Twitter Thread by Heidi Cuda



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■”Former FBI director William Sessions once condemned Russia's mafia. ‘We can beat organized crime,’ he told a Moscow conference in 1997.

“Today,Sessions is a lawyer for Semyon Mogilevich..one of Russia's most powerful organized-crime figures.” @wsj 2007

“Sessions is trying to negotiate a deal with the U.S. Department of Justice for his client, who is charged with racketeering and is a key figure in a separate Justice Department probe of energy deals between Russia and Ukraine.”-@wsj 2007

“A number of notable Washington insiders are earning big fees these days by representing controversial clients from the former Soviet Union.”-@wsj 2007 archives

“From prominent businessmen—some facing criminal allegations—to top politicians, well-known ex-Soviets are lining up to hire help with criminal cases, lobbying and consulting.”-@WSJ 2007 archives

“These figures, many of whom made fortunes in the wide-open 1990s amid the Soviet Union's disintegration,hire Washington insiders to help rehabilitate their reputations in the West or to persuade investors and regulators they are committed to good corporate governance.”-@WSJ 2007

“Sensitive foreign clients are nothing new for Washington's lobbying industry..Jack Abramoff—convicted of fraud and bribery—represented clients in Pakistan and Russia, while Liberian President Charles Taylor, awaiting trial on war-crimes..employed his own DC lobbyist.”-@WSJ 2007

“Recent years have seen a growing number of former Soviet officials and industrialists seeking assistance in the U.S. capital. Many are playing an important role in the global economy, as they wrest ever-greater control of Eurasia's vast energy reserves and resources.”-@WSJ 2007

“All have become politically powerful in their home countries as well, making them -- and by extension their U.S. advisers -- key players in Western efforts to promote regional stability.”-@WSJ 2007 archives

“Among recent examples:

For a $560,000 fee, Bob Dole, the former Senate majority leader and 1996 Republican presidential nominee, helped a Russian billionaire accused by rivals of bribery obtain a visa to visit the U.S. in 2005, among other things.”-@WSJ 2007 archives

“Leonid Reiman, a powerful member of Russia's cabinet and close ally of President Vladimir Putin, uses a Washington public-relations consultant.”-@WSJ 2007

“Reiman is under federal investigation in the U.S. over money laundering and is locked in a high-stakes battle with Moscow conglomerate Alfa for control of a Russian telecommunications empire.”-@WSJ 2007 archives

“Alfa has paid Barbour Griffith & Rogers -- the influential lobbying firm co-founded by Mississippi Gov. Haley Barbour -- nearly $2 million in lobbying fees.”-@WSJ 2007

■■■■■”Paul Manafort, a former adviser to Dole's presidential campaign, has advised a Ukrainian metals billionaire and his close political ally, Ukrainian Prime Minister Viktor Yanukovich.”-@WSJ 2007 archives

■■■■■”Yanukovich, who favors closer ties with Putin's administration, is embroiled in a power struggle with pro-Western Ukrainian President Viktor Yushchenko.”-@WSJ 2007 archives

“In America cases, the details of how these ex-Soviet clients made their fortunes are murky—and the source, amount and purpose of the fees they pay Washington consultants can be as well.”-@WSJ 2007 archives

“In 2005, for example, Ukrainian politician Yuri Boyko used a Caribbean shell company to pay a Washington lobbyist for help arranging meetings with top Republicans.”-@WSJ 2007 archives

■■■■“Boyko, currently Ukraine's minister of energy, was the architect of gas deals between Russia and Ukraine now being investigated by the U.S. Justice Department for possible ties to the alleged mafia client of Mr. Sessions.”-@WSJ 2007 archives

“Boyko said the $98,000 in fees was paid by a small political party he heads. Annex Holdings, the Caribbean firm that paid Mr. Boyko's lobbyist, also had a stake in the gas deals, corporate records show.”-@WSJ 2007 archives

“At times, even clients' names are camouflaged by lobbyists -- despite federal laws making clear that they aren't allowed to disguise identities by taking fees from intermediaries.”-@WSJ 2007 archives

“Without such rules, says prominent Washington ethics lawyer Jan Baran, ‘you would just have a bunch of shell organizations identified as clients of lobbyists and lobbying firms.’”-@WSJ 2007 archives

“In 2004, for instance, a United Kingdom shell company called Foruper Ltd., which had no assets or employees, paid Barbour Griffith $820,000. Foruper was established by an attorney who structured the natural-gas deals being investigated by the U.S. Justice Department.”-@WSJ 2007

“Prosecutors are investigating whether there are ties between the attorney who set up Foruper and Mr. Mogilevich, Mr. Sessions's client.”-@WSJ 2007 archives

“In its filings, Barbour Griffith said the fees were for ‘promotion of greater cooperation and financial ties between Eastern Europe and the West.’

In 2002 and 2003, a group called ‘Friends of Ukraine’ paid Barbour Griffith $320,000.”-@WSJ 2007

“Tax records show that Friends of Ukraine, which no longer exists, was headquartered at Barbour Griffith's own office in Washington. The group's chairman was firm partner Lanny Griffith.”-@WSJ 2007 archives

“Griffith said in an email that the firm as a policy doesn't discuss client matters but added that Barbour Griffith ‘has been scrupulous in our compliance’ with laws governing the disclosure of lobbying clients.”-@WSJ 2007 archives

“Barbour Griffith is locked in a legal battle with associates of Reiman, the Russian minister, whose Washington adviser is a former Wall Street Journal reporter named Mark D'Anastasio. D'Anastasio said he helped Reiman as a favor to a friend but doesn't work for him.”-@WSJ 2007

“Longstanding federal laws require Americans to register with the federal government if they do lobbying or public-relations work for foreign clients. But details in those filings often offer only a vague sense of the work being done.”-@WSJ 2007

“Dole, for instance, disclosed in lobby filings with the U.S. Senate his work for Russian billionaire Oleg Deripaska. He described it as involving "U.S. Department of State visa policies and procedures."-@WSJ 2007

“Deripaska, who has close ties to the Kremlin, emerged from Russia's "aluminum wars" of the 1990s with a virtual monopoly on the nation's aluminum production.”-@WSJ 2007 archives

“Deripaska has been dogged by allegations from business rivals in courts in the U.S. and U.K. that he used bribery, intimidation and violence to amass his fortune. Those accusations, which he denies, have never been substantiated and no criminal charges have been filed”-@WSJ 2007

“But for years they helped keep the State Department from granting Deripaska a visa.”-@wsj 2007 archives

“In 2003, the Russian industrialist paid $300,000 to Mr. Dole's law firm, Alston & Bird... After that, Mr. Dole worked to persuade U.S. officials his client isn't a criminal and that his business operations are transparent, said people with knowledge of the matter.”-@WSJ 2007

“In 2005, the State Department reversed itself and granted the visa. Mr. Deripaska then paid Mr. Dole and his firm an additional $260,000, filings show.”-@WSJ 2007 archives

“Mr. Deripaska traveled to Washington in 2005 and also made trips to the U.S. last year, said people with knowledge of the situation.”-@WSJ 2007 archives



In from the Cold

Washington insiders who represent post-Soviet business and political figures.

Lobbyist	Connection
Bob Dole	Former U.S. senator and presidential candidate helped Russian aluminum magnate obtain a visa to visit the U.S. despite security concerns
William Sessions	Former FBI director represents alleged Russian organized crime figure
Paul Manafort	Former Dole campaign official advises pro-Russian prime minister of Ukraine and formerly advised Ukrainian metals billionaire
Barbour Griffith & Rogers	Mississippi Gov. Haley Barbour's firm received fees from unidentified source through a Ukrainian nonprofit organization set up by Barbour Griffith

“Dole and a State Department spokeswoman declined to comment.

Simon Moyse, a London-based spokesman for Deripaska, said the businessman currently possesses a multiple-entry U.S. visa. He declined to comment further or provide documentation of Deripaska's visa status.”-@WSJ 2007

WHERE THE F*CK WAS THE MEDIA IN 2015????■

“The former Dole strategist Mr. Manafort and a former Dole fund raiser, Bruce Jackson, have received fees and donations from Ukrainian billionaire Rinat Akhmetov, the political patron of Ukrainian Prime Minister Yanukovich.”-@WSJ 2007

“Messrs. Manafort and Jackson played prominent roles in the Ukrainian's recent visit to Washington. The visit included meetings with U.S. officials, including Vice President Dick Cheney.”-@WSJ 2007 archives

“A company controlled by Mr. Akhmetov donated $300,000 in 2005 to a human-rights charity run by Mr. Jackson and his wife, an Internal Revenue Service document reviewed by The Wall Street Journal shows. Mr. Jackson said he was grateful for the support.”-@WSJ 2007 archives

WHY IS PUTIN PROXY MANAFORT STILL ALLOWED ON TWITTER?

“Mr. Manafort, who isn't registered as a consultant to the Ukrainian leader, didn't respond to requests for comment.”-@WSJ 2007 archives

“Mr. Sessions's client, Mr. Mogilevich, is accused in a 45-count racketeering and money-laundering indictment in Philadelphia of masterminding an elaborate stock fraud using a web of shell companies in Europe.”-@WSJ 2007 archives

“The DOJ also is investigating whether there are any ties between Mogilevich and a recent series of billion-dollar natural-gas deals between Russian gas giant OAO Gazprom and Ukraine, people familiar with the matter.”-@WSJ 2007 archives

“The probe is being led by the Justice Department's Organized Crime and Racketeering Section.”-@WSJ 2007 archives

“According to people familiar with the matter, Mr. Sessions recently approached former colleagues at Justice with an unusual offer...”-@WSJ 2007 archives

“Mr. Mogilevich would provide the U.S. with intelligence on Islamist terrorism if prosecutors opened negotiations to resolve his legal problems in the U.S. Federal prosecutors rejected that offer, lawyers and others familiar with the matter said.”-@WSJ 2007 archives

“Sessions's firm and a DOJ spokesman declined to comment.

“The Mogilevich talks were brokered by a Washington security expert named Neil C. Livingstone—who was briefly in the news during the 1980s Iran-Contra scandal for his work on terrorism issues with Oliver North.”-@WSJ 2007

“He declined to discuss the Mogilevich talks, other than to say they involved ‘very sensitive issues.’"-@WSJ 2007 archives

“Until recently, Mr. Livingstone was chief executive of GlobalOptions, a Washington corporate-intelligence firm he founded. Mr. Sessions sits on the firm's advisory board. Most of its clients, the firm says, ‘operate in Russia and the Caribbean.’"-@WSJ 2007 archives

“GlobalOptions has worked with former Soviet businessmen in the past. In 2004, Mr. Livingstone said, lobbyists at Barbour Griffith introduced GlobalOptions to a Cyprus-based firm called Highrock Holdings.”-@WSJ 2007 archives

“Highrock is controlled by Dimytro Firtash, a Ukrainian businessman who acknowledges the company's major shareholders once included Mr. Mogilevich's wife.”-@WSJ 2007 archives

“In 2003-2005, Mr. Firtash brokered several billion-dollar deals between Gazprom and the government of Ukraine. They netted big profits for Highrock -- and criticism from the U.S. ambassador to the Ukraine at the time for the deals' lack of transparency.”-@WSJ 2007 archives

“Mr. Livingstone said Highrock hired GlobalOptions in 2004 to help it win federal safety certification for passenger jets it hoped to export to Central Asia.”-@WSJ 2007 archives

“However, in a recent lawsuit filed by GlobalOptions against Highrock claiming unpaid bills, the security firm alleged that Mr. Firtash hired GlobalOptions for an unspecified ‘special operation’ on behalf of a Ukrainian government official.’"-@WSJ 2007 archives

“The two sides ceased litigating the suit, which was filed in U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia, after the bill was paid, but the suit was never withdrawn.”-@WSJ 2007 archives

"'We have no knowledge of a company called GlobalOptions,'" a spokesman for Mr. Firtash said, adding that he severed his ties to Mr. Mogilevich several years ago.”-@WSJ 2007 archives

For more on “legal bribery”, please read: https://t.co/RisRJtBNMM

> \U0001f534 Second Impeachment: American Kompromat
>
> \u2018We Have to Prosecute Trump To the Fullest Extent of the Law\u2019@craigunger tells @Heidi_Cuda that the most terrifying aspect of modern America is the things that are still legal
> \U0001f53d
>
> https://t.co/rCPXQm2ZRA
>
> — Byline Times (@BylineTimes) February 9, 2021

“Sessions was accused of improperly using an FBI plane to visit his family as well as..installing a security fence around his home on the government’s dime. A DOJ report found Sessions avoided paying taxes on use of his FBI limousine for his commute.”
https://t.co/kd4IEYc1BR @ABC