

# DETOUR: ROGER STONE'S EPICALLY SHITTY EXPLANATION FOR HIS PODESTA TWEET

I need to take another detour from my series on the universe of the known hacked and leaked emails from 2016.

While working on the Podesta email post, my treatment of how epically shitty Stone's explanation for his August 21, 2016 tweet boasting that "it would soon be the Podesta's time in the barrel" grew so big it has become its own post.

For reasons I laid out in this post, the public record is not all that convincing that Stone *did* have foreknowledge of the Podesta dump. Both in August, when he started talking about foreknowledge of a Hillary release, and in October, when he promised it on a specific day (that turned out to be wrong), he predicted WikiLeaks would dump Hillary's deleted emails, not Podesta's emails.

But Stone's explanation for the tweet is epically shitty and increasingly makes me think he not only knew that Podesta's emails would be released, but may have seen some of them in advance.

Effectively, Stone claimed to the House Intelligence Committee that his Podesta comment referred to a report Jerome Corsi did for him between August 14, and 31, 2016 (which doesn't identifiably show up in Stone's political expenditures in this period).

My Tweet of August 21, 2016, in which I said, "Trust me, it will soon be the Podesta's time in the barrel. #CrookedHillary" Must be examined in

context. I posted this at a time that my boyhood friend and colleague, Paul Manafort, had just resigned from the Trump campaign over allegations regarding his business activities in Ukraine. I thought it manifestly unfair that John Podesta not be held to the same standard. Note, that my Tweet of August 21, 2016, makes no mention, whatsoever, of Mr. Podesta's email, but does accurately predict that the Podesta brothers' business activities in Russia with the oligarchs around Putin, their uranium deal, their bank deal, and their Gazprom deal, would come under public scrutiny. Podesta's activities were later reported by media outlets as diverse as the Wall Street Journal and Bloomberg. My extensive knowledge of the Podesta brothers' business dealings in Russia was based on The Panama Papers, which were released in early 2016, which revealed that the Podesta brothers had extensive business dealings in Russia. The Tweet is also based on a comprehensive, early August opposition research briefing provided to me by investigative journalist, Dr. Jerome Corsi, which I then asked him to memorialize in a memo that he sent me on August 31st, all of which was culled from public records. There was no need to have John Podesta's email to learn that he and his presidential candidate were in bed with the clique around Putin.

The claim is, particularly knowing what we know about efforts Paul Manafort was making to hide his own corruption by asking Tony Podesta to avoid legally mandated reporting, ... interesting. Particularly given the way this timeline overlaps with some other events, notably Manafort's increasingly desperate efforts to stave off bankruptcy even while working for Trump for "free." There are also some oddities

about how the timing evolved from those August “research” documents and later October publications. I’ll hit both those timing issues in my Podesta email post.

For now, consider what Corsi claimed back in March 2017, the first attempt to explain Stone’s tweet. In his version, Stone’s tweet was about four different reports.

Corsi first said that he started researching the Podestas and Russia in response to reading a July 31, 2016 Government Accountability Institute report, one not mentioned in Stone’s explanation.

On July 31, 2016, the New York Post reported that Peter Schweizer’s Washington-based Government Accountability Institute had published a report entitled, “From Russia with Money: Hillary Clinton, the Russian Reset, and Cronyism.”

That report detailed cash payments from Russia to the Clintons via the Clinton Foundation which included a Putin-connected Russian government fund that transferred \$35 million to a small company that included Podesta and several senior Russian officials on its executive board.

“Russian government officials and American corporations participated in the technology transfer project overseen by Hillary Clinton’s State Department that funneled tens of millions of dollars to the Clinton Foundation,” the report noted in the executive summary.

“John Podesta failed to reveal, as required by law on his federal financial disclosures, his membership on the board of this offshore company,” the executive summary continued. “Podesta also headed up a think tank which wrote favorably about the Russian reset while apparently receiving millions from Kremlin-linked

Russian oligarchs via an offshore LLC.”

Reading Schweizer’s report, I began conducting extensive research into Secretary Clinton’s “reset” policy with Russia, Podesta’s membership on the board of Joule Global Holdings, N.V. – a shell company in the Netherlands that Russians close to Putin used to launder money – as well as Podesta’s ties to a foundation run by one of the investors in Joule Energy, Hans-Jorg Wyss, a major contributor to the Clinton Foundation.

Having claimed this report got him interested in substantiating a tie between Hillary and Russia, Corsi then shifts, saying that the August 14 NYT story on Manafort’s secret ledgers did (which I would call “mid-August,” not early August). He claimed his goal in response to the NYT reporting – it’s not clear whether this started on August 1 or August 14 – was just to publicize the already-written GAI report.

On Aug. 14, 2016, the New York Times reported that a secret ledger in Ukraine listed cash payments for Paul Manafort, a consultant to the Ukraine’s former President Viktor F. Yanukovich.

When this article was published, I suggested to Roger Stone that the attack over Manafort’s ties to Russia needed to be countered.

My plan was to publicize the Government Accountability Institute’s report, “From Russia With Money,” that documented how Putin paid substantial sums of money to both Hillary Clinton and John Podesta.

Putin must have wanted Hillary to win in 2016, if only because Russian under-the-table cash payments to the Clintons and to Podesta would have made blackmailing her as president easy.

On Aug. 14, 2016, I began researching

for Roger Stone a memo that I entitled "Podesta."

So Corsi suggests the report he did for Stone was based on the GAI one.

Except Corsi's report (starting at PDF 39, copies of the report are at this point just reproductions without metadata to track when they were written, but Corsi claims to have handed over ways for Mueller to track such things when he interviewed with Mueller's team and then appeared before the grand jury in September) doesn't deal with the GAI report at all. Instead, it is a direct response to the NYT Manafort report, claiming that the NYT reporting (the stuff that has since been confirmed by all of Manafort's guilty pleas) was not substantiated. It then makes a key logical move, admitting that his report is an attempt to undermine the claim that Russia's close ties to Manafort had some relation to the hack-and-leak.

From there, the Democratic Party narrative continues to suggest Manafort's close relationship to the Kremlin allowed him to position the Trump campaign to receive a dump of hacked emails that embarrassed the Clinton campaign by exposing the efforts Debbie Wasserman Schultz, as chairman of the DNC, took to rig the primaries for Hillary, to the distinct disadvantage of challenger, Sen. Bernie Sanders.

The entire Democratic Party narrative is thrown into disarray if it turns out the Podesta brothers, via the Podesta Group, have tighter and more easily documentable financial ties to Russia, involving far greater numbers than have ever been suggested to tie Manafort to Russia via Ukraine.

This is a key distinction. While the report definitely responds to the burgeoning scandal

about Manafort's ties to Russian oligarchs, Corsi admits that this report is about undercutting the claim that Russia would have reason to target Hillary in a hack-and-leak effort. So yeah, it's about Stone's "boyhood friend and colleague" (who at the time was setting off on a crime spree to hide his Russian ties), but it's also about his longtime buddy Donald Trump, too.

From there the Corsi report focuses on the Podesta Group, on Uranium One, on Clinton's ties to Fethulla Gulen (whom Mike Flynn was moving towards on kidnapping at the time), as if any of that suggests closer ties to Russia than Manafort has. Virtually the only claim about John Podesta (as opposed to Tony) is that he had ties to Hillary's Foundation.

The idea behind Corsi's story, I suppose, is that if Corsi started writing this report on August 14, then when Stone tweeted on August 21, it would reflect a draft of the report that bears the final date of August 31. There's no public record to support that chronology, though.

From there, Corsi notes that he and Podesta returned to the subject of the GAI report – Podesta's ties with Joule – in October.

On October 6, 2016, I published in WND.com the first of a series of articles detailing Putin's financial ties to Clinton and Podesta, based largely on the research contained in the Government Accountability Institute's report, "From Russia With Money."

On Oct. 13, 2016, Stone published on his website an article entitled, "Russian Mafia money laundering, the Clinton Foundation and John Podesta."

So thus far, Corsi argues that the progression goes from an August 1 GAI Report, to ... something ... to his research starting on August 14 about entirely unrelated allegations about the

Podestas, back to both he and Stone writing on Joule in October.

In his description of the October pieces, Corsi claims – citing selectively – that Stone’s Joule piece relied on his and (he seems to claim, but this is nonsense) his private research report.

A comparison of the two articles will show the extent to which Stone incorporated my research into his analysis.

Probably, Corsi is talking about that series he is referring to, which include these posts:

September 28: Media Neglect Clinton-Linked Firm’s Role in Russia Scandal (pointing out the Podesta Group was also under investigation)

October 6: Russia? Look Who’s Really in Bed with Moscow (Reiterates findings of GAI report)

October 13: Hillary Campaign Chief Linked to Money-Laundering in Russia (cites but does not link to WikiLeaks releases)

October 17: How Hillary’s Campaign Chief Hid Money from Russia (actually inking to the WikiLeaks emails and claiming the Leonidio to which Podesta transferred Joule shares was one one in Utah)

Though he cites Stone’s denials of advance knowledge that WikiLeaks would dump the Podesta emails, Corsi doesn’t cite this passage in Stone’s October 13 piece.

Wikileaks emails tie John Podesta, chairman of Hillary Clinton’s 2016 presidential campaign, into the money-laundering network with the confirmation Podesta had exercised 75,000 shares out of 100,000 previously undisclosed stock options he was secretly issued by Joule

Unlimited, a U.S. corporation that ties back to Vekselberg connected Joule Global Stichting in the Netherlands – a shady entity identified in the Panama Papers as an offshore money-laundering client of the notorious Panamanian law firm Mossack Fonseca.

As a clear indication of guilty conscience, the Wikileaks Podesta file further documents that Podesta made a serious effort to keep the transaction from coming to light as evidenced by his decision to transfer 75,000 common shares of Joule Unlimited to Leonidio LLC, another shady shell corporation – this one listed in Salt Lake City at the home apartment of the gentlemen who registered the company.

Stone mentions – but does not link to – some of the WikiLeaks files he's discussing. It is true that two Podesta emails released two days earlier on October 11 (December 31, 2013 resignation letter, January 7, 2014 severance letters) relate to the stuff Stone mentions and have some of the same numbers. They certainly don't substantiate Stone's claim about mob ties and shell corporations. Plus, three of the Joule documents that might actually pertain to Stone's claims weren't released until October 30, October 31, and November 1. Significantly, the research that Corsi claims Stone relied on didn't show up until Corsi's October 17 post, four days after Stone's.

That at least suggests that Stone may have had those WikiLeaks emails earlier – and it may suggest he had "WikiLeaks documents" that never got published, which he ironically would have referenced in a piece purporting to prove he didn't have advance knowledge of the release. It also raises real questions about why Corsi resuscitated the Joule attack on October 6, as if knowing both *that* Podesta emails would come out and that they would include some attached documents allegedly substantiating and advancing



the GAI report from the summer.

Stone also claims further research reflects an unsubstantiated further tie with (Trump inauguration donor) Viktor Vekselberg, one he didn't repeat when he revived the post to implicate Michael Cohen last May.

Further research has documented that Viktor Vekselberg arranged for two transfers of unknown amounts to a private Clinton Foundation account in the Bank of America, with the funds passing through a pass-through account at Deutsche Bank and Trust Company Americas in New York City – with the first transfer made on Feb. 10, 2015, and the second on March 15, 2016.

Vekselberg is known to have donated to the Clinton Foundation, though it's not clear where Stone gets the banking details.

I'm not actually sure what to make of Stone's post. I have yet to chase down where all these claims come from (if not from Stone's ripe imagination).

But even aside from these three unsubstantiated claims, I know this.

Corsi originally claimed that all four reports – the August 1 GAI report, his own August 14-31 private report to Stone, his own revival of the GAI report the day before the Podesta emails started coming out on October 7 (and, arguably, the entire series), and then Stone's own piece after some WikiLeaks documents came out that sort of related to his arguments but not entirely – were part of the same effort.

That's not right. His own report for Stone is the outlier.

While it's unsurprising that Manafort's "boyhood friend" might solicit a report both to protect that boyhood friend and his longtime political mentee, Donald Trump, that report was part of a separate effort than the GAI research – which

Stone would ultimately claim without proof WikiLeaks releases supported. It's unclear which of the three things is most damning: the Stone report which claimed to use WikiLeaks research to elaborate on the GAI research, the report attempting to disprove true facts about Manafort's ties to Russia, or the tweet.

But they don't explain each other. And inserted into the timeline – as I'll do – they become even more problematic.

Update: I took out a paragraph on Corsi's timing, which was erroneous.

Update: Via the Daily Caller, Stone has now offered another explanation: that he learned of all this from a James Rosen email to Andrew Napolitano on which he was BCCed.

Stone also told The Post he had a "second source" regarding his claims about WikiLeaks the Clinton Foundation. Emails provided to The Daily Caller show the "second source" referenced is an email Stone was Bcc'd on from July 25, 2016. Stone was Bcc'd on the email by Clinton Foundation expert Charles Ortel, who was conducting a conversation with then-Fox News journalist James Rosen and Judge Andrew Napolitano.

**Subject:** Re: Fox London needs to meet Assange  
**Date:** Monday, July 25, 2016 at 11:12:07 AM Eastern Daylight Time  
**From:** Charles Ortel  
**To:** Rosen, James  
**CC:** Napolitano, Andrew  
**BCC:** players02@hotmail.com

#### July 2016 Email

The email included a previous exchange between Ortel and Rosen in which the Fox News journalist wrote "am told Wikileaks will be doing a massive dump of HRC emails relating to the CF in September" to Ortel. There is no evidence to suggest Rosen was aware of Stone's visibility on the email chain.

On Jul 25, 2016 11:42 AM, "Rosen, James" <[REDACTED]> wrote:  
Am told Wikileaks will be doing a massive dump of HRC emails relating to the CF in September.

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James Rosen  
Chief Washington Correspondent  
Host, "The Foxhole"  
Twitter: @JamesRosenFNC  
[REDACTED]

## James Rosen Email

Ortel confirmed the authenticity of the email exchanges to TheDC while Rosen declined to comment.

Stone explained to TheDC the information he learned from the email was part of the basis for his August 2016 claim of impending information from WikiLeaks about the Clinton Foundation.

This doesn't actually explain squat. But it does put Stone in contact with people who might be explain the rest of what went down. The DC piece also provides another Stone excuse for why he was interested in Podesta's plight on August 14, which he claims was a Schweitzer piece at Breitbart, but which might instead be this one. In any case, Stone seems to have a real urgency to have something that explains an August 14 interest in Podesta.

Update: One other point about the language in Corsi's report making it clear it was a response to the Russian allegations. He still seems to treat the possibility that Russia did the hack seriously. That's an interesting detail given that the guy he was purportedly doing the report for was publicly on the record blaming a 400 pound hacker in mom's basement.