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September 24, 2019

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MEMORANDUM OF TELEPHONE CONVERSATION

SUBJECT: ~~(C)~~ Telephone Conversation with President Zelenskyy of Ukraine

PARTICIPANTS: President Zelenskyy of Ukraine

Notetakers: The White House Situation Room

DATE, TIME July 25, 2019, 9:03 - 9:33 a.m. EDT

AND PLACE: Residence

~~(S//NF)~~ The President: Congratulations on a great victory. We all watched from the United States and you did a terrific job. The way you came from behind, somebody who wasn't given much of a chance, and you ended up winning easily. It's a fantastic achievement. Congratulations.

~~(S//NF)~~ President Zelenskyy: You are absolutely right Mr. President. We did win big and we worked hard for this. We worked a lot but I would like to confess to you that I had an opportunity to learn from you. We used quite a few of your skills and knowledge and were able to use it as an example for our elections and yes it is true that these were unique elections. We were in a unique situation that we were able to

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achieve a unique success. I'm able to tell you the following; the first time, you called me to congratulate me when I won my presidential election, and the second time you are now calling me when my party won the parliamentary election. I think I should run more often so you can call me more often and we can talk over the phone more often.

~~(S/NF)~~ The President: [laughter] That's a very good idea. I think your country is very happy about that.

~~(S/NF)~~ President Zelenskyy: Well yes, to tell you the truth, we are trying to work hard because we wanted to drain the swamp here in our country. We brought in many many new people. Not the old politicians, not the typical politicians, because we want to have a new format and a new type of government. You are a great teacher for us and in that.

~~(S/NF)~~ The President: Well it's very nice of you to say that. I will say that we do a lot for Ukraine. We spend a lot of effort and a lot of time. Much more than the European countries are doing and they should be helping you more than they are. Germany does almost nothing for you. All they do is talk and I think it's something that you should really ask them about. When I was speaking to Angela Merkel she talks Ukraine, but she doesn't do anything. A lot of the European countries are the same way so I think it's something you want to look at but the United States has been very very good to Ukraine. I wouldn't say that it's reciprocal necessarily because things are happening that are not good but the United States has been very very good to Ukraine.

~~(S/NF)~~ President Zelenskyy: Yes you are absolutely right. Not only 100%, but actually 1000% and I can tell you the following; I did talk to Angela Merkel and I did meet with her. I also met and talked with Macron and I told them that they are not doing quite as much as they need to be doing on the issues with the sanctions. They are not enforcing the sanctions. They are not working as much as they should work for Ukraine. It turns out that even though logically, the European Union should be our biggest partner but technically the United States is a much bigger partner than the European Union and I'm very grateful to you for that because the United States is doing quite a lot for Ukraine. Much more than the European Union especially when we are talking about sanctions against the Russian Federation. I would also like to thank you for your great support in the area of defense. We are ready to continue to cooperate for the next steps specifically we are almost ready to buy more Javelins from the United States for defense purposes.

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~~(S//NF)~~ The President: I would like you to do us a favor though because our country has been through a lot and Ukraine knows a lot about it. I would like you to find out what happened with this whole situation with Ukraine, they say CrowdStrike... I guess you have one of your wealthy people... The server, they say Ukraine has it. There are a lot of things that went on, the whole situation. I think you're surrounding yourself with some of the same people. I would like to have the Attorney General call you or your people and I would like you to get to the bottom of it. As you saw yesterday, that whole nonsense ended with a very poor performance by a man named Robert Mueller, an incompetent performance, but they say a lot of it started with Ukraine. Whatever you can do, it's very important that you do it if that's possible.

~~(S//NF)~~ President Zelenskyy: Yes it is very important for me and everything that you just mentioned earlier. For me as a President, it is very important and we are open for any future cooperation. We are ready to open a new page on cooperation in relations between the United States and Ukraine. For that purpose, I just recalled our ambassador from United States and he will be replaced by a very competent and very experienced ambassador who will work hard on making sure that our two nations are getting closer. I would also like and hope to see him having your trust and your confidence and have personal relations with you so we can cooperate even more so. I will personally tell you that one of my assistants spoke with Mr. Giuliani just recently and we are hoping very much that Mr. Giuliani will be able to travel to Ukraine and we will meet once he comes to Ukraine. I just wanted to assure you once again that you have nobody but friends around us. I will make sure that I surround myself with the best and most experienced people. I also wanted to tell you that we are friends. We are great friends and you Mr. President have friends in our country so we can continue our strategic partnership. I also plan to surround myself with great people and in addition to that investigation, I guarantee as the President of Ukraine that all the investigations will be done openly and candidly. That I can assure you.

~~(S//NF)~~ The President: Good because I heard you had a prosecutor who was very good and he was shut down and that's really unfair. A lot of people are talking about that, the way they shut your very good prosecutor down and you had some very bad people involved. Mr. Giuliani is a highly respected man. He was the mayor of New York City, a great mayor, and I would like him to

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call you. I will ask him to call you along with the Attorney General. Rudy very much knows what's happening and he is a very capable guy. If you could speak to him that would be great. The former ambassador from the United States, the woman, was bad news and the people she was dealing with in the Ukraine were bad news so I just want to let you know that. The other thing, There's a lot of talk about Biden's son, that Biden stopped the prosecution and a lot of people want to find out about that so whatever you can do with the Attorney General would be great. Biden went around bragging that he stopped the prosecution so if you can look into it... It sounds horrible to me.

~~(S//NF)~~ President Zelenskyy: I wanted to tell you about the prosecutor. First of all I understand and I'm knowledgeable about the situation. Since we have won the absolute majority in our Parliament, the next prosecutor general will be 100% my person, my candidate, who will be approved by the parliament and will start as a new prosecutor in September. He or she will look into the situation, specifically to the company that you mentioned in this issue. The issue of the investigation of the case is actually the issue of making sure to restore the honesty so we will take care of that and will work on the investigation of the case. On top of that, I would kindly ask you if you have any additional information that you can provide to us, it would be very helpful for the investigation to make sure that we administer justice in our country with regard to the Ambassador to the United States from Ukraine as far as I recall her name was Ivanovich. It was great that you were the first one who told me that she was a bad ambassador because I agree with you 100%. Her attitude towards me was far from the best as she admired the previous President and she was on his side. She would not accept me as a new President well enough.

~~(S//NF)~~ The President: Well, she's going to go through some things. I will have Mr. Giuliani give you a call and I am also going to have Attorney General Barr call and we will get to the bottom of it. I'm sure you will figure it out. I heard the prosecutor was treated very badly and he was a very fair prosecutor so good luck with everything. Your economy is going to get better and better I predict. You have a lot of assets. It's a great country. I have many Ukrainian friends, their incredible people.

~~(S//NF)~~ President Zelenskyy: I would like to tell you that I also have quite a few Ukrainian friends that live in the United States. Actually last time I traveled to the United States, I stayed in New York near Central Park and I stayed at the Trump

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Tower. I will talk to them and I hope to see them again in the future. I also wanted to thank you for your invitation to visit the United States, specifically Washington DC. On the other hand, I also want to ensure you that we will be very serious about the case and will work on the investigation. As to the economy, there is much potential for our two countries and one of the issues that is very important for Ukraine is energy independence. I believe we can be very successful and cooperating on energy independence with United States. We are already working on cooperation. We are buying American oil but I am very hopeful for a future meeting. We will have more time and more opportunities to discuss these opportunities and get to know each other better. I would like to thank you very much for your support

~~(S//NF)~~ The President: Good. Well, thank you very much and I appreciate that. I will tell Rudy and Attorney General Barr to call. Thank you. Whenever you would like to come to the White House, feel free to call. Give us a date and we'll work that out. I look forward to seeing you.

~~(S//NF)~~ President Zelenskyy: Thank you very much. I would be very happy to come and would be happy to meet with you personally and get to know you better. I am looking forward to our meeting and I also would like to invite you to visit Ukraine and come to the city of Kyiv which is a beautiful city. We have a beautiful country which would welcome you. On the other hand, I believe that on September 1 we will be in Poland and we can meet in Poland hopefully. After that, it might be a very good idea for you to travel to Ukraine. We can either take my plane and go to Ukraine or we can take your plane, which is probably much better than mine.

~~(S//NF)~~ The President: Okay, we can work that out. I look forward to seeing you in Washington and maybe in Poland because I think we are going to be there at that time.

~~(S//NF)~~ President Zelenskyy: Thank you very much Mr. President.

~~(S//NF)~~ The President: Congratulations on a fantastic job you've done. The whole world was watching. I'm not sure it was so much of an upset but congratulations.

~~(S//NF)~~ President Zelenskyy: Thank you Mr. President bye-bye.

-- End of Conversation --

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EXHIBIT  
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THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON  
May 29, 2019

His Excellency  
Volodymyr Zelenskyy  
President of Ukraine  
Kyiv

Dear Mr. President,

On the occasion of your inauguration, I wish to offer my congratulations on your historic election victory.

The United States and Ukraine are steadfast partners, working together to realize the shared vision of a stable, prosperous, and democratic Ukraine that is integrated into the Euro-Atlantic community. Our partnership is rooted in the idea that free citizens should be able to exercise their democratic rights, choose their own destiny, and live in peace. As you said in your victory speech, your election demonstrates that democracy is possible anywhere in the former Soviet region. Ukraine's success exemplifies the triumph of democracy over resurgent despotism. United States support for Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity is unwavering.

As you prepare to address the many challenges facing Ukraine, please know that the American people are with you and are committed to helping Ukraine realize its vast potential. To help show that commitment, I would like to invite you to meet with me at the White House in Washington, D.C., as soon as we can find a mutually convenient time.

I wish you every success as you assume office, and I look forward to meeting with you.

Sincerely,

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

May 4, 2018



Mr. Yuriy Lutsenko  
General Prosecutor  
Office of the Prosecutor General of Ukraine  
13/15 Riznytska St.  
Kyiv, 01011  
Ukraine

Dear Mr. Prosecutor General:

We are writing to express great concern about reports that your office has taken steps to impede cooperation with the investigation of United States Special Counsel Robert Mueller. As strong advocates for a robust and close relationship with Ukraine, we believe that our cooperation should extend to such legal matters, regardless of politics. Ours is a relationship built on a foundation of respect for the rule of law and accountable democratic institutions. In four short years, Ukraine has made significant progress in building these institutions despite ongoing military, economic and political pressure from Moscow. We have supported that capacity-building process and are disappointed that some in Kyiv appear to have cast aside these principles in order to avoid the ire of President Trump. If these reports are true, we strongly encourage you to reverse course and halt any efforts to impede cooperation with this important investigation.

On May 2, the New York Times reported that your office effectively froze investigations into four open cases in Ukraine in April, thereby eliminating scope for cooperation with the Mueller probe into related issues. The article notes that your office considered these cases as too politically sensitive and potentially jeopardizing U.S. financial and military aid to Ukraine. The article indicates specifically that your office prohibited special prosecutor Serhiy Horbatiuk from issuing subpoenas for evidence or interviewing witnesses in four open cases in Ukraine related to consulting work performed by Paul Manafort for former Ukrainian president Viktor Yanukovich and his political party.

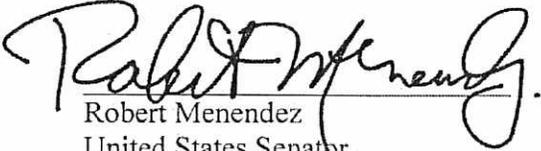
This investigation not only has implications for the Mueller probe, but also speaks to critically important investigations into the corrupt practices of the Yanukovich administration, which stole millions of dollars from the people of Ukraine. Blocking cooperation with the Mueller probe potentially cuts off a significant opportunity for Ukrainian law enforcement to conduct a more thorough inquiry into possible crimes committed during the Yanukovich era. This reported refusal to cooperate with the Mueller probe also sends a worrying signal—to the Ukrainian people as well as the international community—about your government's commitment more broadly to support justice and the rule of law.

We respectfully request that you reply to this letter answering the following questions:

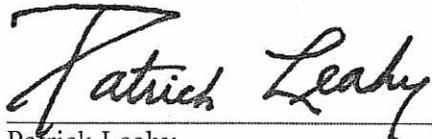
1. Has your office taken any steps to restrict cooperation with the investigation by Special Counsel Robert Mueller? If so, why?

2. Did any individual from the Trump Administration, or anyone acting on its behalf, encourage Ukrainian government or law enforcement officials not to cooperate with the investigation by Special Counsel Robert Mueller?
3. Was the Mueller probe raised in any way during discussions between your government and U.S. officials, including around the meeting of Presidents Trump and Poroshenko in New York in 2017?

Sincerely,

  
Robert Menendez  
United States Senator

  
Richard J. Durbin  
United States Senator

  
Patrick Leahy  
United States Senator

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PRESIDENTIAL TRANSITION

# Ukrainian efforts to sabotage Trump backfire

Kiev officials are scrambling to make amends with the president-elect after quietly working to boost Clinton.

By KENNETH P. VOGEL and DAVID STERN | 01/11/2017 05:05 AM EST



President Petro Poroshenko's administration, along with the Ukrainian Embassy in Washington, insists that Ukraine stayed neutral in the American presidential race. | Getty

Donald Trump wasn't the only presidential candidate whose campaign was boosted by officials of a former Soviet bloc country.

Ukrainian government officials tried to help Hillary Clinton and undermine Trump by publicly questioning his fitness for office. They also disseminated documents implicating a

top Trump aide in corruption and suggested they were investigating the matter, only to back away after the election. And they helped Clinton's allies research damaging information on Trump and his advisers, a Politico investigation found.

A Ukrainian-American operative who was consulting for the Democratic National Committee met with top officials in the Ukrainian Embassy in Washington in an effort to expose ties between Trump, top campaign aide Paul Manafort and Russia, according to people with direct knowledge of the situation.

The Ukrainian efforts had an impact in the race, helping to force Manafort's resignation and advancing the narrative that Trump's campaign was deeply connected to Ukraine's foe to the east, Russia. But they were far less concerted or centrally directed than Russia's alleged hacking and dissemination of Democratic emails.

Russia's effort was personally directed by Russian President Vladimir Putin, involved the country's military and foreign intelligence services, according to U.S. intelligence officials. They reportedly briefed Trump last week on the possibility that Russian operatives might have compromising information on the president-elect. And at a Senate hearing last week on the hacking, Director of National Intelligence James Clapper said "I don't think we've ever encountered a more aggressive or direct campaign to interfere in our election process than we've seen in this case."

There's little evidence of such a top-down effort by Ukraine. Longtime observers suggest that the rampant corruption, factionalism and economic struggles plaguing the country — not to mention its ongoing strife with Russia — would render it unable to pull off an ambitious covert interference campaign in another country's election. And President Petro Poroshenko's administration, along with the Ukrainian Embassy in Washington, insists that Ukraine stayed neutral in the race.

CONGRESS

## Lawmakers broach possible Trump campaign coordination with Russia

By AUSTIN WRIGHT and MARTIN MATISHAK

Yet Politico's investigation found evidence of Ukrainian government involvement in the race that appears to strain diplomatic protocol dictating that governments refrain from engaging in one another's elections.

Russia's meddling has sparked outrage from the American body politic. The U.S. intelligence community undertook the rare move of publicizing its findings on the matter, and President Barack Obama took several steps to officially retaliate, while members of Congress continue pushing for more investigations into the hacking and a harder line against Russia, which was already viewed in Washington as America's leading foreign adversary.

Ukraine, on the other hand, has traditionally enjoyed strong relations with U.S. administrations. Its officials worry that could change under Trump, whose team has privately expressed sentiments ranging from ambivalence to deep skepticism about Poroshenko's regime, while sounding unusually friendly notes about Putin's regime.

Poroshenko is scrambling to alter that dynamic, recently signing a \$50,000-a-month contract with a well-connected GOP-linked Washington lobbying firm to set up meetings with U.S. government officials "to strengthen U.S.-Ukrainian relations."

Revelations about Ukraine's anti-Trump efforts could further set back those efforts.

"Things seem to be going from bad to worse for Ukraine," said David A. Merkel, a senior fellow at the Atlantic Council who helped oversee U.S. relations with Russia and Ukraine while working in George W. Bush's State Department and National Security Council.

Merkel, who has served as an election observer in Ukrainian presidential elections dating back to 1993, noted there's some irony in Ukraine and Russia taking opposite sides in the 2016 presidential race, given that past Ukrainian elections were widely viewed in Washington's foreign policy community as proxy wars between the U.S. and Russia.

"Now, it seems that a U.S. election may have been seen as a surrogate battle by those in Kiev and Moscow," Merkel said.

...

The Ukrainian antipathy for Trump's team — and alignment with Clinton's — can be traced back to late 2013. That's when the country's president, Viktor Yanukovich, whom Manafort had been advising, abruptly backed out of a European Union pact linked to anti-corruption reforms. Instead, Yanukovich entered into a multibillion-dollar bailout agreement with Russia, sparking protests across Ukraine and prompting Yanukovich to flee the country to Russia under Putin's protection.

In the ensuing crisis, Russian troops moved into the Ukrainian territory of Crimea, and Manafort dropped off the radar.

Manafort's work for Yanukovych caught the attention of a veteran Democratic operative named Alexandra Chalupa, who had worked in the White House Office of Public Liaison during the Clinton administration. Chalupa went on to work as a staffer, then as a consultant, for Democratic National Committee. The DNC paid her \$412,000 from 2004 to June 2016, according to Federal Election Commission records, though she also was paid by other clients during that time, including Democratic campaigns and the DNC's arm for engaging expatriate Democrats around the world.

A daughter of Ukrainian immigrants who maintains strong ties to the Ukrainian-American diaspora and the U.S. Embassy in Ukraine, Chalupa, a lawyer by training, in 2014 was doing pro bono work for another client interested in the Ukrainian crisis and began researching Manafort's role in Yanukovych's rise, as well as his ties to the pro-Russian oligarchs who funded Yanukovych's political party.

In an interview this month, Chalupa told Politico she had developed a network of sources in Kiev and Washington, including investigative journalists, government officials and private intelligence operatives. While her consulting work at the DNC this past election cycle centered on mobilizing ethnic communities — including Ukrainian-Americans — she said that, when Trump's unlikely presidential campaign began surging in late 2015, she began focusing more on the research, and expanded it to include Trump's ties to Russia, as well.

She occasionally shared her findings with officials from the DNC and Clinton's campaign, Chalupa said. In January 2016 — months before Manafort had taken any role in Trump's campaign — Chalupa told a senior DNC official that, when it came to Trump's campaign, "I felt there was a Russia connection," Chalupa recalled. "And that, if there was, that we can expect Paul Manafort to be involved in this election," said Chalupa, who at the time also was warning leaders in the Ukrainian-American community that Manafort was "Putin's political brain for manipulating U.S. foreign policy and elections."

PRESIDENTIAL TRANSITION

## Trump confronts firestorm over Russia allegations

By ELI STOKOLS, SHANE GOLDMACHER, JOSH DAWSEY and MICHAEL CROWLEY

She said she shared her concern with Ukraine's ambassador to the U.S., Valeriy Chaly, and one of his top aides, Oksana Shulyar, during a March 2016 meeting at the Ukrainian Embassy. According to someone briefed on the meeting, Chaly said that Manafort was very

much on his radar, but that he wasn't particularly concerned about the operative's ties to Trump since he didn't believe Trump stood much of a chance of winning the GOP nomination, let alone the presidency.

That was not an uncommon view at the time, and, perhaps as a result, Trump's ties to Russia — let alone Manafort's — were not the subject of much attention.

That all started to change just four days after Chalupa's meeting at the embassy, when it was reported that Trump had in fact hired Manafort, suggesting that Chalupa may have been on to something. She quickly found herself in high demand. The day after Manafort's hiring was revealed, she briefed the DNC's communications staff on Manafort, Trump and their ties to Russia, according to an operative familiar with the situation.

A former DNC staffer described the exchange as an "informal conversation," saying "briefing' makes it sound way too formal," and adding, "We were not directing or driving her work on this." Yet, the former DNC staffer and the operative familiar with the situation agreed that with the DNC's encouragement, Chalupa asked embassy staff to try to arrange an interview in which Poroshenko might discuss Manafort's ties to Yanukovych.

While the embassy declined that request, officials there became "helpful" in Chalupa's efforts, she said, explaining that she traded information and leads with them. "If I asked a question, they would provide guidance, or if there was someone I needed to follow up with." But she stressed, "There were no documents given, nothing like that."

Chalupa said the embassy also worked directly with reporters researching Trump, Manafort and Russia to point them in the right directions. She added, though, "they were being very protective and not speaking to the press as much as they should have. I think they were being careful because their situation was that they had to be very, very careful because they could not pick sides. It's a political issue, and they didn't want to get involved politically because they couldn't."

Shulyar vehemently denied working with reporters or with Chalupa on anything related to Trump or Manafort, explaining "we were stormed by many reporters to comment on this subject, but our clear and adamant position was not to give any comment [and] not to interfere into the campaign affairs."

Both Shulyar and Chalupa said the purpose of their initial meeting was to organize a June reception at the embassy to promote Ukraine. According to the embassy's website, the event highlighted female Ukrainian leaders, featuring speeches by Ukrainian parliamentarian Hanna Hopko, who discussed "Ukraine's fight against the Russian

aggression in Donbas,” and longtime Hillary Clinton confidante Melanne Verveer, who worked for Clinton in the State Department and was a vocal surrogate during the presidential campaign.

Shulyar said her work with Chalupa “didn’t involve the campaign,” and she specifically stressed that “We have never worked to research and disseminate damaging information about Donald Trump and Paul Manafort.”

But Andrii Telizhenko, who worked as a political officer in the Ukrainian Embassy under Shulyar, said she instructed him to help Chalupa research connections between Trump, Manafort and Russia. “Oksana said that if I had any information, or knew other people who did, then I should contact Chalupa,” recalled Telizhenko, who is now a political consultant in Kiev. “They were coordinating an investigation with the Hillary team on Paul Manafort with Alexandra Chalupa,” he said, adding “Oksana was keeping it all quiet,” but “the embassy worked very closely with” Chalupa.

In fact, sources familiar with the effort say that Shulyar specifically called Telizhenko into a meeting with Chalupa to provide an update on an American media outlet’s ongoing investigation into Manafort.

Telizhenko recalled that Chalupa told him and Shulyar that, “If we can get enough information on Paul [Manafort] or Trump’s involvement with Russia, she can get a hearing in Congress by September.”

Chalupa confirmed that, a week after Manafort’s hiring was announced, she discussed the possibility of a congressional investigation with a foreign policy legislative assistant in the office of Rep. Marcy Kaptur (D-Ohio), who co-chairs the Congressional Ukrainian Caucus. But, Chalupa said, “It didn’t go anywhere.”

Asked about the effort, the Kaptur legislative assistant called it a “touchy subject” in an internal email to colleagues that was accidentally forwarded to Politico.

Kaptur’s office later emailed an official statement explaining that the lawmaker is backing a bill to create an independent commission to investigate “possible outside interference in our elections.” The office added “at this time, the evidence related to this matter points to Russia, but Congresswoman Kaptur is concerned with any evidence of foreign entities interfering in our elections.”

...

Almost as quickly as Chalupa's efforts attracted the attention of the Ukrainian Embassy and Democrats, she also found herself the subject of some unwanted attention from overseas.

Within a few weeks of her initial meeting at the embassy with Shulyar and Chaly, Chalupa on April 20 received the first of what became a series of messages from the administrators of her private Yahoo email account, warning her that "state-sponsored actors" were trying to hack into her emails.

She kept up her crusade, appearing on a panel a week after the initial hacking message to discuss her research on Manafort with a group of Ukrainian investigative journalists gathered at the Library of Congress for a program sponsored by a U.S. congressional agency called the Open World Leadership Center.

Center spokeswoman Maura Sheldon stressed that her group is nonpartisan and ensures "that our delegations hear from both sides of the aisle, receiving bipartisan information." She said the Ukrainian journalists in subsequent days met with Republican officials in North Carolina and elsewhere. And she said that, before the Library of Congress event, "Open World's program manager for Ukraine did contact Chalupa to advise her that Open World is a nonpartisan agency of the Congress."

Chalupa, though, indicated in an email that was later hacked and released by WikiLeaks that the Open World Leadership Center "put me on the program to speak specifically about Paul Manafort."

## **Republicans pile on Russia for hacking, get details on GOP targets**

By MARTIN MATISHAK and AUSTIN WRIGHT

In the email, which was sent in early May to then-DNC communications director Luis Miranda, Chalupa noted that she had extended an invitation to the Library of Congress forum to veteran Washington investigative reporter Michael Isikoff. Two days before the event, he had published a story for Yahoo News revealing the unraveling of a \$26 million deal between Manafort and a Russian oligarch related to a telecommunications venture in Ukraine. And Chalupa wrote in the email she'd been "working with for the past few weeks" with Isikoff "and connected him to the Ukrainians" at the event.

Isikoff, who accompanied Chalupa to a reception at the Ukrainian Embassy immediately after the Library of Congress event, declined to comment.

Chalupa further indicated in her hacked May email to the DNC that she had additional sensitive information about Manafort that she intended to share “offline” with Miranda and DNC research director Lauren Dillon, including “a big Trump component you and Lauren need to be aware of that will hit in next few weeks and something I’m working on you should be aware of.” Explaining that she didn’t feel comfortable sharing the intel over email, Chalupa attached a screenshot of a warning from Yahoo administrators about “state-sponsored” hacking on her account, explaining, “Since I started digging into Manafort these messages have been a daily occurrence on my yahoo account despite changing my password often.”

Dillon and Miranda declined to comment.

A DNC official stressed that Chalupa was a consultant paid to do outreach for the party’s political department, not a researcher. She undertook her investigations into Trump, Manafort and Russia on her own, and the party did not incorporate her findings in its dossiers on the subjects, the official said, stressing that the DNC had been building robust research books on Trump and his ties to Russia long before Chalupa began sounding alarms.

Nonetheless, Chalupa’s hacked email reportedly escalated concerns among top party officials, hardening their conclusion that Russia likely was behind the cyber intrusions with which the party was only then beginning to grapple.

Chalupa left the DNC after the Democratic convention in late July to focus fulltime on her research into Manafort, Trump and Russia. She said she provided off-the-record information and guidance to “a lot of journalists” working on stories related to Manafort and Trump’s Russia connections, despite what she described as escalating harassment.

About a month-and-a-half after Chalupa first started receiving hacking alerts, someone broke into her car outside the Northwest Washington home where she lives with her husband and three young daughters, she said. They “rampaged it, basically, but didn’t take anything valuable — left money, sunglasses, \$1,200 worth of golf clubs,” she said, explaining she didn’t file a police report after that incident because she didn’t connect it to her research and the hacking.

But by the time a similar vehicle break-in occurred involving two family cars, she was convinced that it was a Russia-linked intimidation campaign. The police report on the latter break-in noted that “both vehicles were unlocked by an unknown person and the

interior was ransacked, with papers and the garage openers scattered throughout the cars. Nothing was taken from the vehicles.”

Then, early in the morning on another day, a woman “wearing white flowers in her hair” tried to break into her family’s home at 1:30 a.m., Chalupa said. Shulyar told Chalupa that the mysterious incident bore some of the hallmarks of intimidation campaigns used against foreigners in Russia, according to Chalupa.

“This is something that they do to U.S. diplomats, they do it to Ukrainians. Like, this is how they operate. They break into people’s homes. They harass people. They’re theatrical about it,” Chalupa said. “They must have seen when I was writing to the DNC staff, outlining who Manafort was, pulling articles, saying why it was significant, and painting the bigger picture.”

In a Yahoo News story naming Chalupa as one of 16 “ordinary people” who “shaped the 2016 election,” Isikoff wrote that after Chalupa left the DNC, FBI agents investigating the hacking questioned her and examined her laptop and smartphone.

Chalupa this month told Politico that, as her research and role in the election started becoming more public, she began receiving death threats, along with continued alerts of state-sponsored hacking. But she said, “None of this has scared me off.”

...

While it’s not uncommon for outside operatives to serve as intermediaries between governments and reporters, one of the more damaging Russia-related stories for the Trump campaign — and certainly for Manafort — can be traced more directly to the Ukrainian government.

Documents released by an independent Ukrainian government agency — and publicized by a parliamentarian — appeared to show \$12.7 million in cash payments that were earmarked for Manafort by the Russia-aligned party of the deposed former president, Yanukovich.

The New York Times, in the August story revealing the ledgers’ existence, reported that the payments earmarked for Manafort were “a focus” of an investigation by Ukrainian anti-corruption officials, while CNN reported days later that the FBI was pursuing an overlapping inquiry.

One of the most damaging Russia-related stories during Donald Trump's campaign can be traced to the Ukrainian government. | AP Photo

Clinton's campaign seized on the story to advance Democrats' argument that Trump's campaign was closely linked to Russia. The ledger represented "more troubling connections between Donald Trump's team and pro-Kremlin elements in Ukraine," Robby Mook, Clinton's campaign manager, said in a statement. He demanded that Trump "disclose campaign chair Paul Manafort's and all other campaign employees' and advisers' ties to Russian or pro-Kremlin entities, including whether any of Trump's employees or advisers are currently representing and or being paid by them."

A former Ukrainian investigative journalist and current parliamentarian named Serhiy Leshchenko, who was elected in 2014 as part of Poroshenko's party, held a news conference to highlight the ledgers, and to urge Ukrainian and American law enforcement to aggressively investigate Manafort.

"I believe and understand the basis of these payments are totally against the law — we have the proof from these books," Leshchenko said during the news conference, which attracted international media coverage. "If Mr. Manafort denies any allegations, I think he has to be interrogated into this case and prove his position that he was not involved in any misconduct on the territory of Ukraine," Leshchenko added.

Manafort denied receiving any off-books cash from Yanukovich's Party of Regions, and said that he had never been contacted about the ledger by Ukrainian or American investigators, later telling POLITICO "I was just caught in the crossfire."

According to a series of memos reportedly compiled for Trump's opponents by a former British intelligence agent, Yanukovich, in a secret meeting with Putin on the day after the *Times* published its report, admitted that he had authorized "substantial kickback payments to Manafort." But according to the report, which was published Tuesday by BuzzFeed but remains unverified. Yanukovich assured Putin "that there was no documentary trail left behind which could provide clear evidence of this" — an alleged statement that seemed to implicitly question the authenticity of the ledger.

2016

## Inside the fall of Paul Manafort

By KENNETH P. VOGEL and MARC CAPUTO

The scrutiny around the ledgers — combined with that from other stories about his Ukraine work — proved too much, and he stepped down from the Trump campaign less than a week after the *Times* story.

At the time, Leshchenko suggested that his motivation was partly to undermine Trump. "For me, it was important to show not only the corruption aspect, but that he is [a] pro-Russian candidate who can break the geopolitical balance in the world," Leshchenko told the *Financial Times* about two weeks after his news conference. The newspaper noted that Trump's candidacy had spurred "Kiev's wider political leadership to do something they would never have attempted before: intervene, however indirectly, in a U.S. election," and the story quoted Leshchenko asserting that the majority of Ukraine's politicians are "on Hillary Clinton's side."

But by this month, Leshchenko was seeking to recast his motivation, telling Politico, “I didn’t care who won the U.S. elections. This was a decision for the American voters to decide.” His goal in highlighting the ledgers, he said was “to raise these issues on a political level and emphasize the importance of the investigation.”

In a series of answers provided to Politico, a spokesman for Poroshenko distanced his administration from both Leshchenko’s efforts and those of the agency that reLeshchenko Leshchenko leased the ledgers, The National Anti-Corruption Bureau of Ukraine. It was created in 2014 as a condition for Ukraine to receive aid from the U.S. and the European Union, and it signed an evidence-sharing agreement with the FBI in late June — less than a month and a half before it released the ledgers.

The bureau is “fully independent,” the Poroshenko spokesman said, adding that when it came to the presidential administration there was “no targeted action against Manafort.” He added “as to Serhiy Leshchenko, he positions himself as a representative of internal opposition in the Bloc of Petro Poroshenko’s faction, despite [the fact that] he belongs to the faction,” the spokesman said, adding, “it was about him personally who pushed [the anti-corruption bureau] to proceed with investigation on Manafort.”

But an operative who has worked extensively in Ukraine, including as an adviser to Poroshenko, said it was highly unlikely that either Leshchenko or the anti-corruption bureau would have pushed the issue without at least tacit approval from Poroshenko or his closest allies.

“It was something that Poroshenko was probably aware of and could have stopped if he wanted to,” said the operative.

And, almost immediately after Trump’s stunning victory over Clinton, questions began mounting about the investigations into the ledgers — and the ledgers themselves.

An official with the anti-corruption bureau told a Ukrainian newspaper, “Mr. Manafort does not have a role in this case.”

And, while the anti-corruption bureau told Politico late last month that a “general investigation [is] still ongoing” of the ledger, it said Manafort is not a target of the investigation. “As he is not the Ukrainian citizen, [the anti-corruption bureau] by the law couldn’t investigate him personally,” the bureau said in a statement.

Some Poroshenko critics have gone further, suggesting that the bureau is backing away from investigating because the ledgers might have been doctored or even forged.

Valentyn Nalyvaichenko, a Ukrainian former diplomat who served as the country's head of security under Poroshenko but is now affiliated with a leading opponent of Poroshenko, said it was fishy that "only one part of the black ledger appeared." He asked, "Where is the handwriting analysis?" and said it was "crazy" to announce an investigation based on the ledgers. He met last month in Washington with Trump allies, and said, "of course they all recognize that our [anti-corruption bureau] intervened in the presidential campaign."

And in an interview this week, Manafort, who re-emerged as an informal advisor to Trump after Election Day, suggested that the ledgers were inauthentic and called their publication "a politically motivated false attack on me. My role as a paid consultant was public. There was nothing off the books, but the way that this was presented tried to make it look shady."

He added that he felt particularly wronged by efforts to cast his work in Ukraine as pro-Russian, arguing "all my efforts were focused on helping Ukraine move into Europe and the West." He specifically cited his work on denuclearizing the country and on the European Union trade and political pact that Yanukovich spurned before fleeing to Russia. "In no case was I ever involved in anything that would be contrary to U.S. interests," Manafort said.

Yet Russia seemed to come to the defense of Manafort and Trump last month, when a spokeswoman for Russia's Foreign Ministry charged that the Ukrainian government used the ledgers as a political weapon.

"Ukraine seriously complicated the work of Trump's election campaign headquarters by planting information according to which Paul Manafort, Trump's campaign chairman, allegedly accepted money from Ukrainian oligarchs," Maria Zakharova said at a news briefing, according to a transcript of her remarks posted on the Foreign Ministry's website. "All of you have heard this remarkable story," she told assembled reporters.

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Beyond any efforts to sabotage Trump, Ukrainian officials didn't exactly extend a hand of friendship to the GOP nominee during the campaign.

The ambassador, Chaly, penned an op-ed for The Hill, in which he chastised Trump for a confusing series of statements in which the GOP candidate at one point expressed a willingness to consider recognizing Russia's annexation of the Ukrainian territory of Crimea as legitimate. The op-ed made some in the embassy uneasy, sources said.

“That was like too close for comfort, even for them,” said Chalupa. “That was something that was as risky as they were going to be.”

Former Ukrainian Prime Minister Arseny Yatseniuk warned on Facebook that Trump had “challenged the very values of the free world.”

Ukraine’s minister of internal affairs, Arsen Avakov, piled on, trashing Trump on Twitter in July as a “clown” and asserting that Trump is “an even bigger danger to the US than terrorism.”

Avakov, in a Facebook post, lashed out at Trump for his confusing Crimea comments, calling the assessment the “diagnosis of a dangerous misfit,” according to a translated screenshot featured in one media report, though he later deleted the post. He called Trump “dangerous for Ukraine and the US” and noted that Manafort worked with Yanukovich when the former Ukrainian leader “fled to Russia through Crimea. Where would Manafort lead Trump?”

#### INVESTIGATIONS

### **Manafort’s man in Kiev**

By KENNETH P. VOGEL

The Trump-Ukraine relationship grew even more fraught in September with reports that the GOP nominee had snubbed Poroshenko on the sidelines of the United Nations General Assembly in New York, where the Ukrainian president tried to meet both major party candidates, but scored only a meeting with Clinton.

Telizhenko, the former embassy staffer, said that, during the primaries, Chaly, the country’s ambassador in Washington, had actually instructed the embassy not to reach out to Trump’s campaign, even as it was engaging with those of Clinton and Trump’s leading GOP rival, Ted Cruz.

“We had an order not to talk to the Trump team, because he was critical of Ukraine and the government and his critical position on Crimea and the conflict,” said Telizhenko. “I was yelled at when I proposed to talk to Trump,” he said, adding, “The ambassador said not to get involved — Hillary is going to win.”

This account was confirmed by Nalyvaichenko, the former diplomat and security chief now affiliated with a Poroshenko opponent, who said, “The Ukrainian authorities closed all doors and windows — this is from the Ukrainian side.” He called the strategy “bad and short-sighted.”

Andriy Artemenko, a Ukrainian parliamentarian associated with a conservative opposition party, did meet with Trump's team during the campaign and said he personally offered to set up similar meetings for Chaly but was rebuffed.

"It was clear that they were supporting Hillary Clinton's candidacy," Artemenko said. "They did everything from organizing meetings with the Clinton team, to publicly supporting her, to criticizing Trump. ... I think that they simply didn't meet because they thought that Hillary would win."

Shulyar rejected the characterizations that the embassy had a ban on interacting with Trump, instead explaining that it "had different diplomats assigned for dealing with different teams tailoring the content and messaging. So it was not an instruction to abstain from the engagement but rather an internal discipline for diplomats not to get involved into a field she or he was not assigned to, but where another colleague was involved."

And she pointed out that Chaly traveled to the GOP convention in Cleveland in late July and met with members of Trump's foreign policy team "to highlight the importance of Ukraine and the support of it by the U.S."

Despite the outreach, Trump's campaign in Cleveland gutted a proposed amendment to the Republican Party platform that called for the U.S. to provide "lethal defensive weapons" for Ukraine to defend itself against Russian incursion, backers of the measure charged.

The outreach ramped up after Trump's victory. Shulyar pointed out that Poroshenko was among the first foreign leaders to call to congratulate Trump. And she said that, since Election Day, Chaly has met with close Trump allies, including Sens. Jeff Sessions, Trump's nominee for attorney general, and Bob Corker, the chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, while the ambassador accompanied Ivanna Klymush-Tsintsadze, Ukraine's vice prime minister for European and Euro-Atlantic integration, to a round of Washington meetings with Rep. Tom Marino (R-Pa.), an early Trump backer, and Jim DeMint, president of The Heritage Foundation, which played a prominent role in Trump's transition.

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Many Ukrainian officials and operatives and their American allies see Trump's inauguration this month as an existential threat to the country, made worse, they admit, by the dissemination of the secret ledger, the antagonistic social media posts and the perception that the embassy meddled against — or at least shut out — Trump.

“It’s really bad. The [Poroshenko] administration right now is trying to re-coordinate communications,” said Telizhenko, adding, “The Trump organization doesn’t want to talk to our administration at all.”

During Nalyvaichenko’s trip to Washington last month, he detected lingering ill will toward Ukraine from some, and lack of interest from others, he recalled. “Ukraine is not on the top of the list, not even the middle,” he said.

Poroshenko’s allies are scrambling to figure out how to build a relationship with Trump, who is known for harboring and prosecuting grudges for years.

A delegation of Ukrainian parliamentarians allied with Poroshenko last month traveled to Washington partly to try to make inroads with the Trump transition team, but they were unable to secure a meeting, according to a Washington foreign policy operative familiar with the trip. And operatives in Washington and Kiev say that after the election, Poroshenko met in Kiev with top executives from the Washington lobbying firm BGR — including Ed Rogers and Lester Munson — about how to navigate the Trump regime.

## Ukrainians fall out of love with Europe

By DAVID STERN

Weeks later, BGR reported to the Department of Justice that the government of Ukraine would pay the firm \$50,000 a month to “provide strategic public relations and government affairs counsel,” including “outreach to U.S. government officials, non-government organizations, members of the media and other individuals.”

Firm spokesman Jeffrey Birnbaum suggested that “pro-Putin oligarchs” were already trying to sow doubts about BGR’s work with Poroshenko. While the firm maintains close relationships with GOP congressional leaders, several of its principals were dismissive or sharply critical of Trump during the GOP primary, which could limit their effectiveness lobbying the new administration.

The Poroshenko regime’s standing with Trump is considered so dire that the president’s allies after the election actually reached out to make amends with — and even seek assistance from — Manafort, according to two operatives familiar with Ukraine’s efforts to make inroads with Trump.

Meanwhile, Poroshenko’s rivals are seeking to capitalize on his dicey relationship with Trump’s team. Some are pressuring him to replace Chaly, a close ally of Poroshenko’s who

is being blamed by critics in Kiev and Washington for implementing — if not engineering — the country’s anti-Trump efforts, according to Ukrainian and U.S. politicians and operatives interviewed for this story. They say that several potential Poroshenko opponents have been through Washington since the election seeking audiences of their own with Trump allies, though most have failed to do so.

“None of the Ukrainians have any access to Trump — they are all desperate to get it, and are willing to pay big for it,” said one American consultant whose company recently met in Washington with Yuriy Boyko, a former vice prime minister under Yanukovych. Boyko, who like Yanukovych has a pro-Russian worldview, is considering a presidential campaign of his own, and his representatives offered “to pay a shit-ton of money” to get access to Trump and his inaugural events, according to the consultant.

The consultant turned down the work, explaining, “It sounded shady, and we don’t want to get in the middle of that kind of stuff.”

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