



CHRONOLOGY AND BACKGROUND TO THE HOROWITZ REPORT

The chronology is drawn from a variety of sources including, principally, The Russia investigation and Donald Trump: a timeline from on-the-record sources (updated), John Kruzel, (Politifact, July 16, 2018).

Spring 2014: A company, the Internet Research Agency, linked to the Kremlin and specializing in influence operations devises a strategy to interfere with the 2016 U.S. presidential election by sowing distrust in both individual candidates and the American political structure.

June 16, 2015: Donald Trump announces his candidacy for president.

July 2015: Computer hackers supported by the Russian government penetrate the Democratic National Committee's (DNC) computer network.

Summer and Fall of 2015: Thousands of social media accounts created by Russian surrogates initiate a propaganda and disinformation campaign reflecting a decided preference for the Trump candidacy.

March 19, 2016: Hillary Clinton's presidential campaign chairman, John Podesta, falls victim to an email phishing scam.

March 2016: George Papadopoulos joins the Trump campaign as an adviser. While traveling in mid-March, Papadopoulos meets a London-based professor, Josef Mifsud, who Papadopoulos understands to have "substantial connections to Russian government officials."

March 21, 2016: Trump identifies Papadopoulos and Carter Page as members of his foreign policy team, in an interview with the Washington Post.

March 29, 2016: Trump appointed Paul Manafort to manage the Republican National Convention for the Trump campaign.

March 31, 2016: Following a meeting with Josef Mifsud in Italy, Papadopoulos tells Trump, Jeff Sessions, Carter Page and other campaign members that he can use his Russian connections to arrange a meeting between Trump and Putin.

April 2016: Mifsud tells Papadopoulos about a meeting with high-ranking Russian government officials in Moscow who have "dirt" on Hillary Clinton in the form of "thousands of emails."

April 6, 2016: The FBI's New York Field Office opens a counterintelligence investigation into Carter Page based upon Page's contacts with suspected Russian intelligence officers.

May 2016: Donald Trump, Jr. meets with Alexander Torshin at an National Rifle Association (NRA) convention in Louisville. Torshin is a former senator and deputy head of Russia's central bank.

May 2016: George Papadopoulos meets with an Australian diplomat and advises that the Trump team had received "a suggestion" from Russia that it could assist with the anonymous release of information during the campaign that would be damaging to Mrs. Clinton (and President Obama).

Mid-2016: The Kremlin-linked Internet Research Agency establishes a dual strategy of supporting Donald Trump's candidacy and disparaging Hillary Clinton.

June 2016: Fusion GPS, a Washington, D.C.-based investigative firm, hires Christopher Steele, a former operative of MI-6, the British foreign intelligence service, to obtain information about whether Russia was trying to achieve a particular outcome in the 2016 U.S. elections, what personal and business ties then candidate Trump had in Russia, and whether there were any ties between the Russian government and Trump or his campaign. With Fusion GPS's authorization, between July and October 2016, Steele provides more than a dozen of his reports to the FBI.

June 3, 2016: Trump, Jr. receives an email from Rob Goldstone, a business associate. Goldstone tells the younger Trump that Moscow supports his father's candidacy and that he has a connection to a Russian government official with incriminating evidence against Hillary Clinton. Goldstone tells Trump Jr.: "This is obviously very high level and sensitive information but is part of Russia and its government's support for Mr. Trump." The younger Trump replied that same day: "If it's what you say, I love it."

June 8, 2018: Russian intelligence officers launch DC Leaks, a website that promulgates stolen emails.

June 9, 2016: Trump, Jr., Manafort, and Kushner meet with a Russian national and several others at Trump Tower. The meeting follows Goldstone's promise to Trump Jr. that a "Russian government attorney" would deliver damaging information about Clinton. Recollections and descriptions of the purpose and details of the meeting shift over time.

June-July 2016: WikiLeaks and DCLeaks release thousands of documents about Clinton and internal DNC deliberations.

July 2016: Trump campaign adviser Carter Page travels to Moscow, where he meets with Russia's deputy prime minister and a high-ranking Russian oil official. Page emails campaign staffers that the deputy prime minister had "expressed strong support for Mr. Trump" and that he had gleaned "incredible insights and outreach" in Russia. Ultimately, four applications are filed by the government under the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act (FISA) seeking authority to electronically surveil Page.

July 2016: Trump campaign associate J.D. Gordon successfully lobbies for the GOP platform to be changed to benefit Russia. Language is inserted vowing not to provide lethal aid to Ukrainians in their fight against Russian-backed separatists.

July 18, 2016: Jeff Sessions talks with Sergey Kislyak, Russia's U.S. ambassador, after Sessions' speech at the Republican National Convention.

July 22, 2016: WikiLeaks begins releasing DNC emails ahead of the Democratic National Convention. The first tranche—nearly 20,000 emails—reveals an embarrassing glimpse at internal DNC deliberations.

July 25, 2016: The FBI publicly confirms its investigation into the DNC hack.

July 27, 2016: During a press conference, Trump says of Clinton's emails: "Russia, if you're listening, I hope you can find the 33,000 emails that are missing. I think you will probably be rewarded mightily by our press."

July 27, 2016: The Russians begin to target Clinton's emails.

July 31, 2016: Days after receiving information from a friendly foreign government (Australia) regarding the information that George Papadopoulos exchanged with an Australian diplomat in May 2016 about a Russian "suggestion" that that "it could assist with the anonymous release of information during the campaign that would be damaging to Mrs. Clinton (and President Obama)" the FBI opens a counterintelligence investigation ("Crossfire Hurricane") into links between the Trump campaign and the Russian government. Among other issues, the "predicate" for the Crossfire Hurricane investigation becomes a principal focus of the Horowitz Report.

August 2016: Crossfire Hurricane expands with the FBI opening individual investigations on George Papadopoulos, Carter Page, Paul Manafort and Michael Flynn.

September 2016: Jeff Sessions meets again with Sergei Kislyak.

September 19, 2016: The FBI's Crossfire Hurricane team receives a set of 6 Steele reports on the 2016 election that the Horowitz Report concludes play a "central and essential role in the FBI's and DoJ's decision to submit an application for FISA surveillance authority to the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court (FISC)."

Oct. 7, 2016: The U.S. Intelligence Community releases a statement saying the releases of emails on DC Leaks and WikiLeaks "are consistent with the methods and motivations of Russian-directed efforts."

Oct. 21, 2016: The FBI and Justice Department obtain the first FISA order to monitor Page based on the conclusion of the FISC that there is probable cause to conclude that Page is a Russian agent.

Nov. 8, 2016: Donald Trump is elected the 45th president.

Nov. 15, 2016: Admiral Michael Rogers, NSA director and head of U.S. Cyber Command, attributes the hacking of Democratic National Committee servers to Russia saying, "There shouldn't be any doubt in anybody's mind. This was not something that was done casually. This was not something done by chance. This was not a target that was selected purely arbitrarily. This was a conscious effort by a nation-state to attempt to achieve a specific effect."

Nov. 28, 2016: In an interview with Time magazine, Trump denies that Russia interfered with the 2016 presidential election.

Dec. 1, 2016: Jared Kushner and Trump campaign adviser Michael Flynn meet with Kislyak at Trump Tower.

Dec. 13, 2016: Kushner meets with Russian banker Sergey Gorkov, the CEO of a state-run Russian bank under U.S. sanction. Gorkov was described to Kushner as “someone with a direct line to the Russian president who could give insight into how Putin was viewing the new administration and best ways to work together.”

Dec. 29, 2016: President Obama responds to Russia’s interference in the election by expelling 35 Russian diplomats and issuing new sanctions.

December 2016: Following Obama’s move against Russia, Flynn asks Kislyak to “refrain from escalating the situation.” Kislyak later tells Flynn that Russia “had chosen to moderate its response to those sanctions as a result of his request.”

Dec. 30, 2016: Putin, in a move that baffles many Kremlinologists at the time, declines to retaliate against the Obama administration’s sanctions.

Jan. 4, 2017: Trump tweets “The ‘Intelligence’ briefing on so-called Russian hacking was delayed until Friday, perhaps more time needed to build a case. Very strange!”

Jan. 6, 2017: The U.S. Intelligence Community issues a report stating, with “high confidence,” the conclusion that Russia engaged in an influence campaign directed at the 2016 U.S. presidential election, and the Russian government had developed a “clear preference for President-elect Trump.”

Jan. 10, 2017: In his confirmation hearing to become Trump’s attorney general, Sessions denies having contact with Russian officials during the 2016 presidential campaign. In a separate questionnaire submitted a week later, Sessions again denies contacting any Russian officials regarding the 2016 election.

Jan. 10, 2017: A dossier compiled by former British intelligence officer Christopher Steele goes public. The Steele dossier suggests the Kremlin possesses compromising material against Trump and raises the possibility Trump is vulnerable to blackmail.

Jan. 11, 2017: In his first press conference since the election, Trump admits Russian hacking for the first time but says “And I have to say this also, the Democratic National Committee was totally open to be hacked. They did a very poor job.”

Late January 2017: Flynn, now Trump’s national security adviser, lies to the FBI, by falsely claiming that he never discussed the Obama administration’s Russia sanctions with Kislyak prior to Trump taking office.

Feb. 10, 2017: On Air Force One, Trump states he didn't know about reports that Flynn had conversations with the Russians about sanctions prior to the Inauguration.

Feb. 13, 2017: Michael Flynn resigns after 24 days as National Security Advisor.

March 1, 2017: The Washington Post reports that Jeff Sessions met with Kislyak twice over the previous year, encounters that Sessions failed to disclose during his confirmation proceedings. Sessions later confirms these meetings.

April 2017: Carter Page provides interviews to news outlets denying that he had collected intelligence for the Russian government and asserting that he had previously assisted U.S. government agencies.

March 2, 2017: Sessions recuses himself from any “existing or future investigations” related to the 2016 presidential election.

March 20, 2017: James Comey publicly confirms that the FBI’s counterintelligence probe includes “investigating the nature of any links between individuals associated with the Trump campaign and the Russian government and whether there was any coordination between the campaign and Russia’s efforts.”

May 11, 2017: After firing Comey, Trump tells NBC “this Russia thing” factored into his decision.

May 15, 2017: The Washington Post reports that Trump disclosed highly classified information to Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov and Ambassador Sergey Kislyak during their May 10 visit to the Oval Office.

May 17, 2017: The Justice Department appoints former FBI Director Robert Mueller as Special Counsel. Mueller will lead the investigation into possible ties or coordination between the Trump campaign and Russian officials, as well as other matters that “may arise directly from the investigation.” The activities of the Crossfire Hurricane investigation are effectively transferred to the Special Counsel.

June 2017: Shortly before the filing of the final FISA application relating to Carter Page, the FBI inquires of the CIA regarding Page’s past status. The CIA replies that Page had had prior interactions with the CIA but an attorney in the FBI OGC edits the CIA email to reflect that Page was not a source for the CIA.

Oct. 5, 2017: Papadopoulos reaches a plea deal with Mueller and pleads guilty to lying to the FBI about his efforts to put the Trump campaign in contact with Moscow.

Oct. 30, 2017: Manafort and Trump campaign associate Rick Gates surrender to the FBI after being charged with a dozen felonies each, including failing to disclose lobbying activities on behalf of foreign entities, financial crimes, and making false statements. They plead not guilty to all charges.

Nov. 2, 2017: Page, contradicting previous denials by Sessions, tells the House Intelligence Committee he had notified Sessions about contacts he made with Kremlin officials during his July 2016 Russia visit. Page also testifies to the House Intelligence Committee that he also had told Trump campaign officials Corey Lewandowski, and Hope Hicks of his July 2016 trip to Moscow where Page spoke at the New Economic School and met with Russian deputy prime minister Arkadiy Dvorkovich.

Nov. 11, 2017: Aboard Air Force One while traveling between cities in Vietnam following a

brief meeting with Vladimir Putin, Trump says Putin denied any meddling in the U.S. election. According to Trump, “You can only ask him so many times.” In the same appearance, commenting about Intelligence Community officials, Trump says: “I mean, give me a break, they are political hacks.”

Nov. 30, 2017: Flynn pleads guilty to lying to the FBI about his discussions with the Russian ambassador during the presidential transition and enters a plea agreement with Mueller.

Feb. 16, 2018: The Special Counsel charges 13 Russians and three Russian entities with conspiring to defraud the United States and interfere with the 2016 presidential election. The Russian government denies involvement.

Feb. 24, 2018: A new superseding indictment is filed against Manafort alleging he “secretly retained a group of former senior European politicians to take positions favorable to Ukraine, including by lobbying in the United States.”

March 28, 2018: The Justice Department announces that its inspector general will investigate how the FBI obtained FISA orders to surveil Carter Page, including whether information from the Steele Dossier was improperly used in the Page FISA applications. This investigation leads to the issuance of the Horowitz Report.

April 27, 2018: The House Intelligence Committee concludes that Russia conducted cyberattacks on U.S. political institutions during the 2016 campaign. However, the Republican majority finds no evidence of collusion between the Trump campaign and Moscow.

June 8, 2018: As a private citizen, William Barr, writes to the Department of Justice providing his views on the supposed defects in “Mueller’s Obstruction Theory.”

July 3, 2018: The Senate Select Committee on Intelligence (SSCI) independently reviews the Intelligence Community’s assessment of Russian election activities and validates its findings, concluding that the joint assessment which it describes as “a seminal intelligence product with significant policy implications” is a “sound intelligence product.”

July 13, 2018: The Special Counsel indicts 12 Russian intelligence officers for their role in the hacking of the Democratic National Committee, the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee and the Clinton campaign, and for their leaking of emails and documents.

July 16, 2018: In a joint press conference with Russian President Vladimir Putin, Trump appears to accept Putin’s denial of Russian election interference.

July 20, 2018: In connection with a Freedom of Information Act request submitted by Judicial Watch, the Justice Department releases over 400 pages constituting the four redacted FISA applications submitted to the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court seeking authority to surveil Carter Page.

July 22, 2018: Trump tweets the following comments on the Page FISA applications, “I said this could never happen. This is so bad that they should be looking at the judges who signed off on this stuff, not just the people who gave it. It is so bad it screams out at you.”

Aug, 21, 2018: Paul Manafort, former chair of the 2016 Trump presidential campaign is convicted by a federal jury on 8 felony counts. That same day, Michael Cohen pleads

guilty to 8 counts relating to tax fraud and campaign finance violations.

Nov. 29, 2018: Micheal Cohen pleads guilty in the Mueller investigation to lying to Congress about the length and scope of his work on plans to build a Trump Tower in Moscow.

Dec. 7, 2018: Trump appoints William Barr, the critic of “Mueller’s Obstruction Theory,” to be Attorney General. Barr is confirmed on Feb. 14, 2019.

Dec. 20, 2018: James Mattis resigns as Secretary of Defense.

Jan. 25, 2019: Roger Stone is indicted on charges stemming from Stone’s 2017 congressional testimony about his alleged contacts with Wikileaks during the 2016 presidential campaign.

Feb. 27, 2019: Michael Cohen, formerly personal counsel to Donald Trump, testifies before the House Committee on Oversight and Reform.

March 24, 2019: Attorney General Barr releases a summary of the “Report On The Investigation Into Russian Interference In The 2016 Presidential Election” (the “Mueller Report”). Barr also announces that he and Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein had concluded that “the evidence developed during the Special Counsel’s investigation is not sufficient to establish that the President committed an obstruction-of-justice offense.”

April 10, 2019: While testifying before a congressional subcommittee on budget matters, Attorney General Barr says that “spying did occur” against the Trump campaign, and promises to investigate.

April 30, 2019: The Washington Post reveals that, prior to Attorney General Barr’s release of his “summary” of the Mueller Report, Special Counsel Robert Mueller wrote to the Attorney General expressing that the “summary” prepared by the Department of Justice and sent by the Attorney General to Congress “did not fully capture the context, nature, and substance of this office’s work and conclusions.”

May 8, 2019: The House Judiciary Committee holds Attorney General William Barr in contempt for refusing to provide the Committee with an unredacted copy of the Mueller Report.

May 14, 2019: The Associated Press reports that Attorney General Barr has appointed John Durham, the U.S. Attorney for Connecticut, to investigate the origins of the Russia probe and determine whether intelligence collection involving the Trump campaign was “lawful and appropriate.”

July 24, 2019: Robert Mueller testifies before the House Judiciary and Intelligence Committees on the investigation over which he presided as Special Counsel.

July 28, 2019: Daniel Coats resigns as Director of National Intelligence.

Nov. 15, 2019: Roger Stone is convicted on all counts relating to his obstruction of congressional investigations into the Trump campaign.