

HHS PROPAGANDIST MICHAEL CAPUTO IS THE RAT-FUCKER'S PROTÉGÉ

It was inevitable when Trump installed a press flack in April with the intention of riding herd on Health and Human Services Secretary Alex Azar that the flack, Michael Caputo, would invent a false reality about Trump's efforts to fight COVID.

Last week, Politico described how Caputo has done just that.

Caputo and his team have attempted to add caveats to the CDC's findings, including an effort to retroactively change agency reports that they said wrongly inflated the risks of Covid-19 and should have made clear that Americans sickened by the virus may have been infected because of their own behavior, according to the individuals familiar with the situation and emails reviewed by POLITICO.

Caputo's team also has tried to halt the release of some CDC reports, including delaying a report that addressed how doctors were prescribing hydroxychloroquine, the malaria drug favored by Trump as a coronavirus treatment despite scant evidence. The report, which was held for about a month after Caputo's team raised questions about its authors' political leanings, was finally published last week. It said that "the potential benefits of these drugs do not outweigh their risks."

In one clash, an aide to Caputo berated CDC scientists for attempting to use the reports to "hurt the President" in an Aug. 8 email sent to CDC Director Robert Redfield and other officials that was widely circulated inside the department

and obtained by POLITICO.

That has led to a closer focus on Caputo, including this NYT piece describing a fevered Caputo calling for armed insurgency if Trump doesn't win.

"I don't like being alone in Washington," he said, describing "shadows on the ceiling in my apartment, there alone, shadows are so long." He then ran through a series of conspiracy theories, culminating in a prediction that Mr. Trump will win re-election but his Democratic opponent, Joseph R. Biden Jr., will refuse to concede.

"And when Donald Trump refuses to stand down at the inauguration, the shooting will begin," he said. "The drills that you've seen are nothing." He added: "If you carry guns, buy ammunition, ladies and gentlemen, because it's going to be hard to get."

Bizarrely – particularly given Caputo's ranting about insurgency and his claims to be stressed by his implication in the Mueller Report – few of the stories on him (WaPo is one exception) have even mentioned his relationship to Roger Stone.

Caputo did not just set Stone up for a meeting with a Russian offering dirt in May 2016. He's Stone's protégé. Multiple Mueller 302s describe that Stone got Caputo a job with the campaign. Manafort testified that he used Caputo to keep track of what Stone was up to – a damning description given that Manafort offered more details about Stone's foreknowledge of the Podesta emails than other known witnesses. Caputo's own 302—which was released in February—was heavily redacted because of ongoing investigations. One thing it revealed, however, is that Caputo ran a "Project Rasputin" for Trump in 2016 that remains unexplained.

Caputo repeatedly complained that, after Stone was indicted, a gag prohibited him from speaking with witnesses, including him. In December he wrote Judge Amy Berman Jackson a plaintive letter asking for permission to spend Christmas with Stone.

Mr. Stone and I have been close friends since 1986. We work together, we dine together, our families share holidays together.

[snip]

[I]t's Christmas, Judge, and our family wants to spend time with his.

[snip]

[W]ith the holiday season imminent, I am writing to ask to see Roger and his family again soon. During this season, I hope you see fit to give our families this gift.

He also wrote a letter in support of leniency.

As the years went on, Roger and I became close friends. I learned important lessons from him: to listen more than talk, to keep driving forward during hard times, to keep my friends and family close. He loved friendly but hard-hitting banter, and I learned to give as well as I got. He was the big brother I never had, and I feel fortunate.

[snip]

People think they know Roger Stone: he plays hardball; he's Machiavellian. But he is at his center a caring man.

Since Stone's commutation, however, Caputo and Stone should be free to talk. It's likely not a coincidence, then, that Caputo is making the same calls for insurgency after Trump loses that

the rat-fucker is.