



Written by [R. Cort Kirkwood](#) on September 16, 2022

Former FBI Agent Who Probed Trump's "Collusion" With Russians Was Probed For Collusion With Russians

In what might end in another black eye for the FBI, a former agent involved in the Russia "collusion" probe of Donald Trump's presidential campaign in 2016 might have colluded with the Russians himself.

Charles McGonigal, former head of the bureau's counterintelligence in New York, was investigated for his ties with Russia, Albania, and another government, *Business Insider* reported yesterday.

A grand jury looked at McGonigal's activities, including "business dealings" with a Russian billionaire who was accused of colluding with Trump to help him win the 2016 election.



mashabuba/iStock/Getty Images Plus

The collusion tale turned out to be a hoax conceived by the Clinton campaign.

A former high-level FBI agent who was involved in the investigation into the Trump campaign's contacts with Russia during the 2016 election has come under scrutiny by federal prosecutors for his ties with Russia and other foreign governments. ↓

<https://t.co/jENOZT7thT>

— Military and Defense Insider (@MilDefInsider) [September 15, 2022](#)

Unseemly

"Late last year, according to internal court documents obtained by Insider, US attorneys secretly convened" the jury to investigate McGonigal, [Insider reported](#):

But a witness subpoena obtained by Insider seems to indicate that the government, in part, was looking into McGonigal's business dealings with a top aide to Oleg Deripaska, the billionaire Russian oligarch who was at the center of allegations that Russia colluded with the Trump campaign to interfere in the 2016 election.

The subpoena, issued in November, requests records relating to McGonigal and a shadowy consulting firm called Spectrum Risk Solutions. A week after the subpoena was issued, a Soviet-born immigrant named Sergey Shestakov said in a separate filing that McGonigal had helped him "facilitate" an introduction between Spectrum and Deripaska's aide. The filing also states that McGonigal helped introduce the aide to Kobre & Kim, a New York law firm that specializes in representing clients who are being investigated on suspicion of "fraud and misconduct." Shestakov, who has been identified on TV panels as a former Soviet foreign ministry official and former chief of staff to the Soviet ambassador to the United



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Nations, reported receiving \$33,000 for the referrals.

“If McGonigal is mixed up in any way shape or form with Deripaska, that strikes me as unseemly, to put it politely,” FBI biographer Tim Weiner told Insider. Weiner is the author of [Enemies: A History of the FBI](#).

Still, “it is not clear whether McGonigal is a target of the grand-jury investigation, or simply a subject whose activities are somehow related to it,” Insider continued. “And there is nothing in the court documents or elsewhere to suggest that McGonigal behaved inappropriately during the FBI’s investigation of the Trump campaign.”

The question, the website reported, is whether McGonigal used his FBI reputation and connections abroad to profit after he left the bureau.

“And whatever McGonigal’s actions, the fact that he has been swept up in a grand-jury investigation is highly unusual,” [Insider reported](#):

According to a former senior official at the Justice Department who asked not to be identified, prosecutors almost never consider charges against someone so high up in the FBI. “It’s very rare that former FBI people at all, and certainly former senior FBI people, wind up as grand-jury targets,” the official said.

The federal scrutiny of McGonigal is especially striking given his work at the FBI. Before his retirement in 2018, McGonigal led the WikiLeaks investigation into Chelsea Manning, busted Bill Clinton’s national security advisor Sandy Berger for removing classified material from a National Archives reading room, and led the search for a Chinese mole inside the CIA. In 2016, when reports surfaced that Russia had hacked the email system of the Democratic National Committee, McGonigal was serving as chief of the cybercrimes section at FBI headquarters in Washington. In that capacity, he was one of the first officials to learn that a Trump campaign official had bragged that the Russians had dirt on Hillary Clinton, sparking the investigation known as Operation Crossfire Hurricane. Later that year, FBI Director James Comey promoted McGonigal to oversee counterintelligence operations in New York.

Prosecutors also want to know about McGonigal’s links to Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Clinton Hoax

The “Trump campaign official” and Russian dirt on Clinton aside, we now know that her campaign legmen [hoked up](#) the collusion hoax. The reason: to divert attention from her illegal use of a private email server to send and receive classified documents.

That effort involved the notorious [Steele Dossier](#), which was used to justify surveilling Trump campaign official Carter Page.

Special Counsel John Durham’s probe of Clinton button man Michael Sussmann [provided more proof](#) that the collusion accusations were a hoax and smear job, which Obama [knew full well](#) was the work of Clinton’s campaign.

Hate-Trump FBI agents were so worried the hoax would be uncovered that [they purchased](#) liability



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insurance.

The question is when McGonigal learned the collusion accusation was false, and what he did to thwart an illegal effort not only to stop Trump from defeating Clinton, but also to remove him from office after he did.



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