

JOSHUA SCHULTE: THE ALLEGED VAULT 7 AND CIA ELECTION SPYING LEAKER?

I'm preparing a post showing that the government is preparing to lay out WikiLeaks as a decade-long ongoing conspiracy (whether or not they're planning on charging anyone with that).

Before I do, I wanted to correct an error I've made throughout my coverage of accused Vault 7 source Joshua Schulte. That's how I've always referred to him, as the guy who stole CIA's hacking tools and leaked them all to WikiLeaks.

But that's almost certainly not all the government believes he leaked.

Weeks before the actual Vault 7 leak, remember, WikiLeaks published a one-off file purporting to show CIA "espionage" on the 2012 French election. It purported to show that CIA had conducted both SIGINT and HUMINT on France's political parties, with an emphasis on the left and the right.

All major French political parties were targeted for infiltration by the CIA's human ("HUMINT") and electronic ("SIGINT") spies in the seven months leading up to France's 2012 presidential election. The revelations are contained within three CIA tasking orders published today by WikiLeaks as context for its forthcoming CIA Vault 7 series. Named specifically as targets are the French Socialist Party (PS), the National Front (FN) and Union for a Popular Movement (UMP) together with current President Francois Hollande, then President Nicolas Sarkozy, current round one presidential front runner Marine Le Pen, and former presidential candidates Martine Aubry and Dominique

■ Strauss-Khan.

But what the document *actually* showed is analysis of what might happen in the upcoming election, with some questions to ask, but questions that could easily be answered by wandering around the campus of Science Po, and would likely not be answered by infiltrating a campaign.

Nevertheless, in the wake of the Russian hack of the US, critics of America who took note of this thoroughly uninteresting document might misrepresent it as proving that the US still does what Russia did, even to our close allies.

WikiLeaks, significantly, claimed that this document provided context for the upcoming Vault 7 drop, even though it did no such thing.

The document, which as I said, the government likely will argue *also* came from Schulte, is significant for two reasons.

According to several documents in his case, he stole the Vault 7 files in May 2016, in a fit of anger over not getting his way.

But then, in August 2016, he started searching on WikiLeaks.

■ Around this time, Schulte also began regularly to search for information about WikiLeaks. In the approximately six years leading to August 2016, Schulte had conducted one Google search for WikiLeaks. Beginning on or about August 4, 2016 (approximately three months after he stole the Classified Information), Schulte conducted numerous Google searches for WikiLeaks and related terms and visited hundreds of pages that appear to have resulted from those searches.

Also in August 2016, he researched how to use throwaway emails and how to use Tails again.

It seems likely the government believes – though may not have proof – that the French election file also came from Schulte, but that he stole it in August, after WikiLeaks had released the DNC emails. If so, it seems that this file was something Schulte stole to help WikiLeaks justify its DNC dump. Perhaps even, as some files charged in the Assange indictment, this was something WikiLeaks requested.

The government is going to show that Schulte was closely involved in the way WikiLeaks released the Vault 7 files. And WikiLeaks and Schulte continued to cooperate closely after that. But it also now seems clear they plan to argue that Schulte stole files precisely to make WikiLeaks' 2016 cooperation with Russia look less damning.