

OPEN THREAD: ALL IN THE FAMILIES?

This is an open thread dedicated to this morning's news. By now many of you have heard that Alex van der Zwaan, a lawyer at mega-lawfirm Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom, was charged today by Team Mueller for making false statements while answering questions about his work for the Ukrainian Ministry of Justice in its case against Ukraine's former prime minister Yulia Tymoshenko.

The "materially false, fictitious, and fraudulent statements and representations" arose from questions about interactions related to Paul Manafort's partner Rick Gates and "Person A."

[*insert blogger's laugh*] Gee, I wonder who Person A could be? *

You can read the short and sweet court filing here (pdf).

These folks from Team Mueller signed the filing: Andrew Weissman, Greg Andres, Kyle Feeny, Brian Richardson. Add them and this assignment to Marcy's bingo card

Richardson is a new name, which Marcy noted, already wondering if he is Mystery Prosecutor 17? She'll probably elaborate in a separate post.

For a little background on Skadden Arps' relationship to Ukraine, see this this NYT piece from September 21 last year: Skadden, Big New York Law Firm, Faces Questions on Work With Manafort

There was related legal news last autumn – emphasis on *related*.

Alfa Bank co-owners German Khan, Mikhail Fridman, and Peter Aven filed suit last October against Fusion GPS and Glenn Simpson claiming the Steele dossier was defamatory. Their

reputations were “gravely” damaged as the dossier indicated they were engaged in criminal activity with Russia’s president Vladimir Putin.

Khan just happens to be van der Zwaan’s father-in-law. It’s a small world, yes?

It’ll be amusing if the Mueller-led investigation ends up unintentionally corralling multiple families.

*** EDIT – 1:30 pm EST –** I meant to add that Andrea Manafort Shand, Paul Manafort’s daughter, was an associate at Skadden Arps-Washington DC office. I haven’t seen anything to suggest she’s involved in any way with today’s charges or that she’s Person A but stranger things have happened. Like the leaking of hacked text messages between Manafort’s daughters which have not been disavowed.

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In case you missed it this morning, Marcy was on Democracy Now this morning, talking about the Mueller probe and the IRA indictment last Friday.

A transcript isn’t up as I type this but the video and audio are up on the main site under the Daily Show at the right side of Democracy Now’s homepage. I’ll add a link to the transcript as it becomes available.

Have at it!