

AMONG OTHER THINGS, SAM PATTEN PLEA SIGNALS THAT MUELLER REFERRALS WILL INCLUDE FALSE CONGRESSIONAL TESTIMONY

As I noted in an update to this post, another sleazy influence peddler, Sam Patten, just pled guilty to a FARA violation. As his criminal information lays out, he pled to serving as an agent of Konstantin Kilimnik and Serhiy Lyovochkin without registering under FARA. His plea agreement (which notes he first made a proffer to Mueller's team on May 22, meaning this is another investigation that has been going on months that is being finalized in the last days of August) included a cooperation agreement.

More interesting details, however, are the descriptions of the other crimes he is being excused from, which appear in the statement of the offense.

First, there's a description of how he served as a straw purchaser for Lyovochkin for inauguration tickets.

To circumvent the foreign donation restriction, PATTEN, with the knowledge of Foreigner A, solicited a United States citizen to act as a "straw" purchaser so that he could conceal from the [Presidential Inauguration Committee] that the tickets for the inauguration were being paid for from a foreign source. The straw purchaser paid \$50,000 for four inauguration tickets. The straw purchaser paid that sum one day after receiving from [Begemot

Ventures] a check signed by PATTEN in the sum of \$50,000. In turn, [Lyovochkin] had paid [Begemot] for the tickets through a Cypriot account. [Kilimnik and Lyovochkin] another Ukrainian, and PATTEN were allocated the four inauguration tickets. Thereafter, PATTEN attended a PIC even in Washington, D.C. with Foreigner B.

I suspect we'll see a lot more straw purchasers funneling money from foreigners who backed his campaign into Donald Trump's pocket before this investigation is done.

Less sexy, but procedurally more important, is the revelation that Patten also lied to SSCI.

In or about January 2018, the United States Senate Select Committee on Intelligence (SSCI) sought PATTEN's voluntary testimony on various topics. In advance of that testimony, the SSCI sought various pertinent documents from PATTEN.

In or about January 2018, PATTEN testified before the SSCI. Both before and during his testimony, PATTEN misled the SSCI in that he intentionally did not provide SSCI certain documents that could lead to revelation of him causing and concealing the foreign purchase of the PIC tickets, described above, and gave false and misleading testimony to avoid disclosing that he had caused and concealed foreign money to be paid to the PIC. In addition, PATTEN provided misleading testimony about his representation of foreign principals in the United States, so as to conceal his violation of the Foreign Agents Registration Act. Finally, after the interview, PATTEN deleted documents pertinent to his relationships with the above-described foreign principals.

As noted, this is one of the additional crimes that Patten will avoid being charged for by pleading to the FARA charge. Reportedly, SSCI made its own criminal referral, based off different comments.

All of this might concern people like Don Jr, who pretty clearly lied to multiple committees. Because it shows Mueller will use such crimes for leverage.

But Mueller probably has bigger things planned for Don Jr.

Update: This is speculation. But SSCI has released a statement making it clear that they referred Patten, but for statements other than what made it into his plea.

We can confirm that Mr. Patten produced documents to the Committee and was interviewed by Committee staff. Due to concerns about certain statements made by Mr. Patten, the Committee made a criminal referral to the Department of Justice. While the charge, and resultant plea, do not appear to directly involve our referral, we appreciate their review of this matter. We will have no further comments on this case at this time.

One thing SSCI has investigated closely is Cambridge Analytica. One thing this plea is utterly silent about is Patten's work for CA in 2014.

Which would make the topic an even more interesting thing for Patten to cooperate on (without protection against prosecution) than just straw donors.

Update: On Twitter, Christopher Wylie said,

BREAKING: Ex-Cambridge Analytica contractor Sam Patten just charged by FBI after Mueller referral. This guy was responsible for CA operations in the US that involved covertly testing US voter attitudes on Putin's leadership.. I know

there's more to come...

In his testimony to SJC, he said,

Other CA contractors have worked on pro-Russian political operations in Eastern Europe, including work in Ukraine with suspected Russian intelligence agents. This may have influenced some of CA's research in the USA. During its research projects in 2014, CA also set up focus groups, message testing and polling on Americans' views on the leadership of Vladimir Putin and Russian expansionism in Eastern Europe. Of note, Vladimir Putin was the only foreign leader tested by CA.

He also told SJC he was cooperating with FBI, so he presumably made this same claim to FBI under threat of false statements charges.