

THE TIMING OF THE INAUGURATION SUBPOENA

By last May, it was clear that part of Mueller's investigation covered how Russians laundered money to Trump and his associates via his inauguration fund. It turns out that Sam Patten started talking to prosecutors about his own laundering of Ukrainian money into the inauguration that month. And during Paul Manafort's trial last summer, Rick Gates had to admit to stealing money from Trump's inauguration fund. Around that time, I started predicting that Mueller would spin off such "garden variety" corruption to other parts of DOJ.

Meanwhile, the press' efforts to liberate Michael Cohen's April 9 search warrant affidavits failed because so many other people were named in it.

Among the things seized in that raid was a recording from Cohen to Stephanie Winston Wolkoff, who handled some of the money that disappeared from Trump's inauguration.

In April raids of Mr. Cohen's home, office and hotel room, Federal Bureau of Investigation agents obtained a recorded conversation between Mr. Cohen and Stephanie Winston Wolkoff, a former adviser to Melania Trump who worked on the inaugural events. In the recording, Ms. Wolkoff expressed concern about how the inaugural committee was spending money, according to a person familiar with the Cohen investigation.

The Wall Street Journal couldn't determine when the conversation between Mr. Cohen and Ms. Wolkoff took place, or why it was recorded. The recording is now in the hands of federal prosecutors in Manhattan, a person familiar with the

matter said.

And yet it was just in recent days that SDNY has subpoenaed the inauguration committee for the materials that will reveal all the other ways that Trump profited off his inauguration.

The subpoena broadly asks for all documents related to the committee's donors and vendors, including documents related to the Federal Election Commission filings in which the committee disclosed its donations. It also seeks records related to any "benefits" such as tickets, photo opportunities or receptions that donors received in exchange for their contributions.

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Among the subpoena's requests is one for documents regarding any donations to the committee "made by or on behalf of foreign nationals, including but not limited to any communications regarding or relating to the possibility of donations by foreign nationals."

The subpoena also asks for documents related to "donations or payments made by donors directly to contractors and/or vendors" used by the committee, including any communications related to the possibility of such donations being "made or directed to contractors or vendors."

The subpoena seeks information relating to a bunch of conspiracy-related crimes – parallel to the crimes Mueller looked at in the Russian investigation, but including other countries.

It discloses that prosecutors are investigating a litany of potential crimes: conspiracy against the US, false statements, mail fraud, wire fraud,

money laundering, inaugural committee disclosure violations, and violations of laws prohibiting contributions by foreign nations and contributions in the name of another person, also known as straw donors.

This investigation may explain why SDNY alum Guy Petrillo dropped Michael Cohen in recent weeks: since Cohen refused to cooperate with SDNY on what would have been this investigation, he's likely to face further criminal exposure for his efforts to get rich off the big party.

My guess is that SDNY is only now getting around to digging into what is surely a vast swamp of corruption because Mueller asked them to wait until his inauguration related equities were done. Which may be consistent with reports that his investigation is coming to a head, perhaps pending just the Mystery Appellant, Andrew Miller, and William Barr's confirmation. Which may mean that after the results in Mueller's Russian investigation soften Trump up, this investigation will just be ripening, possibly even at a time where Trump can be indicted.

As I disclosed last July, I provided information to the FBI on issues related to the Mueller investigation, so I'm going to include disclosure statements on Mueller investigation posts from here on out. I will include the disclosure whether or not the stuff I shared with the FBI pertains to the subject of the post.