

Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNMENT REFORM

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July 12, 2018

The Honorable Trey Gowdy
Chairman
Committee on Oversight and Government Reform
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Mr. Chairman:

I am writing to request that you issue a subpoena to Black Cube, a private intelligence agency based in London, Paris, and Tel Aviv, to produce documents it is withholding about its reported participation in a “dirty ops” campaign against former Obama Administration officials Ben Rhodes and Colin Kahl at the behest of associates of President Donald Trump.

On May 5, 2018, *The Guardian* reported that Black Cube 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 the 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.”¹

On May 24, 2018, I sent Black Cube a letter, joined by Ranking Member Eliot Engel of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, releasing new documents confirming that Black Cube attempted to obtain information about Mr. Rhodes and Mr. Kahl through their family members on multiple occasions. We requested that Black Cube provide information about who engaged and funded Black Cube for this “black ops” operation, as well as what communications Black Cube may have had with Trump Administration officials or aides of President Trump.²

On June 7, 2018, Black Cube responded to our request through a letter from its counsel, who refused to provide the documents we sought. The letter stated that “Black Cube takes exception to any suggestion that its work is unlawful or otherwise improper,” but it did not

¹ *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).

² Letter from Ranking Member Elijah E. Cummings, House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, and Ranking Member Eliot L. Engel, Ranking Member, House Committee on Foreign Affairs, to Dr. Avi Yanus and Mr. Dan Zorella, Founders, B.C. Strategies, Ltd. (May 24, 2018) (online at <https://democrats-oversight.house.gov/sites/democrats.oversight.house.gov/files/2018-0524.EEC%20Engel%20to%20Zorella%20Yanus-Black%20Cube.pdf>).

provide any of the requested information about funding for the “black ops” operation or the firm’s communications with President Trump’s aides.

In order to evaluate the extent of Black Cube’s reported “black ops” operations, I request that you issue a subpoena to compel Black Cube to produce the following documents:

- (1) all documents and communications referring or relating to Colin Kahl, Ben Rhodes, their families, or to the aliases Emile Neri, Adriana Gavriolo, 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.

If you decide not to issue this subpoena, then I ask you to place this matter on the agenda for our next regularly scheduled business meeting so all Committee Members will have the opportunity to debate and vote on this motion.

The Honorable Trey Gowdy, Chairman
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Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Elijah E. Cummings". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping flourish at the end of the name.

Elijah E. Cummings
Ranking Member