

GEORGE PAPADOPOULOS' SOCIAL MEDIA CALL RECORDS WERE NOT SUBPOENAED UNTIL AFTER HIS INTERVIEWS

I've been tracking questions about how aggressively (or not) the FBI investigated George Papadopoulos after receiving a tip, in July 2016, that he had heard the Russians bragging about having dirt in the form of emails from Hillary Clinton in April 2016. In this post, I showed that, given that they didn't know about Ivan Timofeev until after his interviews, they could not even have started pursuing a warrant until after the first interview, at best (and didn't know about the existence communications over a Section 702 provider with Timofeev until after both). In this post, I suggested that it looked like the FBI first obtained a preservation order for the device GSA had on him on March 9, 21 days after his second interview.

Since then two details have come out. First, this Peter Strzok/Lisa Page SMS text highlighted by Matt Tait suggests that as late as June 6, 2017, the Special Counsel's office was still debating whether searching Section 702 presented a litigation risk (meaning Trump's buddies are getting far more protection than the rest of us might be).

Then there's a point that Eric Swalwell made in Monday's hearing debating whether or not to reveal the Schiff memo. In response to Michael Turner's suggestion that there was no evidence of "collusion" between Trump and Russia, Swalwell pointed out that only after the FBI challenged Trump aide claims did the Bureau find evidence to support a conspiracy.

George Papadopoulos I think is the canary in the coal mine. He was interviewed January 27, 2017, by FBI. He lied about his contacts over in London with the professor. He was interviewed again in February, and he lied. Only when the FBI showed the willingness to subpoena his Skype and Facebook logs did he come around 6 months later.

This makes it clear that the FBI had not even obtained call records from Papadopoulos (via an NSL or a subpoena) before the second interview, the standard for which is really low.

Again, this shows that, at least during that phase of the investigation, the FBI was moving very conservatively. The GOP keep complaining that Carter Page, who had been a suspected foreign agent for years, was targeted under FISA. But they're not acknowledging that the FBI appears to have treated the other Trump aides with kid gloves. for nine months after the period when they obtained a real tip about their involvement.