

BREAKING! ROBERT MUELLER WOULD BE FUCKING STUPID IF HE DIDN'T SUBPOENA TRUMP ORGANIZATION

The NYT has everyone all huffing and puffing about their scoop that Robert Mueller has subpoenaed documents from the Trump Organization.

The special counsel, Robert S. Mueller III, has subpoenaed the Trump Organization to turn over documents, including some related to Russia, according to two people briefed on the matter. The order is the first known time that the special counsel demanded documents directly related to President Trump's businesses, bringing the investigation closer to the president.

The breadth of the subpoena was not clear, nor was it clear why Mr. Mueller issued it instead of simply asking for the documents from the company, an umbrella organization that oversees Mr. Trump's business ventures. In the subpoena, delivered in recent weeks, Mr. Mueller ordered the Trump Organization to hand over all documents related to Russia and other topics he is investigating, the people said.

The NYT then goes on to suggest this tells us anything new about how long this investigation will take.

The subpoena is the latest indication that the investigation, which Mr. Trump's lawyers once regularly assured him would be completed by now, will drag on for at least several more months.

Word of the subpoena comes as Mr. Mueller appears to be broadening his investigation to examine the role foreign money may have played in funding Mr. Trump's political activities.

It further speculates this might cross a "red line" they put there themselves back in July, a red line commentators routinely report incorrectly as pertaining to any business interests of his.

Mr. Mueller could run afoul of a line the president has warned him not to cross. Though it is not clear how much of the subpoena is related to Mr. Trump's business beyond ties to Russia, Mr. Trump said in an interview with The New York Times in July that the special counsel would be crossing a "red line" if he looked into his family's finances beyond any relationship with Russia.

BREAKING: Robert Mueller would be fucking stupid if he weren't subpoenaing this information.

First, of all, we know that in the late part of last year, Mueller was locking in testimony from everyone involved in the June 9 Trump Tower meeting, and he subsequently recalled at least one of the participants back for seconds. We know there's good reason to believe the public story the participants are telling about the meeting doesn't make sense, and that they may be hiding a second part of the meeting. We know Mueller is examining Trump's relationship with the Agalarovs, in particular. We know from what Sam Nunberg has told us he was asked about the Miss Universe contest. From his subpoena, we know that Mueller is dating his investigative scope from the time, in 2015, when Trump was considering yet another Moscow Trump Tower deal. Several key witnesses, notably Don Jr and Rhona Graff were interviewed [by Congress] as Trump Organization employees, represented by Abe

Futerfas.

All of this pertains to Trump's business! And it is common practice among prosecutors, especially prosecutors dealing with shifty types, to first ask for voluntary production, and then subpoena it. It would be stupid of Mueller to not do the same here.

Robert Mueller is not stupid. Therefore it is not BREAKING news that he is subpoenaing this information, and it may even mean he's doing that just so he can finalize presentations to the grand jury, particularly given the "recent weeks" timing – the most interesting detail about this report.

One more thing. As I said, while the NYT got their own reporting right, most people quoting from it misquote what Trump actually said about any red line. Here's the exchange.

SCHMIDT: Last thing, if Mueller was looking at your finances and your family finances, unrelated to Russia – is that a red line?

HABERMAN: Would that be a breach of what his actual charge is?

TRUMP: I would say yeah. I would say yes. By the way, I would say, I don't – I don't – I mean, it's possible there's a condo or something, so, you know, I sell a lot of condo units, and somebody from Russia buys a condo, who knows? I don't make money from Russia. In fact, I put out a letter saying that I don't make – from one of the most highly respected law firms, accounting firms. I don't have buildings in Russia. They said I own buildings in Russia. I don't. They said I made money from Russia. I don't. It's not my thing. I don't, I don't do that. Over the years, I've looked at maybe doing a deal in Russia, but I never did one. Other than I held the Miss Universe pageant there eight, nine years [crosstalk].

SCHMIDT: But if he was outside that lane, would that mean he'd have to go?

[crosstalk]

HABERMAN: Would you consider—

TRUMP: No, I think that's a violation. Look, this is about Russia. So I think if he wants to go, my finances are extremely good, my company is an unbelievably successful company. And actually, when I do my filings, peoples say, "Man." People have no idea how successful this is. It's a great company. But I don't even think about the company anymore. I think about this. 'Cause one thing, when you do this, companies seem very trivial. O.K.? I really mean that. They seem very trivial. But I have no income from Russia. I don't do business with Russia. The gentleman that you mentioned, with his son, two nice people. But basically, they brought the Miss Universe pageant to Russia to open up, you know, one of their jobs. Perhaps the convention center where it was held. It was a nice evening, and I left. I left, you know, I left Moscow. It wasn't Moscow, it was outside of Moscow.

Aside from the prompted feel of the question (as if Trump or Chris Ruddy set these reporters up to pose the questions so Trump could "warn" Mueller), it pertains only to business unrelated to Russia. Trump seems to admit that the mobbed up Russians buying his condos would be pertinent, his Miss Universe contest, and his serial efforts to get a Trump Tower in Moscow.

Even the example the NYT points to today – the involvement of UAE in some pre-inauguration meetings – pertains to Russia, as one of the points of the meetings were to set up a back channel with ... Russia.

I think Jared Kushner's business ties ... that's a

different issue. But as to the substance of Trump's purported red line, nothing in today's report says Mueller has crossed that (even if he cared about such things).

So let's sum up:

1. Robert Mueller would be fucking stupid not to subpoena stuff he had already received
2. Robert Mueller is not fucking stupid
3. Therefore, that Robert Mueller has subpoenaed this stuff is not BREAKING news

Shew. Glad I got that off my chest.

Update: I realized in reading CNN's version of this BREAKING news that they reported in January that Mueller had already obtained documents from Trump Org voluntarily.