

“YOUNG GEORGE” PAPADOPOULOS WANTS “MERCY AND COMPASSION” (FROM TRUMP) FOR SOMETHING HE BELIEVES IS TREASON

George Papadopoulos submitted his sentencing memo last night. Rather than writing an honest sentencing memo, he’s still working with co-conspirators, in this case, in hopes of getting a pardon from Trump. Reading it, I’d be shocked if the government doesn’t charge him as a knowing participant whenever they drop the conspiracy indictment.

Papadopoulos claims he told two other countries Russia was dealing stolen emails, but not his bosses

The most important sentences in the sentencing memo – which have no purpose in an actual sentencing memo – are his revelations that he kept denying that he had told the campaign that Russia was planning on releasing emails stolen from Hillary.

He told the agents he was unaware of anyone in the campaign knowing of the stolen Hillary Clinton emails prior to the emails being publicly released.

[snip]

If investigators wished to know what George did with the information from

Professor Mifsud, they could have asked George during his interview. Indeed, they did ask if George provided the information to the campaign and George denied ever doing so. In his later proffer sessions, George reiterated that he does not recall ever passing the information along to the campaign.

The introduction to the second of these mentions in fact serves no other purpose than to provide an excuse to repeat, again, in case Trump missed it the first time, that Papadopoulos lied and continued to lie about telling the campaign about the emails.

Rick Gates (among others) has surely told the FBI this is a lie, but Papadopolous repeats the lies for Trump's benefit.

And Papadopoulos makes this claim in spite of the fact that he casually told Alexander Downer about Russia dealing stolen emails and, in the memo, he admits he also told the Greek Foreign Minister.

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.

So for the entire month of May, Papadopoulos was telling complete strangers about Russia dealing stolen Hillary emails. And yet, even though he professes to have "unbridled loyalty" to the Trump campaign, at a time he was thrilled that "his career [was] skyrocketing to unimaginable heights" and "gidd[y] over Mr. Trump's recognition," he didn't tell any of those people on the campaign with whom he was currying favor.

Again, the notice that he always denied telling the campaign about Russia's offer of stolen emails has no purpose in a sentencing memo

designed as a sentencing memo. The FBI knows he continued to claim he didn't tell the campaign. The judge – the one legally entrusted to sentence Papadopolous, anyway – has no need to know it. Trump, on the other hand, surely wants to know it.

Ten pages, of which three are drivel

And Trump is presumably the only audience Papadopolous cares about with this memo, or he would have spent more time talking about the case (indeed, he would have made an effort to be honest) and less time spouting drivel. Much of the first three pages, for example, lead up to a request for probation served with platitudes like this:

It is essential that a court's sentencing decision be informed and guided by the fundamental doctrines of mercy and compassion. See *United States v. Blarek*, 7 F.Supp.2d 192, 210 (E.D.N.Y. 1998). While these principles are not specifically delineated as rationales for sentencing, they are evidenced by the federal sentencing statute's mandate that the court impose the lowest possible punishment to accomplish the goals of sentencing.

Papadopoulos does this without making an honest case about his conduct, but I guess it makes sense to start pitching Trump with a request for mercy.

Even Papadopoulos' narrative about Sergei Millian is

(necessarily) bogus

A key part of Papadopoulos' bogus narrative is that he lied about Mifsud, in part, because FBI Agents started his interview by telling him they wanted to ask him some questions about Sergei Millian (even while making it clear that the FBI correctly linked his relationship with Millian with his earlier interactions with Mifsud).

The agents asked George to accompany them to their office to answer a "couple questions" regarding "a guy in New York that you might know[,] [t]hat has recently been in the news." George thought the agents wanted to ask him about Russian businessman Sergei Millian. Wanting clarification, he asked the agents, "...just so I understand, I'm going there to answer questions about this person who I think you're talking about." The agents assured George that the topic of discussion was Mr. Millian who had been trending in the national media.

[snip]

The FBI agent confirmed that the Sergei Millian inquiry was just a ruse to get him in a room when he told George that:

... the reason we wanted to pull you in today and have that conversation because we wanted to know to the extent of your knowledge being an insider inside that small group of people that were policy advisors who, if anybody, has that connection with Russia and what, what sort of connections there were.

For the next two hours, George answered questions about Professor Mifsud, Olga, Carter Page, Sergei Millian and the

"Trump Dossier," and George's interactions with other people working on the campaign.

He claims – impossibly – that he answered their questions about Millian honestly.

Seemingly as promised, the agents began their questioning about George's relationship with Sergei Millian. George knew Mr. Millian only as a businessman pitching an opportunity to George in his personal capacity. The agents asked how they first met, what they discussed, how often they talked or met in person, if George knew whether Mr. Millian was connected to Russia or a foreign intelligence service, and who else on Mr. Trump's campaign may have been in contact with Mr. Millian. George answered their questions honestly.

I can say with confidence that he didn't answer them truthfully, first of all, because Millian's business pitch was not limited to "his personal capacity." As Simona blabbed to the press, Millian had already tied financial offers to Papadopoulos' access to Trump.

According to Simona Mangiante, whose husband George Papadopoulos briefly served on the Trump campaign as a foreign policy advisor, Millian offered Papadopoulos a \$30,000 monthly retainer on the condition he remain attached to the campaign. Papadopoulos declined, she said.

Millian wanted to pay Papadopoulos money as one entree into the Trump Administration.

More importantly, Papadopoulos couldn't have answered truthfully because, in *both* his interviews with the FBI, Papadopoulos hid the conversation he had on Facebook with Ivan Timofeev about Millian, something the FBI noted

on his arrest affidavit.

“If you know any background of him that is noteworthy before I see him, kindly send my way.”

Indeed, after his second interview, Papadopoulos deleted his Facebook account, in an apparent attempt to hide his relationship with Timofeev entirely, something he doesn't mention at all in the sentencing memo.

The somersaults about Papadopoulos' motive

The sentencing memo is perhaps most interesting in its presentation of Papadopoulos' motive, in which he continues the line Simona has been feeding to the press that he didn't have corrupt motive in lying to the FBI. Remember that one of the few things he told Stefan Halper in September 2016 is that he believed being involved in the hack targeting Hillary amounted to treason (I don't agree). If that's remotely true, when the FBI first revealed they knew he had been told about the emails, he would have been worried about going to prison for a very long time (something he may yet manage).

Instead of admitting that, Papadopoulos describes telling the lies about Mifsud because he was trying to “distance” those activities from Trump.

George found himself personally conflicted during the interrogation as he felt obligated to assist the FBI but also wanted to distance himself and his work on the Trump campaign from that investigation.

[snip]

In his answers, George falsely distanced his interactions with these players from his campaign work.

The problem with this claim is that both before and after they asked about Mifsud, he told the FBI he was concerned about how talking to them would jeopardize his chances of getting a job with Trump.

En route to the FBI office, George voiced concern about the repercussions of his cooperation ever becoming public because the Wall Street Journal had just reported that Sergei Millian was a key source in the “Trump Dossier” controversy. George explained that he was in discussions with senior Trump administration officials about a position and the last thing he wanted was “something like this” casting the administration in a bad light.

[snip]

At one point, George told the agents that he did not want to “get too in-depth” because he did not know what it would mean for his professional future. He told the agents he was “trying to help the country and you guys, but I don’t want to jeopardize my career.”

In the motive section of the memo, Papadopoulos pitches this as the “personal reason” of getting a job. But in the intro, Papadopoulos is more honest, including that detail but also admitting he lied because of “loyalty to his master.”

The Government’s claim, however, that Mr. Papadopoulos intended that his false statements harm the investigation is speculative and contrary to the evidence. His motives for lying to the FBI were wrongheaded indeed but far from the sinister spin the Government suggests. Caught off-guard by an impromptu interrogation, Mr. Papadopoulos misled investigators to save his professional aspirations and preserve **a perhaps misguided loyalty to**

his master. [my emphasis]

The phrase suggests to Trump that he feels his lies have not been rewarded (yet), even while making it clear that (contrary to the way he spins it in this memo) he was doing it to protect Trump.

There are, as I'll note in a follow-up, several interesting details (presumably offered to tell his co-conspirators what damaging information he did provide to the government) that only make it clearer that Papadopoulos was, and knows he was, a participant in the conspiracy.

But the overall purpose of this sentencing memo is to communicate to Trump that he's still a loyal member of the conspiracy.

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.