

THOSE SEXY DETAILS IN THE PAPADOPOULOS SENTENCING MEMO AREN'T INTENDED FOR YOUR CONSUMPTION

In this post, I argued that George Papadopoulos' sentencing memo was written to make a case to Donald Trump for a pardon, not to judge Randolph Moss for no prison time (even though that's what he asks for).

It would follow logically, then, that the details of his testimony Papadopoulos chose to highlight in a claim that "George provided investigators with critical information" – details that have attracted much of the press coverage of this memo – also aren't intended for our benefit, but for Trump and other co-conspirators.

Jeff Sessions lies as much as "young George" Papadopoulos

Consider the one that has attracted the most attention, revealing that (according to Papadopoulos), he told the government that Trump approved of his plan to pursue a meeting with Putin and – even more importantly – Jeff "Sessions ... appeared to like the idea."

On March 31, 2016, he joined Mr. Trump, Senator Jeff Sessions, and other campaign officials for a "National Security Meeting" at the Trump Hotel. George's photograph at this meeting flashed around the world via Twitter. Eager to show his value to the campaign, George announced at the meeting that he had connections that could facilitate a

foreign policy meeting between Mr. Trump and Russian President Vladimir Putin. While some in the room rebuffed George's offer, Mr. Trump nodded with approval and deferred to Mr. Sessions who appeared to like the idea and stated that the campaign should look into it.

At a minimum, after 11 months of being prevented from sharing this detail, including it here tells all the other co-conspirators what Papadopoulos said. The allegation is not new; at least two other participants in the meeting offered a similar version to Reuters in March (and presumably to the FBI before that). Still, Papadopoulos provides the detail in such a way and at such a time that it's sure to generate pressure on Sessions, just as Trump is trying to convince Republican members of Congress he should fire the Attorney General. Not to mention that Papadopoulos raises an example of a person who has thus far avoided all consequences for lying in official settings.

The offer of emails came during a discussion finalizing a meeting

An even more delicious mention is the specific description Papadopoulos gives of the meeting at which Joseph Mifsud told him the Russians had Hillary emails they planned to release to help Trump.

George strived to organize a meeting with the Russian government and help the Trump campaign promote its foreign policy objective: improve U.S. and Russian relations. He believed that such a meeting would be a boon for the campaign as Mr. Trump had not yet hosted any major foreign policy events with officials from other countries.

George joined Professor Mifsud for breakfast in London on April 26, 2016, with the intention of finalizing plans for the foreign policy meeting. It was during this breakfast meeting, however, that Professor Mifsud told George that individuals in Moscow possessed “dirt” on candidate Hillary Clinton in the form of “thousands of emails.” Not knowing what to make of this comment, George continued his efforts to make the Trump – Russia meeting a reality. [my emphasis]

Papadopoulos’ statement of the offense had made it clear that Mifsud mentioned the emails in the context of Papadopoulos’ efforts to set up a meeting.

On or about April 25, 2016, defendant PAPADOPOULOS emailed [Stephen Miller – see this [story confirming Miller as the “Senior Policy Advisor”](#) in the document]: “The Russian government has an open invitation by Putin for Mr. Trump to meet him when he is ready []. The advantage of being in London is that these governments tends to speak more openly in “neutral” cities.

On or about April 26, 2016, defendant PAPADOPOULOS met the Professor for breakfast at a London hotel. During this meeting, the Professor told defendant PAPADOPOULOS that he had just returned from a trip to Moscow where he had met with high-level Russian government officials. 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 defendant 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.”

[snip]

[T]he day after his meeting at the hotel with the Professor, on or about April 27, 2016, defendant PAPADOPOULOS emailed [Miller]: “Have some interesting messages coming in from Moscow about a trip when the time is right.”

Also on or about April 27, 2016, defendant PAPADOPOULOS emailed a [Corey Lewandowski] “to discuss Russia’s interest in hosting Mr. Trump. Have been receiving a lot of calls over the last month about Putin wanting to host him and the team when the time is right.”

The Schiff memo and Alexander Downer have subsequently added the detail that Mifsud specifically told Papadopoulos that, “the Russians might use material that they have on Hillary Clinton in the lead-up to the election, which may be damaging,” to assist Trump’s campaign.

Remember, Papadopoulos worked with Lewandowski to draft Trump’s first foreign policy speech, delivered on April 27, which Papadopoulos reportedly told Ivan Timofeev (whose entire existence Papadopoulos’ lies had managed to hide from the FBI at first) was a signal to meet. That speech included these lines:

I believe an easing of tensions, and improved relations with Russia from a position of strength only is possible, absolutely possible. Common sense says this cycle, this horrible cycle of hostility must end and ideally will end soon. Good for both countries.

Some say the Russians won’t be reasonable. I intend to find out. If we can’t make a deal under my administration, a deal that’s great – not good, great – for America, but also good for Russia, then we will quickly walk from the table. It’s as simple as

that. We're going to find out.

Obviously, the tie between Russia releasing stolen emails and foreign policy meetings was always implicit. But Papadopoulos has just revealed that Mifsud said Russia might release emails *in the context of setting up a meeting*, after having floated such a meeting with Miller the day before.

The breakfast meeting ties the release of the stolen emails to help the Trump campaign and foreign policy meetings together directly. And having just sat through such a meeting, Papadopoulos worked with Stephen Miller and Corey Lewandowski to send a message to Russian that Trump was willing to meet – and would pursue improved relations with Russia.

Papadopoulos tells the Greeks of the dirt offer just in time to pass Putin a message

I'm most interested, however, in the inclusion of Papadopoulos' admission he told the Greek Foreign Minister about the Russian offer of dirt just before Putin came to town on May 27, 2016.

George provided investigators with critical information. George told investigators about his interactions and meetings with other members of the campaign. He detailed a meeting in late May 2016 where he revealed to the Greek Foreign Minister that the Russians had "dirt" on Hillary Clinton. He explained that this meeting took place days before President Vladimir Putin traveled to Greece to meet with Greek officials.

Remember, Natalia Veselnitskaya dates the idea for the June 9 meeting to a conversation she had with Aras Agalarov at "the end of May" 2016.

Around the end of May 2016, during a conversation with a good acquaintance of mine, being my client, Aras Agalarov on a topic that was not related to the United States, I shared the story faced when defending another client, Denis Katsyv, about how terribly misled the US Congress had been by the tax defrauder William Browder, convicted in Russia, who, through his lobbyists and his close-minded rank-and-file Congress staffers, succeeded in adopting the Act in the name of a person whom Browder practically hardly ever knew. I considered it my duty to inform the Congress people about it and asked Mr. Agalarov if there was any possibility of helping me or my colleagues to do this. I do not remember who of us was struck by the idea that maybe his son could talk about this with Donald Trump, Jr., who, although a businessman, was sure to have some acquaintances among Congress people.

But it's not just the tantalizing possibility that Papadopoulos left some kind of message for Putin just before Aras Agalarov started setting up the June 9 meeting.

Papadopoulos' statement of the offense describes him emailing Paul Manafort about Russia's desire to set up a meeting, which Manafort forwarded to the government's most important now cooperating witness, Rick Gates, telling him that the candidate wasn't going to do such meetings himself – someone else in the campaign would.

On or about May 21, 2016, defendant PAPADOPOULOS emailed another high-ranking Campaign official, with the subject line "Request from Russia to meet Mr. Trump." The email included the May 4 MFA Email and added: "Russia has been eager to meet Mr. Trump for quite sometime and have been reaching out to me to discuss."²

2 The government notes that the official forwarded defendant PAPADOPOULOS's email to another Campaign official (without including defendant PAPADOPOULOS) and stated:

"Let[']s discuss. We need someone to communicate that DT is not doing these trips. It should be someone low level in the campaign so as not to send any signal."

The House Intelligence Majority Report, however, reveals that that Papadopolous sent that email from Greece.

(U) While on a trip to Athens, Greece in May 2016, Papadopoulos sent an email to Manafort stating that he expected to soon receive "an official invitation for Mr. Trump to visit Greece sometime this summer should his schedule allow."¹⁸³ In the same email to Manafort, Papadopoulos also forwarded a meeting Invitation from Ivan Timofeev, Director or [sic] Programs for the Russian International Affairs Council, and claimed that "Russia has been eager to meet Mr. Trump for quite sometime and have been reaching out to me to discuss. thought it would be prudent to send to you."¹⁸⁴

(U) As of May 2016, Manafort had not yet been elevated to campaign chairman, but had a long track record of work abroad. Manafort forwarded Papadopoulos' email to his business and campaign deputy [Rick Gates] noting that we need someone to communicate that D[onald] T[rump] is not doing these trips." ¹⁸⁵ Manafort and [Gates] agreed to assign a response of a "general letter" to "our correspondence coordinator." the person responsible for "responding to all mail of non-importance."¹⁸⁶

While it's clear nothing *in that email* could have reflected a discussion of passing a message to Putin via Papadopoulos' Greek contacts, it does show that Papadopoulos used the opportunity of a verbal offer from Greece to raise a Russian meeting with Manafort directly. Manafort responded by saying other campaign aides would do such meetings. Papadopoulos then somehow saw reason to tell Greece's Foreign Minister that the Russians were offering dirt to help Trump *just before Putin arrived*. And that's precisely the timeframe when the June 9 meeting setting up a Russian meeting with Trump's senior-most campaign officials, including Manafort, got born.

Maybe it's all a big fat coinkydink, but Papadopoulos seems to believe it important enough to tell all his co-conspirators (even while it makes his repeated claims not to have told the campaign itself laughable), possibly because he knows the FBI has evidence from the Greeks as well.

As I disclosed in July, I provided information to the FBI on issues related to the Mueller investigation, so I'm going to include disclosure statements on Mueller investigation posts from here on out. I will include the disclosure whether or not the stuff I shared with the FBI pertains to the subject of the post.