

SEVEN DAYS AFTER JULIAN ASSANGE HELPED TRUMP WIN, ROGER STONE STARTED WORKING ON A PARDON

Last night, the government released a slew of warrants associated with but not limited to Roger Stone. I'll have much more to say about them going forward. But I'd like to focus on what they say about discussions of a pardon for Julian Assange.

I have previously noted that there was an effort – including but not limited to Stone – to get Assange a pardon from 2017 through early 2018. Randy Credico's sworn testimony at Stone's trial made it clear this effort started in 2016 (which is one reason WikiLeaks' efforts to pretend pardon discussions only occurred later in 2017 are so cynical). Indeed, Credico's hope of getting a pardon for Assange is one of the reasons Stone's threats against him worked as long as they did.

As a number of people have observed, the affidavits against Stone incorporate a paragraph explaining that, on June 10, 2017, Stone DMed Assange about a pardon.

On Saturday, June 10, 2017, @RogerJStoneJr sent a direct message to @JulianAssange, reading: "I am doing everything possible to address the issues at the highest level of Government. Fed treatment of you and WikiLeaks is an outrage. Must be circumspect as experience demonstrates it is monitored. Best regards R."

But this effort started much earlier than that.

When Credico testified about introducing Stone

to Kunstler in 2016 at trial (Stone would have known Kunstler was close to Credico because Credico bcc'ed Stone on an email he sent to the lawyer), he was vague about when that happened.

Q. What did you write to Mr. Stone on May 21st, 2018?

A. "Go right ahead. She's not Assange's lawyer."

Q. I'm sorry. Below that. Let's start at the first message, "You should have." All the way at the bottom.

A. Where? Where am I? Here, "You should have."

"You should have just been honest with the House Intel Committee. You've opened yourself up to perjury charges like an idiot. You have different versions. Maybe you need to get into rehab and get that memory straight."

Q. What did Mr. Stone respond?

A. I don't see it here.

Q. Just above that, do you see –

A. Oh, yes. "You are so full of S-H-I-T. You got nothing. Keep running your mouth and I'll file a bar complaint against your friend Margaret."

Q. And when he says "your friend Margaret," who is he referring to?

A. Margaret Ratner Kunstler.

Q. Had you put Mr. Stone directly in touch with Ms. Kunstler after the election?

A. Yes, I did.

Q. And why had you done that?

A. Well, sometime after the election, he wanted me to contact Mrs. Kunstler. He called me up and said that he had spoken

to Judge Napolitano about getting Julian Assange a pardon and needed to talk to Mrs. Kunstler about it. So I said, Okay. And I sat on it. And I told her—I told her—she didn't act on it. And then, eventually, she did, and they had a conversation.

Credico didn't even admit, at trial, that this happened before the end of 2016. But it appears to have started immediately after the election.

A warrant the government obtained to search the devices they seized when they searched Stone's home reveals that on November 14, 2016, Stone switched from using an iPhone 5s to an iPhone 7.

The next day, Stone started communicating using Signal with Margaret Kunstler.

According to records from Stone's iCloud account, a copy of the Signal application was downloaded to an iPhone registered to Stone on or about August 18, 2016. Additionally, text messages recovered from Stone's iCloud account revealed that on or about November 15, 2016, Stone sent an attorney with the ability to contact Julian Assange a link to download the Signal application.¹⁵ Approximately fifteen minutes after sending the link, Stone texted the attorney, "I'm on signal just dial my number." The attorney responded, "I'll call you."

¹⁵ This attorney was a close friend of Credico's and was the same friend Credico emailed on or about September 20, 2016 to pass along Stone's request to Assange for emails connected to the allegations against then-candidate Clinton related to her service as Secretary of State.

Stone deleted a year of texts from this phone.

Finally, one more detail that's in the generic affidavit. The investigation into Stone focused closely on whether, after getting a heads up from WaPo about the imminent Access Hollywood video story, Stone got WikiLeaks to drop the Podesta emails (Mueller's team appears to have gotten an understanding of whether and how this happened in September 2018, which I'll return to). Certainly, Steve Bannon gave Stone credit; his executive assistant, Alexandra Preate, commended Stone's "well done" hours later.

| Body | Timestamp: Time |
|------------|------------------------------|
| Well done. | 10/7/2016 10:30:55 PM(UTC+0) |

What these warrants reveal, however, are that Stone had an unexpected lunch meeting with Trump the next day, October 8, 2016, that forced him to reschedule a meeting with Jerome Corsi.

On or about October 8, 2016, STONE, using Target Account 3, messaged CORSI, "Lunch postponed-have to go see T." CORSI responded to STONE, "Ok. I understand."

One of the things that Bill Barr's DOJ has withheld thus far in the the release of Mueller-related 302s are the ones in which Mike Flynn explained that, in the wake of the Podesta release, the campaign considered reaching out to WikiLeaks.

The defendant also provided useful information concerning discussions within the campaign about WikiLeaks' release of emails. WikiLeaks is an important subject of the SCO's investigation because a Russian intelligence service used WikiLeaks to release emails the intelligence service stole during the 2016 presidential campaign. On July 22, 2016, WikiLeaks released emails stolen from the Democratic National Committee. Beginning

on October 7, 2016, WikiLeaks released emails stolen from John Podesta, the chairman of Hillary Clinton's 2016 presidential campaign. The defendant relayed to the government statements made in 2016 by senior campaign officials about WikiLeaks to which only a select few people were privy. For example, the defendant recalled conversations with senior campaign officials after the release of the Podesta emails, during which the prospect of reaching out to WikiLeaks was discussed.

Around the same time the campaign was having this discussion, then, Stone met personally with Trump.

So, yes, in June 2017 Stone DMed Assange about a pardon.

But more interesting is that the day after the Podesta releases, Stone met with Trump. And then, just days after Assange helped Trump win, Stone reached out to one of Assange's lawyers.