

Strzok, Peter P. (CD) (FBI)

From: Strzok, Peter P. (CD) (FBI)
Sent: Monday, March 06, 2017 8:33 PM
To: Priestap, E. W. (CD) (FBI); Baker, James A. (OGC) (FBI); Anderson, Trisha B. (OGC) (FBI); [REDACTED] (OGC) (FBI); Page, Lisa C. (OGC) (FBI)
Subject: AG letter to Judiciary
Attachments: Sessions, 03-06-17, letter, testimony.pdf

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"As I discussed publicly on March 2, 2017, I spoke briefly to the Russian Ambassador at the Republican National Convention in Cleveland, Ohio, in July 2016. This was at the conclusion of a speech I had made, when I also met and spoke with other ambassadors. In September 2016, I met with the Russian Ambassador at my Senate office in the presence of members of my professional Senate staff. I do not recall any discussions with the Russian Ambassador, or any other representative of the Russian government, regarding the political campaign on these occasions or any other occasion."



The Attorney General
Washington, D.C.

March 6, 2017

Hon. Charles E. Grassley
Chairman
Senate Judiciary Committee
226 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Hon. Dianne Feinstein
Ranking Member
Senate Judiciary Committee
152 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Grassley and Ranking Member Feinstein:

I write to supplement my January 10, 2017, testimony before the Committee.

During my confirmation hearing, Senator Franken asked the following question:

OK. CNN has just published a story and I'm telling you this about a news story that's just been published. I'm not expecting you to know whether or not it's true or not. But CNN just published a story alleging that the intelligence community provided documents to the president-elect last week that included information that quote, "Russian operatives claimed to have compromising personal and financial information about Mr. Trump." These documents also allegedly say quote, "There was a *continuing exchange of information* during the campaign between Trump's surrogates and intermediaries for the Russian government." [Emphasis added]

Now, again, I'm telling you this as it's coming out, so you know. But, if it's true, it's obviously extremely serious and if there is any

evidence that anyone affiliated with the Trump campaign communicated with the Russian government in the course of this campaign, what will you do?

I responded: "Senator Franken, I'm not aware of any of those activities. I have been called a surrogate at a time or two in that campaign and I didn't have -- did not have communications with the Russians, and I'm unable to comment on it."

My answer was correct. As I noted in my public statement on March 2, 2017, I was surprised by the allegations in the question, which I had not heard before. I answered the question, which asked about a "continuing exchange of information during the campaign between Trump's surrogates and intermediaries for the Russian government," honestly. I did not mention communications I had had with the Russian Ambassador over the years because the question did not ask about them.

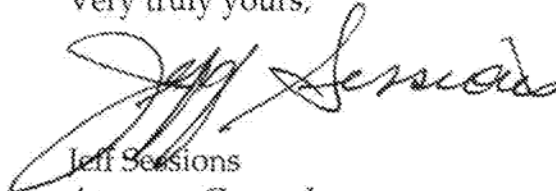
As I discussed publicly on March 2, 2017, I spoke briefly to the Russian Ambassador at the Republican National Convention in Cleveland, Ohio, in July 2016. This was at the conclusion of a speech I had made, when I also met and spoke with other ambassadors. In September 2016, I met with the Russian Ambassador at my Senate office in the presence of members of my professional Senate staff. I do not recall any discussions with the Russian Ambassador, or any other representative of the Russian government, regarding the political campaign on these occasions or any other occasion.

The Judiciary Committee received a letter dated March 3, 2017, from Committee Democrats that asks other questions. The letter asks why I did not supplement the record to note any contact with the Russian Ambassador before its disclosure. Having considered my answer responsive, and no one having suggested otherwise, there was no need for a supplemented answer.

I also promptly made a decision on recusal. I said during the course of my confirmation hearing that if a question arose as to whether I should recuse myself from a particular matter, I would consult with the appropriate ethics officials at the Department in order to make a decision. Within a week of becoming Attorney General, I held the first meeting concerning recusal. And, on February 27, 2017, my staff scheduled a meeting for March 2, 2017. On that date, I met with the relevant officials, and later that day announced my recusal from certain matters. This process and schedule were established before I was made aware of any concern about the accuracy of my testimony before the Committee.

The March 3, 2017, letter also asked why I had not recused myself from "Russian contacts with the Trump transition team and administration." I understand the scope of the recusal as described in the Department's press release would include any such matters. This should not be taken as any evidence of the existence of any such investigation or its scope. Suffice it to say that the scope of my recusal is consistent with the applicable regulations, which I have considered and to which I have adhered.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jeff Sessions". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "J" and "S".

Jeff Sessions
Attorney General

JS:ph