

WE HAVE NO IDEA WHAT EMAILS THE PAPADOPOULOS PLEA REFER TO

In response to yesterday's server hiccups and in anticipation that Mueller is nowhere near done, we expanded our server capacity overnight. If you think you'll rely on emptywheel reporting on the Mueller probe, please consider a donation to support the site.

As I've noted, the George Papadopoulos plea information, reveals that Papadopoulos learned that Russia had "dirt" consisting of "thousands of emails of Clinton" three days before the DNC learned they had been hacked.

And it makes it clear that on April 26 – three days before the DNC figured out Russia had hacked them – Papadopoulos' handler told him Moscow had dirt on Clinton.

The Professor told defendant PAPADOPOULOS that on that trip he (the Professor) learned that the Russians had obtained "dirt" on then-candidate Clinton. The Professor told defendant PAPADOPOULOS, as PAPADOPOULOS later described to the FBI, that "They [the Russians] have dirt on her"; "the Russians had emails of Clinton"; "they have thousands of emails."

After learning the Russians had emails on Clinton even before Clinton learned it, Papadopoulos "continued to correspond with Campaign officials," including his Senior Policy Advisor and a High-Ranking Campaign Official.

From this detail, I've seen endless amount of shite premised on what these emails were.

For example, Julian Assange tweeted something bizarre about the emails being the emails released mostly in response to a Jason Leopold FOIA. I thought he was trying to pretend he had no inside information from the Russians?

Others are tying the emails to the registration of the DC Leaks website, which had occurred by this point, but which also released more emails pertaining to Ukraine than Democrats.

Others are suggesting that because no one ever found the emails Hillary deleted from her server, the claim must not be correct because there were no emails of Hillary out there.

Others are tying the comment to Podesta's emails (he was first hacked on March 19). Or they're claiming incorrectly that the Papadopoulos report must be wrong because the DNC emails were the ones released early on, not the Podesta ones (in fact, the source for about half the earliest released Guccifer 2.0 "DNC" emails appears to be the Podesta emails, and for most of the rest has not be identified).

Others are pointing out – I'm not sure why – that Russia hacked some Republicans.

All of this suggests that people have this mistaken belief that the general public knows the universe of emails that have been hacked, and that all the hacked emails have been released.

Most annoyingly, most people who know better are saying that Russia started hacking the Democrats in spring 2016. But as the Intelligence Committee Assessment lays out, "In July 2015, Russian intelligence gained access to Democratic National Committee (DNC) networks and maintained that access until at least June 2016." And the ICA was always deliberately coy about who else the earlier wave of hacking, by APT 29 associated with FSB, may have hacked (I assure you its targets were prominent), to say nothing

of the later APT 28 attribution known to be associated with released emails.

And as I was bitching about *this*, I was reminded by a Kaspersky researcher that APT 29 had spent the previous year hacking the White House and State Department.

All of which is to say, without more evidence (which Mueller has chosen not to give us yet) we cannot conclude anything about Papadopoulos learning, in April, that Russians were talking about having dirt against Hillary with regards to which emails were on offer; we can only conclude that a person in the campaign learned (and probably shared that knowledge, though Mueller is deliberately withholding *that* detail too) very early on that Russians were offering up emails as campaign dirt.

Update: In related news, the AP got ahold of a list of APT 28's targets (though doesn't emphasize, as it should, that these targets may not have been successfully breached).