



Trump “Dossier” Author Soon to be Deposed in Defamation Suit

Christopher Steele — the author (perhaps novelist would be a better description) of the Trump “dossier” — is facing serious legal troubles. Besides being referred for criminal investigation by members of the Senate Judiciary Committee, he is facing a multi-million dollar civil suit for defamation of character. Fox News has published British court records related to Steele’s upcoming deposition in that lawsuit.



The lawsuit was filed by Russian technologist Aleksey Gubarev and stems from salacious and unsubstantiated claims made in the “dossier” that defamed Gubarev, according to both his lawyer and court documents. After BuzzFeed published the full text of the “dossier” in early January 2017, Gubarev filed the lawsuit against BuzzFeed and Steele. Steele is a former MI-6 agent who was paid \$168,000 by Fusion GPS to create the “dossier.” Fusion GPS is an American company run by Clinton supporter Glenn Simpson.

That \$168,000 was only a portion of the nearly \$1.8 million the Clinton campaign and DNC paid Fusion GPS for “opposition research” on Trump. The “dossier” conveniently supported Clinton’s claims that Trump is “Putin’s puppet” and was both the victim of Russian blackmail (as the result of sexually perverse misbehavior while in Moscow) and the recipient of Russian assistance (in the form of Russia “hacking” the election by turning public opinion against Clinton).

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As this writer reported when the “dossier” was still making its rounds in the mainstream liberal media despite its glaring lack of anything resembling credibility, even BuzzFeed — which published the full 35-page leaked document after CNN broke the “story” — had to admit that it has serious problems, saying:

It is not just unconfirmed: It includes some clear errors. The report misspells the name of one company, “Alpha Group,” throughout. It is Alfa Group. The report says the settlement of Barvikha, outside Moscow, is “reserved for the residences of the top leadership and their close associates.” It is not reserved for anyone, and it is also populated by the very wealthy.

As that [previous article](#) said:

Besides the misspellings and factual errors, the document is rife with such poor grammar formatting, a high school teacher would be forced to either return the document as incomplete or give it a failing grade. Furthermore, the “dossier” accuses Aleksey Gubarev and his company XBT Holding of “using botnets and porn traffic to transmit viruses, plant bugs, steal data and conduct ‘altering operations’ against the Democratic Party leadership.” (A botnet is a group of Internet-connected computers often used to send spam e-mails or conduct other hacking operations.) Again, as before, the claim of the report lacks anything resembling evidence, and is — in fact — contradicted by facts.



Written by [C. Mitchell Shaw](#) on March 23, 2018

That the document was a fraud is evident on every one of its 35 pages. For instance, one would expect that a document produced by a former intelligence operative would — assuming any real effort went into verifying any of its wild claims — have at least included the correct spelling of the names of the people whom it accuses of crimes. But Gubarev’s name is misspelled as “Aleksei GUBAROV” (it is actually “Aleksej Gubarev”).

The “dossier” claims:

[REDACTED] reported that over the period March-September 2016 a company called XBT/Webzilla and its affiliates had been using botnets and porn traffic to transmit viruses, plant bugs, steal data and conduct “altering operations” against the Democratic Party leadership. Entities linked to one Aleksei GUBAROV were involved and he and another hacking expert, both recruited under duress by the FSB, Seva KAPSUGOVICH, were significant players in this operation. in Prague. COHEN agreed contingency plans for various scenarios to protect the Operation, but in particular what was to be done in the event that Hillary CLINTON won the presidency. It was important in this event that all cash payments owed were made quickly and discreetly and that cyber and other operators were stood down/able to go effectively to ground to cover their traces. (We reported earlier that the involvement of political operatives Paul MANAFORT and Carter PAGE in the secret TRUMP-Kremlin liaison had been exposed in the media in the run-up to Prague and that damage limitation of these also was discussed by COHEN with the Kremlin representatives).

In reality, there was not only no evidence that Gubarev was the victim of blackmail by the FSB (the Russian intelligence-agency successor to the KGB), there is, in fact, strong evidence to the contrary. As McClatchy reported at the time, “Gubarev’s Facebook page shows his wife, Anna Gubareva, and him on the bow rail of a fast-moving luxury yacht,” and “His profile picture shows him behind the wheel of a vintage convertible Citroen. He is the public face of a number of tech companies around the globe.” Is this the man the “dossier” describes as having been recruited under duress” by Russian intelligence?

Furthermore, if Gubarev’s companies — XBT Holdings and Webzilla — had been “using botnets and porn traffic to transmit viruses, plant bugs, steal data and conduct ‘altering operations’ against the Democratic Party leadership,” one might reasonably expect that he would have been contacted by U.S. intelligence. This is especially true, since he maintains a physical office in Dallas, Texas. But Gubarev was never visited or contacted by anyone in U.S. intelligence. “Nobody contacted me,” he said.

None of that, though, kept BuzzFeed — in its frenzy to deligitimize the Trump presidency — from publishing the “fake news” document. And while President Trump has — probably because of his office — refrained from filing a lawsuit for defamation, Gubarev has nothing like Trump’s reasons for holding back on seeking justice in the courts.

Steele — who has strongly resisted being deposed in this case — is expected to be called to London for his deposition within the next two to three weeks. He should wear something comfortable and pack a lunch; that deposition is expected to last up to seven hours. Gubarev’s lawyer, Evan Fray-Witzer, told Fox News via e-mail, “We expect that Mr. Steele will confirm that the allegations concerning Mr. Gubarev were unsolicited and that he included them in the dossier despite having done nothing to verify whether the allegations were true or not.”

The [court documents](#) published by Fox News serve to indicate the types of questions Steele should be prepared to answer. For instance, the document states, “The dossier was supplied to Fusion on terms that it was subject to an obligation not to disclose it or any of it to third parties without the agreement



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of Orbis and/or Mr. Steele.” But, as Fox News reported, Fusion GPS founder Glenn Simpson “specifically tasked Steele with spreading the dossier’s contents to at least five U.S. media outlets friendly to Clinton, via both in-person meetings and Skype. While in Rome, Steele also briefed the FBI, who reportedly offered him \$50,000 to verify parts of the dossier. However, the FBI has denied making any payments or reimbursements to Steele.”

Steele feigned shock and horror “that the U.S. defendants published the dossier at all, let alone without substantial redactions” and claimed, “It is not known who provided the dossier to the U.S. defendants.”

The “U.S. defendants” referred to in Steele’s statement are the good folks over at BuzzFeed.

Considering not only the rousing game of he-said-she-said that is going on here, but also the lack of anything resembling journalistic integrity demonstrated by BuzzFeed, it looks as though they may be getting ready to be fed into a buzz saw. Gubarev’s lawyer told Fox News, “[Neither] Steele [nor] BuzzFeed did anything to figure out if the things they were saying about Mr. Gubarev were remotely true. That’s not journalism, that’s simply smearing someone’s reputation.”

This is important, since BuzzFeed could claim protection of the press except that “smearing someone’s reputation” by publishing lies is, as Fray-Witzer said, “not journalism” and is not protected.

Buzzfeed continues to appear clueless in all of this. In an e-mail to Fox News, BuzzFeed spokesman Mike Mittenhall said, “We fully expect the information contained in Mr. Steele’s deposition to reaffirm our decision to publish the dossier, which was at the center of official investigations and circulating at the highest levels of government.” Mittenhall seems to be confused about the timeline: The “dossier” was not “at the center of official investigations” until BuzzFeed put it there by publishing it. Furthermore, given the way the GOP House Intelligence Committee FISA abuse memo treats the use of the “dossier” as a reason for the FISA warrant that really is at the center of the investigation, perhaps Mittenhall would do best not to mention it in that context.

While BuzzFeed may hope that Steele’s deposition will put them in the clear, that is not likely. What is much more likely is that his sworn testimony will show what most thinking people already know: There was never anything to the “dossier” except Steele’s fertile (if juvenile) imagination. It won’t be BuzzFeed that’s in the clear, but it might be Trump — at least where this is concerned.

Image of Christopher Steele: Screenshot from a [YouTube video by CBS News](#)



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