

Chris Megerian @ChrisMegerian Apr 18

I'm reading Robert Mueller's report right now. Here's a efw highlights.

1 27 67



Chris Megerian @ChrisMegerian Apr 18

The Russian government's interference was conducted in "sweeping and systematic fashion."

Trump has often downplayed or outright denied Moscow's role.

The Russian government interfered in the 2016 presidential election in sweeping and systematic fashion. Evidence of Russian government operations began to surface in mid-2016. In June, the Democratic National Committee and its cyber response team publicly announced that Russian hackers had compromised its computer network. Releases of hacked materials—hacks that public reporting soon attributed to the Russian government—began that same month. Additional releases followed in July through the organization WikiLeaks, with further releases in October and November.

3 30 75



Chris Megerian

@ChrisMegerian

Follow

Mueller didn't establish a conspiracy with Russia, but "the Campaign expected it would benefit electorally from information stolen and released through Russian efforts."

As set forth in detail in this report, the Special Counsel's investigation established that Russia interfered in the 2016 presidential election principally through two operations. First, a Russian entity carried out a social media campaign that favored presidential candidate Donald J. Trump and disparaged presidential candidate Hillary Clinton. Second, a Russian intelligence service conducted computer-intrusion operations against entities, employees, and volunteers working on the Clinton Campaign and then released stolen documents. The investigation also identified numerous links between the Russian government and the Trump Campaign. Although the investigation established that the Russian government perceived it would benefit from a Trump presidency and worked to secure that outcome, and that the Campaign expected it would benefit

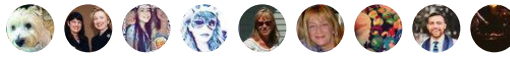
1

U.S. Department of Justice
~~Attorney Work Product // May Contain Material Protected Under Fed. R. Crim. P. 6(e)~~

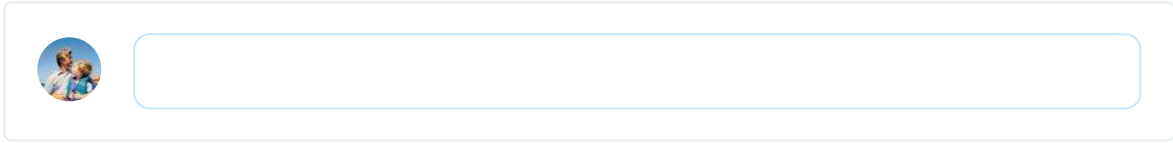
electorally from information stolen and released through Russian efforts, the investigation did not establish that members of the Trump Campaign conspired or coordinated with the Russian government in its election interference activities.

11:15 AM - 18 Apr 2019

48 Retweets 93 Likes



6 48 93



Chris Megerian @ChrisMegerian Apr 18

The special counsel examined whether there was a conspiracy. It didn't look at "collusion," which isn't a legal definition.

In evaluating whether evidence about collective action of multiple individuals constituted a crime, we applied the framework of conspiracy law, not the concept of "collusion." In so doing, the Office recognized that the word "collud[e]" was used in communications with the Acting Attorney General confirming certain aspects of the investigation's scope and that the term has frequently been invoked in public reporting about the investigation. But collusion is not a specific offense or theory of liability found in the United States Code, nor is it a term of art in federal criminal law. For those reasons, the Office's focus in analyzing questions of joint criminal liability was on conspiracy as defined in federal law. In connection with that analysis, we addressed the factual question whether members of the Trump Campaign "coordinat[ed]"—a term that appears in the appointment order—with Russian election interference activities. Like collusion, "coordination" does not have a settled definition in federal criminal law. We understood coordination to require an agreement—tacit or express—between the Trump Campaign and the Russian government on election interference. That requires more than the two parties taking actions that were informed by or responsive to the other's actions or interests. We applied the term coordination in that sense when stating in the report that the investigation did not establish that the Trump Campaign coordinated with the Russian government in its election interference activities.

4 23 53



Chris Megerian @ChrisMegerian Apr 18

Although the investigation did not establish a conspiracy, this is a long way from "no one talked to the Russians."

The Russian contacts consisted of business connections, offers of assistance to the Campaign, invitations for candidate Trump and Putin to meet in person, invitations for Campaign officials and representatives of the Russian government to meet, and policy positions seeking improved U.S.-Russian relations. Section IV of this Report details the contacts between Russia and the Trump Campaign during the campaign and transition periods, the most salient of which are summarized below in chronological order.

12 119 329



Chris Megerian @ChrisMegerian Apr 18

Here's the key part on how Trump associates were not charged with a conspiracy with the Russians

Second, while the investigation identified numerous links between individuals with ties to the Russian government and individuals associated with the Trump Campaign, the evidence was not sufficient to support criminal charges. Among other things, the evidence was not sufficient to charge any Campaign official as an unregistered agent of the Russian government or other Russian principal. And our evidence about the June 9, 2016 meeting and WikiLeaks's releases of hacked materials was not sufficient to charge a criminal campaign-finance violation. Further, the evidence was not sufficient to charge that any member of the Trump Campaign conspired with representatives of the Russian government to interfere in the 2016 election.

2 16 34



Chris Megerian @ChrisMegerian Apr 18

Parts about the Internet Research Agency are heavily redacted

A. Structure of the Internet Research Agency

Harm to Ongoing Matter ⁸ Harm to Ongoing Matter

Harm to Ongoing Matter ¹⁰ Harm to Ongoing Matter

The organization quickly grew. Harm to Ongoing Matter

Harm to Ongoing Matter ¹¹

Harm to Ongoing Matter ¹²

The growth of the organization also led to a more detailed organizational structure. Harm to Ongoing Matter

1 24 34



Chris Megerian @ChrisMegerian Apr 18

A lot of parts on WikiLeaks is heavily redacted. But it's clear that the Trump campaign wanted to capitalize on the fruits of a Russian covert operation

According to Gates, by the late summer of 2016, the Trump Campaign was planning a press strategy, a communications campaign, and messaging based on the possible release of Clinton emails by WikiLeaks.²⁰⁷ Harm to Ongoing Matter

²⁰⁸ Harm to Ongoing Matter

Harm to Ongoing Matter while Trump and Gates were driving to LaGuardia Airport. Harm to Ongoing Matter, shortly after the call candidate Trump told Gates that more releases of damaging information would be coming.²⁰⁹

5 35 67



Chris Megerian @ChrisMegerian Apr 18

The special counsel's office did not find Jerome Corsi reliable.

The Office investigated Corsi's allegations about the events of October 7, 2016 but found little corroboration for his allegations about the day.²⁴⁸ Harm to Ongoing Matter

²⁴⁹ Harm to Ongoing Matter

²⁵⁰ However, the phone records themselves do not indicate that the conversation was with any of the reporters who broke the *Access Hollywood* story, and the Office has not otherwise been able to identify the substance of the conversation. Harm to Ongoing Matter

²⁵¹ However, the Office has not identified any conference call participant, or anyone who spoke to Corsi that day, who says that they received non-public information about the tape from Corsi or acknowledged having contacted a member of WikiLeaks on October 7, 2016 after a conversation with Corsi.

1 9 26



Chris Megerian @ChrisMegerian Apr 18

Another dead end? Peter Smith didn't seem to actually have the inside track on obtaining Hillary Clinton's emails.

Smith drafted multiple emails stating or intimating that he was in contact with Russian hackers. For example, in one such email, Smith claimed that, in August 2016, KLS Research had organized meetings with parties who had access to the deleted Clinton emails, including parties with "ties and affiliations to Russia."²⁸⁶ The investigation did not identify evidence that any such meetings occurred. Associates and security experts who worked with Smith on the initiative did not believe that Smith was in contact with Russian hackers and were aware of no such connection.²⁸⁷ The investigation did not establish that Smith was in contact with Russian hackers or that Smith, Ledeen, or other individuals in touch with the Trump Campaign ultimately obtained the deleted Clinton emails.

1 1 20



Chris Megerian @ChrisMegerian Apr 18

Yes, there were links between Russians and Trump associates.

No, the investigation did not determine they coordinated on the election.

IV. RUSSIAN GOVERNMENT LINKS TO AND CONTACTS WITH THE TRUMP CAMPAIGN

The Office identified multiple contacts—"links," in the words of the Appointment Order—between Trump Campaign officials and individuals with ties to the Russian government. The Office investigated whether those contacts constituted a third avenue of attempted Russian interference with or influence on the 2016 presidential election. In particular, the investigation examined whether these contacts involved or resulted in coordination or a conspiracy with the Trump Campaign and Russia, including with respect to Russia providing assistance to the Campaign in exchange for any sort of favorable treatment in the future. Based on the available information, the investigation did not establish such coordination.

5 8 31



Chris Megerian @ChrisMegerian Apr 18

According to Michael Cohen, Trump didn't see the Trump Tower Moscow project as benefiting his campaign.

But he did see his campaign serving as an "infomercial" for his business.

According to Cohen, he did not consider the political import of the Trump Moscow project to the 2016 U.S. presidential election at the time. Cohen also did not recall candidate Trump or anyone affiliated with the Trump Campaign discussing the political implications of the Trump Moscow project with him. However, Cohen recalled conversations with Trump in which the candidate suggested that his campaign would be a significant "infomercial" for Trump-branded properties.³²⁹

1 19 40



Chris Megerian @ChrisMegerian Apr 18

There's some redactions here, but the report clearly says the investigation did not establish that George Papadopoulos told other campaign officials about Russians having dirt on Hillary Clinton

Grand Jury [REDACTED]⁴⁹⁹ No documentary evidence, and nothing in the email accounts or other communications facilities reviewed by the Office, shows that Papadopoulos shared this information with the Campaign.

1 4 11



Chris Megerian @ChrisMegerian Apr 18

Poor Carter Page — the report says he inflated his credentials when he applied for a Trump administration job and never got a response.

responded to diplomatic outreach efforts from senior government officials in Asia, Europe, the Middle East, Africa, [and] the Americas."⁵⁹² Page received no response from the Transition Team. When Page took a personal trip to Moscow in December 2016, he met again with at least one Russian government official. That interaction and a discussion of the December trip are set forth in Volume I, Section IV.B.6, *infra*.

2 4 19



Chris Megerian @ChrisMegerian Apr 18

The investigation did not show that Trump wanted Mike Flynn to pass any messages about sanctions to the Russian ambassador during the transition.

7. Contacts With and Through Michael T. Flynn

Incoming National Security Advisor Michael Flynn was the Transition Team's primary conduit for communications with the Russian Ambassador and dealt with Russia on two sensitive matters during the transition period: a United Nations Security Council vote and the Russian government's reaction to the United States's imposition of sanctions for Russian interference in the 2016 election.¹²⁰⁷ Despite Kushner's conclusion that Kislyak did not wield influence inside the Russian government, the Transition Team turned to Flynn's relationship with Kislyak on both issues. As to the sanctions, Flynn spoke by phone to K.T. McFarland, his incoming deputy, to prepare for his call to Kislyak; McFarland was with the President-Elect and other senior members of the Transition Team at Mar-a-Lago at the time. Although transition officials at Mar-a-Lago had some concern about possible Russian reactions to the sanctions, the investigation did not identify evidence that the President-Elect asked Flynn to make any request to Kislyak. Flynn asked Kislyak not to escalate the situation in response to U.S. sanctions imposed on December 29, 2016, and Kislyak later reported to Flynn that Russia acceded to that request.

1 3 6



Chris Megerian @ChrisMegerian 24h

Donald Trump Jr. was at risk of campaign finance charges related to Trump Tower meeting. But the evidence wasn't there, the report says.

Accordingly, taking into account the high burden to establish a culpable mental state in a campaign-finance prosecution and the difficulty in establishing the required valuation, the Office decided not to pursue criminal campaign-finance charges against Trump Jr. or other campaign officials for the events culminating in the June 9 meeting.