

MANAFORT WAS PURSUING A UKRAINIAN “PEACE” DEAL WELL AFTER HE WAS CHARGED FOR LYING ABOUT BEING AN AGENT OF UKRAINE

Yesterday, the Mueller team submitted a highly redacted filing and set of exhibits substantiating their claim that Paul Manafort continued to lie during the period he was supposed to be cooperating with prosecutors.

Even aside from the heavy redaction, the filing is a bit confusing because it doesn't follow the same order as the two prior filings (Mueller, Manafort) on Manafort's lies and its parallel structure is weak. But it appears to be structured like this:

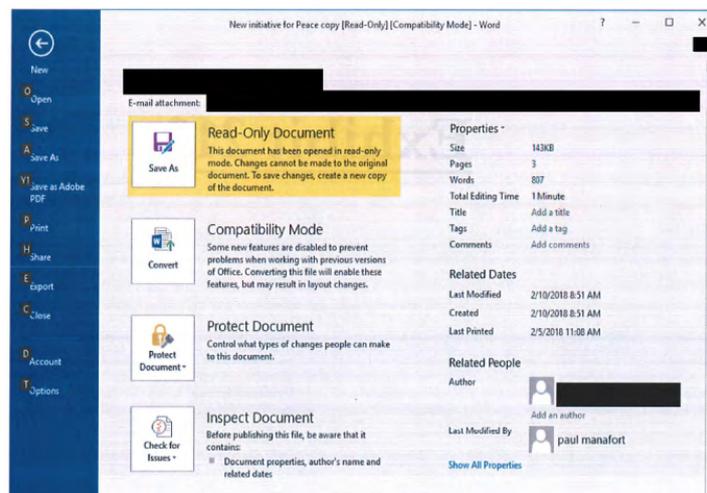
- Payment to/from Rebuilding America Now (0-series exhibits)
- Konstantin Kilimnik's role in witness tampering (100-series exhibits)
- Interactions with Kilimnik (200-series exhibits)
 - Discussions of the Ukraine Peace Deal
 - One meeting
 - Another meeting
 - A 2018 proposal
 - Manafort's false statements (almost certainly about

sharing polling data)

- Another DOJ investigation (possibly that of Steve Calk) (300-series exhibits)
- Manafort's contact with the Administration (400-series exhibits)

Also note the exhibits (which are mostly redacted) restart counting with each new section, as noted above. That said, descriptions of what appear to be the polling-sharing exhibits are in entirely redacted footnotes. The highest number exhibit pertaining to Manafort's interactions with Kilimnik referred to in unredacted form in the filing is 221 (which pertains to the Ukraine peace plan), but the Kilimnik-related exhibits go through exhibit 238, with a skip at exhibit 237. By order, the discussion on page 21-22 of its filing almost certainly pertains to Manafort's lies about sharing polling data, but the government isn't even going to describe what are the 16 or 17 exhibits they have substantiating it.

Nevertheless, both the discussion and the exhibits make it clear that – contrary to Konstantin Kilimnik's claims to the contrary – Manafort remained involved in efforts to push a “peace” plan in Ukraine at least until May 2018. For example, in February 2018, Manafort authored a document on a “New initiative for Peace.”



And this email appears to substantiate a discussion of Manafort's active involvement in Ukrainian peace deals.



From: Paul Manafort [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, May 4, 2018 3:49 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: Maybe this will help



Maybe [REDACTED] will see some value in this.
P

Significantly, the government seems to have sprung some of this on Manafort when he appeared before the grand jury (so therefore was in a position where his lawyers could not serve as direct witnesses). The government treats this October 26 grand jury appearance separately in their Ukraine discussion, and notes that Manafort "was asked in the grand jury about his work in 2018" on the subject. He had "not mentioned" it "during any of his twelve interviews and had said he had last discussed" what must be the peace initiative "in spring 2017" (possibly at the meeting in Madrid he also lied about). A witness testified that he was primarily responsible for drafting this "based ... on directions given to him by Manafort" – though it's clear that Kilimnik continued to offer his feedback, as an attachment to the above email reflects.

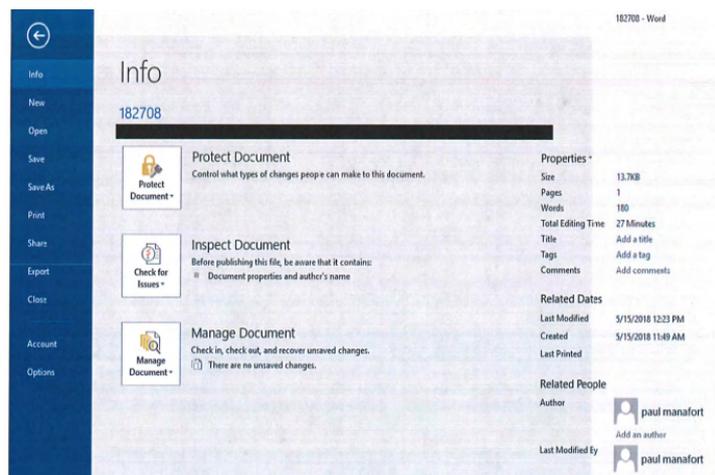
KK Note on Dr 4



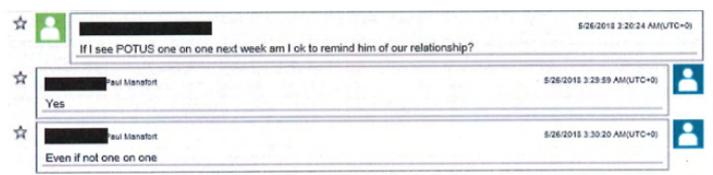
Remember: the government's first public accusation that Kilimnik was a Russian agent came in a filing submitted in March 2018. Manafort continued to conspire (by witness tampering) and pitch peace deals with Kilimnik for over a month after that.

And that makes Manafort's ongoing communications with the Administration more interesting. On that issue, too, Manafort was "confront[ed] with

documents” during a grand jury appearance, at least two of which involved attempts to contact the Administration in May 2018, when we know Manafort was still working on a Ukraine peace plan. Two of the exhibits supporting ongoing efforts to reach out to the Administration included in yesterday’s filing date to May 2018. There’s a May 2018 Word document that Manafort authored and edited that discussed targeting (but that may also incorporate a Ukrainian tax filing).



The other document substantiating ongoing efforts to reach out to the Administration was a text exchange in the weeks after this document reflecting “targeting” got written, in which Manafort invited someone to use his name with Trump.



The government is clear in its filing that,

This is not a complete listing of such contacts Manafort had with Administration officials. Further, for the purpose of proving the falsity of Manafort’s assertions in this section, the government is not relying on communications that may have taken place, with Manafort’s consent, through his legal counsel.

It also refutes Manafort's claim that, "Mr. Manafort was well aware that the Special Counsel's attorneys and investigators had scrutinized all of his electronic communications" because "Mr. Manafort voluntarily produced numerous electronic devices and passwords at the request of the Government" by revealing that it had found more than 10 devices or documents for which Manafort hadn't shared a password.

Defendant said in his pleading that he has provided electronic to the government. However, although he has provided some electronic data, passwords, and documents, in more than ten instances he did not provide passwords to access his electronic communications, thumb drives, or documents.

That is, there may be 10 documents or devices that Manafort tried to shield from the government, but which Manafort's legendarily shitty OpSec failed to protect. If that's true, they're not telling him – or the public, yet – what he was trying to shield.

Indeed, unless I'm missing them or the discussions were redacted, the details provided in this filing address only lies told at about half of Manafort's meetings with prosecutors (September 20, 21, October 1, 16) and a grand jury appearance on October 26 where they sprung both the 2018 peace efforts and 2018 communications on him. I believe there are no unredacted details about his three meetings on September 25, 26, and 27 or his grand jury appearance on November 2, a period when Mueller was also focused closely on Roger Stone. This filing doesn't tell us whether Manafort told the truth in those sessions.

In any case, consider how insane this is. Manafort was charged with lying (and getting other people to lie) about his work with Ukraine on October 27, 2017. And yet Manafort appears to

have continued that Ukraine-related work for another seven months, while he was supposed to be preparing for his first trial for evading taxes on the funds he earned in Ukraine. And while the government is not telling us what Manafort tried to engage the White House about during that period, timing-wise it may well be that he continued to try to engage the President's top advisors in this period.

Some of the other evidence in Mueller's filing makes it clear Manafort was still trying to clean up what appear to be clear campaign finance violations from the 2016 election (both in the form of illegal donations from foreigners and coordination between a SuperPAC and the campaign) as recently as last month. He has long known that Mueller has been watching every step of these parallel efforts. But he doesn't seem to care.

Update: I've updated the post to reflect – as per several comments – that among the 10 things Manafort withheld passwords for may be devices, and so may reflect a much wider universe of documents that he doesn't know whether they've accessed or not.

As I disclosed last 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.