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Nov. 2024

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(b)(1), (b)(3), (b)(7)(E)

Memorandum from the National Intelligence Council

17 JAN 2015 2009

25 AUGUST 2015



(b)(3)

Russian Escalation Against the US in the Cyber and Intelligence Realms

Memorandum for:

Stephanie O'Sullivan
Principal Deputy Director of National Intelligence

From:

(b)(3), (b)(6)

National Intelligence Officer for Russia and Eurasia

(b)(3), (b)(6)

National Intelligence Officer for Cyber Issues

(b)(3), (b)(6)

National Intelligence Officer for Counterintelligence

Reference:

(b)(3)

In Response to your request for analysis of recent notable Russian activity in the cyber realm.

(U) This memorandum was prepared for the National Intelligence Council under the auspices of the National Intelligence Officer for Russia and Eurasia, the National Intelligence Officer for Cyber Issues, and the National Intelligence Officer for Counterintelligence. It was drafted by the NIC (b)(3)

Questions about this memorandum may be directed to the NIO on secure (b)(3) commercial (b)(3)

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(b)(1), (b)(3), (b)(7)(E)

(U) Key Points

(b)(3) We judge that Russia has moved to escalate its use of intelligence and cyber capabilities against the United States, based on Moscow's demonstrated willingness to disclose information collected through cyber espionage without fear of nominal attribution or retribution. (b)(1), (b)(3)

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(b)(3) Over the next few weeks, Moscow will probably consider whether to engage in additional cyber and intelligence operations with the potential to meddle in the US elections. It is also possible that the Kremlin has already decided to do so. A desire to discredit both the US political system and the candidates almost certainly motivates Moscow. Putin might assess that weakening the next US president's standing would give him a stronger hand in dealing with his new counterpart.

(b)(3) Putin's diplomatic track record reveals few—if any—instances where he has backed down from a position to which he had committed himself and where the Kremlin was able to maintain a degree of deniability. (b)(1), (b)(3)

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(b)(3) **An Escalatory Period with Intelligence Matters Becoming Public**

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- (U) Russia's 17 June expulsion of US Embassy personnel following US expulsions of Russian diplomats in response to the physical assault on 6 June by a Russian FSB officer against a US accredited diplomat at the US Embassy in Moscow;
- (U) The 22 July disclosure by Wikileaks of DNC information that "Guccifer 2.0" claimed responsibility for hacking;
- (U) The DOJ and FBI press announcement on 29 July that they have strong evidence that Russian intelligence was behind a range of additional cyber intrusions, followed by the 30 July announcement by the Federal Security Service (FSB) that foreign intelligence services had planted malware on multiple Russian defense sector organizations;
- (U) Press reports on 11-12 August that the United States Government was considering options to respond to Russian cyber operations, ranging from counter-hacking to sanctions followed by the 12 August disclosure by DCLeaks.com of the personal cell phone numbers and private e-mail addresses of many congressional members;
- (U) The 16 August disclosure by DCLeaks.com of documents from George Soros's Open Society Foundation;
- (b)(1), (b)(3)
- (U) Press reports on 23 August about Russian hackers gaining access to and collecting information from a major US newspaper.

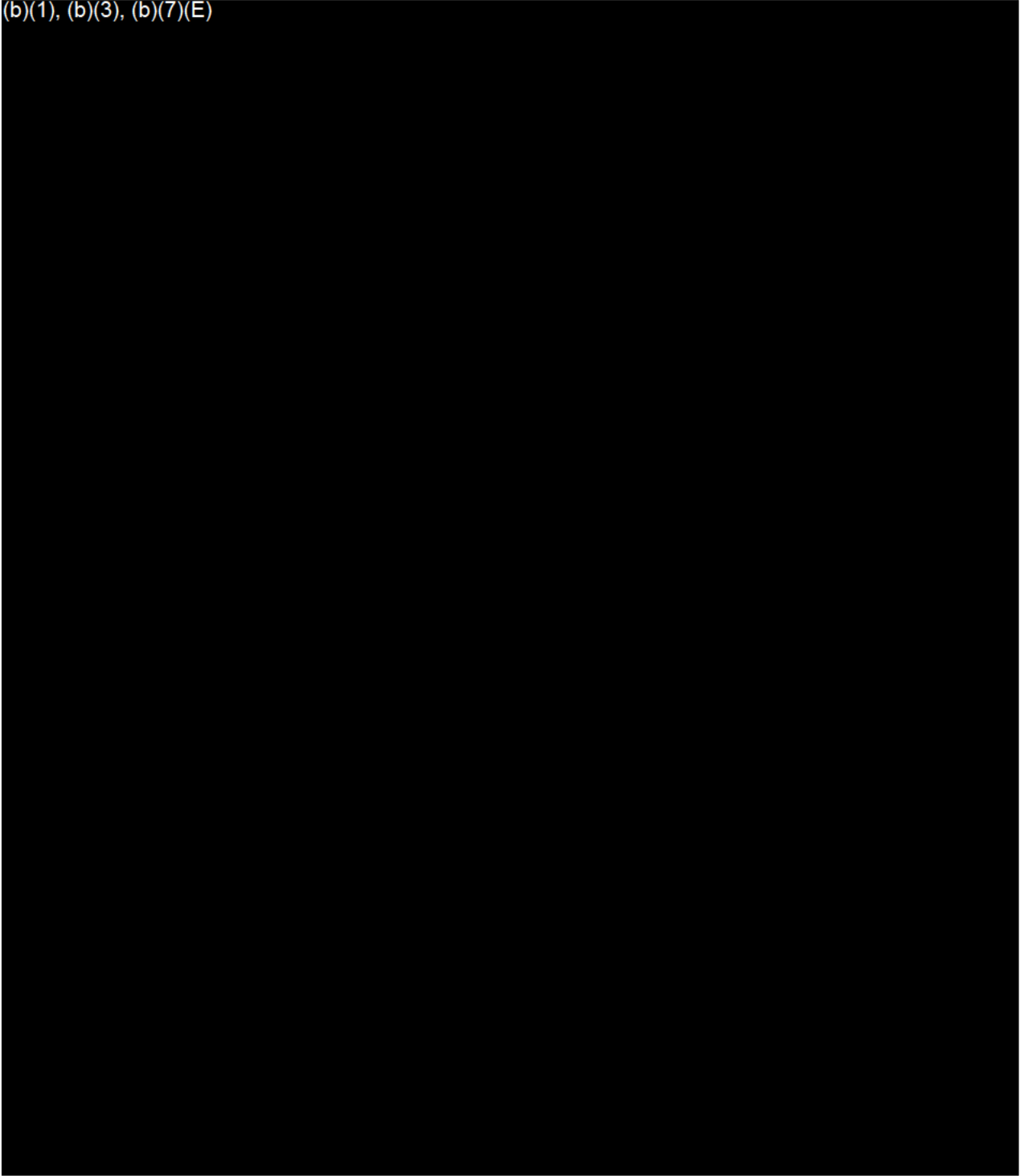
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(b)(3) More Meddling in US Politics Likely if Putin's Thinking Goes Unaltered

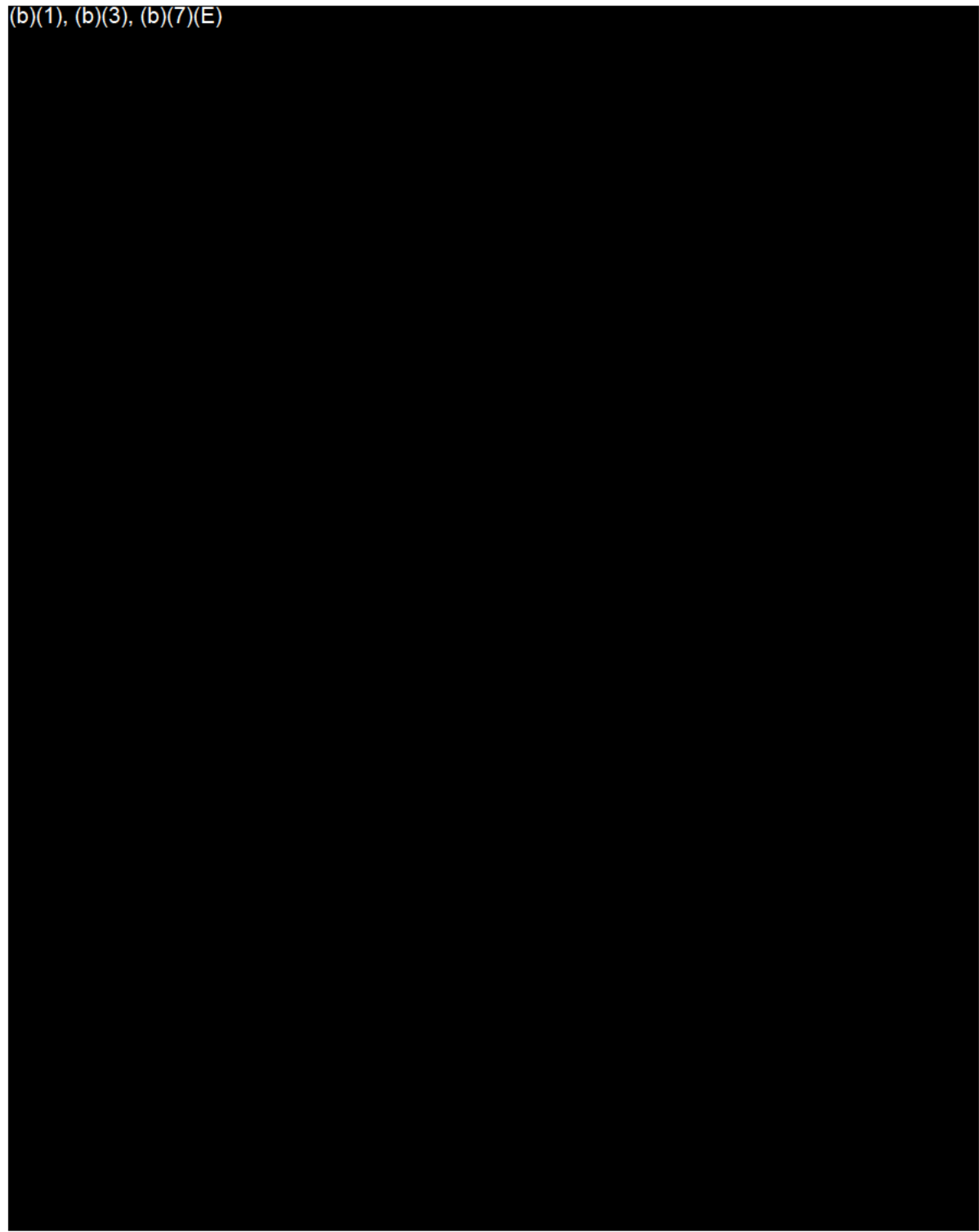
(b)(3) Over the next several weeks, Moscow will probably consider whether to engage in additional cyber and intelligence operations with the potential to meddle in upcoming US elections. It is also possible that the Kremlin has already decided to do so. A desire to discredit the US political system and the candidates almost certainly motivates Moscow. Moscow seeks to create conditions that favor Russian interests, such as weakening the next US president's standing, which Putin might calculate would give him a stronger hand in dealing with his new counterpart in January.

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