

35 Key People Involved In The Russia Hoax Who Need To Be Investigated

As their desperate search for collusion continues, Democrats want to interview 81 people. Try this list instead.

By [Willis L. Krumholz](#)

March 8, 2019

Funny how things change. The Washington Post couldn't say a nice thing about congressional Republican efforts to investigate the Obama administration and FBI shenanigans that occurred before and after the 2016 election. That's if they even covered these efforts at all.

But with Democrats controlling the House, and that legislative body's subpoena power, the establishment media's line has changed. Democrats on the House Judiciary Committee have just sent letters to 81 people, all associated with President Trump or the Russia probe, demanding answers on Russian election interference.

This is part of Democrats' effort to continue their hunt for proof of Russia collusion—although they are already sure that Trump is guilty—as Special Counsel Robert Mueller's investigation appears to be winding down. To cover these events, the Post's Philip Bump wrote an article titled: "[The 81 people and organizations just looped into the Trump probe—and why they were included.](#)" Of course, the article is totally unquestioning of the House Democrats' desired narrative and motivations.

Investigated, But Not for the Reasons Dems Give

It isn't worth it to go through Bump's whole article, but even the commentary about the first name on the list—Rinat Akhmetshin—omits glaring and important facts. Bump says Akhmetshin "joined his colleague Natalia Veselnitskaya, a lawyer linked to the Kremlin, at the June 9, 2016, meeting in Trump Tower predicated on providing information that would undermine Hillary Clinton's campaign." But, Bump says, "the focus of the meeting instead reportedly focused on the Magnitsky Act—a law that resulted in sanctions on numerous prominent Russians."

Bump somehow forgets to tell us that Fusion GPS, the opposition research firm hired by Hillary Clinton to create nefarious ties between Trump and Russia, was [working with Akhmetshin and Veselnitskaya](#) to lobby for the Russian government. Fusion GPS even provided the documents that were handed out at that Trump Tower meeting. Fusion GPS head Glenn Simpson also met with the Russians both before and after that Trump Tower meeting. Yet Simpson isn't on the Democrats' list.

So there's a few people on the Democrats' list who should be investigated, but not for the reasons Democrats say. Some should also be charged with crimes.

The following all played a part in the stunning and successful effort by Hillary Clinton's campaign to infect the executive branch of the federal government with Trump-Russia conspiracy theories. Various writings—either authored by a Brit with ties to the Kremlin who was indirectly paid by Clinton's campaign, or directly written by Hillary Clinton cronies—were funneled into the federal government through multiple avenues.

Partisan Democrats in the Obama administration were all too willing to believe the allegations, and use them as an excuse for bad behavior whether they believed them or not.

The documents have been called “dossiers,” but that really just attaches a fancy term to a Word document full of unverified mumbo jumbo that alleged Trump-Russia collusion. Those Word documents were then used to spy on the opposing political party’s presidential campaign, and to plant stories in the media right before the election insinuating that Trump had nefarious ties with Russia.

Here are 36 people who should be interviewed under oath, if they have not been interviewed already, some of whom should be subjected to criminal prosecution.

Obama and Comey’s FBI People

Gregory Brower was Jim Comey’s FBI congressional liaison, and [left the agency in 2018](#). Brower was in Comey’s inner circle, and like many in Comey’s inner circle, Brower played the game of claiming things were classified when they were not, in order to label Republican investigators as leakers and hide how the FBI used the “dossiers.” Brower was [called out](#) by Sens. Chuck Grassley and Lindsey Graham for that.

Kevin Clinesmith, a former FBI lawyer, wrote anti-Trump texts with former top FBI officials Peter Strzok and Lisa Page. According to the [Washington Times](#), Clinesmith “worked on the 2016 probe into Hillary Clinton’s email use [known as Mid-Year-Exam], then worked on the FBI’s original investigation into the Trump campaign [known as Crossfire Hurricane] and, eventually, with the special counsel’s investigation into Mr. Trump’s presidential campaign.”

But Clinesmith, like Strzok, was let go from Mueller’s investigative team once his anti-Trump texts were uncovered by the FBI inspector general (IG), who is tasked with uncovering wrongdoing at the FBI. “Viva le resistance,” Clinesmith said in one text.

Joseph Pientka, an FBI official, was the go-between for Fusion GPS and the FBI. Pientka interviewed Department of Justice official Bruce Ohr on at least 12 occasions, who passed on the information Ohr’s wife Nellie (who worked for Fusion GPS) was receiving from Christopher Steele (who also worked for Fusion GPS), and who was using Edward Baumgartner, a British national with ties to Moscow, to compile the dossier for the Clinton campaign.

Steele was originally the direct FBI source, despite his ties to the Clinton campaign through Fusion GPS, but when Steele was caught leaking to the media to paint Trump as a Russian stooge just before the election, official FBI rules said that Steele’s use as an FBI source had to be discontinued. The FBI top brass worked around these rules, which are in place to prevent this very kind of abuse, by using [Pientka to interview Ohr](#), who was getting his information from Steele.

Pientka also played a role in the [interview of former Trump national security advisor Mike Flynn](#), where Pientka and Strzok interviewed Flynn, and Department of Justice (DOJ) and FBI officials (including former deputy attorney general Sally Yates) used that interview to entrap Flynn for a [completely non-nefarious conversation with the Russian ambassador](#). The pretext for the interview was the [Logan Act](#), a 200-year old law that has never led to a conviction and is probably unconstitutional. Plus, it is violated by every incoming administration, as they seek to begin conducting foreign policy during the transition period.

All Flynn did was talk to the Russian ambassador and try to get Russia to not retaliate against sanctions Obama placed on Russia right before leaving the White House, and to not allow an anti-Israel vote at the United Nations. The Obama administration was going to allow this vote in the final days of Obama’s presidency, an unprecedented move.

Although Flynn was never charged with violating the Logan Act, he was later charged with lying to the FBI investors sent to interview him, under the pretext of a possible Logan Act violation—even though

the agents didn't think he was lying at the time, and even though the FBI had wiretapped access to the record of Flynn's conversation with the Russian ambassador.

What happened to Flynn is a disgrace, and a total perversion of our justice system. And it is just one example in the dangerous trend of the left using our justice system to take out political opponents, where Democrat politicians [point out a target or a supposed crime, and the federal bureaucracy dutifully moves into action](#).

Obama's DOJ People

Tashina Gauhar is a Department of Justice attorney who was deeply involved in applications to the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance (FISA) Court, which were used to spy on the Trump campaign using the dossiers. Gauhar was also one of the few people to see or be notified of the existence of missing Hillary Clinton emails [found on Anthony Weiner's computer](#). Weiner was being investigated for pedophilia and was married to top Clinton aide Huma Abedin.

Gauhar and Andrew McCabe sat on those emails, and a [cursory investigation—led by anti-Trump FBI agent Strzok](#)—was only conducted when FBI field agents in New York threatened to go public. Gauhar later played a role in recommending former attorney general Jeff Sessions' [recusal](#) from overseeing Mueller's probe.

John Carlin is the head of the Justice Department's National Security Division, and got out of the DOJ in late 2016. He was the former chief of staff to Mueller, when Mueller led the FBI in the 2000s. Carlin was involved in the FBI's systemic abuse of the FISA surveillance laws, which included spying on the Trump campaign.

Gauhar later played a role in recommending former attorney general Jeff Sessions' recusal from overseeing Mueller's probe.

This included omitting information on FBI wiretap abuse to the FISA court, and omitting information when applying to spy on Trump campaign official Carter Page to the FISA court. Carlin was also regularly briefed on and involved with the FBI's overall investigation into the Trump campaign, called [Crossfire Hurricane](#).

David Laufman is a high-level DOJ official in the national security division. Laufman worked with FBI counterintelligence guy Strzok on both the Clinton email investigation and the investigation into the Trump campaign based on the still-unproven, Clinton-paid, and Russian-sourced "dossier."

Mary McCord was the acting assistant attorney general for a time, replacing Carlin as the head of the DOJ's national security division. She left the DOJ in 2017. McCord played a role in Yates's plan to spy on Flynn and entrap him with the Logan Act.

George Toscas, a senior official in the Justice Department, was in charge of the "Mid-Year-Exam" investigation into Clinton's email abuses. Toscas had a front seat to both McCabe and Comey's efforts to hide the fact that Clinton's emails were found on Weiner's computer, and former Obama attorney general [Loretta Lynch's efforts](#) to stymie the Clinton email investigation.

The importance of Hillary's emails wasn't just her flouting security rules. Many have speculated that Hillary's 30,000 missing emails, which were stored on her home-brew server, would have shown pay-to-play activities Clinton conducted while Obama's secretary of state.

Obama's State Department People

Victoria Nuland was a top Obama State Department official, and potentially Clinton's secretary of state. Nuland had a role in pushing Fusion GPS conspiracy theories in the State Department, and in the broader Obama administration.

She received the Steele dossier just after it was created, via Jonathan Winer, in July 2016. That was possibly [two months before](#) the document was in the hands of the FBI, unless the FBI had it sooner than we currently know. She then ultimately gave permission for the FBI to make the contact with Steele, which was initiated by Michael J. Gaeta, an FBI agent based in Rome who became Steele's handler.

Steele even came to the State Department to [directly brief](#) officials on his work, paid for by the Clinton campaign. Nuland had an [awkward exchange](#) with Sen. Richard Burr, where she claimed she "actively" avoided this Steele briefing, but also said she didn't hear about the briefing until after it occurred.

Safe to say that if Nuland was tied to the Trump campaign, she would already be indicted for perjury by Mueller's team of angry Democrats.

Jonathan Winer was a top Obama State Department official. Winer received documents alleging Trump-Russia collusion from notorious Clinton guy Cody Shearer, through another even more notorious Clinton guy named Sidney Blumenthal, and received the Steele dossier from Steele [in summer 2016](#).

She claimed she 'actively' avoided this Steele briefing, but also said she didn't hear about the briefing until after it occurred.

Winer shared the contents of these documents with his boss, Nuland, and prepped a summary of these docs for the State Department. He also gave the Shearer document to Steele, who then gave it to the FBI. That both Shearer and Blumenthal are known Clinton cronies and hatchet-men [never seemed to be important to Winer](#). Winer was also a source for at least two journalists who wrote articles prior to the election based on the Steele dossier.

Jonathan Finer was another Obama State Department official, and the chief of staff to former secretary of state John Kerry. Finer got the so-called dossier from Winer, and gave it to John Kerry. This of course, among several other pieces of information, raises questions as to whether [President Obama](#) saw the dossiers and knew about what was being done to the Trump campaign.

Elizabeth Dibble was the deputy chief of mission at the U.S. embassy in London. She was reported to be one of the State Department officials who received information from Australian ambassador to the U.K. Alexander Downer, who has [ties to the Clinton Foundation](#), about George Papadopoulos saying to Downer that Joseph Misfud—a European professor with [potential ties to western intelligence agencies](#)—told Papadopoulos that Russia had dirt on Hillary Clinton.

This of course, among several other pieces of information, raises questions as to whether President Obama knew what was being done to the Trump campaign.

Misfud allegedly told Papadopoulos this in April 2016, and Papadopoulos allegedly told Downer what Misfud had said in [early May](#). It is entirely possible that Papadopoulos was [set up](#) by Misfud, who has now disappeared and is hopefully just in hiding and not at the bottom of some body of water.

This chain of events became important when the FBI began using the Papadopoulos tip as an excuse for its "Crossfire Hurricane" investigation into the Trump campaign, in order to say why they didn't rely on the Clinton-funded dossier.

But the FBI didn't open Crossfire Hurricane until [several months](#) after the Dibble-Downer tip was

received, and that tip, if it ever even occurred, didn't go through the normal and proper chain of intelligence (others have claimed that the tip wasn't taken seriously until the Democratic National Committee hack was made public).

More damning for the FBI's Papadopoulos excuse was that they didn't interview Papadopoulos until after the 2016 election, and went after Carter Page for FISA surveillance instead. This was no damning piece of firsthand information, or emergency. It was hearsay, and what Papadopoulos said to Downer, and what Misfud said to Papadopoulos, is still disputed.

The reality is that the Clinton-funded dossier [started the FBI's investigation into Trump](#), at least the official Crossfire Hurricane investigation.

Finally, **Thomas Williams** is another State Department guy in the London embassy. **Colin Kahl**, **Kathleen Kavalec**, and **Lewis Lukens** were all State Department officials who had some sort of interaction with the dossier, or Fusion GPS people.

People Tied to the DNC or Clinton Campaign

Perkins Coie, a law firm, was paid by the Clinton campaign to serve as a go-between to hide the fact that Hillary's campaign was paying Fusion GPS to push the Trump-Russia smear.

Marc Elias is a lawyer at Perkins Coie, who hired Fusion GPS for the Clinton campaign.

Michael Sussmann is another lawyer at Perkins Coie, who received a story about a Russian bank, Alphabank, communicating with a server in Trump Tower from Fusion GPS. Sussmann went directly to the FBI with that story—to James Baker, who was general counsel of the FBI under Comey—prompting reports midway through the 2016 campaign that hinted Trump had nefarious ties with Russia.

Although it was [widely debunked](#), the server angle again showed up in media stories, including in New York Times and Slate articles, right before the election in September of 2016. Hillary Clinton even [tweeted](#) that Slate article when it posted.

Robbie Mook was a top Hillary Clinton campaign official. As Fusion GPS was working on the dossier, Perkins Coie was getting the information from Steele and [briefing Mook](#). It is important to note that Mook was the first Hillary official to publicly say that Russia wanted to help Trump win. Mook said this right before the Democratic National Convention.

This is more evidence that Clinton's campaign is the entity that started the Russia investigation, by alleging that Trump had nefarious ties with Russia to [distract from the DNC and Clinton campaign's mistreatment of Bernie Sanders](#), as was revealed by the DNC email theft that was leaked by WikiLeaks right before the Democrats' 2016 national convention.

Jake Sullivan is another top advisor in Clinton's campaign, who played a role in forming the Trump-Russia collusion narrative.

Cody Shearer is a longtime Clinton dirty tricks guy, with a [record of smearing the Clintons' political opponents](#). He authored a "dossier," largely based on Steele's work, that was picked up by Winer at Obama's State Department.

Sidney Blumenthal is an even [more infamous](#) Clinton stooge. "Sid" is so infamous that Obama told Hillary that he didn't want Blumenthal associated with the Obama administration. Blumenthal got the Trump-Russia conspiracies written by Shearer into the Obama State Department, when only the Clinton campaign was talking about Trump-Russia collusion.

Fusion GPS People

Fusion GPS is a D.C. based opposition research and public relations firm with a history of representing less-than-savory actors, including Planned Parenthood, the Venezuelan dictatorship of Nicolas Maduro, and Vladimir Putin's Russia. Fusion has been [shown in court documents](#) to have paid still-unknown journalists, likely for the placement of stories or to push a certain narrative.

Rinat Akhmetshin is the aforementioned Russian spy guy who was working with Fusion GPS when he showed up in Trump Tower. Get him under oath and ask him how much he knew about Fusion's work for the Clinton campaign.

Edward Baumgartner is the British national, fluent in Russian and with ties to the Kremlin, who actually [worked on most of Steele's dossier](#). To compile the dossier, Baumgartner used unknown Russian sources that were paid and totally unverified, possibly tied to the Kremlin.

Peter Fritsch is a partner at Fusion GPS.

Mary Jacoby is the wife of Fusion GPS head Simpson, and has [bragged publicly](#) that her husband started the Russia investigation.

Shailagh Murray was a senior advisor to the Obama administration. Her husband is Neil King Jr., who [works at Fusion GPS](#).

Neil King Jr., a Fusion GPS guy married to Murray, was also Obama's top communications advisor. On a related story, Politico quoted King [without mentioning he worked for Fusion GPS](#). This is just one of many examples of the endless ties between reporters and Fusion GPS, and between so-called journalists and prominent Democrats.

Thomas Catan is a Fusion GPS executive. [He pled the Fifth in front of Congress](#) when asked questions about the role of the dossier for the Hillary campaign.

Daniel Jones, a former staffer to Sen. Dianne Feinstein, heads the Penn Quarter Group, a D.C. "consulting firm." He also heads a "nonprofit" called the "Democracy Integrity Project." Jones' groups have [received millions](#) from the likes of George Soros and Tom Steyer, two leftwing billionaires, to continue investigations into Trump [via Fusion GPS](#). It appears as if Jones began picking up the tab for Fusion to continue its work as soon as the Clinton campaign and the DNC stopped paying Fusion after the election.

Glenn Simpson is the head of Fusion GPS. There are lots of indications that he lied to Congress during his testimony about Nellie Ohr, the wife of DOJ official Bruce Ohr, before it was publicly known that Nellie worked for Fusion GPS. Specifically, Simpson told Congress that only Baumgartner spoke Russian at Fusion. But Nellie spoke Russian, and she was largely hired because she was a Russia expert (and because her husband worked at DOJ).

Simpson also lied about the timing of his contacts with Bruce Ohr. Again, if he were associated with Trump, he would have been indicted by Mueller already.

The Big Fish

Of course, there's also former director of national intelligence **Jim Clapper**, **Comey** and **Andrew McCabe** at FBI, and former CIA director **John Brennan**.

Comey and McCabe are leakers, and should be prosecuted as such. Brennan is a [particular bad actor](#), and did much to spread the dossiers around the federal government and our intelligence community. It is also thought that Brennan [pushed](#) the FBI to investigate Trump, or at least increase the intensity of its

spying on Trump's campaign.

Will any of these guys ever be prosecuted? Better said, does new Attorney General Bill Barr care about the rule of law or not?

So Many Questions Yet to Be Answered

Was the [Kremlin behind this whole thing](#), in order to sow distrust in the American political process? If so, that would make far too many Democrats their "useful idiots." Why isn't there more uproar about the fact that Fusion GPS was working for Russia while it was working for the Clinton campaign?

The other gnawing problem is the timeline to all of this. In early June 2016, the DNC publicly said that it had been hacked, two days after WikiLeaks announced that it had information that showed Clinton and the DNC were mistreating Sanders. Right away, Steele began his work for Fusion GPS [in June](#).

The DNC says it first [noticed that it was hacked on April 28, 2016](#). But DNC staffers weren't forced to turn over their [presumably infected equipment](#) until June 10, 2016. And numerous [set-up attempts](#) of Trump campaign people occurred during 2016, possibly as early as April 2016.

You don't have to think that the Clintons killed Seth Rich to think something stinks to high heaven here. Justice has been grossly miscarried, on a high and far-reaching level. If this is what America is to be like going forward, it will be only a shell of what it once was in the past. The only hope is for Barr's DOJ to swing into action.

Willis L. Krumholz is a fellow at Defense Priorities. He holds a JD and MBA degree from the University of St. Thomas, and works in the financial services industry. The views expressed are those of the author only. You can follow Willis on Twitter [@WillKrumholz](#).

Photo [Nathan Forget / Flickr](#)

[clinton campaign](#) [Crossfire Hurricane](#) [Department of Justice](#) [DOJ](#) [FBI](#) [FISA abuse](#) [Fusion GPS](#) [Hillary Clinton](#) [James Comey](#) [Mike Flynn](#) [Robert Mueller](#) [Russia](#) [Russiagate](#) [Russian collusion](#) [special counsel](#) [Spygate](#) [State Department](#)

Copyright © 2020 The Federalist, a wholly independent division of FDRLST Media, All Rights Reserved.