DIANNE FEINSTEIN
CALIFORNIA

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY - RANKING MEMBER
SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE
COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS
COMMITTEE ON RULES AND ADMINISTRATION

United States Senate

December 6, 2017

Mr. Reince Priebus

Dear Mr. Priebus:

As former Chief of Staff to President Trump, you were at the President's side in the early days of the Administration, before and during the President's decision to fire FBI Director James Comey. Given your role in the White House and your knowledge of the President's actions, we believe that you have information that would assist the Committee in its investigation related to the 2016 presidential election and the dismissal of Director Comey. Accordingly, we are writing to request documents and schedule an interview with you in January 2018.

Before Director Comey was fired, you reportedly asked the FBI to publicly refute media reports asserting that the Trump campaign had "repeated contacts" with Russian officials.[1] FBI Director James Comey apparently refused but an unidentified White House officials told reporters that Mr. Comey cleared you to say publicly that the reporting was inaccurate.

A few months later, President Trump fired Director Comey – a decision that you reportedly were involved in and had warned the President could be problematic.[2] Director Comey has also testified that you were outside the Oval Office when the President asked to speak to him alone and proceeded to speak to him about the FBI's probe of Lt. General Michael Flynn.[3]

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[1] Brian Naylor, "White House Asked FBI To Publicly Refute Reports Trump Associates Had Russia Contacts," NPR (Feb. 24, 2017).

[22] See, e.g., Josh Gerstein, "Trump aides averted more detailed letter justifying Comey firing," Politico (Sept. 1, 2017); Michael D. Shear and Matt Apuzzo, "F.B.I. Director James Comey Is Fired by Trump," New York Times (May 9, 2017).

[3] Statement for the Record of James B. Comey before the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence (June 8, 2017).

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President Trump also reportedly summoned you and senior strategist Stephen Bannon to a meeting with White House Counsel Don McGahn immediately after then-acting Attorney General Sally Yates informed Mr. McGahn that Michael Flynn had lied to Vice President Pence about Flynn's conversations with Russian Ambassador Sergey Kislyak.[4] According to the Washington Post, "within the White House, the matter was viewed skeptically, and Trump, Bannon, Preibus and McGahn for several days remained among the few people briefed."[5]

The Intelligence Community has concluded that Russia interfered in the 2016 election, with the goal of undermining faith in our democratic processes and harming Secretary Clinton's candidacy.[6] As explained in the January 6, 2017 Intelligence Community assessment: "We further assess Putin and the Russian Government developed a clear preference for President-elect Trump."[7] Director Comey was leading the FBI's investigation into Russian interference in the 2016 election – including possible ties to the Trump campaign – when he was summarily dismissed by the President.

The Committee is investigating these matters, and we ask that you provide the following documents in advance of your interview with the Committee, covering the time period from November 9, 2016 to the present:

1. All documents concerning FBI Director Comey's interactions with President Trump or visits to the White House;

2. All documents concerning President Trump's decision to fire FBI Director James Comey;

3. All documents concerning the selection, termination or resignation of Lt. General Michael Flynn as national security advisor;

4. All communications concerning the status, progress, or scope of the FBI's investigation of Russian interference in the 2016 election, including communications regarding press reporting on the investigation;

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[4] Karen DeYoung, Abby Phillip and Jenna Johnson, "Flynn departure erupts into a full-blown crises for the Trump White House," The Washington Post, Feb. 14, 2017.
[5] Id.
[6] Office of the Director of National Intelligence, "Assessing Russian Activities and Intentions in Recent US Elections," ICA 2017-01D, January 6, 2017, at 2-3.
[7] Office of the Director of National Intelligence, "Assessing Russian Activities and Intentions in Recent US Elections," ICA 2017-01D, January 6, 2017.

5. All communications concerning the Trump campaign's or transition team's contacts with Russian government officials, associates, or representatives, including any individuals who purported to act or whom you believed to be acting on behalf of or in concert with Russian government officials, associates, or representatives;

6. All documents concerning the June 9, 2016, meeting among Mr. Kushner, Donald J. Trump Jr., Paul Manafort, and Russian lawyer Natalia Veselnitskaya and others;

7. All documents concerning statements (including drafts) about the June 9, 2016, meeting at Trump Tower, including statements issued on or about July 8 through July 10, 2017, by Donald Trump, Jr., the President, or the White House.

We appreciate your cooperation and prompt attention to this important matter and ask that you provide the requested material as soon as possible, but no later than December 20, 2017. Please contact Brian Privor on my staff at (202) 224-7703 to schedule your interview and discuss arrangements for document production.

Sincerely,

Dianne Feinstein
United States Senator

cc: The Honorable Charles E. Grassley