

CARTER PAGE SHARED “IMMATERIAL NON- PUBLIC INFORMATION” WITH ROSNEFT WHILE “WORKING” FOR TRUMP

William McGurn and Brit Hume have decided that Carter Page, who the government convinced a judge might be acting as an Agent of Russia in 2016, is a latter day Martin Luther King Jr, based solely on the fact that Page was not charged as an agent of Russia (though a redacted discussion of the charging decision for him suggests it was a close call and Page is also one of two likely candidates to be the Trump aide who lied to the grand jury but wasn't charged).

Remember, the FBI sought a warrant on Mr. Page from the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court based on the claim that the former Trump campaign associate was “an agent of a foreign power,” namely Russia. Yet Mr. Page is one of the few targets of the investigation to have emerged without ever being charged with anything.

McGurn obscures the difference between the government showing probable cause that someone is an agent of a foreign power and charging them as such.

More interestingly, McGurn doesn't engage with the new evidence about Page's behavior revealed in the Mueller Report. For example, the report reveals that after Page was described but not identified in Victor Podobnyy's complaint, he sought out a Russian official at the UN to tell them he didn't do anything – something that conflicts with a right wing myth that Page was a cooperating witness with the FBI. He was, however, interviewed about his contacts with

Podobnyy, and he told the FBI that, “the more immaterial non-public information I give [Russia], the better for this country,” which may be why FBI got a FISA warrant on Page before 2016.

Which is interesting background given that when, on March 30, 2017, the FBI interviewed him about his two trips to Russia in 2016, he admitted to them that, “he and [Rosneft head of investor relations Andrey] Baranov talked about ‘immaterial non-public’ information,” the same language he used to defend his prior sharing of information with Russian intelligence officers.

Mueller’s conclusion on Page’s July 2016 trip was actually inconclusive.

The Office was unable to obtain additional evidence or testimony about who Page may have met or communicated with in Moscow; thus Page’s activities in Russia—as described in his emails with the Campaign—were not fully explained.

His conclusion on Page’s activities in December 2016 are redacted, though he makes it clear that Deputy Prime Minister Arkady Dvorkovich was pitching business an ongoing relationship – an academic partnership – with Page.

Republicans should be more attentive to this detail, though: Long after Page had been fired from the Trump campaign, at a time when the Transition was ignoring Page’s application for a job in the Administration, just weeks before Steve Bannon called up Page and told him not to appear on MSNBC, he was still wandering around Moscow claiming to be speaking for Trump.

In a December 8, 2016 email intended for Manafort, Kilimnik wrote, “Carter Page is in Moscow today, sending messages he is authorized to talk to Russia on behalf of DT on a range of issues of mutual interest, including Ukraine.”

Most Administrations would be furious that someone who had become a political liability would continue to represent himself as someone who spoke for the Administration. They might even be grateful that the FBI continued to keep its eye on that person, to prevent them from facing any liability for what Page might say in Russia.

Not so today's Republican party. For them, Carter Page – someone Trump fired and then refused to consider employing – is MLK Jr.

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.