

November 15, 2021

Via First Class Mail

Mr. Bud Kliment
Interim Administrator
The Pulitzer Prizes
709 Pulitzer Hall
New York, New York USA 10027

Re: 2018 Pulitzer Prize for National Reporting
DEMAND LETTER, NOTICE OF POTENTIAL LITIGATION AND NON-SPOILIATION OF EVIDENCE

Dear Mr. Kliment:

This office represents President Donald J. Trump. In a letter dated October 3, 2021, a copy of which is annexed hereto for your reference, President Trump called your attention to the Pulitzer Prize Board's erroneous decision to award *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post* with the 2018 Pulitzer Prize for National Reporting. As highlighted in President Trump's letter, it has recently become apparent that the subject articles were based on incontrovertibly false information provided by dubious sources who were maliciously attempting to mislead the public and tarnish our client's reputation.

These sources are now facing criminal charges for their illicit conduct. On September 16, 2021, attorney Michael Sussman was charged with providing false statements to the FBI when he reported potential incidents of cooperation between our client and Russia. It has now been revealed that he was acting at the behest of the Clinton Campaign and that the accusations made by him were entirely fabricated.

Thereafter, on November 3, 2021, another analyst associated with the Clinton Campaign, Igor Danchenko, was charged with making false statements to the FBI. Specifically, it is alleged that Mr. Danchenko, who has been identified as a key contributor to the widely debunked "Steele Dossier," lied to the FBI when he denied colluding with the Clinton Campaign in providing his contributions to same.

Despite these revelations, the Pulitzer Prize Board has failed to take any action to correct, retract, or otherwise repudiate the false reporting contained in the subject articles. **Even one of the recipients of the award, *The Washington Post*, has acknowledged the unsubstantiated nature of its reporting as it relates to these events. Specifically, on November 12, 2021, *The Post* retracted statements from several articles relating to the Steele Dossier and the alleged Russia-Trump connection and its executive editor proclaimed that "*The Post* could no longer stand by the accuracy of those elements of the story."** On the same day, *The Post* also published an op-ed authored by one of its columnists calling for CNN to retract its coverage of the Steele

Dossier, noting that “[t]he Danchenko indictment contextualizes the flimsiness” of the document and pointing to such misleading coverage as an example of why “many people mistrust CNN.”

Meanwhile, the Pulitzer Prize website still maintains that the subject articles were “deeply sourced” and refers to “Russian interference in the 2016 presidential election and its connections to the Trump campaign, the President-elect’s transition team and his eventual administration.” By failing to remove these statements, revoke the award, or even publicly comment on the illegitimate nature of the works, the Pulitzer Prize Board is actively advancing the false narrative contained therein and promoting defamatory statements against our client.

Based on the foregoing, it is hereby demanded that the Pulitzer Prize Board take immediate steps to strip the *New York Times* and *The Washington Post* of the 2018 Pulitzer Prize for National Reporting. Pulitzer Prize Board’s failure to do so will result in prompt legal action being taken against it. Please be guided accordingly.

Furthermore, please be advised that the Pulitzer Prize Board is under a legal duty to retain and not destroy or alter in any way any and all evidence, records, documents, notes, summaries, memoranda and/or data, including electronic information, that may be relevant to our client’s potential claims.

For purposes of this notice, electronic information, data or evidence shall include, but not be limited to, all text files (including word processing documents), presentation files (such as PowerPoint), financial data, spreadsheets, e-mail correspondences, e-mail files, and information concerning e-mail communications and files (including logs of e-mail history and use, header information, and deleted files), internet history files and preferences, graphical files in any format, databases, calendar, and scheduling information, task lists, voicemails, text messaging, app-based messaging, instant messaging, and other electronic communications, telephone logs, contact managers, computer system activity logs, and all file fragments, internet use files, offline storage, or information stored on removable or storage media, information contained on computers, laptops, cell phones, I-Pads or other portable devices, network access information, and backup files containing electronic data or evidence.

Specifically, the Pulitzer Prize Board is instructed not to destroy, disable, erase, encrypt, alter, or otherwise make unavailable any electronic data and evidence relevant to our client’s potential claims, and the Pulitzer Prize Board is instructed further to take reasonable efforts to preserve such data and evidence. To meet this burden, the Pulitzer Prize Board is instructed by way of example and not limitation, to preserve any photographs, videotapes, or audio evidence; preserve all data storage backup files (i.e., not overwrite any previously existing backups); preserve and retain all electronic data generated or received by the Pulitzer Prize Board and any of its members, employees, agents, associates, officials or any third parties who may have personal knowledge of the facts related to our client’s claims as set forth above; refrain from operating, removing, or altering, fixed or external drives and media attached to any workstations or laptops, voicemail systems, and cell phones, copy machines that are reasonably thought to have data related to the claims; preserve and retain all data from servers and networking equipment that log network access activity and system authentication; preserve and retain all electronic data in any format, media, or location relating to the claims, including data on hard drives, hard disks, floppy disks,

zip drives, CD-ROMs, CD-RWs, DVDs, backup tapes, PDAs, cell phones, smartphones, memory cards/sticks, or digital copiers or facsimile machines; safeguard against the automatic deletion, expiration or overwriting of any electronic data related to our client's potential claims, and take such other security measures, including, but not limited to, restricting physical and electronic access to all data stored electronically that are related, directly or indirectly, to our client's potential claims.

Failure to take all reasonable steps towards preserving any evidence will expose the Pulitzer Prize Board to civil liability for the spoliation and/or destruction of evidence. Any direction to any other person, potential party or entity to do the same will result in an additional claim against the Pulitzer Prize Board and that party.

Very Truly Yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Alina Habba", with a long, sweeping horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Alina Habba, Esq.

For HABBA MADAIO & ASSOCIATES LLP

Encl.

cc: Donald J. Trump



DONALD J. TRUMP

September 30, 2021

**Mr. Bud Kliment
Interim Administrator
The Pulitzer Prizes
New York, New York**

Re: Demand for Revocation of the 2018 Pulitzer Prize for National Reporting

Dear Mr. Kliment,

I call on the Pulitzer Prize Board to immediately rescind the 2018 Pulitzer Prize for National Reporting awarded to the staffs of *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post*, which was based on false reporting of a non-existent link between the Kremlin and the Trump Campaign. As has been widely publicized, the coverage was no more than a politically motivated farce which attempted to spin a false narrative that my campaign supposedly colluded with Russia despite a complete lack of evidence underpinning this allegation.

When the Board announced the prize, it lauded the recipients "for deeply sourced, relentlessly reported coverage in the public interest that dramatically furthered the nations' understanding of Russian interference in the 2016 presidential election and its connections to the Trump campaign, the President-elect's transition team, and his eventual administration." Specifically, the prize was awarded for a series of articles centered around the now-debunked Russia collusion conspiracy theory. The headlines themselves were extremely sensational and leaned heavily on unsubstantiated anonymous sources. For example, much of the information contained in these articles were credited to "people with knowledge," "current and former officials," "some senior U.S. officials," and other vaguely defined individuals. As a result, the public was deprived of an independent means of assessing their credibility, their potential for political bias, and the source of their knowledge.

For two years, these institutions feverishly pushed one Russia story after another and – despite lacking any credible evidence – attempted to persuade the public that my campaign had colluded with the Russian government. Contemporaneously with that reporting, numerous conservative news outlets and commentators questioned the legitimacy of these reports, exposing the clear logical fallacies contained in their narratives and pointing to the clear lack of evidence underpinning them.

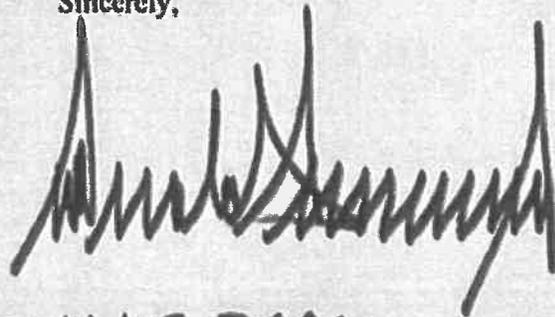
It has since been confirmed that the allegations were false and I have been exonerated of these charges. Most recently, John Durham's indictment of former cybersecurity attorney and Hillary Clinton Campaign attorney, Michael Sussman, serves as a damning repudiation of the media's

obsession with the collusion story. The indictment pointedly accuses Mr. Sussman of making false statements to the FBI when he presented "evidence" purporting to show secret communications between my organization and the Russia-based Alfa Bank. At the time, Mr. Sussman assured the FBI that he was providing this information of his own accord, and not at the behest of any particular individual or entity. The indictment reveals, however, that Mr. Sussman was working with other Democrats and billing his time to the Clinton campaign. Importantly, the indictment reinforces the falsehood of the Alfa Bank connection, stating that "the FBI's investigation revealed that the e-mail server at issue was not owned or operated by the Trump Organization but, rather, had been administered by a mass marketing email company that send advertisements for Trump hotels and hundreds of other clients."

For over a century, the Pulitzer Prize has been widely recognized as a significant achievement in the field of journalism. It has been viewed by many as an honor that is meant to be bestowed upon well-deserving recipients in recognition of their groundbreaking journalistic efforts. This level of reverence carries with it a very important connotation, namely that the reporting itself is inherently deemed credible, well-sourced and trustworthy. Given this powerful presumption, there is a heavy burden to ensure that these works are continuously and closely examined as to the veracity of the information contained therein. When it becomes apparent that a Pulitzer Prize-winning work was based on shoddy, dubious and manifestly false reporting – as is the case here – the Pulitzer Prize Board must react accordingly.

Ultimately, my hope is that the recipients of the 2018 Pulitzer Prize for National Reporting, *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post*, will voluntarily surrender this award in light of recent revelations. However, should they fail to do so, I would expect that you will take the necessary steps to rectify the situation, including stripping the recipients of their prize and retracting the false statements which remain on the Pulitzer website. Without holding the recipients to such a high standard of accountability, the integrity of the Pulitzer Prize namesake stands to be wholly compromised.

Sincerely,



P.S. OUR COUNTRY HAS BEEN
HURT SO BADLY BY THIS
CRIMINAL SCAM. PLEASE DO
THE RIGHT THING.