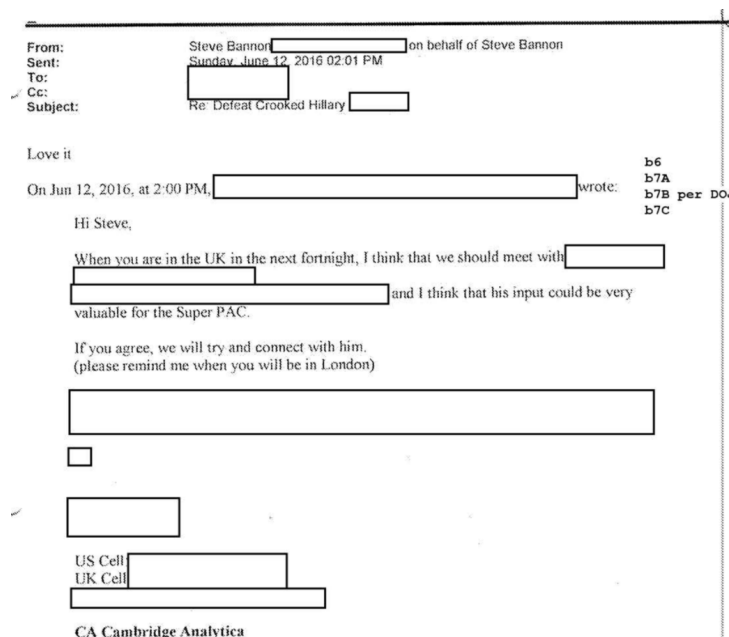


STEVE BANNON, ROGER STONE, AND THE ONGOING INVESTIGATION INTO CAMBRIDGE ANALYTICA

Steve Bannon responded to what may have been Alexander Nix's pitch to reach out to Julian Assange to help find Hillary Clinton's missing emails in June 2016 by responding, "Love it."



DOJ has hidden that email in a series of FOIA releases to BuzzFeed under a b7A redaction, claiming an ongoing investigation prevents its release.

DOJ also continues to hide Roger Stone's possible involvement in all this.

We can unpack what that email means by piecing together the multiple releases of Steve Bannon's interviews and backup material liberated by BuzzFeed, which I've laid out in this post.

Bannon was first asked about this email – which DOJ released with b7B redactions related to the pending Roger Stone trial – in his February 14, 2018 interview, at which Bannon made a lot of

claims that violently conflict with the now public record. Bannon claimed not to remember the email and also claimed not to know whether the person who sent the email ever did reach out to this person. The redactions show that the person in question had a 3-character name, meaning Nix is almost certainly the person at Cambridge Analytica who sent it. And the date of the email, June 12, is the same day that Assange said he had Hillary's emails, the Assange comments in response to which Nix has said he did reach out.

Bannon was shown Document #14, email dated 6/12/2016 from Bannon to [redacted] with [redacted] cc'd, subject "Re: Defeat Crooked Hillary | [redacted] b6 b7A b7B per DOJ/OIP b7C [redacted] Bannon did not remember sending the email and he never went to the United Kingdom. Bannon did not remember talking to [redacted] about meeting with [redacted] in general. Bannon would not characterize his response in the email, "Love it," as an approval to [redacted] suggestion to meet with [redacted] Bannon did not know if [redacted] or anyone from Cambridge Analytica, ever reached out to [redacted] Bannon thought they probably dropped the idea. Bannon had no idea where [redacted] of Cambridge Analytica and he was focused on getting their data business growing in the U.S. [redacted] had a lot of "James Bond" ideas like this idea on [redacted] and characterized it as [redacted] saying he "knows a guy, who knows a guy."

DOJ released another copy of the same email when it released more of the backup to Bannon's interviews earlier this month. DOJ redacted the previously released passages under privacy exemptions, and redacted the previously unredacted date under an ongoing b7A exemption. So it's useless to help determine the full content of the email.

But it makes it possible to connect the email to Bannon's second explanation of it in his October 28, 2018 interview. Bannon's attempts to claim that "Love it" means "I don't love it" were no more convincing in his October 2018 interview than they were in his February 2018 interview. Though by the end of his answer, Bannon admitted that, as someone who ran a media company and not yet a campaign, "there wasn't any reason why doing it would be wrong."

BANNON was shown an email dated [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] When BANNON wrote "Love it" in the email, he was saying he thought it was fantastic, epic, and that he wasn't going to get back to you. There would be no follow on. BANNON described it as a "quasi blow-off". [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] When BANNON wrote "Love it" he was not approving it, or else he would say he was approving it. It also did not indicate that he was going to do something. At that time, in June 2016, BANNON was going to go over to cover Brexit for Breitbart. BANNON had spent a lot of time and effort trying to find CLINTON's 33,000 missing emails. At the time, BANNON did not think that was dangerous as he was part of a media company. In 2017, [REDACTED] was totally blown out of proportion to the point where it was purported that [REDACTED] was TRUMP's [REDACTED] BANNON believed this story metastasized into something that was totally misconstrued and it made a tacit connection to the Trump Campaign. When BANNON wrote "Love it", he was not saying not to do it. In June 2016, there wasn't any reason why doing it would be wrong. In his role at a media company it was a good idea.

b6
b7A
b7C

b5 per DOJ/OIP

In this second explanation of the email, Bannon makes it quite clear that this was part of his effort to find Hillary's missing 33,000 emails – the same purpose which Alexander Nix has admitted his outreach to Assange served. It appears that this email is a different one than the one that has been reported in the past, where Nix told Rebekah Mercer and someone else who was not (as Bannon was not yet) on the campaign that he *had* reached out to Assange.

If that's right, then it's unclear why the Congressional committees didn't get this email, or indeed, why SSCI had to rely on the Daily Beast report of the outreach that purportedly sourced to Congressional investigators.

In that second interview, Bannon also described the coverage in 2017, which again strongly suggests this is Nix reaching out to Assange.

But that may not be the most important part of this email.

The passages from Bannon's February 2018 interview that got reprocessed after Stone's trial show that the second question after the one about this June 12 email prompted Bannon to explain how he met Stone. There's even a question about whether Bannon introduced someone – again, a three letter name – to Stone. Stone and this person didn't have a relationship, Bannon said, but the person was "trying to get business from Stone." Bannon said he may have introduced the two.

Then there are a series of questions about other emails, several of which were withheld, probably under b7A redactions. Those include:

- An April 20, 2016 email to Bannon with Stone cc'ed about Cambridge Analytica
- A May 4, 2016 email which may reflect Bannon congratulating Stone (this was right after Trump sealed the nomination)
- A May 7, 2016 email, with the subject line "I am," from Stone to Bannon referencing the "highest level" that Bannon read as a certain kind of backer
- This May 4, 2016 email, reflecting a text Bannon received, probably from the same Cambridge Analytica person:

From: [redacted]
 Sent: Wed 5/04/2016 8:13 AM (GMT-04:00)
 To: Steve Bannon
 Cc:
 Bcc:
 Subject: [No Subject]

b6
 b7A
 b7B per 1
 b7C

TEXT RECEIVED FROM [redacted]

[redacted]

I know [redacted] well - he is a total pretender!
 We worked on our very first pilot program in Virginia with him in 2013

I will connect with him directly.

☐

[redacted]

US Cell: [redacted]
 UK Cell: [redacted]

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Bannon's explanation for the second May 4 email is that it relates to Stone's May 7 email (described as "Document #17").

Bannon was shown an email dated 5/04/2016 from [REDACTED] to Bannon, subject "[No Subject]." Bannon thought this looked like the same \$20 million from the email in Document #17. Cambridge Analytica claimed they could help micro-target voters on Facebook. Stone tried to raise \$20 million and it might have been for a project for Cambridge Analytica.

All this seems to suggest that, even before Nix reached out to Julian Assange, he or someone else at CA and Stone were in discussions about a very sizable data project.