

HOW PAUL MANAFORT LIED TO MUELLER TO PROTECT JARED KUSHNER

Paul Manafort appears to have saved the President's son-in-law by lying to Mueller's prosecutors.

That's what his 302 from September 13, 2018, released yesterday under FOIA, appears to show.

The 302 records the last interview before he sealed his plea deal (starting at PDF 223). Much of it focuses on how the campaign dealt with WikiLeaks. The 302 includes the following topics:

1. A reminder that on the previous two days, Manafort had lied about meeting Konstantin Kilimnik in February 2017, but after being shown travel records in this interview he admitted it.
2. Mostly redacted (for ongoing investigation likely tied to Roger Stone's prosecution) discussions about how Manafort didn't want Trump "distracted by the titillation of a WikiLeaks release."
3. A claim that the RNC would handle press on the WikiLeaks release, even though three Trump staffers had been strategizing just

that for weeks.

4. Manafort's claim he was surprised by the "Russia are you listening" comment, which is consistent with other people's claims, is unbelievable.
5. Language designed to sustain a claim that Manafort had no idea why Trump attributed the stolen emails to Russia in his "Russia are you listening" comment.
6. A claim that no one suspected Trump of "colluding" with Russia before Robbie Mook made the allegation.
7. A discussion that ties the two October 7 events (the release of the Podesta emails and the Access Hollywood tape) with details of his own crimes in Ukraine, along with an admission that Manafort spoke to Trump about all that.
8. Manafort's claims to be absolutely ignorant about whether Trump had any entanglements with Russia.
9. Lies about (almost certainly) Steve Calk's awareness that his bank loan paperwork submission was false.

Between topic 8 and 9, the 302 also captures the basis for one of Mueller's claims that Manafort lied during his cooperation agreement, an allegation (that Judge Amy Berman Jackson upheld) that Manafort lied about another DOJ investigation to protect someone.

I laid out what the breach determination disclosed about the investigation here. Basically, shortly before Manafort left the campaign, someone (which it's now clear is almost certainly Roger Stone and indeed appears to have come up in Stone's trial) offered up a way to save the candidate. The question is how closely involved someone else – someone with a 7-character name – got involved in this effort to save the candidate. According to the breach proceedings, Manafort told one story that incriminated the person with a 7-character name when first interviewed, prior to getting his plea deal, on September 13 (that is, in this 302). But when Mueller's team brought prosecutors from another investigation in to hear the story on October 5, Manafort at first gave a very different version, one that was much less incriminating to that 7-character name person, a version that aligned with the story that person was telling the FBI at the time, and that put more of the blame on the 5-character name person, presumably Stone.

It appears highly likely that the person he was protecting was Jared Kushner.

In the breach hearing (discussion starts on page 110), the names of both people involved are redacted.

That -- so this is one where there are real details being given. And the next version that happens, what we, of course, then, as we noted, brought ██████████ ██████████ was relevant to that investigation, and had them come here. And the story omitted everything, basically, about Mr. ██████████ saying that and, instead, there was a very watered-down version related to Mr. ██████████ and -- who specifically, Mr. Manafort had previously said, I did not want to be involved in this at all.

But in the 302 released yesterday, Kushner's name is not redacted.

Interviewers read to Manafort text messages between Manafort and [redacted]
[redacted] Manafort does not believe that [redacted] text
message relates to [redacted] Manafort believes [redacted]
message may be about [redacted]
[redacted] Kushner called Manafort. [redacted] b6
b7A
b7B per DOJ/OIG
b7C

Subsequent to Kushner's call, Manafort received a call from [redacted] b6
[redacted] Manafort never discussed b7B per DOJ/OIG
whether [redacted] had a solution. Manafort did not want [redacted] b7C
involved. Manafort told [redacted] that it had been handled. Manafort did not
tell [redacted] who handled it.

Numerous times in Paul Manafort's texts with Sean Hannity (who, in another of the 302s released yesterday, he admitted to treating as a back channel to Trump), Manafort talked about his certainty that Mueller would go after Kushner. Indeed, he claimed that's who he would have to give up to get a plea deal.

The screenshot shows four text messages in a conversation. Each message is marked with a star icon on the left and a profile icon on the right. The messages are as follows:

- Message 1: From [redacted] (ID: 52) to [redacted] (ID: 57) on 3/14/2018 at 4:29:02 PM (UTC+0). Text: "Why don't u get a sweetheart deal like Gates". Source Extraction: Legacy.
- Message 2: From [redacted] (ID: 57) to [redacted] (ID: 52) on 3/14/2018 at 5:04:14 PM (UTC+0). Text: "They would want me to give up Dt or family, esp JK. I would never do that". Source Extraction: Legacy.
- Message 3: From [redacted] (ID: 52) to [redacted] (ID: 57) on 3/14/2018 at 5:04:56 PM (UTC+0). Text: "Understand. There is nothing to give up on DT. What did JK do?". Source Extraction: Legacy.
- Message 4: From [redacted] (ID: 57) to [redacted] (ID: 52) on 3/14/2018 at 5:56:31 PM (UTC+0). Text: "Nothing, just like I did nothing. They will want me to make shit up on both. I will never do that". Source Extraction: Legacy.

We now know he discussed Kushner the day before he got a plea deal. And then he reneged on telling that story.

As I disclosed in 2018, I provided information to the FBI on issues related to the Mueller investigation.