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HILLARY CLINTON

2016 Democratic Presidential Nominee: Secretary of State

Hillary for America Statement on Bombshell Report About Trump Aide's Chilling Ties To Kremlin

September 23, 2016

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Friday, HFA senior national spokesperson Glen Caplin released the following statement in response to the new bombshell report that Trump's foreign policy adviser is being probed for suspected meetings with senior Russian officials:

"It's chilling to learn that U.S. intelligence officials are conducting a probe into suspected meetings between Trump's foreign policy adviser Carter Page and members of Putin's inner circle while in Moscow. You have to ask why he would meet with Igor Diveykin, who is believed by U.S. officials 'to have responsibility for intelligence collected by Russian agencies about the U.S. election.' This comes as Russian hackers continue their attempts to influence the outcome of our elections, something Trump openly invited. This is serious business and voters deserve the facts before election day.

"Just one day after we learned about Trump's hundreds of millions of dollars in undisclosed Russian business interests, this report suggests Page met with a sanctioned top Russian official to discuss the possibility of ending U.S. sanctions against Russia under a Trump presidency – an action that could directly enrich both Trump and Page while undermining American interests. This is precisely what more than fifty national security experts warned against when they called on Trump to disclose and divest his conflict-laden foreign assets that could endanger our national security.

"We've never seen anything like this in American politics. Every day seems to cast new doubts on what's truly driving Donald Trump's decision-making: the interests of the American people or his own bottom line. He needs to immediately disclose the full extent of his business relationships and foreign assets so the voters can make that determination for themselves."

Full story is below.

U.S. intel officials probe ties between Trump adviser and Kremlin

Yahoo News

By Michael Isikoff

September 23, 2016

U.S. intelligence officials are seeking to determine whether an American businessman identified by Donald Trump as one of his foreign policy advisers has opened up private communications with senior Russian officials – including talks about the possible lifting of economic sanctions if the Republican nominee becomes president, according to multiple sources who have been briefed on the issue.

The activities of Trump adviser Carter Page, who has extensive business interests in Russia, have been discussed with senior members of Congress during recent briefings about suspected efforts by Moscow to influence the presidential election, the sources said. After one of those briefings, Senate minority leader Harry Reid wrote FBI Director James Comey, citing reports of meetings between a Trump adviser (a reference to Page) and "high ranking sanctioned individuals" in Moscow over the summer as evidence of "significant and disturbing ties" between the Trump campaign and the Kremlin that needed to be investigated by the bureau.

Some of those briefed were "taken aback" when they learned about Page's contacts in Moscow, viewing them as a possible back channel to the Russians that could undercut U.S. foreign policy, said a congressional source familiar with the briefings but who asked for anonymity due to the sensitivity of the subject. The source added that U.S. officials in the briefings indicated that intelligence reports about the adviser's talks with senior Russian officials close to President

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Vladimir Putin were being "actively monitored and investigated."

A senior U.S. law enforcement official did not dispute that characterization when asked for comment by Yahoo News. "It's on our radar screen," said the official about Page's contacts with Russian officials. "It's being looked at."

Page is a former Merrill Lynch investment banker in Moscow who now runs a New York consulting firm, Global Energy Capital, located around the corner from Trump Tower, that specializes in oil and gas deals in Russia and other Central Asian countries. He declined repeated requests to comment for this story.

Trump first mentioned Page's name when asked to identify his "foreign policy team" during an [interview with the Washington Post editorial team](#) last March. Describing him then only as a "PhD," Trump named Page as among five advisers "that we are dealing with." But his precise role in the campaign remains unclear; Trump spokeswoman Hope Hicks last month called him an "informal foreign adviser" who "does not speak for Mr. Trump or the campaign." Asked this week by Yahoo News, Trump campaign spokesman Jason Miller said Page "has no role" and added: "We are not aware of any of his activities, past or present." Miller did not respond when asked why Trump had previously described Page as one of his advisers.

The questions about Page come amid mounting concerns within the U.S. intelligence community about Russian cyberattacks on the Democratic National Committee and state election databases in Arizona and Illinois. In a rare public talk this week, former undersecretary of defense for intelligence Mike Vickers said that the Russian cyberattacks constituted meddling in the U.S. election and were "beyond the pale." Also, this week, two senior Democrats — Sen. Dianne Feinstein, ranking minority member on the Senate Intelligence Committee, and Rep. Adam Schiff, ranking minority member on the House Intelligence Committee — released a joint statement that went further than what U.S. officials had publicly said about the matter.

"Based on briefings we have received, we have concluded that the Russian intelligence agencies are making a serious and concerted effort to influence the U.S. election," they said. "At the least, this effort is intended to sow doubt about the security of our election and may well be intended to influence the outcomes of the election." They added that "orders for the Russian intelligence agencies to conduct such actions could come only from very senior levels of the Russian government."

Page came to the attention of officials at the U.S. Embassy in Moscow several years ago when he showed up in the Russian capital during several business trips and made provocative public comments critical of U.S. policy and sympathetic to Putin. "He was pretty much a brazen apologist for anything Moscow did," said one U.S. official who served in Russia at the time.

He hasn't been shy about expressing those views in the U.S. as well. Last March, shortly after he was named by Trump as one of his advisers, Page [told Bloomberg News](#) he had been an adviser to, and investor in, Gazprom, the Russian state-owned gas company. He then blamed Obama administration sanctions — imposed as a response to the Russian annexation of Crimea — for driving down the company's stock. "So many people who I know and have worked with have been so adversely affected by the sanctions policy," Page said in the interview. "There's a lot of excitement in terms of the possibilities for creating a better situation."

Page showed up again in Moscow in early July, just two weeks before the Republican National Convention formally nominated Trump for president, and once again criticized U.S. policy. Speaking at a commencement address for the New Economic School, an institution funded in part by major Russian oligarchs close to Putin, Page asserted that "Washington and other West capitals" had impeded progress in Russia "through their often hypocritical focus on ideas such as democratization, inequality, corruption and regime change."

At the time, Page [declined to say](#) whether he was meeting with Russian officials during his trip, according to a Reuters report.

But U.S. officials have since received intelligence reports that during that same three-day trip, Page met with Igor Sechin, a longtime Putin associate and former Russian deputy prime minister who is now the executive chairman of Rosneft, Russian's leading oil company, a well-placed Western intelligence source tells Yahoo News. That meeting, if confirmed, is viewed as especially problematic by U.S. officials because the Treasury Department in August 2014 named Sechin to a list of Russian officials and businessmen sanctioned over Russia's "illegitimate and unlawful actions in the Ukraine." ([The Treasury announcement](#) described Sechin as "utterly loyal to Vladimir Putin — a key component to his current standing." At their alleged meeting, Sechin raised the issue of the lifting of sanctions with Page," the Western intelligence source said.

U.S. intelligence agencies have also received reports that Page met with another top Putin aide while in Moscow — Igor Diveykin. A former Russian security official, Diveykin now serves as deputy chief for internal policy and is believed by U.S. officials to have responsibility for intelligence collected by Russian agencies about the U.S. election, the Western intelligence source said.

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