

Along with a 302 that doesn't hold up to scrutiny



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iny and some documents that appear to be revamped errors from weeks ago, the Trump Administration also released a report revealing that Igor Danchenko – Christopher Steele’s primary subsource for his dossier – had been under counterintelligence investigation in 2009-2010.

My beliefs about the shit-show of the dossier are well-known, and actually precede those of the frothy right. The fact that Danchenko had high level contacts with Russians in 2009 increases the likelihood his sources had the access that he claimed they did. But the possibility he was being cultivated also increases the chance Russia filled the dossier with disinformation, which I think they did. In any case, Danchenko was *not* under investigation when he was sharing information with Steele, and hadn’t been for years.

If the dossier is disinformation, though, then Republicans continue to be willful participants in it.

The report is remarkable, however, for the details it provides about how, after a tip about a weird comment Danchenko made (possibly at Brookings), the FBI opened a preliminary and then a full investigation into Danchenko.

After initiating the investigation, the FBI converted it from a preliminary to a full investigation based on the following open source and FBI information:

- *The Primary Sub-source was identified as an associate of two FBI counterintelligence subjects. The FBI assessed that the Primary Sub-source formed the associations*

with these individuals through a university student organization of which he/she was a member. The FBI identified no additional derogatory information pertaining to these associations.

- A review of FBI databases revealed that the Primary Sub-source had contact in 2006 with the Russian Embassy and known Russian intelligence officers.
- In September 2006, the Primary Sub-source was in contact with a known Russian intelligence officer. During these conversations, the Russian Intelligence Officer invited the Primary Sub-source to the Russian Embassy to see his office. The Primary Sub-source told the Russian Intelligence Officer that he/she was interested in entering the Russian diplomatic service one day. The two discussed a time when the Primary Sub-

source was to visit. Four days later, the Russian Intelligence Officer contacted the Primary Sub-source and informed him/her they could meet that day to work "on the documents and then think about future plans." Later in October 2006, the Primary Sub-source contacted the Russian Intelligence Officer seeking a reply "so the documents can be placed in tomorrow's diplomatic mail pouch."

- FBI information further identified, in 2005, the Primary Sub-source making contact with a Washington, D.C.-based Russian officer. It was noted that the Russian officer and the Primary Sub-source seemed very familiar with each other.

INTERVIEWS TO SUPPORT THE INVESTIGATION

As part of its investigation, the FBI conducted interviews with the Primary Sub-source's associates. One individual indicated that the Primary Sub-source was not anti-American but wanted to return to Russia one day. Another described the Primary Sub-source as pro-Russia and indicated that he/she always

interjected Russian opinions during policy discussions. While both stated that they did not recall the Primary Sub-source asking directly about their access to classified information, one interviewee did note that the Primary Sub-source persistently asked about the interviewee's knowledge of a particular military vessel.

The FBI identified known Russian intelligence officers Danchenko was hanging out with, including one with whom he shared information. After finding that open source information, the FBI elevated the investigation to a full investigation and started talking to Danchenko's associates.

That is, this report describes some of the same kinds of contacts that Mike Flynn (with Turkey), George Papadopoulos, Carter Page, Paul Manafort, Rudy Giuliani, and Trump himself had which led to the opening of an investigation into them. And the FBI investigated Danchenko in the way that the FBI investigated Trump's associates (though we only know that the Rudy investigation has extended to his grifters, not to Rudy himself yet).

And yet, with Danchenko, the frothy right is not only applauding the investigation, but suggesting that that investigation – though it was closed – should taint Danchenko for the foreseeable future.

BREAKING, Catherine Herridge blared in High Gaslight tone.

The primary sub-source for the Steele dossier was deemed a possible "national security threat" + the subject of 2009 FBI counter-intel probe. According to new records, those facts were known to Crossfire Hurricane team in December 2016.

BREAKING: Donald Trump's National Security

Advisor was deemed a possible "national security threat" and the subject of a 2016 counter-intel probe. According to public records, some of those facts were known to Donald Trump before he hired Flynn in November 2016.

According to the standard the frothy right is adopting with Danchenko, neither Trump nor many of his close associates have any business being anywhere near government.