

established relationship with FBI. This material eventually became Annex A of the ICA, but its placement in the ICA was not resolved until December 29.

[REDACTED]

B. (U) Confidence Level Debate Over One Judgment

[REDACTED]⁷⁷

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]⁸⁰

76 [REDACTED]

77 (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Admiral Michael S. Rogers, USN, Director, National Security Agency, and Commander, U.S. Cyber Command, March 19, 2018, p. 58.

78 (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 62-65.

79 (U) *Ibid.*, p. 61.

80 (U) *Ibid.*, p. 60.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

C. (U) Discussion of the “Steele Reporting” in the ICA

[REDACTED] The CIA team working on the ICA first learned on December 20, 2016, of information the FBI held and wanted to include in the ICA. Despite the fact that the ICA explicitly excluded ongoing investigations, FBI sought to introduce a summary of the material from former [REDACTED] officer Christopher Steele.¹¹¹

(U) The Committee reviewed the debate over whether and where to include the Steele materials with all participants to the drafting of the ICA. In the first meeting of the Committee with Assistant Director for the Counterintelligence Division (AD/CD) of the FBI, he articulated the FBI’s concerns. First was the directive from the President to include all the information the IC had on Russian involvement in the 2016 presidential election, and this included material that FBI held. Even though the Assistant Director suggested that “the FBI didn’t want to stand behind it,” it qualified for this directive. Second, the question immediately became how to handle this information in the drafting of the ICA. This was ultimately resolved by including the information as Annex A, a two-page summary attached only to the most classified version of the ICA (i.e., the “Memorandum to the President” version).¹¹² FBI officials told the Committee that they “would have had a major problem if Annex A had not been included,” and that FBI believed they “had to put everything in.”¹¹³

[REDACTED] The Assistant Director for [REDACTED] recounted a conversation with FBI Assistant Director for CD on December 22, and recalled the FBI’s interest in “weaving their dossier in the actual text of the report.” Assistant Director for [REDACTED] stated there was no “visibility, at the time of the writing of the report, into the sub-sourcing dynamic for that dossier . . . because of the sub-sourcing, I felt [it] was not appropriate for inclusion in the report and would detract from the report.” The Assistant Director for [REDACTED] told the Committee that when she asked the FBI Assistant Director for CD for more information on the sources for the dossier, the Assistant Director for CD told her that the FBI’s primary source “had not provided information regarding

110 [REDACTED]

111 (U) [REDACTED] Analyst 2, SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Analysts Panel, July 18, 2017, p. 151.
112 (U) Interview with Bill Priestap, Assistant Director, Counterintelligence Division, FBI, April 13, 2017.
113 (U) Interview with [Section Chief, Counterintelligence Analysis Section, CD-1, FBI] April 21, 2017.

[REDACTED]

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the sub-sources, but that [FBI was] able to independently corroborate some of the sub-sourcing. But he did not provide the names or reliability for the sub-sources.” Assistant Director for [REDACTED] said the FBI Assistant Director told her, “We feel very strongly that it should be included and woven into the text,” to which Assistant Director for [REDACTED] stated they would have to “agree to disagree” and that her recommendation would be that the information “not be included in the report. At a minimum, I was thinking it should be pulled out and put in an annex.”¹¹⁴

[REDACTED] When asked to comment on Annex A as it appears in the ICA, Assistant Director for [REDACTED] stated that she concurred with most of the language on the first page of what became Annex A of the ICA.¹¹⁵ However, from where the text in Annex A begins with “the most politically sensitive claims by the FBI source alleging a close relationship between the President-elect and the Kremlin,” the Assistant Director for [REDACTED] stated “from there on down, I can tell you that there is no information coming from [REDACTED] sources that would corroborate any of that.”¹¹⁶

[REDACTED] The Assistant Director for [REDACTED] also noted the FBI insisted on including the Steele reporting because “they didn’t want to look like they were hiding anything,” and that “[t]o me, that sounded fair.”¹¹⁷ The Assistant Director for [REDACTED] and her deputy reviewed the material and sent a copy to Director Brennan and Deputy Director Cohen.¹¹⁸ The Assistant Director for [REDACTED] told the Committee that her understanding was that “the analysts were very much against” putting the FBI material in the ICA.¹¹⁹ “[I]t was very unvetted information,” according to the Assistant Director for [REDACTED], and “some of it made sense.”¹²⁰ “[I]f you look at the theme, are the Russians trying to mess with our elections, that theme is certainly accurate. But the details were really—we wouldn’t be able to come up with a good analytic confidence in them before the ICA was due.”¹²¹ Ultimately, “[e]verybody agreed that it would just be an annex, and then it was agreed there would be a big caveat put on top of the annex, that this is totally unvetted, unverified.”¹²²

[REDACTED] The CIA analysts interviewed by the Committee recalled “at one point the FBI wanted [the Steele reporting] in the text [of the ICA]. The FBI wanted it in one form. We had it in a big text box on page 4. . . . We had a bitter argument with the FBI to put it in an annex.”¹²³ One analyst acknowledged that the material was already circulating, and that “[i]f we hadn’t

114 (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with [AD [REDACTED]], May 25, 2017, pp. 48-51, 53-54, 61.

115 [REDACTED] “Memorandum to the President” version of the ICA only, p. 27.

116 (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with [AD [REDACTED]], May 25, 2017, pp. 53-54.

117 (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with [AD [REDACTED]], May 15, 2017, pp. 77-78.

118 (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 76, 78.

119 (U) *Ibid.*, p. 77.

120 (U) *Ibid.*

121 (U) *Ibid.*

122 (U) *Ibid.*, p. 78.

123 (U) [REDACTED] Analyst 1, SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Analysts Panel, July 18, 2017, p. 155.

[REDACTED]

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addressed it, it would have either created the impression among people who didn't go through the sourcing that we had relied on it, which we didn't, or that we were unaware of it."¹²⁴

[REDACTED] Deputy Director for Analysis stated, "We would have never included that report in a CIA-only assessment because the source was so indirect. And we made sure we indicated we didn't use it in our analysis, and if it had been a CIA-only product we wouldn't have included it at all."¹²⁵

(U) Director Clapper later reiterated to the SSCI in a closed hearing in May 2018:

[REDACTED] *I don't think you'll find in any of the footnotes in the ICA any reference to the dossier. We thought it important to include a summary description of it, but it was not included as an organic part of the ICA. Maybe a difference without a distinction, but to us that was a very important point. For our part, particularly the CIA and ODNI, since we could not validate the second and third-order assets, that's why we did not use it as part of the assessment. We felt—and the whole reason particularly for Jim Comey's part—that we had a duty to warn the President-elect that it was out there, and that was the whole point. But it was not included as an organic part of the assessment.*¹²⁶

[REDACTED] Director Brennan reiterated the CIA's reservations about the FBI's Steele material, noting that the DDA [REDACTED] "was very concerned about polluting the ICA with this material," and that "there was stiff opposition, especially from CIA, to include that material either in essence or in substance in that report," which "was not used in any way as far as the judgments in the ICA were concerned."¹²⁷ Director Brennan stated:

Jim Comey and the FBI felt strongly that, here is a very sensitive document that is being produced by CIA, NSA, and FBI about Russian attempts to interfere in the election and Russian attempts to denigrate one candidate and promote prospects of the other. The FBI has acquired this information that comes from a former foreign intelligence officer from a pretty respectable service, [REDACTED] that includes information of potential kompromat related to Donald Trump. So Jim Comey, with some elegance said: How can we have this report and deliver it to the outgoing President and the incoming President and for he, Jim Comey, to be completely silent on this dossier that a lot of people have seen and that the FBI

124 (U) [REDACTED] Analyst, *ibid.*, p. 152.

125 (U) Deputy Director for Analysis, *ibid.*

126 (U) Closed SSCI Hearing with Former Intelligence Directors, May 16, 2018, pp. 33-34.

127 (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with John Brennan, former Director, Central Intelligence Agency, June 23, 2017, pp. 60-65.

[REDACTED]

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was following up on and doesn't know whether or not Mr. Trump is aware or not?¹²⁸

[REDACTED] When Brennan appeared before the SSCI in a closed hearing in 2018, he stated:

Initially FBI wanted it incorporated into the assessment itself. We all pushed back on that. They wanted it to be included as the last portion of the assessment if it wasn't even going to be used as a finding. We pushed back against that. But Jim Comey made a very strong case, which we didn't object to, that it needed to accompany the assessment because it was related to the issue, and we didn't know where the FBI's investigation was as far as some of those things.¹²⁹

[REDACTED] Director Brennan volunteered to the Committee that around the time he received a call from [REDACTED] who said that:

[H]e wanted to make sure that I understood and that others in the senior officialdom of the U.S. government understood that that officer, Steele, had been a former [REDACTED] officer, but had no current relationship with [REDACTED] and that dossier was not put together in any way with [REDACTED] support. So he wanted to make sure there was a separation there.¹³⁰

(U) Director Comey addressed the question of the dossier and its placement when asked by SSCI Chairman Burr whether he “insisted that the dossier be part of the ICA in any way, shape, or form?” Director Comey replied:

I insisted that we bring it to the party, and I was agnostic as to whether it was footnoted in the document itself, put as an annex. I have some recollection of talking to John Brennan maybe at some point saying: I don't really care, but I think it is relevant and so ought to be part of the consideration.¹³¹

(U) NSA played no role in the debate over the Steele reporting and the ICA. NSA analysts told the Committee they had “no role in drafting, nor role in its inclusion, no role in reviewing the source material, became aware of it as it was appended.”¹³² NSA analysts first

128 (U) *Ibid.*, pp. 60-61.

129 [REDACTED] Closed SSCI Hearing with Former Intelligence Directors, May 16, 2018, pp. 34-35.

130 [REDACTED] SSCI Transcript of the Interview with John Brennan, former Director, Central Intelligence Agency, June 23, 2017, p. 65. When Brennan appeared before the SSCI in 2018, he added that [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] see Closed SSCI Hearing with Former Intelligence Directors, May 16, 2018, p. 44.

131 (U) SSCI Transcript of the Closed SSCI Hearing with James Comey, Former Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, June 8, 2017, p. 49.

132 (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with National Security Agency Panel, May 18, 2017, p. 86.

heard of the information on December 29 and had no insights into Steele’s source network, and the Steele material had no effect on NSA’s views of the Key Judgments of the ICA.¹³³

(U) Admiral Rogers recalled that he heard of this from his team of analysts on December 29 while reviewing a draft of the ICA to which this material had been appended. Admiral Rogers’s initial reaction was that the Steele information ought not be in the body of the ICA, but “let’s put it in the appendix.”¹³⁴

[REDACTED] Director Clapper said he “first heard” of the Steele material in a conversation with Director Brennan “around the 15th of December.”¹³⁵ The NIOs were witting of some of the conversations regarding the Steele material, but “had almost no say in this,” and recalled a “unanimous sense that this was not germane to the judgments and findings in the paper” and “did not add value.”¹³⁶ The NIO for Russia and Eurasia said that they were “comfortable placing it in the annex” because “that remained true to the task.”¹³⁷

[REDACTED] On December 27, a SVTC was held between the four deputies of CIA, NSA, FBI, and ODNI, in order to reach an agreement on where to place the Steele materials in the ICA, with the FBI insisting it remain in the body of the ICA. No agreement was reached and, according to the CIA senior officer assigned to the ICA, Director Brennan left it to the analysts to make the call on where to put it. On December 28, Director Comey was still insisting the document be in the body. On December 29, Deputy Director Cohen and Deputy Director McCabe agreed to place the material in an annex.¹³⁸

[REDACTED] Director Brennan recalled to the Committee: “So as long as it was separated from the ICA’s substance and judgments and as long as it was not going to be part of the formal briefing we gave on the ICA, we felt, ok, Jim [Comey], you want to do it, okay. We’re not going to object.”¹³⁹

D. (U) Finalizing the ICA

[REDACTED] With the placement of the Steele material resolved, the ICA was formalized as a Memorandum to the President, dated December 30, 2016, and handed to the NIOs at the NIC.

133 (U) *Ibid.*

134 (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Admiral Michael S. Rogers, USN, Director, National Security Agency, and Commander, U.S. Cyber Command, March 19, 2018, pp. 69, 71.

135 (U) SSCI Transcript of the Closed Hearing: Former Intel Directors Panel on Russian Interference, May 16, 2018, p. 107.

136 (U) NIO for Russia and Eurasia, SSCI Transcript of the Interview with [NIO for Russia and Eurasia] and [NIO for Cyber Issues], May 9, 2017, pp. 90, 92.

137 (U) *Ibid.*, p. 93.

138 [REDACTED] Interview with [REDACTED] April 13, 2017. [REDACTED]

139 (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with John Brennan, former Director, Central Intelligence Agency, June 23, 2017, p. 62.

2. (U) FBI Reporting

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]³⁶¹

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] The sentence summarizes a key point in this analytic line, which is that

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] This citation, to FBI reporting, resulted in significant confusion in the Committee's review of the ICA. The original set of ICA source documents made available to the Committee in March 2017 included a December 27, 2016, FBI Letterhead Memorandum supporting footnote 222. This LHM did not match the document cited in the footnotes of the ICA, which referred to an LHM of the same date with a different heading.³⁶²

³⁶⁰ [REDACTED] FBI, [REDACTED] October 18, 2016 [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

³⁶¹ [REDACTED] The LHM submitted to the ICA source book reviewed by the Committee [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] all of which are also redacted.

³⁶² [REDACTED] FBI, LHM FBI [REDACTED] *Review for POTUS Tasking on Russian Influence in the 2016 Presidential Tasking*, December 27, 2016 (ICA footnote 222). [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] For background, see also SSCI Transcript of [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] August 22, 2017, pp. 12-17.

[REDACTED] The LHM originally submitted to the Committee was an FBI summary of materials FBI had received from Christopher Steele.³⁶³ The LHM specifically cites the various “company reports” that are included in the Steele material, which are a compilation of reports all titled (and numbered as) “company reports.” Submission of this memo for footnote 222 appears to have been an FBI error, as the LHM did not support the ICA language cited. When the Committee noted this anomaly to the FBI in repeated conversations, as well as noting repeated statements by FBI and CIA that no Steele material was used in the ICA, the FBI withdrew this document.

[REDACTED] It was not until January 28, 2018, that the FBI submitted to the Committee the LHM cited in the ICA footnotes, “FBI [REDACTED] Review for POTUS Tasking on Russian Influence in the 2016 Presidential Election.” [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

3. (U) CIA Reporting

[REDACTED]

363 [REDACTED] As previously discussed, the Steele material was summarized in Annex A of the ICA, “Additional Reporting From an FBI Source on Russian Influence Efforts.” The reports in the Steele material are labeled “company reports,” which the FBI cite as such in their LHM under the designation “CROWN.”

364 [REDACTED] FBI, LHM FBI [REDACTED] *Review for POTUS Tasking on Russian Influence in the 2016 Presidential Tasking, December 27, 2016* (ICA footnote 222).

- [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

IX. (U) The ICA Annexes

(U) The ICA includes an unclassified, twelve-page addendum that provides recommendations jointly prepared by DHS, FBI, and the NIST to protect U.S. election infrastructure and political entities.

(U) The addendum represents a partial response to the original presidential tasking for the ICA, which included a request for recommendations. According to Director Clapper, “[w]hat we ended up doing was focusing on the cyber things that could be done. That’s what generated separately on an unclassified basis the best practices paper that DHS and FBI did.”⁴⁰²

(U) The Committee addresses election security issues in Volume 1 of this report, including some of the recommendations made in this annex.

A. [REDACTED] Annex A: Additional Reporting from an FBI Source on Russian Influence Efforts

[REDACTED] Annex A represents a summary of information provided to the FBI by Christopher Steele. The annex cites [REDACTED] reports, and [REDACTED] [REDACTED] and FBI. The [REDACTED] FBI references cite two LHMs, one of which is a summary of [REDACTED] FBI reports. The second LHM, “Additional CROWN Reporting for USIC Tasking,” was erroneously provided to the Committee

⁴⁰² (U) SSCI Transcript of the Interview with James Clapper, Former Director of National Intelligence, July 17, 2017, p. 42.

as the supporting material for footnote 222. The final citation is an open source reference to an October 31, 2016, piece in Mother Jones.

[REDACTED] Annex A includes qualifiers for the Steele material, but does not mention the private clients who paid for Steele’s work. The Committee found no evidence that analysts working on the ICA were aware of the political provenance of the Steele material.

[REDACTED] CIA shared drafting responsibility for the first portion of Annex A, which states, “Some of the FBI source’s reporting is consistent with the judgments in this assessment,” and the first three footnotes of the ICA are reprised.

[REDACTED] The annex language notes, however, that one aspect of the Steele material [REDACTED]. The assertion that the Kremlin “regretted its decision to intervene” [REDACTED]⁴⁰³

[REDACTED] The Committee asked [REDACTED] whether they had any “intelligence that [REDACTED]” [REDACTED] responded, “We had no reporting of that at all.”⁴⁰⁴ (For more information on this material, see elsewhere in the Committee’s report.)

B. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

403 [REDACTED]
404 [REDACTED] SSCI Transcript of the Interview with Analysts Panel, July 18, 2017, p. 34. For Steele material reference, see [REDACTED] *Putin Now Regrets U.S. Presidential Election Influence Operation*, [REDACTED]