab. Just my professor at Kazan University was giving me kind of -- are you talking about Kazan or --

Q. Kazan.
A. Kazan, yes, so just -- you know, they had their own grants, and they had some lab positions. So in addition to working, you do some lab work. You know, just kind of -- you know, it's something they usually would hire someone outside, but, you know, I did this like, you know, to purify liquids, solvents, you know. I mean, do like menial pretty much work, which is not very kind of -- it does not require a high degree but still
Q. And going back to your previous military history, when did you begin your service? And what was your occupational specialty or corresponding job duties?

A. I was drafted after my first year in university in June 1986, and I was assigned to something called Commandant Service of the troops. And I was -- kind of performed a variety of different tasks in that capacity in that unit.

Q. Can you recall which tasks you performed?

A. I did a lot of guard duty. I was -- served also as a courier. I carried documents and like, you know, they give you briefcase with this handcuff briefcase, like gun and two guys with AK-47s, and then, you know, they tell you to go somewhere, take a train, or, you know, just...

Q. And so you were drafted in 1986. When did you complete your service?

A. I was demobilized -- that's the term called demobilized -- in -- I believe it was in June of 1988.

Q. And what was your rank at the end of your service term?

A. Sergeant.
Q. The New York Times article that we had mentioned earlier said that you were a communications specialist. Can you explain what a communications specialist is?

A. Carrying documents.

Q. Only carrying documents?

A. Correct.

Q. That same article referenced again in 1991 you had joined the service. For what purpose did you join the service for a single year?

A. I commissioned -- it actually wasn't then a year. I commissioned as an officer, first lieutenant, in 1991. And because at that time I -- there was an option in the university where you could kind of take like ROTC kind of thing, so you take classes to commission as an officer. So in parallel to pursuing my kind of studies, I also took some extra classes, and kind of -- and then afterwards, I was commissioned as a lieutenant in chemical and biological defense.

Q. And how long did you serve in that role?

A. Three months.

Q. Why did you end that service?

A. There's no need for officers at that time. The wall was coming down, you know, just the
1 troops were coming back. There were way more real
2 officers who kind of went to better schools, and
3 they were all kind of fired. So there was
4 absolutely no need anymore. And I was never even
5 offered to join the service, and I had no interest
6 in joining the service.
7 Q. Except for in 1991 when you --
8 A. No, no. I was interested like at least--
9 at least just in case. You know, it wasn't that
difficult for me to take these classes like once a
11 week. You take like 3 hours. It wasn't a big
12 deal for me.
13 Q. Which extra classes did you take?
14 A. Like very specific class in chemical
defense, what has happened, like nuclear bomb
16 falls. It's not a very romantic thing. You wear
17 scrub suits, and you just go, like wash off
18 things, you know, just -- it's chemical defense.
19 I mean, you study -- it's all chemistry-related.
20 Q. In addition to the term in 1991, have you
21 served in the military in any other capacity?
22 A. No, never.
23 Q. Did you have to undergo weapons training
24 as part of your service?
25 A. I did, yes.
Q. Can you explain that weapons training?
A. It was like everyone does it, and you --
they teach you to shoot. They teach you to kind                  
of -- nothing specific. I wasn't very good at
that. But, you know, every 6 months you take a
6 test or like even 3 months, you know, they kind of
commission you. You have to kind of continue have
8 proficiency, just like every 3 months you run 3K,
9 you do pull-ups, you know, just -- it's regular
10 like tests. I'm sure every military has it.
Q. And during your time serving, were you
12 deployed or did you fight in any foreign wars?
A. I never was in a combat capacity, never
saw a combat capacity.
Q. Okay. You mentioned that you had
16 traveled to Afghanistan in 2005, 2006. What was
17 the purpose for that travel?
A. There was this private businessman asked
19 me to kind of conduct some communication work.
Q. Communication work related to your
21 training as a communications specialist?
A. Oh, no. No, no. Just it's completely
23 different. So it's a northern province of
24 Afghanistan called Balkh Province, and at that
25 time it was right after the elections, and there
1 was this danger that there will be this kind of
2 fighting because the governor of that province was
3 someone, someone who was very close to this
4 businessman, Tajik businessman, and they wanted to
5 kind of tell a story. And, actually, to this day I
6 think it's probably one of the most safe and nicer
7 parts of Afghanistan, so the women don't wear
8 hijabs there. It's just they go to school. It's
9 very kind of forward-looking thing. So I went
10 there just to try and kind of develop stories. At
11 that time there was a danger that like government
12 in Kabul sent their own person to be governor, and
13 this governor who was there -- and war would have
14 been started with all these former commanders, and
15 so it's a -- General Noor Atta was the governor at
16 that time. So -- and there was this kind of whole
17 Tajik-Pashtun split at that time, so there were
18 some -- they wanted to kind of emphasize role of
19 Tajiks in this Afghan society, because Tajiks are
20 a minority there. But they still have probably
21 much stronger financial power and are more --
22 better educated people, and -- but there was at
23 that time this -- Karzai was the president, so
24 there was these kind of -- so it's more like
25 telling a story, help him actually tell a story.
Q. Did you write stories?
A. I did not write stories, but I kind of -- I developed some talking points for them. I contacted journalists, and there were a number of very good stories were published from -- at that time by Western media from them.

Q. Mr. Akhmetshin, I know we had talked about this before, my colleagues have talked about it before, but I want to revisit something. Have you ever worked as an intelligence officer or agent with the Russian Government or former Soviet Union, including as part of the GRU, or with any security agencies in the former Soviet Union?
A. No, ma'am.

Q. Do you currently?
A. I never worked for -- never worked or work, no, for intelligence agency, never got that training. I was an army sergeant, army officer.

Q. I want to turn back to your time now as a student at Catholic University. When you were a student, did you perform any research or work while you were in your field of study, either for the university or elsewhere?
A. I did, yes, ma'am.

Q. And what was that?
A. In order to get a Ph.D., you need to kind of publish in a magazine and to perform research, not just taking classes. So you need original scientific work, and that was the work I was doing there.

MR. TREMONTE: And did you publish?

MR. AKHMETSHIN: I published extensively — I wouldn't say "extensively," but I published in very good magazines, you know, contribute your monographs.

BY MS. NIKAS:

Q. Were you ever employed by the International Eurasian Institute for Economic and Political Research?

A. Yes.

Q. In what capacity?

A. I was working as a director here in Washington.

Q. And what was the time frame for that?

A. This institute kind of became -- after Kazakhstan 21st Century Foundation was closed, it became -- it morphed into this International Eurasian Institute because it had much broader focus on Central Asia. So probably from 2000 -- or 1999, 2000, through probably until recently, it
1 still -- you know, we still file tax returns.
2 Q. So it's still an active --
3 A. It's not -- I mean, we haven't -- I mean, formerly active. It hasn't been doing work in a
4 while but, you know, it's still in existence.
5 They file tax returns.
6 Q. Did you seek work authorization from the
7 then-Immigration and Naturalization Service while
8 you were on your student visa? Do you recall?
9 A. I definitely did not work illegally here,
10 but I'm certain -- I don't remember details of
11 that, but I think that, you know, there are
12 certain arrangements which were made for me to --
13 MR. TREMONTE: Do you remember specifically?
14 MR. AKHMETSHIN: I don't remember
15 specifically. I might have, but it's been such a
16 long time.
17 BY MS. NIKAS:
18 Q. You mentioned you were an office
19 director. What did you do in that capacity?
20 A. I directed the work of the institute. I
21 hired lobbying firms, PR firms, you know, just
22 kind of communicated with journalists. I was
23 developing stories, you know.
24 Q. Do you recall how many employees the
institute employed?
A. We had never more than one or two. It was a small kind of group.
Q. And --

BY MR. FOSTER:
Q. Who funds it?
A. It was funded through donations by the people give to Central Asia, and I believe original money came from some of the corporations, including American.
Q. So who gathered the -- were you involved in fundraising for it?
A. I never fundraised, but there was this gentleman, these whole activities of both entities were centered around this former prime minister of Kazakhstan. I think he was someone who was kind of person who was raising money.
Q. And who was that?

BY MS. NIKAS:
Q. Do you recall if Mr. Lieberman was employed by the institute or conducted any business with the institute?
A. He was legal adviser or his law firm was
1 adviser to the institute, yes.

Q. Do you recall for which time frame that occurred?

A. Probably for most of the time, yes.

Q. To the best of your knowledge, does Mr. Lieberman work as an agent of or in any way do business on behalf of the Russian Government?

MR. TREMONTE: To the best --

MR. AKHMETSHIN: To best -- no.

MR. TREMONTE: Just trying to streamline the process here. We're pushing up against 2:30, and we're here voluntarily and happy to answer all your questions. It does feel to me like we're going over stuff that we've now done at least twice. But go ahead.

BY MS. NIKAS:

Q. So you were naturalized in 2009. Do you recall after you applied for and received your student visa whether you adjusted your status to become a citizen based on that visa? Or was there an additional visa that you applied for?

A. I do not remember specifically this thing, but I'm absolutely certain that at no time during my presence in the United States I was violating immigration laws.
MR. TREMONTE: Hold on. So these are highly specific questions for which --

MS. NIKAS: To the best of his knowledge.

MR. AKHMETSHIN: Yes.

MR. TREMONTE: Okay. Go ahead.

MR. AKHMETSHIN: So there might have been some--

MR. TREMONTE: Just to the best of your knowledge. Do you remember specifically?

MR. AKHMETSHIN: Yes. I'm probably -- not specifically. No, I don't remember specifically.

MR. TREMONTE: Okay.

MR. AKHMETSHIN: Thank you.

MR. TREMONTE: Sure.

BY MS. NIKAS:

Q. Are you familiar with the Henry M. Jackson Foundation?

A. I am familiar.

Q. And to the best of your knowledge, what business does the foundation conduct?

A. It's mainly medicinal research foundation. My wife used to work for them.

Q. Do you remember what duties she performed when she worked for them?

A. She was researcher, I think. She was a
Q. And to the best of your knowledge, do you recall how your wife first became aware of the foundation?

A. I think she was employed by them or --

MR. TREMONTE: If you know.

MR. AKHMETSHIN: No, I don't know.

MR. TREMONTE: Yeah, and I question the relevance of the inquiry that is --

MR. AKHMETSHIN: Actually --

MR. TREMONTE: No, no. Just go ahead. I'm hoping we're getting to the end of this.

MR. AKHMETSHIN: Yeah, thank you.

BY MS. NIKAS:

Q. During the time between after you graduated and you were on your student visa and you're not familiar or you can't recall whether you applied for another visa, did you make trips outside of the United States while -- after you graduated and before you became a U.S. citizen in 2009?

A. I don't remember.

Q. Okay.

MR. TREMONTE: I'm sorry. Do you have a specific recollection of making trips?
MR. AKHMETSHIN: Between 1998 and 2009?

MS. NIKAS: Correct.

MR. AKHMETSHIN: Oh, yes, definitely.

BY MS. NIKAS:

Q. Do you recall how many, approximately?

A. I don't remember. Three dozen. I don't remember, no.

MR. TREMONTE: Thank you.

BY MS. NIKAS:

Q. Do you recall if you traveled on any foreign visas during that time?

MR. TREMONTE: Do you specifically remember traveling on foreign visas during that time?

MR. AKHMETSHIN: Yes.

BY MS. NIKAS:

Q. Did you travel with any business partners during that time?

A. I don't remember.

Q. Mr. Akhmetshin, have you ever been a member of or in any way associated with, either directly or indirectly, the Communist Party, Totalitarian Party, or a terrorist organization?

A. Never.

MS. NIKAS: Okay. I don't have any more.

BY MR. FOSTER:
Q. Earlier we were talking about your conversations with journalists about the Trump Tower meeting, after the meeting but long before the news of the meeting broke publicly. During that time frame, did you ever discuss that meeting with Mr. Glenn Simpson?

A. I never discussed it with Glenn Simpson.

Q. You have never at any time discussed it with Glenn --

A. I don't remember that. I have no memory of that.

MR. TREMONTE: You have no memory of ever discussing --

MR. AKHMETSHIN: Discussing with Glenn --

MR. TREMONTE: -- the meeting with Glenn Simpson.

MR. AKHMETSHIN: -- Simpson.

BY MR. FOSTER:

Q. At any time?

A. At any time, no, I don't remember it.

Q. You also said in earlier rounds that you were surprised that Ms. Veselnitskaya was able to get the meeting with Trump, Jr. Did you ask her how she was able to obtain the meeting with Trump, Jr.? 
A. I did not.

Q. You never discussed that with her despite your surprise?

A. I didn't discuss it, no.

Q. Did you ask anybody else how she got the meeting with Trump, Jr.?

A. No.

Q. And how were you first introduced to Natalia Veselnitskaya?

A. I was introduced in the office of BakerHostetler at the end of 2015.

Q. Okay. And how did you come to get your work--

A. I --

Q. -- for BakerHostetler?

MR. TREMONTE: Hold it, hold it. Let him ask his question.

BY MR. FOSTER:

Q. How did you come to work for BakerHostetler?

A. I have --

Q. On the Prevezon matter. Sorry.

A. I worked with that firm on a number of other issues in the past, and they knew me well, and they invited me to work on that issue.
Q. And that's the first interaction that you had with Denis Katsyv?
A. Correct, yes.
Q. So you mentioned that your meeting with Trump, Jr., was -- it was interesting, remarkable, it was an unusual meeting, which is why you mentioned it to your journalist friends. Have you ever had other meetings with close associates of political candidates or the chief of a major political campaign before?
MR. TREMONTE: In the U.S.?
MR. FOSTER: In the U.S. An American campaign.
MR. AKHMETSHIN: In this cycle or --
BY MR. FOSTER:
Q. Yeah, during an election cycle.
MR. TREMONTE: Any election cycle.
MR. AKHMETSHIN: I knew Senator McCain when he was running years ago because I had friends who were-- did advance work for him.
BY MR. FOSTER:
Q. Presidential campaign?
A. Presidential campaign, yes.
Q. Any other Presidential campaign besides Senator McCain’s?
A. I have friends who also did this for Jon -- what's his name? -- Huntsman. The same people, they ran his campaign, was not very successful.

Q. Did you ever have any meetings with the Hillary Clinton campaign or campaign officials?

A. Not with officials, no.

MR. TREMONTE: Are you talking about her Presidential campaign?

MR. FOSTER: Right.

MR. AKHMETSHIN: I was not involved in her Presidential campaign.

BY MR. FOSTER:

Q. Well, regardless of whether you were involved, did you ever have any meetings?

A. I knew her, I knew some people who worked on her campaign.

Q. So you did have meetings with her and -- did you have meetings with Hillary Clinton?

A. I met her in social setting, not on a professional line.

Q. Not in a campaign --

A. Not in campaign capacity, no, never.

Q. Did you ever do any work related to the Clinton Foundation?

A. No.
Q. Did you ever have any communications with anyone about the Clinton Foundation?
A. No.

MR. HOLMES: I have just one follow-up.

BY MR. HOLMES:
Q. Michael Weiss, the CNN reporter.
A. Yes.

Q. I believe you indicated earlier that he was writing articles you believed to be false about you. And you also indicated that he was conferring with Bill Browder on that matter, and you were going to confer with your counsel, I think, during the break and tell us if you could illuminate on that.
A. Yes, there was this -- it's also connected to this Prevezon matter and the first time he has written also about Prevezon matters. And I believe at one point the letter was drafted by the BakerHostetler addressing those allegations to the editors of -- at that time he was with Daily Beast, I believe.

Q. Okay. So if I recall correctly, the question-- you said that -- you said that Mr. Weiss had been paid by Mr. Browder.
A. Yes.
Q. And I asked you what the basis of that statement was, and your attorney --

A. The letter specifically alleged possible payments from Mr. Browder to Mr. Weiss.

Q. What letter?

A. The letter which was sent by law firm to the editors of Daily Beast.

Q. And that letter forms the only basis for your--

A. That's the only basis. I don't have independent knowledge of that, but I have independent knowledge of articles being false.

MR. HOLMES: Okay. We can go off the record at 2:35.

[Recess at 2:35 p.m. to 2:48 p.m.]

MS. CLAFLIN: Let's go back on the record at 2:48. I just want the record to reflect that one of our colleagues, Jennifer Piatt, has joined.

FURTHER EXAMINATION BY COUNSEL FOR THE MINORITY BY MS. CLAFLIN:

Q. Mr. Akhmetshin, you were asked a number of questions about your military service. Did you list that on your naturalization application?

A. I believe so, yes.

Q. And you disclosed that to immigration
1 officials?
2     A. I don't remember now, but I must have.
3     Q. Do you think that's the sort of thing
4 that would have come up in the immigration
5 process?
6     MR. TREMONTE: In response to these
7 questions, you need to be clear. If you know the
8 answer, then say you know the answer. If you
9 don't know the answer, say you don't know the
10 answer.
11     MR. AKHMETSHIN: I don't know the answer.
12 It's been such a long time ago. I couldn't locate
13 my naturalization form.
14     MR. TREMONTE: Just answer the question.
15     MR. AKHMETSHIN: I'm not sure, ma'am.
16 BY MS. CLAPLIN:
17     Q. Okay. But to your recollection, you
18 don't think you withheld that information from
19 that process?
20     A. I would be surprised.
21     Q. Okay. Do you remember when you were
22 naturalized? Approximately.
23     A. In 2009, I guess.
24     Q. And I think that's when the ceremony took
25 place, but do you know when your application for
citizenship was processed and approved?

A. I don't remember.

Q. Would it surprise you to learn it was October 3rd of 2008, before Barack Obama took office?

MR. TREMONTE: Would that surprise you?

MR. AKHMETSHIN: I don't know what's the relevance that it wouldn't. So I wanted to be a citizen, and I wanted to do it faster --

MR. TREMONTE: Okay. Would it surprise you?

MR. AKHMETSHIN: No.

MR. TREMONTE: No. Okay.

MS. CLAFLIN: All right. I think that is all we have, so we will go off the record now at 2:49.

[Whereupon the proceedings were adjourned at 2:49 p.m.]
The transcript must be read in the Senate Judiciary Committee, room SD-164.

The reviewer may take notes.

Photos and photocopying of this transcript is strictly prohibited.
ERRATA SHEET
SENATE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE
INTERVIEW OF: RINAT AKHMETSHIN

PAGE LINE

110  25  CHANGE: "named in that" to "necessary"
       __ __  REASON: TRANSCRIPTION ERROR

127  16  CHANGE: "to brought those" to "the Browder"
       __ __  REASON: TRANSCRIPTION ERROR

133  13  CHANGE: "contract" to "contact" (2x)
       __ __  REASON: TRANSCRIPTION ERROR

150  23  CHANGE: "publication" to "public relations"
       __ __  REASON: TRANSCRIPTION ERROR

160  23  CHANGE: "signed Information bazaar" to "sign:
Information bazaar"
       __ __  REASON: TRANSCRIPTION ERROR

166  9   CHANGE: "a" to "the"
       __ __  REASON: TRANSCRIPTION ERROR

184  2   CHANGE: "visas" to "visits"
       __ __  REASON: TRANSCRIPTION ERROR

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PRINT NAME: ____________________________

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1-800-FOR-DEPO    _____ of _____ pages
ERRATA SHEET

SENATE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE

INTERVIEW OF: RINAT AKHMETSHIN

PAGE LINE

197 9 CHANGE: "fold" to "follow through"

REASON: TRANSCRIPTION ERROR

199 10 CHANGE: "judge" to "charge"

REASON: TRANSCRIPTION ERROR

215 3 CHANGE: "schematics" to "kinetics"

REASON: TRANSCRIPTION ERROR

Submitted by: (Signed) __________________________ Date: __________

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