

THE ROGER STONE CONVERGENCE AT THE WINTER PALACE

There was a status hearing in the Owen Shroyer case last week that was so short it was over by the time I had entered the dial-in code. Shroyer, you'll recall, is the Alex Jones sidekick who was charged for violating his specific prohibition on being an asshole at the Capitol. His lawyer, Norm Pattis, happens to be the lawyer who sent a large swath of Alex Jones' data to the Texas Sandy Hook plaintiffs, and then presided over the \$1 billion judgement in the Connecticut Sandy Hook lawsuit. On June 14, Pattis noticed his appearance on Joe Biggs' legal team, effectively giving him visibility on how badly the discovery in the Proud Boy case implicates Shroyer and Jones and Ali Alexander. Shroyer appears to be stalling on his decision about whether he wants to enter a plea agreement – one that would presumably require some cooperation – or whether he wants to stick around and be charged in a superseding indictment along with everyone else.

Shroyer has until November 29 to make that decision, around which time I expect a Roger Stone convergence to become more clear.

The Roger Stone convergence has been coming for some time (I've been pointing to it for at 14 months). Yesterday, NYT reported that one means by which it is coming is in the dissemination of the We the People document laying out plans to occupy buildings – under the code "Winter Palace" – which the FBI found on the Enrique Tarrio phone it took over a year to exploit.

As I laid out here, the document is important because it shows Tarrio's motive on January 6 in his assertion that "every waking moment consists of" planning for revolution.

41. Between December 30 and December 31, 2020, TARRIO communicated multiple times

with an individual whose identity is known to the grand jury. On December 30, 2020, this individual sent TARRIO a nine-page document titled, "1776 Returns." The document set forth a plan to occupy a few "crucial buildings" in Washington, D.C., on January 6, including House and Senate office buildings around the Capitol, with as "many people as possible" to "show our politicians We the People are in charge." After sending the document, the individual stated, "The revolution is important than anything." TARRIO responded, "That's what every waking moment consists of... I'm not playing games."

And an exchange he had with now-cooperating witness Jeremy Bertino that they had succeeded in implementing the Winter Palace plan shows that Tarrío recognized that occupying buildings was part of his plan.

107. At 7:39 pm, PERSON-1 sent two text messages to TARRIO that read, "Brother. 'You know we made this happen,'" and "I'm so proud of my country today." TARRIO responded, "I know" At 7:44 pm. the conversation continued, with PERSON-1 texting, "1776 motherfuckers." TARRIO responded, "The Winter Palace." PERSON-1 texted, "Dude. Did we just influence history?" TARRIO responded, "Let's first see how this plays out." PERSON-1 stated, "They HAVE to certify today! Or it's invalid." These messages were exchanged before the Senate returned to its chamber at approximately 8:00 p.m. to resume certifying the Electoral College vote.

The NYT story reveals that Eryka Gemma is the person who sent the document to Tarrío, but she was not its author.

As a part of the investigation, prosecutors are seeking to understand whether Mr. Engels has ties to a little-known Miami-based cryptocurrency promoter who may have played a role in the Capitol attack.

A week before the building was stormed, the promoter, Eryka Gemma, gave Mr. Tarrio a document titled "1776 Returns," according to several people familiar with the matter. The document laid out a detailed plan to surveil and storm government buildings around the Capitol on Jan. 6 in a pressure campaign to demand a new election.

[snip]

The federal indictment of Mr. Tarrio says that the person who provided him with "1776 Returns" told him, shortly after it was sent, "The revolution is more important than anything." That person was Ms. Gemma, according to several people familiar with the matter.

But Ms. Gemma was not the author of "1776 Returns," which was written by others, first as a shared document on Google, the people said.

It remains unclear who the original authors were.

It may be unclear or detrimental to the sources for this story who originally wrote the document; it's probably not to investigators who can simply send a warrant to Google.

And whether because investigators know who wrote the document or for some other reason (such as that they have just a few more weeks of pre-sentencing cooperation with Joel Greenberg), they're trying to understand whether this document, laying out a plan to occupy buildings, had an analogue in the Florida-based riots that key Roger Stone associate, Jacob Engels, staged

in 2018 in an attempt to thwart any delays in certification for Rick Scott (and Ron DeSantis, who gets a positive shout out by name in the Winter Palace document).

On Nov. 9, [2018] a group of about 100 angry protesters, including members of the Proud Boys, descended on the Broward County elections office, carrying pro-Scott and pro-Trump signs and protesting the recount.

The event drew support from several far-right activists in Florida linked to Mr. Stone – among them, Ali Alexander, who later organized Stop the Steal events around the 2020 election, and Joseph Biggs, a leader of the Proud Boys who has since been charged alongside Mr. Tarrio in the Jan. 6 seditious conspiracy case.

The NYT describes this line of inquiry as happening via two different sets of prosecutors, which is a sign of either convergence or simply the networked structure that DOJ's approach, using parallel and (through Stone) intersecting, conspiracy indictments clearly facilitated (Shroyer's prosecution team, incidentally, features an Oath Keeper prosecutor and a key assault prosecutor).

In recent months, prosecutors overseeing the seditious conspiracy case of five members of the Proud Boys have expanded their investigation to examine the role that Jacob Engels – a Florida Proud Boy who accompanied Mr. Stone to Washington for Jan. 6 – played in the 2018 protests, according to a person briefed on the matter.

The prosecutors want to know whether Mr. Engels received any payments or drew up any plans for the Florida demonstration, and whether he has ties to other people connected to the Proud Boys' activities

in the run-up to the storming of the Capitol.

Different prosecutors connected to the Jan. 6 investigation have also been asking questions about efforts by Mr. Stone – a longtime adviser to Mr. Trump – to stave off a recount in the 2018 Senate race in Florida, according to other people familiar with the matter.

While the NYT describes (breaking news!) that Engels was one of the people who in 2019, along with Tarrio, crafted an attack on the judge presiding over Roger Stone's case, Amy Berman Jackson, it does not note that the Stop the Steal effort dates back two years earlier than the 2018 riot, to voter intimidation efforts that Stone pursued that look similar to the current drop box intimidation effort being disseminated via Trump's shitty social media website (NYT does mention the Brooks Brothers riots in 2000 and notes the participants "apparently work[ed] with Mr. Stone" – more breaking news).

Nor does it describe the backstory to how Biggs showed up in Florida in 2018, fresh off his ouster from InfoWars after playing a key role in both the PizzaGate and Seth Rich hoaxes, both part of a Russian info-op that Stone played a key role in. But it's part of the prehistory of the Proud Boys that prosecutors are now tracing.

I have no idea whether the very clear 2016 precedent is part of this. DOJ wouldn't need to do (much) fresh investigation of it because Mueller and DC USAO did quite a bit of investigation before Bill Barr torched the investigation all to hell and then Trump pardoned Stone to avoid being implicated himself. But if it was part of this, no one who would share those details with NYT would know about it unless and until it was indicted. That's even true of the 2019 incident; DOJ did at least some investigative work into the funding of that, the same questions being asked

now about how Engels organized the 2018 riot.

But whether this investigative prong extends no further back than 2018 or whether it includes the Stone Stop the Steal activity that demonstrably paralleled a Russian effort, it does seem that DOJ is investigating how the prior history of the Proud Boys parallels these efforts to undermine democracy and did so in the place – Miami – where the Proud Boys, schooled by the master rat-fucker, are increasingly taking on an official role.

That may not be an investigation about Engels' actions, directly (though he has long been in the thick of things). Rather, it may be an investigation into resources that were consistent throughout these developments.