

From:	"Kent, George P" (b)(6)
To:	Brink, Bridget A (b)(6) (b)(6)
CC:	Yovanovitch, Marie L (b)(6)
Subject:	Bullying, threatening call by Blue Star's Sally Painter (Re Lutsenko)
Date:	Tue, 6 Sep 2016 16:55:14 +0300

Bridget (b)(6)

Need to give you a heads up that I took a call just now from Sally Painter from Blue Star Strategies, the first time we have interacted. (b)(5) Nearly simultaneously her boss, Karen Tramontano, called on the other line asking to talk to the Ambassador (who is out on the run the rest of the day, event to event).

Painter adopted a hostile, aggressive tone from the outside, and was rude and accusatory throughout. It was unlike any conversation I have had in my 24+ years in the foreign service, and completely inappropriate on her part. (b)(5)
(b)(5)

The topic/issue was Prosecutor General Yuri Lutsenko, and his now cancelled plans to come to Washington – a trip that Blue Star had apparently been arranging.

I wasn't able to scribble notes to follow the specific accusations and bullying remarks. The crux of the accusation was that I had allegedly damaged her/firm's reputation to Lutsenko, and allegedly told him not to have anything to do with them (for the record: I did not tell him that. Full stop). She then proceeded to make rambling reference to "not representing Nikolai in the US" (I presume this is Zlochevsky), "because he has legal representation in the US, or Burisma" (Zlochevsky's company), and that she had represented Yushchenko's interests in the US for five years, and knew what was legal and what was not, and when it was required to register, that she was on the board of the Atlantic Council, and on a pro bono basis had been happy to arrange something with John Herbst (ie, for Lutsenko to speak), and that they also had offered a private dinner for Lutsenko that she and her partner Tramontano would have hosted for Lutsenko at no cost, to invite various people, important people, including Melanne Veveer, who was by the way close to former Secretary Clinton.

After I let her vent for close to five minutes and she reached a pause, I pointed out that we had never previously talked. I noted that her tone and accusations, including outright misrepresentations of my conversations with Lutsenko, was an odd way of initiating a first time conversation. I stated that the first time I had ever heard her name had been earlier this summer, when (b)(6) called and asked me if I would be willing to talk to her. I told (b)(6) I would, and had passed my number. Painter jumped in and said: "you never called back." I reiterated that (b)(6) had asked me if I would be willing to talk to her; I had said yes, and passed him my number, and never heard anything further.

I told her that, given the aggressive, threatening, bullying tone she had adopted and her misrepresentations of what I had said in the course of diplomatic discussion, I was within norms and my rights simply to wish her good day and hang up. I instead offered a partial reset, if she were interested (she was). I told her that I had met the Prosecutor General to talk about his proposed trip. I had given

him the general advice that for a trip to Washington on which he would look to engage the USG, it made sense to work primarily through the US embassy here and the Ukrainian embassy in Washington. We became aware of the trip because a senior DOJ official had reached out to the embassy for our reaction and what we knew of the trip.

Painter broke in at this point and said: "we know that. Government to government meetings would be the responsibility of the Ukrainian embassy." This is in fact a false statement by Painter. Blue Star, through an associate who traveled with Tramontano to Kyiv in July and was previously a DOJ political appointee, reached out to DOJ itself; (b)(6) then called RLA (b)(6) about the visit. That is how we learned of the trip. I subsequently reached out to the Ukrainian acting DCM, (b)(6) who indicated she knew nothing of the request to DOJ.

Beyond arranging govt-govt meetings, I continued, I had suggested to Lutsenko that the proposed timing of his trip (25-27 Sept) was not the best, because of UNGA and attention on international relations focused on New York in the second half of September, and the election season, with key people on the Hill out on the stump six weeks before the general election. That suggested an earlier or later trip. Ukrainian officials had been known to have relations with third parties for other events, and that was their business. Ours was bilateral relations, and that had been my focus.

When Painter went back into interrogative mode, asking whether I had mentioned her company, I told her that it would not be appropriate to share the content of my conversation with the Prosecutor General. She referenced an email that Lutsenko sent "her" (Blue Star), and said I would have to answer if I damaged the reputation of her company, and that she would take it up with the Under Secretary (unspecified).

At that point, I told her I could not and would not presume to characterize Lutsenko's private correspondence, while reminding that she had mischaracterized my conversations with Lutsenko. I wished her good day, and told her the conversation was over. And went back to my regularly scheduled business, since I had kept the visiting regional medical officer waiting in the meantime.

(b)(5)

(b)(5)

Sensitive
This email is UNCLASSIFIED.

Sender:	"Kent, George P" (b)(6)
Recipient:	Brink, Bridget A (b)(6)
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