

THE PERSISTENCE OF JARED IN THE WIKILEAKS OPERATION

As I noted repeatedly (one, two), there were a number of provocative loose threads left in Roger Stone's trial. I want to look at one more: Roger Stone's effort to involve Kushner in WikiLeaks related stuff.

Rick Gates testified that in the weeks before WikiLeaks dropped the DNC emails in July 2016, a group including Stephen Miller, Jason Miller, Paul Manafort, and him brainstormed how they would respond to emails that – according to Roger Stone (as well as other public reporting) – would soon be released.

Jared Kushner was pointedly not named as participating in that group.

That's interesting because, just before 10PM on June 14, 2016 – the day that the DNC first announced it had been hacked – Stone had two phone calls with Trump on his home line, lasting a total of 4:18 minutes. The government admits they don't know what happened on those calls, but for some reason they seem to be certain it had to do with the DNC emails. Late afternoon the next day, after Guccifer 2.0 first released documents billed as DNC documents, Stone wrote Gates asking first for Jared Kushner's contact info, then his email. There were also a number of texts that day (the trial exhibit doesn't clarify whether these are ET or UTC, so it's unclear whether they happen around 4 and 12 PM, which is most likely, or 8PM and 4AM the next day).

Stone: Call me. Important

Gates: On con call but will call right after. Thanks.

Stone: Please

Stone: Awake ?

Gates: Yep.

Stone: Call me?

Gates said that Stone wanted Jared's contact info to debrief him on the hacked materials. Which is one reason it's weird that Kushner was not named in the group that prepared for new emails to drop.

Especially since, late in the campaign, Kushner is the one Paul Manafort advised on how to capitalize on WikiLeaks' releases. On October 21, for example, Manafort told him to use WikiLeaks to demonstrate Hillary's alleged corruption.

For example, on October 21, 2016, Manafort sent Kushner an email and attached a strategy memorandum proposing that the Campaign make the case against Clinton "as the failed and corrupt champion of the establishment" and that "Wikileaks provides the Trump campaign the ability to make the case in a very credible way – by using the words of Clinton, its campaign officials and DNC members."936

When, on November 5, Manafort sent Kushner an email warning that Hillary would blame any win on hacked voting machines, Steve Bannon responded by linking Manafort, Russia, and the WikiLeaks releases. (PDF 258)

We need to avoid this guy like the plague

They are going to try and say the Russian worked with wiki leaks to give this victory to us

Paul is nice guy but can't let word out he is advising us

That suggests that Bannon was a lot warier of continuing to accept Manafort's counsel than

Kushner was – and Bannon was wary because it linked a campaign win to Russia’s help.

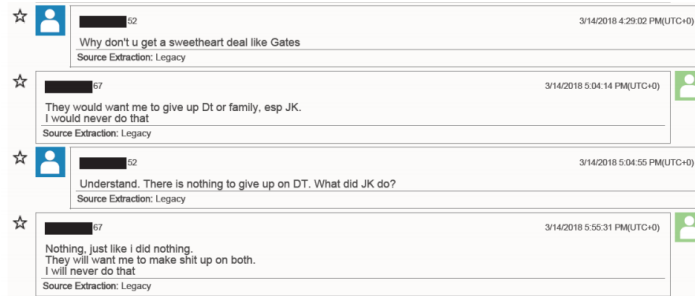
When Bannon was asked about this in an early, not entirely truthful, interview, he in turn linked Manafort to someone else who, given the name length and redaction purpose, is likely Stone.

Candidate Trump never said to Bannon that he was in contact with [5 letter name redacted for ongoing proceeding] or Manafort. Bannon knew they were going to win, and in this email he wanted to avoid Manafort because Bannon believed that if people could link them to Manafort, they could then try to link them to Russia.

Now go back to something else introduced in the trial. On August 18, the day after Bannon was first hired onto the campaign (but the day before Manafort would resign), Stone emailed him and explained, “I do know how to win this but it ain’t pretty.”

That appears to be the “other investigation” that Paul Manafort was supposed to, but reneged, on helping DOJ investigate last year, one where Manafort first implicated (to get his plea deal), then tried to exonerate (after he got it) someone with a seven-letter name. Even at the time, a different part of DOJ was investigating it.

Finally, consider one other detail. Back in March 2018, when Sean Hannity was grilling Paul Manafort about whether he might flip, Manafort explained that he would be expected to give up Kushner.



These are just data points.

But they are consistent with there being two strands of WikiLeaks discussions on the campaign. One – involving Gates, Stephen Miller, and Jason Miller – doing little more than optimizing the releases. And another – involving Manafort and Kushner, one that Bannon didn't want any tie to – involving something more.