

Breaking Down the Mueller Report
What George Papadopoulos Knew
([Mueller Report Volume 1, p 81-93](#))

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- Trump foreign policy advisor George Papadopoulos learned in April 2016 that Russia had stolen Clinton-related emails and that they planned to release them anonymously to help Trump.
- Papadopoulos has claimed that he did not inform the Trump campaign about this. Yet, Papadopoulos told at least two foreign officials with no connection to the Trump campaign about the hack. He also sent regular updates to campaign staff about contacts with Russian officials.
- Trump campaign officials all claim they could “not recall” having been informed by Papadopoulos that the Russians had hacked the Clinton campaign.

Key Facts from the Report

- On April 26, 2016, Kremlin-linked professor Joseph Mifsud told George Papadopoulos, then a foreign policy advisor on the Trump campaign, that the Russian government had “dirt” on Hillary Clinton in the form of “thousands of emails.” That conversation occurred almost two months before the [first public reporting](#) that Russia had hacked the Democratic National Committee, which was published on June 14, 2016.
- Both before and after the revelation, Papadopoulos sent several emails to his superiors on the campaign, including Corey Lewandowski, Paul Manafort, Sam Clovis, and Stephen Miller, about his interactions with Mifsud and Mifsud’s associates. He also mentioned his conversations with Mifsud at an in-person meeting attended by both Trump and Jeff Sessions.
- Between the Mifsud conversation and July, when Russia began releasing emails stolen from the DNC through WikiLeaks, Papadopoulos told at least two foreign officials that he knew Russia planned to do so. These officials have been revealed to be Greek Foreign Minister Nikos Kotzias and [Australian Ambassador to the U.K. Alexander Downing](#).
- Members of the Trump campaign who were asked about it, including Clovis, Lewandowski, and Miller, claimed to have no memory of whether Papadopoulos had mentioned his advance knowledge about Russia’s email releases – despite the fact that Papadopoulos told multiple foreign officials, and despite their frequent interactions with him at the time.
- When WikiLeaks began releasing emails stolen from the DNC in July, the Australian government relayed the details of Papadopoulos’s conversation with Downing to the U.S. government, prompting the beginning of the Russia investigation.
- Papadopoulos did not inform law enforcement, the intelligence community, or the American public about his advance knowledge of Russian hacking. Instead, he lied to federal investigators about his conversations with Mifsud and two of Mifsud’s associates, significantly impairing law enforcement’s ability to investigate.

Overview

George Papadopoulos’s interactions with the Kremlin-linked professor Joseph Mifsud are key to understanding the Russia scandal. They offer a definitive answer to one of the biggest questions about collusion between the Trump campaign and Russia: What did the Trump campaign know, and when?

Papadopoulos began corresponding with Mifsud on March 14, 2016. After a meeting on March 24, 2016, Papadopoulos “sent an email to members of the Trump Campaign’s foreign policy advisory team,” with the subject line “Meeting with Russian leadership—including Putin.” In the email, he wrote that he had “just finished a very productive lunch with a good friend of mine, Joseph Mifsud, the director of the London Academy of Diplomacy—who introduced me to both Putin’s niece and the Russian Ambassador in London ... The topic of the lunch was to arrange a meeting between us and the Russian leadership to discuss U.S.-Russia ties under President Trump”.

Mifsud informed Papadopoulos on April 26, 2016, that Russia had “dirt” on Hillary Clinton in the form of “thousands of emails” and planned to publish them anonymously. This conversation occurred almost two months before *The Washington Post* became the first news outlet to report that Russia had hacked the Democratic National Committee on June 14, 2016.

According to Mueller’s report, “10 days after meeting with Mifsud in late April 2016, Papadopoulos suggested” to Australia’s top diplomat in the United Kingdom “that the Trump Campaign had received indications from the Russian government that it could assist the Campaign through the anonymous release of information that would be damaging to Hillary Clinton”. He also admitted to investigators that he told the Greek foreign minister “about Russia’s obtaining Clinton-related emails.”

In addition, Papadopoulos provided at least 11 updates on his conversations with Mifsud and Mifsud’s associates to at least six campaign superiors, including at a meeting with Trump himself on March 31, 2016. Papadopoulos corresponded with Stephen Miller, Corey Lewandowski, and Sam Clovis on his Russia contacts. And yet, “when interviewed, Papadopoulos and the Campaign officials who interacted with him told the Office that they could not recall Papadopoulos’s sharing the information that Russia had obtained ‘dirt’ on candidate Clinton in the form of emails or that Russia could assist the Campaign through the anonymous release of information about Clinton.”

These denials strain credulity. Papadopoulos shared Mifsud’s information about Russian hacking with two unrelated foreign officials and contacted the Trump campaign at least 11 times. Papadopoulos also apparently recognized that his knowledge of the information was incriminating, as evidenced by his lies to investigators about his conversations with Mifsud.

Key Questions for the Investigation

- What did Papadopoulos say to the two foreign officials he told about Mifsud’s advance warning of Russian dirt on Clinton? Did he indicate to either of them that he intended to share the information with the Trump campaign as well?
- Was there internal discussion between Trump campaign officials about Papadopoulos’s Russian contacts, including his repeated efforts to arrange a meeting between Trump and Vladimir Putin?
- According to the report, Papadopoulos’s lies “impeded the FBI’s investigation into Russian interference in the 2016 presidential election” (Volume 1, p. 193), most notably by precluding the FBI from properly interviewing Mifsud. What role did Mifsud play in the broader Russian conspiracy to interfere in American democracy?