

GLOBAL ENERGY CAPITAL LLC

May 7, 2017

BY ELECTRONIC MAIL

The Honorable Richard Burr and Mark Warner
U.S. Senate Select Committee on Intelligence
211 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Subject: Your statement of May 5, 2017 (“Chairman Burr and Vice Chairman Warner Statement on Carter Page’s Participation in SSCI Investigation”)

Dear Senator Burr and Senator Warner:

I am writing in response to your subject press release from Friday. As an administrative note before I address your latest public pronouncement, I would like to make sure you are aware that I have left multiple messages for several members of your Senate Select Committee on Intelligence staff. As you may recall, each of your two respective form letters from recent months included the following text: “If you have any questions, please contact either Chris Joyner, Staff Director, or Mike Casey, Minority Staff Director, at (202)...” Related to a wide range of questions that I have, I left the first such message in person on March 6, 2017 at SSCI’s blockade on the second floor of the Hart Senate Office Building when I hand delivered my response to your initial correspondence. I have many questions so subsequently followed up with several phone and email messages. In each instance, your offers appear to have been some sort of theoretical proposition since I still haven’t heard back from anyone over 63 days later. Rather than answering my questions as you had proposed on multiple occasions, I have only received your massive data dump request of April 28, 2017 which would cover redundant, highly irrelevant information collected in further violation of my civil rights given the unjustified FISA warrants which already targeted me last year. It seems logical that having an actual conversation like human beings might prove more productive, as you had originally offered and in contrast to the Big Brother methods of the Obama Administration in 2016. I am increasingly coming to understand that these proceedings have thus far followed the precedent of prior show trials¹, which have historically been used as a means of intimidation. In close keeping with the lawless tactics of the Clinton/Obama regime which were in place until January 20, 2017, such strategies also closely align with their ongoing quest to hurt the new Administration as well as the millions of patriotic Americans like me who support our leadership and this country. I have seen nothing that leads me to believe that the questions posed on April 28 are based on anything more than the continued false allegations that their regime’s associates ginned up last year.

¹ Defined as, “A judicial trial held in public with the intention of influencing or satisfying public opinion, rather than of ensuring justice.” Oxford Dictionaries, Oxford University Press, 2017. [https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/show_trial]

Given the inability or unwillingness of your staff to have an actual conversation despite these multiple unanswered requests to address my open questions particularly concerning the growing list of civil liberty violations which have occurred thus far, I would like to directly respond to your main comments from the press release of last week. Related to your points on Friday and whereas it seems that you have still continued to be unwittingly manipulated by the corrupt lies of the Clinton/Obama regime, I believe this additional background information might help you belatedly understand reality. Highlighted below are my specific responses to your comments:

“MR. PAGE HAS INDICATED IN CORRESPONDENCE TO THE COMMITTEE THAT HE LOOKS FORWARD TO WORKING WITH US ON THIS MATTER”

Although this core principle you noted here nevertheless remains the case to this day, I assume this primarily refers to my original letter to you of March 5, 2017. Related to the prior criminal activities by the Clinton/Obama regime last year which unsuccessfully sought to manipulate the 2016 presidential election in their favor, please note that several preliminary felonies have subsequently been revealed over the months since my first response in March. These recent developments have begun to turn the tables on last year’s deceitful perpetrators who helped lead your Committee and part of the American public astray. Today on CBS’s Face the Nation, Senator Manchin offered a perfect characterization of the vain steps to rig the 2016 election: “They’ll do anything they can to disrupt any type of a freedom, if you will, or a democracy or an involvement where there’s an orderly transfer of power. That’s not for them.”² Although he was primarily referring to the unsubstantiated conspiracy theories suggested by the Clinton/Obama regime about Russia, the growing evidence surrounding their defeated regime’s own dishonest misinformation and influence campaign of 2016 perfectly fits the Senator’s description.

In case you and your colleagues are unaware of the multiple recent eye-openers which have further exposed these crimes and thus significantly changed the landscape in the subsequent period, I would like to explain some of the related details and direct relevance of each in turn:

Felony #1: Illegal leaking of my identity as “Male-1” in U.S.A. v. Evgeny Buryakov, Igor Sporyshev, and Victor Podobnyy – On April 3, 2017, reporters at ABC News³ and BuzzFeed News⁴ requested to meet in order to inform me that U.S. government operatives had unlawfully disclosed my identity as Male-1 in this 2015 case. This particular incident follows an increasing series of similar revelations about other politically-motivated unmaskings in 2016.⁵ It relates to my brief interactions in 2013 with Victor Podobnyy, a junior attaché assigned to the Permanent

² “Face the Nation transcript: Mulvaney, Manchin, Rice,” CBS News, May 7, 2017.

[<http://www.cbsnews.com/news/face-the-nation-transcript-may-7-2017-mulvaney-manchin-rice/>]

³ Brian Ross and Matthew Mosk, “Trump campaign adviser Carter Page targeted for recruitment by Russian spies,” ABC News, Apr 4, 2017. [<http://abcnews.go.com/Politics/trump-campaign-advisor-carter-page-targeted-russian-spies/story?id=46557506>]

⁴ Ali Watkins, “A Former Trump Adviser Met With A Russian Spy,” BuzzFeed News, April 3, 2017. [<https://www.buzzfeed.com/alimwatkins/a-former-trump-adviser-met-with-a-russian-spy>].

⁵ Kristina Wong, “Lindsey Graham: ‘We Will Continue’ to Look into Susan Rice’s Unmasking,” Breitbart News, May 4, 2017. [<http://www.breitbart.com/big-government/2017/05/04/lindsey-graham-we-will-continue-to-look-into-susan-rices-unmasking/>]

Mission of the Russian Federation to the United Nations.

During my meeting with U.S. agents at New York's Plaza Hotel in June 2013 in support of their ongoing investigation, I spoke with them at length about my research on international political economy which I had been completing as a Fellow at the Center for National Policy in Washington. I brought this up because it seemed to me that the resources of the U.S. Government might be better allocated towards addressing real national security threats, particularly given the recent Boston Marathon bombing of April 15, 2013. Without question, the harsh retribution subsequently taken against me marked a direct retaliation against my dissenting position. Per an article I had recently written and discussed with the U.S. agents (see Appendix), the Clinton/Obama regime had been, "Reflecting the highest principles of cronyism rather than democracy," in many of their policy decisions. In my writings, I had also cited a recent quote from Maya Angelou which seemed of particular relevance given a range of ineffective policy approaches by Washington at the time: "The philosophers tell us that power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely."⁶ This had marked an earlier instance of the corrupt influence campaign and related domestic political intelligence operations in support of failed policies, which would eventually blossom in full glory with the obnoxious civil rights violations based on complete lies displayed during the 2016 election.

With regards to the 2015 case where I agreed to provide support, the final scene of the movie "The Big Short" offers an instructive summary of the Clinton/Obama regime's justice system, first led by their Attorney General from 2009 through 2015, Eric Holder.⁷ After essentially achieving very little in his 6-years in office, it is understandable why Holder might want to target a token Russian banker during his final months in office⁸ since only Zurich-based Credit Suisse's Kareem Serageldin stood as another perfunctory accomplishment during his extended six-year term.

As the journalist Matt Taibbi has described his activities in a 2015 article, which has more recently proven to offer an accurate representation of the Clinton/Obama regime more generally: "Holder doesn't look it, but he was a revolutionary. He institutionalized a radical dualistic approach to criminal justice, essentially creating a system of indulgences wherein the world's richest companies paid cash for their sins and escaped the sterner punishments the law dictated."⁹

⁶ Maya Angelou, "The 2013 Time 100: Icons," *Time*, April 18, 2013.
[<http://time100.time.com/2013/04/18/time-100/slide/michelle-obama/>]

⁷ "Blame the poor - clip from The Big Short," YouTube, January 14, 2016.
[<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mcJmzEawWi0>]

⁸ Office of Public Affairs, "Attorney General Holder Announces Charges Against Russian Spy Ring in New York City," Department of Justice website, January 26, 2015.
[<https://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/attorney-general-holder-announces-charges-against-russian-spy-ring-new-york-city>]

⁹ Matt Taibbi, "Eric Holder, Wall Street Double Agent, Comes in From the Cold: Barack Obama's former top cop cashes in after six years of letting banks run wild," *Rolling Stone*, July 8, 2015.
[<http://www.rollingstone.com/politics/news/eric-holder-wall-street-double-agent-comes-in-from-the-cold-20150708>]

Felony #2: Illegal leaking of classified information surrounding the completely unjustified FISA warrant against me, which further enabled part of the Clinton/Obama regime's domestic political intelligence operations and influence campaign in the 2016 election – On April 12, 2017, the *Washington Post* published an article explaining that unnamed sources had revealed the completely unjustified FISA warrant to intercept my communications throughout the final months of the reign of the Clinton/Obama regime.¹⁰ Given a growing list of unanswered questions and apparent abuses regarding this nonsensical invasion of privacy, it seems readily apparent that more revelations about these misdeeds will continue to be learned in the period to come.¹¹ As I explained to you last week, my legal team and I are currently busy working on further steps to get to the bottom of this abuse. Whether or not you choose to support these efforts, I am highly confident that this endeavor will prove far more relevant than anything which might be gained in the preposterous forced labor tasks you suggested in your request of April 28, 2017.

To put in context how outrageous your groundless comprehensive data requests would be, consider the case study of General Flynn. Frustrated in the wake of her failed attempt to circumvent the long-delayed introduction of effective immigration policies in the United States, de facto anarchist Sally Yates instead turned her attention to destroying the career of a distinguished American. Although I have never met General Flynn, his recent experiences make clear that any minor variation between his memory of a conversation during a vacation on the beaches of the Dominican Republic vs. the in-depth transcript kept by the deep state is framing him for severe personal damage. Comparing that one relatively recent conversation by General Flynn to the two years of records and recollections you're instead asking me for helps illustrate how illogical your proposition is.

Consistent with the suppression of dissent that this entire exercise has been from the start, Senator Feinstein admitted today: "...when I saw a three-star general in front of the Republican convention shouting 'lock her up,' I thought, oh my goodness. This would never happen, it never has happened before, this is a three-star general of the United States military doing this with no evidence. And it made a big impression on me."¹² Similar to my experiences, the retribution for this exercise of his First Amendment rights cuts to the core of the matter. In any event, the preponderance of evidence related to the cases General Flynn referred to during his speech in

¹⁰ Ellen Nakashima, Devlin Barrett and Adam Entous, "FBI obtained FISA warrant to monitor Trump adviser Carter Page" *Washington Post*, April 12, 2017.

[https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/fbi-obtained-fisa-warrant-to-monitor-former-trump-adviser-carter-page/2017/04/11/620192ea-1e0e-11e7-ad74-3a742a6e93a7_story.html]

¹¹ Senator Charles E. Grassley, "Grassley Seeks Explanation for FBI's Inconsistent Info in Dossier Inquiry: Bureau's Scant Responses to Judiciary Probe Raise More Questions on Steele ties," April 28, 2017. [<https://www.grassley.senate.gov/news/news-releases/grassley-seeks-explanation-fbi's-inconsistent-info-dossier-inquiry>]

¹² Meet the Press transcript, NBC News, May 7, 2017. [<http://www.nbcnews.com/meet-the-press/meet-press-may-7-2017-n756001>]

Cleveland greatly exceeds anything in the 2016 Dodgy Dossier which eventually became a cornerstone of the crooked initiative against me and other supporters of the Trump movement, first within the prior Administration and now amongst some actors in Congress. So it remains unclear to me on what basis you have assigned hundreds of hours of work with your request of April 28, based on literally nothing except lies from corrupt politicians.

“THREE DAYS AGO, CARTER PAGE TOLD FOX NEWS HE WAS COOPERATING WITH THE COMMITTEE’S INVESTIGATION INTO RUSSIAN ACTIVITIES SURROUNDING THE 2016 ELECTION. TODAY WE HAVE LEARNED THAT MAY NOT BE THE CASE.”

To the contrary, I would like to reconfirm for you that I am still cooperating with the Committee’s investigation in the form of a future open testimony. But given the time horizon you noted above, let’s consider a few additional developments which have changed over the course of that 72-hours following the Fox News report you cited from May 2, 2017.¹³

First, Mrs. Clinton gave a speech which dodged responsibility for her disastrous, tone-deaf campaign by instead pointing the finger at Director Comey and Russia.¹⁴ Further illustrating another related reason why I was originally targeted by the Clinton/Obama regime, it is worth bearing in mind a political science concept I previously defined which explains this dysfunctional avoidance of responsibility that has cut across decades of U.S. history:

The Narcissistic Loony Tune School of Foreign Policy

An underlying cultural phenomenon that has served as a foundation for the counterproductive narrative in Russia and beyond may be observed in a domestic context. In discussions with her best friend Diane Blair, Hillary Clinton previously defended her husband by referring to his mistress, former White House intern Monica Lewinsky, as a “**Narcissistic loony tune**”. This personal example demonstrates a fundamental problem at the core of U.S. foreign policy that has been seen across party lines since well before her husband’s administration: the inclination to blame weaker parties for problems without examination of the decisions of top leaders that initiated these mistakes in the first place.¹⁵

¹³ “Carter Page, former Trump adviser, says he's cooperating with Senate Russian probe,” May 02, 2017. [<http://www.foxnews.com/politics/2017/05/02/former-trump-adviser-says-hes-cooperating-with-senate-russian-probe.html>]

¹⁴ “Full transcript of Hillary Clinton interview with Christiane Amanpour,” [<http://transcripts.cnn.com/TRANSCRIPTS/1705/02/cnnt.02.html>]

¹⁵ Carter Page, “Alternative Courses to Quadruple Dual Containment: President Obama’s West Point Speech and Pathways Beyond,” *Global Policy Journal*, May 30, 2014. [<http://www.globalpolicyjournal.com/blog/30/05/2014/alternative-courses-quadruple-dual-containment-president-obama's-west-point-speech-a>]

Not only did precisely that same continued pattern of abuse reflect her disparagement of Director Comey, it also underscores why I have remained a principal target of the Clinton/Obama regime's surrogates including those in Congress. As a perceived weaker party, I have also been effectively and falsely characterized as a narcissistic loony tune amidst other far worse false accusations by the Clinton/Obama regime. In a revealing *New York Times* article based on illegal leaks, "The [Obama] Justice Department considered direct surveillance of anyone tied to a political campaign as a line it did not want to cross, the official added."¹⁶ In other words and consistent with the narcissistic loony tune school approach, they apparently decided it was fine to trample on human rights if someone is a low-level, junior, unpaid supporter rather than a fellow fat-cat career politician from the Washington swamp.

Second, the real leadership shown by Senator Grassley, Senator Graham and others members of the Judiciary Committee last Wednesday in beginning to address the genuinely problematic interference in last year's election offers new confidence that logic may now be restored in this overall process.¹⁷

To help further illustrate how disgraceful both the spirit and substance of your original interrogation list is, the original source of a more precisely and carefully targeted question of this sort is worth bearing in mind: former Gang of Eight member Harry Reid. Characteristic of this ongoing investigation which he helped instigate and typical of his personal level of integrity, he has previously stated that making prior claims without any evidence in 2012 was "one of the best things I've ever done."¹⁸ Although this is obviously the exact same thing which again happened against me and the Trump campaign last year, it is my hope that your Committee might restore its dignity by moving beyond the standards of such gangster tactics and the organized crime network that Reid supported during the Clinton/Obama regime.¹⁹

¹⁶ Matthew Rosenberg and Matt Apuzzo, "Court Approved Wiretap on Trump Campaign Aide Over Russia Ties," *New York Times*, April 12, 2017.

[<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/04/12/us/politics/carter-page-fisa-warrant-russia-trump.html>]

¹⁷ Catherine Herridge, Pamela K. Browne and Cyd Upson, "Comey pressed for anti-Trump dossier in classified Russia report, sources say," Fox News, May 05, 2017.

[<http://www.foxnews.com/politics/2017/05/05/comey-pressed-for-anti-trump-dossier-in-classified-russia-report-sources-say.html>]

¹⁸ Chris Cillizza, "Harry Reid lied about Mitt Romney's taxes. He's still not sorry," *Washington Post*, September 15, 2016. [<https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/the-fix/wp/2016/09/15/harry-reid-lied-about-mitt-romneys-taxes-hes-still-not-sorry/>]

Ben Terris, "'I hate palm trees': The sentimental journey of Harry Reid," *Washington Post*, September 14, 2016.

[https://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/style/i-hate-palm-trees-the-sentimental-journey-of-harry-reid/2016/09/14/afcf6bc-7301-11e6-be4f-3f42f2e5a49e_story.html]

¹⁹ Precisely meeting the definition of Transnational Organized Crime: "Those self-perpetuating associations of individuals who operate transnationally for the purpose of obtaining power, influence, and monetary and/or commercial gains, wholly or in part by illegal means, while protecting their activities through a pattern of corruption..."

"Transnational Organized Crime: Glossary of Terms," FBI website.

[<https://www.fbi.gov/investigate/organized-crime>]

Related to your question #5 and in addition to his standing as one of the early promoters of the 2016 Dodgy Dossier, Harry Reid previously made a federal case out of complete nonsense by asking Director Comey to investigate my investments in Gazprom and supposed conflicts of interest this might create.²⁰ In response to your question, please note that I purchased 200 American Depository Receipts of PJSC Gazprom in June 2008 for \$5,909.00. In response to these gangster-style witch hunt tactics led in the U.S. Senate by Reid, I divested my stake in August 2016 for \$798.98 – a net loss of \$5,110.02. Given the complete disaster that the Clinton/Obama regime made of U.S.-Russia relations and the related problems they inflicted on private industry across the Russian economy, I held no other financial or real estate holdings related to Russia between June 16, 2015 and January 20, 2016.

In addition to my unanswered request from May 4, 2017 that we save time and hundreds of hours of forced labor by jointly corroborating the personal information illegally intercepted by the Obama Administration with the all-encompassing list of trivial questions you have posed to me, there is one other related question which I would like to ask. Whereas this bitter investigation based on false evidence on behalf of lying crooked politicians seems to be a nostalgic repeat of many of the corrupt Clinton/Obama regime's practices of 2016, I am interested to learn if similar related information payoff propositions may be on offer in this instance. It has been reported that \$50,000 was offered by the U.S. Government to the political research operatives of the Clinton campaign – apparently a special treat from the Obama Administration to supplement whatever undisclosed, presumably larger amount was already paid by Clinton associates for the 2016 Dodgy Dossier.²¹ In light of this outrageous payoff precedent which precipitated the primary genesis of our interaction in the first place, can you please clarify what level of remuneration for my assigned work is on offer in this instance? While the complete lies that the Dodgy Dossier hastily assembled might have carried potentially disastrous results for the integrity of the 2016 election had voters fallen for their dishonesty, factual information of some form might prove infinitely more valuable and relevant.

On one hand, Senator Dianne Feinstein has demonstrated admirable honesty by admitting that there has been no evidence of collusion between anyone associated with the Trump campaign and Russia following recent briefings with the U.S. intelligence community despite harshly invasive surveillance and millions of dollars wasted on this investigatory endeavor.²² Meanwhile, another California politician, Congressman Eric Swalwell has perpetuated more baseless innuendos and lies in loyal support of certain political allies.²³ One would hope that SSCI follows Senator Feinstein's lead by taking the high road in this instance.

²⁰ Minority Leader Harry Reid letter to Director Comey, August 27, 2016.

[<https://assets.documentcloud.org/documents/3035844/Reid-Letter-to-Comey.pdf>]

²¹ Chuck Ross, "Here's How Much The FBI Planned To Pay Trump Dossier Author," Chuck Ross, Daily Caller, April 22, 2017. [<http://dailycaller.com/2017/04/22/heres-how-much-the-fbi-planned-to-pay-trump-dossier-author/>]

²² Cameron Cawthorne, "Feinstein: No Evidence of Collusion Between Trump Associates and Russia," Washington Free Beacon, May 4, 2017. [<http://freebeacon.com/national-security/feinstein-no-evidence-collusion-between-trump-associates-russia/>]

²³ Tommy Christopher, "Breaking: House intel Democrat tells Chris Matthews he has seen 'evidence of collusion'," Shareblue, April 27, 2017. [<http://shareblue.com/breaking-house-intel->

As one person experienced in the workings of the DC swamp accurately summarized the laundry list of requests that you sent on April 28, 2017: “Tell us everything so we can have our snotty-nosed Ivy Leaguers pore over it and try to put you in the worst light possible. Oh, and you should count on minority staff leaking anything possible to embarrass you or the President.” This analysis and prediction would certainly parallel many of my experiences over the past year given the extreme transgressions of the Clinton/Obama regime. This accurate reference to the ongoing history of selective leaking for maximum personal damage of a private citizen (e.g. Felony #1 and Felony #2, above) is another reason making it essential that our future interaction be held in open session.

Since you have been praised as the bipartisan adults here²⁴, it is my hope that your continued unity now helps to break through lame partisan-based excuses attempted earlier by those who have still consider themselves above the law.²⁵

The urgency of getting to the bottom of the abysmal human rights record of those actions taken by the Clinton/Obama regime during the 2016 election is an immediate national priority. Finally moving beyond the dark cloud of the civil rights abuses which occurred last year might help encourage capable leaders and essential allies such as Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte to again feel safe in visiting the United States.²⁶

democrat-tells-chris-matthews-he-has-seen-evidence-of-collusion/] “Hillary racks up endorsements for 2016,” *The Hill*, April 15, 2015.

[<http://thehill.com/homenews/campaign/238912-2016-hillary-endorsement-list>]

²⁴ Tom LoBianco, “Senate Russia investigators' message: We're the adults here,” CNN, March 30, 2017. [<http://www.cnn.com/2017/03/29/politics/senate-russia-investigation-comparison/>] Austin Wright and Martin Matishak, “Senate steps up as House Russia probe flails: The leaders of the Senate Intelligence Committee delivered a bipartisan show of force,” Politico, March 29, 2017. [<http://www.politico.com/story/2017/03/senate-russia-probe-nunes-236661>]

²⁵ Parker Lee, “Sen. Feinstein Wants Susan Rice to Reconsider Skipping Russia Hearings,” *Independent Journal Review*, May 4, 2017.

[<http://ijr.com/2017/05/864058-sen-feinsteins-remark-about-susan-rice-skipping-russia-hearings-is-last-thing-she-needs-right-now/>] Kathryn H. Ruemmler, Letter to Senators Lindsey Graham and Sheldon Whitehouse, Latham & Watkins LLP, May 3, 2017.

[<https://assets.documentcloud.org/documents/3699576/Susan-Rice-Letter.pdf>]

²⁶ “I might not take up Trump's invitation to the U.S. says Philippines' hard-man president Duterte after 'friendly' phone call with the White House,” *Daily Mail*, May 1, 2017.

[<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-4463266/I-not-Trump-s-invitation-says-Duterte.html>]

“THE COMMITTEE WILL CONTINUE TO PURSUE ITS INQUIRY INTO ISSUES SURROUNDING RUSSIA’S INVOLVEMENT IN THE 2016 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION; IT IS OUR EXPECTATION THAT MR. PAGE WILL LIVE UP TO HIS PUBLICLY-EXPRESSED COOPERATION WITH OUR EFFORT.”

I would close by reminding you of the excerpt from the 1976 report by the Church Committee that I quoted in my March 5, 2017 letter, the findings of which led to the founding of the U.S. Senate Select Committee on Intelligence:

“Too many people have been spied upon by too many Government agencies and too much information has been illegally collected. The Government has often undertaken the secret surveillance of citizens on the basis of their political beliefs, even when those beliefs posed no threat of violence or illegal acts on behalf of a hostile foreign power...”²⁷

While the earliest indications at the time had already hinted that the Church Committee’s conclusions might parallel the injustices committed against me and countless other American citizens last year, few public observers could have imagined way back in March 2017 the growing evidence of corrupt dealings by the Clinton/Obama regime which has subsequently been revealed surrounding their failed attempt to influence the 2016 election. Let us please move beyond the noise of last year’s pathetic lies by a bitter losing campaign as we jointly refocus our attention on substantive and relevant matters that can help fix the direction of your Committee and this country.

Sincerely,



Carter Page, Ph.D.

²⁷ U.S. Senate, "Intelligence Activities and the Rights of Americans", Book II, Final Report of the Select Committee to Study Governmental Operations with respect to Intelligence Activities United States Senate, April 26, 1976.

[https://www.intelligence.senate.gov/sites/default/files/94755_II.pdf]

After Boston: Alternative Diplomacy and the Reconsideration of Unbridled U.S. Power

May 1, 2013

In March 2003, the Century Foundation and the Stanley Foundation released a report entitled [“U.S. Foreign Policy and Chechnya”](#). Written by Michael McFaul who was then a Professor at Stanford University prior to taking positions in the Obama Administration, the report included a review of various factoids on this topic. But the most valuable contribution it offered was a window into the underlying source of age-old problems that have plagued the U.S.-Russia bilateral relationship to this day. Some of these very same obstacles may have helped pave the way for the tragedy that occurred at the Boston Marathon on April 15, 2013. The report’s conclusions essentially highlight fundamental philosophies, objectives and dilemmas that have stood in the way of vital cooperation:

“US policy regarding Chechnya exposes the limits of American power even in an age of unbridled US power. Russia’s military interventions in Chechnya were policies that US foreign policy leaders would have liked to stop. In the end, however, policies pursued by both the Clinton and Bush administrations have had little impact on the course of the war in Chechnya.”

Reflecting persistent tendencies and aspirations toward unbridled US power, some of the options suggested in the article bordered on the truly draconian:

“There were and are policy alternatives. Clinton and Bush could have sanctioned Russia by cutting off direct assistance to the Russian government. They could have suspended Russia from membership in the G-8. They could have postponed presidential summits. They could have offered more humanitarian assistance to the region. Even more dramatically, they could have offered their services as a mediator. Theoretically, Chechen and Russian officials could have met at Camp David in 1995 or 2001 to hammer out a political settlement. Hypothetically, they even could have recognized the legitimacy of the elected government of Chechnya and provided direct assistance to the government in exile.”

Although US foreign tactics and ambitions have varied by region, these approaches of sanctions, suspensions and meddling in internal affairs when not invited remain consistent with intrusive policies which have often afflicted America since the Cold War.

In an epilogue written after a deadly Chechen terrorist attack and hostage seizure at the sold-out Dubrovka Theater in Moscow on October 23, 2002, McFaul added his bottom-line conclusion regarding certain cooperative approaches:

“Most dramatically, Bush unambiguously framed his ‘war on terrorism’ and Putin’s ‘war in Chechnya’ as part of one common struggle. The real losers of this united front are the people of Chechnya.”

A debate has emerged whether the U.S. [missed the chance to prevent the Boston bombing](#). Although evidence will materialize over time and despite the acknowledgement of U.S. government officials that a “[trust deficit](#)” may have negatively impacted the earlier investigations, the possibility of prevention might remain a controversy that can never be definitively solved. However, there is one certainty that cannot be called into question: a more cooperative U.S.-Russian bilateral relationship would clearly decrease the risks of such a potential event, both earlier this month and in the future. In this sense, the recent tragedy in Boston could offer a valuable wake-up call for the U.S. government.

Instead of putting in place excessive restrictions on Russian officials as seen in last year’s [Magnitsky Act](#) which was reminiscent of the blacklists of the McCarthy era, establishing policies that instead build links could help to address a range of critical global challenges. Yet while Washington and its representatives sleep on the security front, other actors are taking matters into their own hand in other arenas.

Uncle Sam, please do no harm: Alternative forms of diplomacy in an era of gridlock

Last week, a subtle theme permeated the second annual New York Times Energy for Tomorrow Conference. While on one hand dysfunction in the U.S. federal government has instituted an era of gridlock, innovative initiatives across the private sector and at the state and municipal level of government have continued to drive forward monumental change in the energy sector. In the wake of this structural evolution of governance, corporations and local communities have taken control of their own destiny through a diverse array of revolutionary technologies and investment programs.

In the context of U.S.-Russian relations, a similar example may be seen in the relationship of ExxonMobil and Rosneft – the largest oil companies in each of these respective countries. Through a diverse portfolio of agreements and related ventures, the two leading companies have continued to move forward on projects in the United States, Russia and beyond. Under the leadership of Igor Sechin, Rosneft’s President and Management Board Chairman, the company has taken steps to build bridges and advance the interests of both companies.

At an [investment conference](#) organized by the American Chamber of Commerce in Russia last week, a former Australian diplomat named Glenn Waller was the star of the show. As the President of ExxonMobil Russia, he offered telling comments regarding his company’s joint accomplishments with Rosneft:

"I was happy to hear from Ambassador McFaul that it has been discussed at the highest level between presidents. We have very strong support from various levels of the Russian government."

Consistent with the conclusions of the recent New York Times conference, Waller's quote did not indicate strong support from various levels of the Russian **and US** governments. A more active government support of the US businesses community's efforts most especially through the avoidance of efforts that seek to instigate hegemonic change could represent a strong initial move in that general direction.

The frequently unjustified maltreatment of Russia and its leaders in the US media further engrains long-standing tendencies toward misunderstanding, thereby offering a super-sized cover for equally large policy mistakes by the U.S. government. Despite the recent accomplishments of Igor Sechin, his article for the Time 100 was written by [Vladimir Milov](#) – an exceptionally harsh critic who followed historic precedent in his write-up. In contrast, the April 29 edition of Time magazine also included tributes to U.S. President Barack Obama and the First Lady Michelle Obama by [Hillary Clinton](#) and [Maya Angelou](#) respectively. Reflecting the highest principles of cronyism rather than democracy, Clinton's future political career rests firmly on the continued success and popularity of the Obama Administration over the next three and a half years. Meanwhile, Angelou was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom by President Obama in 2011 – the highest civilian award in the United States and in essence the ultimate pay-off.

Reminiscent of McFaul's earlier discussion of unbridled U.S. power, Angelou ironically mentions in her tribute, "The philosophers tell us that power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely." While no person on this planet is completely free from sin in contrast to public relations spin, another political philosopher named Alexander Hamilton once noted, "The strongest passions, and most dangerous weaknesses of the human breast; ambition, avarice, vanity, the honorable or venial love of fame, are all in conspiracy against the desire and duty of peace." Although such failings may have helped enable the terror in Boston, a reevaluation of ambitions could set the stage for a future peace.

Instead of worrying about what decisions are made on high, efforts by American business leaders like ExxonMobil to continue establishing bilateral links play an invaluable service to both countries. While the palatial setting of Spaso House which Dr. McFaul now calls home may understandably be a difficult place to acquire new humble perspectives regarding unbridled power, initial strides in the right direction by business can offer further momentum which eventually changes the tone and improves the broader bilateral relationship.

Building a cleaner future

Fortunately, the earlier policy alternatives outlined by McFaul were not followed and the American headmaster did not suspend Russia from the G-8 school. To the contrary, Russia currently holds the Chair of the more democratic and inclusive G-20. Under the leadership of President Putin, the [Energy Sustainability Working Group](#) of the G-20 has taken important steps in the energy arena including in the area of green growth. The US Government's support of such cutting-edge initiatives led by Russia offers a viable means for changing direction and following in the wake of the Rosneft-ExxonMobil ship.