



Trump Fires Back at Intelligence Community

President-elect Donald Trump is not backing down in his ongoing war with the intelligence community. Friday morning, he fired a salvo of tweets via his Twitter account. His tweets renew his previous accusations that the document purported to be a “dossier” of his ties *to* — and control *by* — Russia was leaked to the media by the intelligence community.

Because Twitter limits the length of tweets to 140 characters, Trump’s message was broken up into three separate tweets. Starting at 6:05 a.m., he tweeted:



It now turns out that the phony allegations against me were put together by my political opponents and a failed spy afraid of being sued....

Totally made up facts by sleazebag political operatives, both Democrats and Republicans — FAKE NEWS! Russia says nothing exists. Probably...

released by “Intelligence” even knowing there is no proof, and never will be. My people will have a full report on hacking within 90 days!

The “failed spy” referred to in Trump’s multi-Tweet statement is former British MI-6 agent Christopher Steele. Steele is the director of Orbis Business Intelligence, an intelligence company based out of London. The [Orbis website](#) claims:

Our global network of senior associates is made up of regional, industry and academic experts, as well as prominent business figures. We call upon their expertise and closed network of contacts to help our clients frame business decisions, protect our clients’ reputations, and problem-solve for companies facing complex issues worldwide.

Orbis was ostensibly hired by a political opposition research firm in Washington. That firm was working for both Republicans and Democrats to dig up dirt on Trump. If Steele or one of his associates at Orbis is the author of the document, it doesn’t say much for the quality of the company’s work product. The company’s website also claims:

Ethical business practice is a fundamental value for the Orbis Business Intelligence team. Our documented procedures, developed in conjunction with external legal counsel, ensure compliance with relevant UK, US and EU legislation.

No one who has read the dossier on Trump could walk away with the impression that it was anything approaching professional, much less credible. Even BuzzFeed — which ran the full text of the 35-page



Written by [C. Mitchell Shaw](#) on January 15, 2017

dossier — later [admitted](#) that there are some serious problems with the document:

The document was prepared for political opponents of Trump by a person who is understood to be a former British intelligence agent. 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.

Add to BuzzFeed’s list the fact that the grammar in the document is terrible and the format is beyond unprofessional. The document reads more like a caricature of a dossier than it does like anything one would expect from a company operated by a former MI-6 agent. Considering the [claims of anonymous 4Chan users](#) — that they created the document out of thin air as a prank — perhaps Orbis should return whatever fee it was paid for producing the document. After all, that would be an “ethical business practice” when one apparently pilfered content from Internet fanfiction created by the same people who gave the world lolcat and rickrolling.

Trump’s statement in his tweets to Steele being “afraid of being sued” may be a reference to the fact that when the *Wall Street Journal* [identified](#) him as the author of the document, he refused to comment. He later reached out to the *Journal* through an intermediary to say he would not speak to them about the document because it was “too hot.” His co-director, Christopher Burrows, said he would neither “confirm or deny” that Orbis was the company behind the document.

And the *Daily Mail* [reported](#) that Steele “has vanished after being named as the author of a ‘dirty’ file smearing Donald Trump and fled his £1.5million mansion in fear telling his neighbour: ‘Look after my cat.’”

It appears that Trump — who has been known to exaggerate — may have pulled up short this time; Steele appears to be afraid of more than just “being sued.”

Trump ended his flurry of tweets about the intelligence community and the dossier by promising that his “people will have a full report on hacking within 90 days.” His statement was a reiteration of what he said near the end of his press conference:

Within 90 days, we will be coming up with a major report on hacking defense, how do we stop this new phenomenon? — fairly new phenomenon because the United States is hacked by everybody. That includes Russia and China and everybody — everybody.

Trump was likely referring to major hacks over the last two years where the intelligence community and other government agencies failed to prevent hacks at the White House and the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM). Those hacks were — with almost complete certainty — perpetrated by Russia ([the White House](#)) and China ([OPM](#)) and were accomplished as a result of [U.S. surveillance tools backfiring and falling into the hands of foreign hackers](#). It is hopeful that Trump’s “people” will encourage him to use his presidential power to curtail the surveillance state for better national security.



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