

“I MEAN HIS TRUMP ORGANIZATION EMPLOYEES”

I’m still plodding through the June 9 meeting materials, working on what they show about the story about the June 9 meeting that got crafted after the fact.

There’s one detail that I want to post separately. On July 13, 2017, Ike Kaveladze (who was really in charge of the meeting for his boss, Aras Agalarov) and Roman Benjaminov (Emin Agalrov’s assistant, who heard ahead of time the meeting was about dealing dirt on Hillary to the Trumps) had the following exchange by text (PDF 34).

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7/13/2017 2:14 Roman Benjaminov [redacted] Roman Benjaminov [redacted] https://www.google.com/amp/s/amp.cnn.com/cnn/2017/07/12/politics/video-trump-relationships-russian-associates/index.html
7/13/2017 3:06 Roman Benjaminov [redacted] Self [redacted] But I don't recall taking any video. And I can't understand why it looks so similar.
7/13/2017 3:33 Self [redacted] Roman Benjaminov [redacted] I mean his trump organization employees
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[Kaveladze sends link]

Benjaminov: But I don’t recall taking any video. And I can’t understand why it looks so similar.

Kaveladze: I mean his trump organization employees.

By July 13, the Agalarovs and Trumps were increasingly at odds on how to respond to the story, not least after the Trumps leaked Rod Goldstone’s name to the press after saying they wouldn’t. After that, there seemed to be increasing amounts of dirt being leaked, perhaps by both sides.

It appears that Kaveladze may have phoned Benjaminov right before this to raise this CNN story, which had just been posted. Benjaminov seemed to think Kaveladze had suggested that he, Benjaminov, had taken the video, even while he seems to have been present at the Las Vegas event back in 2013.



Scott Balber, the Agalarov's ever-present lawyer (who had actually represented Trump on a Miss Universe related issue in 2013), was quoted in the piece.

"It's simply fiction that this was some effort to create a conduit for information from the Russian federal prosecutors to the Trump campaign," Balber said on CNN's "New Day." "It's just fantasy world because the reality is if there was something important that Mr. Agalarov wanted to communicate to the Trump campaign, I suspect he could have called Mr. Trump directly as opposed to having his son's pop music publicist be the intermediary."

I don't rule out Balber having taken and leaked the video.

Or maybe not: What Kaveladze is interested in highlighting to Beniaminov is the presence of two other Trump employees in the video: Keith Schiller and Michael Cohen, shown above.

I don't know what to make of the reference – though it's equally possible they were involved in the 2017 response, or were viewed for some other reason as an additional concern regarding the June 9 meeting. Both, of course, have gotten some scrutiny for the liaison role they have served between Trump and other Russians.