

NEXT STOP: JARED

This morning at 8, I was on Democracy Now talking about how then reported and now completed Flynn plea agreement would focus attention directly on Jared.

Since then, Mike Flynn indeed pled guilty to one charge of false statements to the FBI about various conversations with Sergei Kislyak, promising he'd fully cooperate with Mueller's inquiry. Reports describe that Flynn spoke with an unnamed senior advisor who was at Mar A Lago at the time about his December 29 conversations with Kislyak, which pertained to Russian sanctions. They also say Flynn will testify against Trump and members, plural, of his family, particularly regarding the orders he had to reach out to Russia.

The other lie charged about conversations with Kislyak involves a request that Russia try to delay or shut down a vote on condemning Israel's illegal settlements.

That's a key lie, because we know who was pushing that: Jared Kushner (though the court filing suggests it might be someone even more senior).

Robert Mueller's investigators are asking questions about Jared Kushner's interactions with foreign leaders during the presidential transition, including his involvement in a dispute at the United Nations in December, in a sign of the expansive nature of the special counsel's probe of Russia's alleged meddling in the election, according to people familiar with the matter.

The investigators have asked witnesses questions about the involvement of Mr. Kushner, President Donald Trump's son-in-law and a senior White House adviser, in a controversy over a U.N. resolution passed Dec. 23, before Mr. Trump took office, that condemned Israel's

construction of settlements in disputed territories, these people said.

Israeli officials had asked the incoming Trump administration to intervene to help block it. Mr. Trump posted a Facebook message the day before the U.N. vote—after he had been elected but before he had assumed office—saying the resolution put the Israelis in a difficult position and should be vetoed.

[snip]

Israeli officials said at the time that they began reaching out to senior leaders in Mr. Trump's transition team. Among those involved were Mr. Kushner and political strategist Stephen Bannon, according to people briefed on the exchanges.

So that second lie – and almost certainly the first – involves Kushner directing Flynn.

I noted yesterday CNN's report that in the last few weeks – so during the window when Mueller was in close discussions about Flynn flipping – Mueller's team interviewed Kushner asking if he had any exonerating information on Flynn.

Mueller's team specifically asked Kushner about former national security advisor Michael Flynn, who is under investigation by the special counsel, two sources said. Flynn was the dominant topic of the conversation, one of the sources said.

[snip]

The conversation lasted less than 90 minutes, one person familiar with the meeting said, adding that Mueller's team asked Kushner to clear up some questions he was asked by lawmakers and details that emerged through media reports. One source said the nature of this conversation was principally to make

sure Kushner doesn't have information that exonerates Flynn.

The meeting took place around the same time the special counsel asked witnesses about Kushner's role in the firing of former FBI Director James Comey and his relationship with Flynn, these people said.

Mueller was, effectively, locking in Kushner's testimony before Flynn flipped. As I said this morning, speaking of that meeting,

The Kushner meeting was reported as kind of one of the last things that Mueller had to put into place before this plea agreement that people have been talking about with Mike Flynn. And that suggests that there is more news about to drop regarding Mike Flynn that I think is going to really dramatically change how Republicans take the Russian investigation.

Flynn had been avoiding discussing plea agreements for months and months and months, and then really in the last two weeks, all of a sudden it seems like it's about to happen. Mueller has more leverage over Flynn in the last couple of weeks. It may be Turkey, because a key witness in New York has turned state's evidence and apparently has information on Flynn. I think there's some other information.

And so, Flynn, we expect, is moving towards a plea agreement. We expect, or I expect, that's going to add a lot more pressure on Trump. And I have been saying for months that the way to get to Kushner is through Flynn. Because a lot of the events in which Flynn was involved, such as meeting with Sergei Kislyak in December, they connect very closely with activities that Kushner is

known to be involved with.

Kushner may now be hoping he'll be in a he-said he-said with Flynn, except it's unlikely Mueller would give Flynn this easy plea without a whole lot more to know that Flynn would be telling the truth. Remember, Kushner is one of the few people aside from Flynn himself who has a very appropriate lawyer for this kind of issue.