

JESSE JACKSON JR'S COOPERATION WITH FITZ

Multiple stories—explicitly sourced to Jesse Jackson Jr's allies—report that Jesse Jackson started cooperating with Fitz as least as early as earlier this year. Here are some data points on JJJ's cooperation and other involvement.

He apparently told Fitz earlier this year that in 2003, Blago conditioned a position for JJJ's wife on a \$25,000 donation.

Jackson has been in regular contact with the feds and has told the government that in 2003 Blagojevich denied the congressman's wife Sandi an appointment as Illinois lottery director because Jackson would not donate \$25,000 to the governor's campaign fund.

Also earlier this year, JJJ told Fitz that he refused to accept Tony Rezko's condition that the state would support a third airport only if JJJ agreed to let Blago approve the airport board.

The meeting in June of 2006 at a Gold Coast hotel included Congressman Jesse Jackson, Jr. and Blagojevich fundraiser Antoin "Tony" Rezko.

The topic was a proposed third airport at Peotone, Jackson's pet project which needed more state money. Rezko allegedly demanded that the governor be given control of the airport's board. Jackson refused and state support for the project stopped.

Fitz's folks called JJJ last Monday night to give him a head's up that they were arresting Blago and that a reference to him would show up in the complaint.

Reportedly, last week, both JJJ and his father (who appears not to have been mentioned in the complaint) both retained lawyers.

Also last week, JJJ issued a narrow denial: denying any involvement in pay-to-play, while not denying someone may have made an offer to Blago in his name without his knowledge or support.

I want to make this fact plain: I reject and denounce pay-to-play politics and have no involvement whatsoever in any wrongdoing. I did not initiate or authorize anyone, at any time, to promise anything to Governor Blagojevich on my behalf.

I never sent a message or an emissary to the governor to make an offer, to plead my case, or to propose a deal about a U.S. Senate seat, period.

Also in his denial, JJJ described his sister's support for what he has done. And in an previously unremarked reference, he described being proud of Illinois in the last 2.5 years.

This morning, I got a text message from my little sister, who told me that she was proud of me. She was proud of what I've done for this nation.

In the 14 years that I've nearly served in this Congress, I've tried to honor this institution and I've tried to honor public service because I believed that it was a noble profession (inaudible) a profession that requires the highest possible sacrifice. It is public service, but it is private sacrifice.

And so this morning, she told me, "Jesse Jr., I'm proud of you." That came from my — from my little sister.

And I felt that kind of pride over the last two and a half years in our state.
And I know this is a low moment for the

people of our state. [my emphasis]

And, there appear to have been meetings that correlated with the allegations pertaining to JJJ in the complaint. On October 31, a JJJ fundraiser approached Blago. And then on December 6, that person co-hosted a fundraiser for JJJ that some participants appear to have believed pertained to JJJ's bid for the Senate.

Finally, earlier today, a judge approved the indefinite postponement of Rezko's sentencing, suggesting that he has suddenly decided to cooperate more enthusiastically than he had earlier.

My best guess—and it's just a guess—is that JJJ got totally exposed by fundraisers who really did approach Blago without his consent or knowledge. It doesn't seem like a sting, for several reasons (the timing of the first approaches to Blago on October 31), and if it were, it wouldn't make sense for JJJ (or his father) to have gotten a lawyer only at this point. Also, it doesn't make sense to arrest Blago suddenly based on a sting surrounding the Senate seat.

That said, I'm confused about the 2.5 year reference. It seems to tie to Obama's run for President, though it could well relate to cooperation. (JJJ says it again a few paragraphs later, specifically in context of Obama.)

And I'd say that JJJ's statement seems much more loaded than it even did when he made it. Consider, for example, JJJ's statement that he hasn't met Blago for four years—which would have been just after Blago tried to extort a donation in relation to an appointment for JJJ's wife.