

EXHIBIT A

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF VIRGINIA

Alexandria Division

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA)
)
 v.)
) Case No. 1:20-CR-193
 PETER RAFAEL DZIBINSKI DEBBINS,)
)
 Defendant.)

**UNCLASSIFIED DECLARATION OF
SPECIAL AGENT JEFFREY B. PARSONS**

I, Jeffrey B. Parsons, hereby declare and state as follows:

1. I am a Special Agent with the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), and have been since March 2003. During this time, I have received training on investigative methods and training specific to counterintelligence, espionage and national security matters. I currently am assigned to investigate counterintelligence and espionage matters.

2. I am one of the primary case agents assigned to the investigation and prosecution of the defendant, Peter Rafael Dzibinski Debbins. As part of the investigation, the FBI conducted a series of voluntary interviews with Debbins from July 2019 to December 2019. The interviews were recorded, and the FBI has prepared draft transcripts of them. I participated in all of Debbins's interviews with the FBI. Debbins was informed at the beginning of each interview that the interview was voluntary. Debbins was also frequently admonished that his statements during the interview were required to be truthful and that making a false statement could be considered a violation of federal law. If it would assist the Court, the FBI can, upon request, provide the recordings and transcripts of its interviews with Debbins for the Court to review in camera.

3. I submit this declaration for the limited purpose of providing the Court with the evidentiary basis for certain information that the government relies upon in its response to the defense's sentencing memorandum. This declaration does not set forth all of my knowledge about this matter. The statements in this declaration are based on my personal observations (including my participation in interviews with Debbins), my review of the transcripts and recordings of Debbins's interviews with the FBI, information obtained from other law enforcement agents, and information obtained from other government agencies.

A. Debbins's Claim of Threats by Russian Intelligence Agents

4. In Debbins's letter to the Court dated February 2, 2021, he explained that one reason for his continued cooperation with the Russian intelligence agents was their threats against him and his family. Debbins specifically stated: "The threats the GRU made to me were both overt in nature and subtle in nature. They told me they could eliminate me anywhere in the world and that someone would end up finding my corpse in the trunk of a car. They also subtly mentioned examples of others being imprisoned for their refusal to acquiesce to their propositions." This allegation of threats by the Russian intelligence agents as a motivating factor is inconsistent with the statements made by Debbins during his interviews with the FBI.

5. The issue of whether the Russian intelligence agents threatened or blackmailed Debbins came up in his first interview with the FBI on July 11, 2019. During the interview, Debbins was asked about his motivation for providing information to the Russian intelligence agents. Debbins responded, "I didn't want anything bad to happen to my wife or her family was initially it and the other one was, well, I need to cooperate with these people if I want to do business in Russia." Debbins was then asked if the Russian intelligence agents ever threatened or blackmailed him. Debbins responded, "No." Debbins stated that the Russian intelligence agents "read [him] the riot act" in 1996 for being in Russia without a visa. Debbins quoted the

Russian intelligence agents as saying that they could “ban [his] future visits to Russia or ban [him] about five years.” But he said “that was the only . . . specific threat that they had towards [him].”

6. During a subsequent interview with the FBI on July 14, 2019, Debbins further discussed the Russian intelligence agents’ comments in 1996 about the consequences of being in the country without a visa. I asked Debbins whether the Russian intelligence agents tried to link the potential consequences of not getting a visa to his cooperation. Debbins answered, “No.” Debbins characterized it as the Russian intelligence agents telling him “don’t do this again but they sorta said hey you can be in jail for five years.”

7. Further, during his interviews with the FBI, Debbins never indicated that he was threatened with imprisonment. Nor did he describe any statements by the Russian intelligence agents that others had been imprisoned for refusing to cooperate with them.

8. The issue of whether Debbins feared imprisonment from the Russian intelligence agents came up during the July 14, 2019 interview. In that interview, Debbins described how a Russian intelligence agent accused him of being a spy for the CIA during one of their meetings.¹ My FBI colleague asked Debbins whether he had any fear of being harmed or imprisoned. Debbins stated, “No because, well, if I’m not working for the CIA, why would I worry about it?” Debbins did not suggest that he worried at any point about the Russian intelligence agents imprisoning him if he did not cooperate.

9. During his interviews with the FBI, Debbins recalled a time when the Russian intelligence agents made a comment similar to being a corpse in the trunk of a car, but the comment was not made in the context of a threat. Specifically, in an interview conducted on

¹ This incident is described in paragraph 28 of Debbins’s Statement of Facts.

December 20, 2019, Debbins described a conversation with Russian intelligence agents on the possibility of cooperation between the United States and Russia in conducting counterterrorism operations in the Caucasus Region of Russia. Debbins recounted the Russian intelligence agent's response as, "don't go there, cause you'll . . . end up dead in somebody's trunk."

Debbins did not describe this statement as a threat, and the context of the conversation demonstrates that it was not made as a threat.

B. Debbins's Claim of Russian Intelligence Agents' Use of His Same Sex Attraction

10. In Debbins's letter to the Court dated February 2, 2021, he made several statements identifying his same-sex attraction (SSA) as a motivating factor for his cooperation with the Russian intelligence agents. Specifically, Debbins noted, "During the 1997 meeting, one of the GRU told me they knew of my SSA. I feared they would tell my wife, her family, and the US Army." In the same statement, Debbins also explained as follows: "I wish I had explained to the FBI how my concealment of my SSA and mental pathologies denominated every decision and action in my younger life and my interactions with GRU. They would have seen that my actions had no malicious intent nor reason to believe that I wished harm would come to our country."

11. In fact, the FBI and Debbins discussed the issue of his same-sex attraction and whether the Russian intelligence agents knew about it. During the interview conducted on July 14, 2019, Debbins discussed the Russian concept of "kompromat,"² and he was specifically asked about his homosexual tendencies and if the Russian intelligence agents were aware of

² In the context of the interview with Debbins, I understood the term "kompromat" to refer to a Russian word meaning compromising material which could be used to blackmail somebody for influence. In the same interview, Debbins described kompromat as an indiscretion.

them. In his answer, Debbins stated that he “didn’t have any homosexual contact like other guys or stuff like that” but that he “looked at gay pornography.” Debbins stated that he assumed that the Russian intelligence agents were aware and that his concern about them knowing was a motivation to be cooperative. However, I asked Debbins whether the Russian intelligence agents ever hinted to him that they knew, and Debbins answered that they did not.

12. During his interviews with the FBI, Debbins denied that the Russian intelligence agents tried to blackmail him.

13. During the last interview conducted on December 20, 2019, I asked Debbins, “what was the biggest thing . . . that you think they used, overtly, covertly, implicitly, to encourage the relationship?” Debbins answered, “They just let me feel validated. You know . . . my meaning . . . was as a loyal son of Russia. Uhm, I felt, you know, encouragement from them.” Debbins explained, “my mother being Russian, . . . they . . . help[ed] reinforce that self-image.”

C. The Polygraph Administered by the FBI in October 2019

14. In Debbins’s letter to the Court dated February 2, 2021, he states that, in the period between 2014 and his arrest, he “[w]as paranoid of the GRU and loved ones.” Debbins explains, “I thought my wife and daughter were working for the GRU, which may explain why I didn’t pass the 2019 FBI polygraph. The FBI didn’t believe me when I told them that I had no post-2010 contacts.”

15. For the background of the Court, the FBI began investigating Debbins after he failed a polygraph as part of his security clearance reinvestigation in early July 2019. Between July 2019 and December 2019, the FBI interviewed Debbins on multiple occasions about his cooperation and contacts with Russian intelligence agents. During these interviews, Debbins

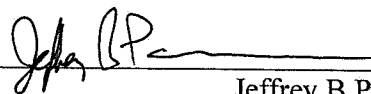
claimed that he stopped cooperating with the Russian intelligence agents after 2010. At the FBI's request, Debbins agreed to take a polygraph examination regarding whether he had any communication with the GRU or any other branch of Russian intelligence after 2010.

16. The FBI administered the polygraph to Debbins on October 23, 2019. Before the polygraph, Debbins signed two forms—a “Consent to Interview with Polygraph” and an “Advice of Rights.” During the examination, the polygrapher asked Debbins whether he had any contact with Russian intelligence or the GRU since 2011. Debbins failed the polygraph.

17. During the interview immediately following the failed polygraph, Debbins continued denying any contact with the GRU since 2011. He offered a number of explanations as to his inability to pass. However, Debbins did not mention any paranoia that his wife and daughter were working for the GRU as a possible explanation. In fact, Debbins explicitly told the FBI that his wife was not involved with the Russian intelligence service during a separate interview.

18. I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct.

Executed on May 11, 2021



Jeffrey B Parsons
Special Agent
Federal Bureau of Investigation