

JESSE JACKSON JR. MET BLAGOJEVICH IN THE LATTER'S OFFICE: WERE THEY TAPED?

Keep in mind, as you're reading Jesse Jackson Jr's statement from yesterday, that they met in Blagojevich's office on Monday.

The media saw me enter the governor's office. And after a 90-day [sic] meeting about my record, my qualifications, the media saw me exit Governor Blagojevich's office.

Jackson doesn't say in which office he met with Blago. That is, he doesn't say (and the coverage of the meeting doesn't say) whether or not he met with Blago in his campaign office—which we know with certainty is bugged.

But regardless of which office they met in, what do you think the odds are that the FBI listened in on that meeting?

The complaint makes no mention of Monday's meeting between Jackson and Blago—aside from describing Blago, before the fact, explaining to aides that it was going to happen. It couldn't have! The complaint is dated December 7—Sunday, the day before the Blago-Jackson meeting, and two days before they actually used it.

We do know, however, that the FBI had been able to get bugging devices approved and installed in a few days earlier in this case, because that's how long it took them to install the bug in Blago's campaign office in time for a long meeting with John Wyma.

Now, Jackson should have at least suspected that their meeting Monday might be taped, since the Trib broke the story that the governor was being taped on Friday. Though that story suggested that John Wyma was wearing a wire (which is what

Blago seemed to think was occurring, as he referred to people "wearing taping devices")—it never revealed that Blago's campaign office was bugged.

Federal investigators recently made covert tape recordings of Gov. Rod Blagojevich in the most dramatic step yet in their corruption investigation of him and his administration, the Tribune has learned.

As part of this undercover effort, one of the governor's closest confidants and former aides cooperated with investigators, and that assistance helped lead to recordings of the governor and others, sources said.

The cooperation of John Wyma, 42, one of the state's most influential lobbyists, is the most stunning evidence yet that Blagojevich's once-tight inner circle appears to be collapsing under the pressure of myriad pay-to-play inquiries.

That's what Jackson would have known when he walked into his meeting on Monday; he knows far more now.

So consider the possibility that Jackson now believes (or knows for certain) their meeting was taped on Monday when he spoke yesterday, but may not have on Monday. That raises the possibility that Jackson was trying to set expectations about what occurred in that meeting (though the only thing that Jackson describes that might be ambiguous is his discussion of service).

I did not know that the process had been corrupted. I did not know that credentials, that qualifications, that a record of service meant nothing to the governor. I did not know that the governor and his cronies were attempting to use the process to extort money and

favors, in a brazen pay to play scheme.

I wanted to be considered for the appointment because I believe in public service. I believe that Illinois deserves another senator serving alongside Senator Dick Durbin, who shares the values and will work to fix our economy, make our nation more energy independent, provide health care for all Americans, and provide our children with a world-class education, the values of the president-elect.

That's what I shared with Governor Blagojevich on Monday, when I had the opportunity to meet with him for the first time in four years.

I want to repeat that. I met with Governor Blagojevich for the first time in four years on Tuesday. I presented my record, my qualifications and my vision.

But it would also make Jackson's version of what the Fitz told him on Tuesday more significant.

Know this. I spoke to the U.S. attorney's office on Tuesday. They shared with me that I am not – I am not a target of this investigation, and that I am not accused of any misconduct.

That is, if Fitz told Jackson that "he is not accused of any misconduct" after hearing tapes of Monday's meeting, that carries more weight than if he only knew what Blago had been saying on earlier tapes.

Of course, if they did tape Monday's meeting—and then almost immediately triggered Blago's arrest—that would suggest something else entirely (though, still, might not mean that Jackson had any idea that money might change hands).