

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

May 24, 2018

Dr. Avi Yanus and Mr. Dan Zorella  
Founders  
B.C. Strategies Ltd., d/b/a Black Cube  
23 Yehuda HaLevi St.  
Tel Aviv, Israel 65136

Dear Dr. Yanus and Mr. Zorella:

We are writing to request documents relating to reports that Black Cube conducted a “dirty ops” campaign against former Obama Administration officials Ben Rhodes and Colin Kahl at the behest of associates of President Donald Trump. If these reports are accurate, they raise grave questions about how and why a foreign entity was engaged to attempt to secretly influence the foreign policy of the United States.

On May 5, 2018, *The Guardian* reported that your firm was engaged to “orchestrate a ‘dirty ops’ campaign against key individuals from the Obama administration who helped negotiate the Iran nuclear deal.” A source with knowledge of your engagement reportedly stated: “The idea was that people acting for Trump would discredit those who were pivotal in selling the deal, making it easier to pull out of it.”<sup>1</sup>

We have now obtained documents that appear to confirm that your firm attempted to obtain information about Mr. Rhodes and Mr. Kahl through their family members on multiple occasions.

For example, in an email chain originated on June 22, 2017, an individual identifying herself as “Eve Novak,” a production coordinator for Shell Productions, contacted Mr. Rhodes’ wife claiming that she wanted to discuss “a movie revolving around people working in the US government during a major geo-political event.” In a proposal she attached to her email, she described the movie as focusing on the following concept: “Nuclear negotiations with a hostile nation and the negotiations to open relations with a country that has been under embargo for the better part of a century.”<sup>2</sup>

Similarly, in an email chain that originated on May 26, 2017, an individual purporting to be “Adriana Gavrilov,” the head of corporate responsibility at Reuben Capital Partners, contacted

---

<sup>1</sup> *Revealed: Trump Team Hired Spy Firm for ‘Dirty Ops’ on Iran Arms Deal*, *The Guardian* (May 5, 2018) (online at [www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2018/may/05/trump-team-hired-spy-firm-dirty-ops-iran-nuclear-deal](http://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2018/may/05/trump-team-hired-spy-firm-dirty-ops-iran-nuclear-deal)).

<sup>2</sup> Email from “Eva Novak,” Production Coordinator, Shell Productions (June 22, 2017) (online at [https://democrats-oversight.house.gov/sites/democrats.oversight.house.gov/files/documents/Eva%20Novak\\_0.pdf](https://democrats-oversight.house.gov/sites/democrats.oversight.house.gov/files/documents/Eva%20Novak_0.pdf)).

Mr. Kahl's wife based on a pretense involving her children's school.<sup>3</sup> On May 30, 2017, Mrs. Kahl replied that she was "not a staff member" of the school and offered to connect her with "better contacts for discussing possibilities of collaboration with the school"—an offer she repeated in two subsequent emails. However, the individual claiming to be Ms. Gavrilov persisted in attempting to meet specifically with Mrs. Kahl:

- In a June 2, 2017, email, Ms. Gavrilov wrote: "I hope you find this interesting enough to meet me once I am in the USA between 12-20 of June, over a cup of coffee."
- In a June 12, 2017, email, Ms. Gavrilov wrote: "I'd be delighted to chat with you, what number can I reach you at?"
- In a June 15, 2017, email, Ms. Gavrilov wrote: "My offer to grab coffee with you still stands, should you happen to make your way to Europe in the upcoming months."

In addition, an individual identifying himself as "Emile Neri," representing "the French Neri foundation," contacted Mr. Kahl himself. In a May 17, 2017, email, Mr. Neri wrote that his foundation was "looking to host a number of events in Paris in the next few months on the subject of conflicts in the Middle East, Nuclear Proliferation, and how the West can manage these issues." He wrote that he was "looking for experts on how the Obama administration approached these challenges."<sup>4</sup> Mr. Neri persisted:

- In a May 23, 2017, email, Mr. Neri asked for an in-person meeting in Washington, D.C. "in the second half of June."
- In a June 9, 2017, email, Mr. Neri wrote: "Considering your summer vacation and my inability to arrive to DC before your departure date, I would appreciate if you would consider having a cup of coffee with my business partner who is planned to be in the East Coast this coming week (Tuesday 13th to Friday 16th)."
- In a June 12, 2017, email, Mr. Neri wrote: "Let's try to have a cal [sic] this week, Let me know when you might have some time."

Like the operatives who contacted Mr. Rhodes's wife and Mr. Kahl's wife, the operative who contacted Mr. Kahl used a URL that leads to a "page[]" constructed through the free site-

---

<sup>3</sup> Email from "Adriana Gavrilov," Reuben Capital Partners (May 26, 2017) (online at [https://democrats-oversight.house.gov/sites/democrats.oversight.house.gov/files/documents/Adriana%20Gavrilov\\_0.pdf](https://democrats-oversight.house.gov/sites/democrats.oversight.house.gov/files/documents/Adriana%20Gavrilov_0.pdf)).

<sup>4</sup> Email from "Emile Neri," Neri Foundation, to Colin Kahl (May 17, 2017) (online at [https://democrats-oversight.house.gov/sites/democrats.oversight.house.gov/files/documents/Emile%20Neri\\_0.pdf](https://democrats-oversight.house.gov/sites/democrats.oversight.house.gov/files/documents/Emile%20Neri_0.pdf)).

building tool Wix.”<sup>5</sup> The website for Mr. Neri’s foundation is no longer online. The physical address listed in Mr. Neri’s signature block appears to be a design and fashion “concept store.”<sup>6</sup>

The *New Yorker* reported that the contacts with the wives of Mr. Rhodes and Mr. Kahl were “part of an undercover campaign by an Israeli private-intelligence firm to discredit Obama officials who had been leading proponents of the 2015 Iran nuclear deal.” It also reported:

Adriana Gavrilov and Eva Novak appear to be aliases. LinkedIn pages for both Gavrilov and Novak at one point showed a slim blond woman advertised as fluent in Serbian. Shortly after The New Yorker contacted Black Cube about this story, Novak’s LinkedIn page was deleted. The e-mail addresses listed by both women do not work. Calls to the phone number Novak listed went unanswered. The Web sites for Reuben Capital Partners and Shell Productions have been taken down, but both were bare-bones pages constructed through the free site-building tool Wix. The addresses for both companies led to shared office spaces; there is no evidence that Shell Productions or Reuben Capital Partners had ever operated there.<sup>7</sup>

Reuben Capital Partners is the same name used in Black Cube’s operation to suppress allegations that Hollywood investor Harvey Weinstein sexually assaulted and harassed multiple women.<sup>8</sup>

*The Guardian* reported that “[a]ides to Donald Trump” may have known about this campaign, stating that “officials linked to Trump’s team” contacted your firm “days after Trump visited Tel Aviv a year ago.”<sup>9</sup> *The New Yorker* suggested that others may have been involved as well, including a “private-sector client pursuing commercial interests related to sanctions on Iran.”<sup>10</sup>

Your firm has denied these reports only in the broadest terms, stating—in the present tense—that “Black Cube has no relation whatsoever to the Trump administration, to Trump

---

<sup>5</sup> *Israeli Operatives Who Aided Harvey Weinstein Collected Information on Former Obama Administration Officials*, New Yorker (May 6, 2018) (online at [www.newyorker.com/news/news-desk/israeli-operatives-who-aided-harvey-weinstein-collected-information-on-former-obama-administration-officials](http://www.newyorker.com/news/news-desk/israeli-operatives-who-aided-harvey-weinstein-collected-information-on-former-obama-administration-officials)).

<sup>6</sup> Archive 18-20 Website (online at [www.archive1820.com/](http://www.archive1820.com/)).

<sup>7</sup> *Israeli Operatives Who Aided Harvey Weinstein Collected Information on Former Obama Administration Officials*, New Yorker (May 6, 2018) (online at [www.newyorker.com/news/news-desk/israeli-operatives-who-aided-harvey-weinstein-collected-information-on-former-obama-administration-officials](http://www.newyorker.com/news/news-desk/israeli-operatives-who-aided-harvey-weinstein-collected-information-on-former-obama-administration-officials)).

<sup>8</sup> *Harvey Weinstein’s Army of Spies*, New Yorker (Nov. 6, 2017) (online at [www.newyorker.com/news/news-desk/harvey-weinsteins-army-of-spies](http://www.newyorker.com/news/news-desk/harvey-weinsteins-army-of-spies)).

<sup>9</sup> *Revealed: Trump Team Hired Spy Firm for ‘Dirty Ops’ on Iran Arms Deal*, The Guardian (May 5, 2018) (online at [www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2018/may/05/trump-team-hired-spy-firm-dirty-ops-iran-nuclear-deal](http://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2018/may/05/trump-team-hired-spy-firm-dirty-ops-iran-nuclear-deal)).

<sup>10</sup> *Israeli Operatives Who Aided Harvey Weinstein Collected Information on Former Obama Administration Officials*, New Yorker (May 6, 2018) (online at [www.newyorker.com/news/news-desk/israeli-operatives-who-aided-harvey-weinstein-collected-information-on-former-obama-administration-officials](http://www.newyorker.com/news/news-desk/israeli-operatives-who-aided-harvey-weinstein-collected-information-on-former-obama-administration-officials)).

aides, to anyone close to the administration, or to the Iran nuclear deal.”<sup>11</sup> You have not denied the operation itself, you have not explained who was aware of it, and you have not identified the clients who funded it.

### **Request for Information**

For the reasons set forth above, we request that you produce the following documents by June 7, 2018:

- (1) all documents and communications referring or relating to Colin Kahl, Ben Rhodes, their families, or to the aliases Emile Neri, Adriana Gavrilo, Eva Novak, Neri Foundation, Reuben Capital Partners, or Shell Productions;
- (2) all documents and communications referring or relating to the initiation of Black Cube’s engagement to conduct research, perform a “dirty ops” campaign, or “get dirt” on Obama Administration officials, including but not limited to Ben Rhodes and Colin Kahl;
- (3) documents and communications sufficient to show the dates that Black Cube was engaged, formally or informally, to conduct research, perform a “dirty ops” campaign, or “get dirt” on Obama Administration officials, including but not limited to Ben Rhodes and Colin Kahl;
- (4) all documents and communications referring or relating to the scope of Black Cube’s engagement to conduct research, perform a “dirty ops” campaign, or “get dirt” on Obama administration officials, including but not limited to Ben Rhodes and Colin Kahl;
- (5) all documents and communications referring or relating to Black Cube’s attempts to conduct research, perform a “dirty ops” campaign, or “get dirt” on Obama administration officials, including but not limited to Ben Rhodes and Colin Kahl;
- (6) all documents and communications referring or relating to payment to Black Cube to conduct research, perform a “dirty ops” campaign, or “get dirt” on Obama administration officials, including but not limited to Ben Rhodes and Colin Kahl; and
- (7) all documents and communications from, to, copying, or referring to Trump Administration officials or aides of President Trump, including but not limited to Sebastian Gorka.

---

<sup>11</sup> *Israeli Intel Firm Denies It Was Hired by Trump Aides to Discredit Obama Officials*, The Guardian (May 7, 2018) (online at [www.theguardian.com/world/2018/may/07/israel-intel-firm-black-cube-trump-obama-iran-nuclear-deal](http://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/may/07/israel-intel-firm-black-cube-trump-obama-iran-nuclear-deal)).

Dr. Avi Yanus and Mr. Dan Zorella  
Page 5

Thank you for your prompt attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,



Elijah E. Cummings  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Oversight and  
Government Reform



Eliot L. Engel  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Foreign Affairs

cc: The Honorable Trey Gowdy  
Chairman, Committee on Oversight and Government Reform

The Honorable Ed Royce  
Chairman, Committee on Foreign Affairs