

Whitewater committee about events surrounding the death of Vincent Foster.

April 17, 1996: Lewinsky is transferred to the Pentagon.

Autumn 1996: Lewinsky meets Tripp.

November 1996: Starr begins questioning Arkansas state troopers about Clinton's extramarital affairs, although there is no clear mandate for this line of investigation.

Spring 1997: *Newsweek's* Michael Isakoff first meets Linda Tripp, while Isakoff is working on the Paula Jones case. Lucianne Goldberg attends some of the Tripp-Isakoff meetings.

August 1997: Tripp speaks to *Newsweek* about an alleged sexual encounter between President Clinton and Kathleen Willey.

Aug. 11, 1997: Clinton's personal attorney, Robert Bennett, attacks Tripp's credibility after the Willey story breaks in the news, and Willey denies the Tripp allegations.

Late August 1997: Linda Tripp begins taping phone conversations with Monica Lewinsky.

October 1997: Tripp and Isakoff meet with Lucianne Goldberg, in Joshua Goldberg's Washington apartment. Tripp plays several of the Lewinsky tapes for Goldberg.

Autumn 1997: The Rutherford Institute, which is now representing Paula Jones, reportedly receives three anonymous phone calls from a woman, alerting them to a Lewinsky-Clinton "affair." Earlier, an anonymous call, also from a woman, had reportedly tipped off the Rutherford lawyers about Kathleen Willey.

Dec. 17, 1997: Lewinsky and Tripp are subpoenaed by Jones's lawyers, to be deposed for the upcoming civil suit against the President.

Dec. 26, 1997: Lewinsky leaves her job at the Pentagon.

Jan. 7, 1998: Lewinsky signs an affidavit denying that she had had an affair with President Clinton.

Jan. 10-12, 1998: Sometime during this 72-hour period, Linda Tripp brings her tapes to Kenneth Starr.

Jan. 13, 1998: Tripp meets Lewinsky at Ritz-Carlton Hotel in Pentagon City, Virginia; Tripp is wearing a wire, with FBI agents in hiding. At this point, Starr still has no jurisdiction to probe the Lewinsky matter.

Jan. 15, 1998: Starr meets Deputy Attorney General Eric Holder and requests expansion of his investigative authority.

Jan. 16, 1998: Reno applies to the three-judge panel for expansion of Starr's investigation. The request is immediately approved.

Jan. 16, 1998: Starr interviews Hillary Clinton under oath at the White House.

Jan. 16, 1998: Tripp meets Lewinsky at the Ritz-Carlton Hotel; FBI agents grab Lewinsky and bring her up to a hotel suite, where they try to compel her to take immunity — without a lawyer present — and then attempt to entrap Vernon Jordan and President Clinton's personal secretary, Betty Currie.

Jan. 18, 1998: Clinton's deposition is taken in the Paula Jones case.

President seeks to expedite Jones trial

by Edward Spannaus

On Jan. 26, President Clinton's lawyers asked a Federal judge to move up the date of the trial in the Paula Jones case, charging that Jones's lawyers had teamed up with Whitewater special prosecutor Kenneth Starr to destroy the President.

Last May, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled unanimously that the Constitution of the United States does not bar the President of the United States from being subject to a civil suit arising out of events that took place before the President took office. The high court's ruling left open the possibility that the case could still be delayed or the trial postponed, saying that the District Court must decide this on the basis of a specific showing of how the suit might interfere with the President's duties — not on general Constitutional grounds.

It was the pre-trial discovery in the Paula Jones case, which provided the pretext for Linda Tripp and others to collaborate with Jones' lawyers to have a subpoena issued to Monica Lewinsky on the Jones case; apparently President Clinton was also questioned about Lewinsky during his deposition in the Jones case on Jan. 17.

Whitewater prosecutor Kenneth Starr then took the pretext to insert himself and his criminal investigation into the sordid Tripp-Lewinsky matter. Starr's involvement was triggered by allegations that Lewinsky had lied in an affidavit submitted in the Jones case, and that Clinton had lied in his deposition. Were it not for the existence of the civil suit brought by Jones, Starr would have had no excuse to become involved.

In their Jan. 26 motion, Clinton's lawyers argued that the Jones case has become too much of a distraction for Clinton to effectively run the country, and they noted that the case had become "a vehicle for parties allied in an attempt to destroy the President."

Then on Jan. 29, Starr filed a surprise motion, seeking to halt *all* pre-trial discovery in the Paula Jones case, saying that lawyers for both Jones and Clinton were "shadowing" his case and interfering with his criminal investigation, by pursuing the same evidence and witnesses.

Judge Susan Webber Wright stunned all sides in her ruling issued late on Jan. 29. Not only did she halt discovery regarding Lewinsky, but she went further, and ruled that *any* evidence concerning the Lewinsky matter would be excluded from the case altogether, stating that "the substantial interests

of the presidency militate against any undue delay in this matter that would be occasioned by allowing plaintiff [Jones] to pursue the Monica Lewinsky matter.”

Starr’s request for a stay of all pre-trial discovery in the case was denied by Judge Wright, who is allowing the rest of the case to proceed to trial. While Jones’s lawyers vowed to appeal Wright’s ruling, President Clinton’s lawyers hailed it as a significant victory. “That’s huge,” Bennett said. “This means we try the Paula Jones case and not the Monica Lewinsky case.”

Even more important may be the impact on Starr’s efforts to trump up a perjury case against the President. By ruling that the Lewinsky evidence “is not essential to the core issues in this case,” it becomes far more difficult for Starr to argue that a false statement—if there were any—is “material” to the case, a requirement for bringing a perjury charge.

Documentation

The following are excerpts from President Clinton’s Jan. 26 motion “for expedited trial and motions schedule,” in the case of Paula Corbin Jones v. William Jefferson Clinton and Danny Ferguson. The motion was submitted to Judge Susan Webber Wright of the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Arkansas.

President Clinton, through undersigned counsel, hereby moves the Court to expedite the trial date of this matter and to truncate the briefing schedule for summary judgment accordingly. Expedited disposition is required to ensure the just and speedy resolution of this litigation, which is in the parties’ and the nation’s best interests. The reasons for this request are as follows:

Unfortunately, this Court’s decision that the trial of a sitting President should not take place while he is in office, and the President’s argument that this should also apply to discovery, were rejected by the higher courts. The events of the last few days have shown that the higher courts’ confidence that this case could proceed without undue distraction to the nation’s business was unfounded. So too was the reliance on plaintiff’s assurances that she would not seek to inquire into the defendant’s conduct as President and that this case was not a partisan witch hunt aimed at discrediting Mr. Clinton’s Presidency. . . .

Notwithstanding the Supreme Court’s observation, and despite this Court’s herculean efforts to maintain control of the litigation, all the dire consequences that we predicted in our briefs and oral argument have come to pass. The virtually unregulated processes of civil discovery have become a vehicle for parties allied in an attempt to destroy the President.

The President is being tarred in the media; gossip, innuendo and hearsay are being passed off as fact. Allegations by unnamed sources are claimed to be credible. Normal journalistic restraint has been abandoned by the broadcast media in their competition to be first on the air with titillating allegations. In short, raw and salacious material is being placed in the public forum without providing the public the means to evaluate the credibility of the information.

All the while, violations of the spirit, if not the letter, of the Court’s Confidentiality Order continue unabated—including completely inaccurate leaks concerning statements made at the President’s deposition—with the President’s counsel constrained from responding. Plaintiff’s counsel nevertheless make regular media appearances.

While they solemnly repeat the mantra that they are covered by a “gag order,” they feed the media frenzy by implying that there is support in the record of this case for unsourced gossip and innuendo.

More significant, however, is the fact that the Office of Independent Counsel (“OIC”), intentionally or unintentionally, directly or indirectly, has joined forces with Paula Jones. His witnesses are now Mrs. Jones’ witnesses. Indeed, in the context of this civil litigation, Linda Tripp—an individual with no knowledge whatsoever of Paula Jones or her allegations—reportedly secretly tape recorded conversations with another tangential witness, and provided the information in the tapes to the OIC and the news media. She also appears to be providing information to plaintiff’s counsel as well, for as the Court knows, plaintiff filed an affidavit supplied by Ms. Tripp in this case.

The result has been television programs such as Sunday’s Meet the Press, which opened with the caption, “The Presidency in Crisis: Will the President Survive?”, and expressions of concern about the ability of the White House to focus on pressing domestic issues, the State of the Union Address, and burgeoning foreign crises. Meanwhile, plaintiff now wants to try the Monica Lewinsky case, as part of the Paula Jones case. Shadowing the steps of the Independent Counsel, plaintiff has issued a flurry of last-minute subpoenas for the purpose of obtaining unnecessary tangential impeachment evidence. . . .

We contend that Paula Jones has no case, and we are prepared to prove it: Paula Jones did not suffer any detriment at the hands of President Clinton; she cannot prove either *quid pro quo* or hostile environment sexual harassment; she cannot prove there was a conspiracy between Mr. Clinton and Trooper Danny Ferguson to deprive her of her civil rights; and she did not experience severe emotional distress as a result of anything President Clinton is alleged to have done to her. . . .

. . . We fully appreciate that expediting trial in this matter may inconvenience the Court and other litigants, but we ask for this relief because it is important not only to the President, but to the institution of the Presidency. . . .