

THE TRUMP PEOPLE REALLY REALLY WANT TO KNOW HOW MUCH MUELLER KNOWS ABOUT ROGER STONE'S "COLLUSION"

In a piece that lets Roger Stone claim he forgot the Russian he met offering Hillary dirt for \$2 million and also fails to ask Stone why it took over a month for him to correct his perjury before HPSCI and also fails to ask if there was follow-up about someone else paying for that dirt on Hillary, Ken Dilanian lets Stone float a claim that Mueller must have obtained the contents of his phone using a FISA order.

Stone also wondered to NBC News how Mueller "has copies of my text messages if not through an illegal FISA warrant. I have filed a notice of my intention to bring a lawsuit against the government for a civil rights and right to privacy violation to get to the bottom of that question."

As I have noted repeatedly, close to the beginning of the time when Mueller has focused unrelentingly on Stone, on March 9, Mueller obtained a probable cause search warrant to obtain the contents of 5 AT&T phones, "In the Matter of the Search of Information Associated with Five Telephone Numbers Controlled by AT&T (D.D.C.) (18-sc-609)." When Paul Manafort attempted to unseal the parts of the affidavit laying out the probable cause for those phones covered by the warrant that he didn't own, Amy Berman Jackson refused the request. The court record makes it fairly clear that the other phones don't belong to Manafort.

THE COURT: What if – I think one of them is about phone information. What if the redacted phones are not his phone?

MR. WESTLING: I don't have a problem with that. I think we're talking about things that relate to this defendant in this case.

We should assume that, in addition to those five phones, there's a warrant covering a proportional number (Verizon covers more of the cell phone market in the US than AT&T does) of Verizon phones.

All of which is to say that the most obvious explanation for how Mueller obtained the text messages Stone has selectively shared with the press showing he did accept a meeting with a Russian offering dirt on Hillary Clinton is that Mueller convinced a judge there was probable cause to believe that there was evidence of crimes were on that phone.

That is, the interest in Roger Stone is no longer strictly a counterintelligence question of whether Henry Greenberg was idly reaching out to Stone to offer dirt. Rather, it's a question of whether, in his subsequent response (about which no journalist seems to have asked Stone questions) constitutes a crime.

In any case, Roger Stone's attempt to turn this into another FISA pseudo scandal (including his suggestion that any warrant targeting him would be "illegal") is just a desperate indication of how badly the Trump people want to know how much Mueller knows about the crimes Stone may have committed.