

NEWS

Ex-Trump aide George Papadopoulos says FBI wanted him to wear a wire

By [Bob Fredericks](#)

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George Papadopoulos

Reuters

A former Trump campaign aide central to the early days of the FBI's Russia probe said the feds wanted him to wear a wire to record conversations with a professor who had told him the Russians had dirt on Hillary Clinton.

George Papadopoulos, [the first of five Trump aides to plead guilty](#) and agree to cooperate in special counsel Robert Mueller's recently concluded investigation, told House lawmakers and staff in a closed-door interview last October that he turned down the FBI request.

A transcript of that interview was released Tuesday by Rep. Doug Jones of Georgia, the top Republican on the House Judiciary Committee, as part of an ongoing effort to sow doubt about the origins of the FBI's investigation into possible coordination between Russia and President Trump's campaign.

Mueller ended his investigation last week without finding a criminal conspiracy between Russia and the Trump campaign to affect the 2016 presidential election, according to a Justice Department summary of his findings released Sunday.

Papadopoulos was a vital figure in the early days of the FBI's investigation.

The revelation that he had learned in an April 2016 meeting in London that Russia had "dirt" on Clinton in the form of thousands of stolen emails helped kick-start the FBI probe months later.

In his interview with lawmakers, Papadopoulos said an FBI agent asked him during a 2017 encounter to wear a wire to record future conversations with the Maltese professor, Joseph Mifsud, who he has said told him about the "dirt."

"And he basically told me that Washington wants answers and you're at the center of this, something like that to make it seem like I was in some deep trouble if I wasn't going to wear a wire against this person," Papadopoulos said, describing his conversation with the agent. "I rejected it."

Papadopoulos said he wasn't sure what to make of Mifsud's claim about Russia having dirt on Clinton since, at the time, "people were openly speculating about that."

"So yeah, it was an interesting piece of information, but you know, by that point you have to understand, he had failed to introduce me to anyone of substance in the Russian government," Papadopoulos said.

"So he failed to do that, but now all of a sudden he has the keys to the kingdom about a massive potential conspiracy that Russia is involved in."

Papadopoulos pleaded guilty last year to lying to the FBI about his conversations with Mifsud and was **sentenced to 14 days in prison**.

With AP

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