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4 SELECT COMMITTEE TO INVESTIGATE THE
5 JANUARY 6TH ATTACK ON THE U.S. CAPITOL,
6 U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
7 WASHINGTON, D.C.

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11 DEPOSITION OF: BENJAMIN WILLIAMSON

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Tuesday, January 25, 2022

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21 Present: Representatives Aguilar, Lofgren, Murphy, Cheney, and Kinzinger.

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2 Appearances:

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5 For the SELECT COMMITTEE TO INVESTIGATE

6 THE JANUARY 6TH ATTACK ON THE U.S. CAPITOL:

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8 ██████████, STAFF ASSOCIATE

9 ██████████, ADMIN ASSISTANT AND SCHEDULER

10 ██████████, SENIOR INVESTIGATIVE COUNSEL

11 ██████████, CHIEF INVESTIGATIVE COUNSEL

12 ██████████, DETAILEE, DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

13 ██████████, CHIEF CLERK

14 ██████████, STAFF ASSOCIATE

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17 For BENJAMIN WILLIAMSON:

18

19 MIKE HOWELL

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2 Mr. ████████. Let's go on the record. And it is 10:07 on January 25th, 2022.

3 This is a deposition of Mr. Benjamin Williamson conducted by the House

4 Select Committee to Investigate the January 6th Attack on the United States Capitol

5 pursuant to House Resolution 503.

6 So at this time I'd ask you, Mr. Williamson, to introduce yourself with your full

7 name and then spell your last name.

8 The Witness. Yes. Full name is Benjamin Williamson. Last name

9 W-i-l-l-i-a-m-s-o-n.

10 Mr. ████████. Thank you very much. And I see that you have your attorney
11 present as well.

12 Mr. Howell, if you don't mind introducing yourself.

13 Mr. Howell. Yeah. Mike Howell, H-o-w-e-l-l.

14 Mr. ████████. Very good. Thank you.

15 So this will be a staff-led interview. We've kind of discussed some of that before
16 we went on the record here and I've discussed that with Mr. Williamson -- or, excuse me,
17 Mr. Howell before.

18 And the deposition will occur primarily through the questions that I ask, but there
19 are other people who are in the room and who might participate from the virtual
20 platform that we're on, Webex, as well.

21 So for your knowledge, I'll go ahead and introduce the people that are here and
22 also the people that I see right now on Webex.

23 My name is ████████. I'm senior investigative counsel to the select
24 committee.

25 To my right, your left on the screen, is ████████. He is counsel to Vice Chair Liz

1 Cheney.

2 To my left, your right on the screen, is [REDACTED]. He's chief investigate
3 counsel to the select committee.

4 In the room with us, [REDACTED] He is a staff member for the select
5 committee who's going to be assisting throughout the deposition, but I don't expect that
6 he'll be asking any questions.

7 I do see online here we have Vice Chair Ms. Cheney is with us right now, and I will
8 announce her presence. There she is. She just appeared on camera.

9 Ms. Cheney. Good morning. Thank you for being with us, Mr. Williamson.

10 The Witness. Good morning.

11 Mr. [REDACTED]. I believe we also have Mrs. Stephanie Murphy, another member of
12 the select committee.

13 Mrs. Murphy. Good morning. Good to be with you all.

14 Mr. [REDACTED]. Good morning, Mrs. Murphy and Ms. Cheney.

15 I think that's all we have for right now. If any other members join, like I said
16 before, I will try to notify you as soon as I can so you know that they're in here.

17 And typically the way it's been working is that, because of some of the bandwidth
18 issues and others, the members have kept their cameras off. But then when, if they
19 have a question or would like to jump in, they'll turn that on and will ask you questions on
20 camera.

21 So any question about that?

22 Mr. Howell. Yes, one real quick based off our earlier discussion.

23 Mr. [REDACTED]. Yes.

24 Mr. Howell. You identified [REDACTED] as counsel to the vice chair, Liz Cheney.

25 Are you able to use those designations for other people in the room and as they speak, or

1 is it only [REDACTED] that has the special designation only related to Liz Cheney and not the entire
2 committee as you kind of laid out before?

3 Mr. [REDACTED]. That's right. The only designation that's particular to a member in
4 this room right now is Mr. [REDACTED] sitting to my right as counsel to Ms. Cheney, but we are
5 all select committee staff.

6 Mr. Howell. Understood.

7 Good to see you, [REDACTED]

8 Mr. [REDACTED]. Good to see you, Mike.

9 Mr. [REDACTED] Very well.

10 So under House deposition rules, neither committee members nor staff may
11 discuss the substance of the testimony that you provide today, Mr. Williamson, unless the
12 committee approves its release. But you and your attorney will have an opportunity to
13 review the transcript, and that in a way precludes you from talking about your testimony
14 if you so choose.

15 Now, there are a few ground rules, and some of this we've discussed with
16 Mr. Howell and you before we went on the record. But we will follow the House
17 deposition rules that we've provided to your counsel previously.

18 And under those rules counsel for other persons or government agencies are not
19 permitted to attend this deposition. But you are allowed to have your own attorney
20 present, and Mr. Howell is here for that purpose.

21 So there is an official reporter who's transcribing this. They may come and go.
22 The way it works in the House is they'll kind of switch out for each other as time goes on,
23 and so you may see one or more on the Webex link here. And they will be taking down
24 a continuous record of the deposition, though, and there won't be any gaps there.

25 If there are any issues with that, they will speak up. And we ask them to do so to

1 make sure that they're accurately capturing both the questions we're asking and the
2 answers that you're providing.

3 But to that end, they can't take down nonverbal answers, if you shake your head
4 or "uh-huhs" or something like that. So we ask that you provide complete answers and
5 full phrases or words that they can take down.

6 And I'd also ask that, because of the court reporter and particularly on a virtual
7 platform like this, it's hard if both people are talking at once. So I will do my very best to
8 let you finish your answers, and I just ask that you do your very best to let us finish our
9 questions before we jump in. It's not quite a conversation like we're used to in real life.

10 If you don't know the answer to something, we ask that you say that. That's
11 perfectly fine if you don't know. If you need clarification of the questions that I ask or
12 that anybody asks, please ask for that, too. That's something we could do. I'd rather
13 make sure that you understand what we're asking than have you answer something that
14 you're not sure about.

15 You may only refuse to answer a question to preserve a privilege that's recognized
16 by the select committee. And if you refuse to answer a question based on a privilege,
17 then staff, we can either proceed with the deposition or seek a ruling from the chairman
18 on the objection. And if the chairman overrules such an objection, you are required to
19 answer that question.

20 I will say I understand that you received a letter from the White House yesterday,
21 from Deputy White House Counsel Jonathan Su, I believe, that discusses some of these
22 privilege issues. And I just want to confirm with you on the record that you did receive
23 that letter.

24 The Witness. We did.

25 Mr. ████████. Okay. Very good. Thank you.

1 Any questions about the processes I've laid out so far, either you, Mr. Williamson,
2 or you, Mr. Howell?

3 Mr. Howell. No. We hear you.

4 The Witness. Good.

5 Mr. [REDACTED] I do want to remind you that this is a deposition. You will be
6 placed under oath. And it is unlawful to deliberately provide false information to
7 Congress. And that could be a violation of certain criminal statutes, including Section
8 1001 or statutes discussing perjury.

9 Do you understand that as well?

10 The Witness. Yes.

11 Mr. [REDACTED] Very good.

12 Then at this time I'd ask that you stand and raise your right hand so you can be
13 sworn.

14 The Reporter. Do you solemnly declare and affirm under penalty of perjury that
15 the testimony you are about to give will be the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but
16 the truth?

17 The Witness. I do.

18 Mr. [REDACTED] Very good. Thank you, Mr. Williamson. All right.

19 EXAMINATION

20 BY MR. [REDACTED] :

21 Q So we'll start. Unless you have any questions about anything we've gone
22 over, we will start. And I'll put -- ask [REDACTED] to put exhibit No. 1 up on the screen. And
23 this is going to be a copy of the subpoena that you were given.

24 So on this exhibit No. 1, this is a subpoena from the House of Representatives to
25 Benjamin Williamson.

1 Does this look like a copy of the subpoena that you received in this matter?

2 A It does.

3 Q And are you the Benjamin Williamson who's listed on there?

4 A I am.

5 Q All right.

6 I understand you have Mr. Howell here and that you have discussed the subpoena
7 likely with him -- I'm not going to ask you for the contents of any of your
8 conversations -- but that in doing so you've also looked for records that are responsive to
9 the document schedule in the subpoena. Is that correct?

10 A Correct.

11 Q And the select committee has received a production of records, mostly, I
12 believe, if not all, text messages from a phone ending in ████

13 Is that your personal phone, Mr. Williamson?

14 A Correct.

15 Q Did you use any other phones at the time period in question? And
16 primarily that's November of 2020 through January of 2021.

17 A No, not that I recall, other than my work device, which would have been at
18 the White House.

19 Q Okay. So that White House work device, you turned that in when you left
20 at the end -- or middle of January?

21 A Correct.

22 Q And you don't have access to any of the records from that, correct?

23 A I do not.

24 Q Very good.

25 Now, I don't believe we received any emails. Did you look in any of your

1 personal email accounts for records that are responsive to the subpoena?

2 A Yes, I looked in my personal email and did not have any.

3 Q You did not have any responsive records?

4 A Correct.

5 Q And messaging apps?

6 A Yes.

7 [Reporter asks for clarification.]

8 The Witness. We pulled it a little bit closer. Hope that helps.

9 Mr. █ If we may take just a moment, there's an audible alarm that's going
10 off in our building right now. So if we can go off the record for maybe a minute and
11 we'll look into this quickly.

12 The Witness. Sure.

13 Mr. █ Thank you.

14 [Recess.]

15 Mr. █ All right. Then let's go back on the record. It's 10:21. We're
16 back on the record, and we're just talking about Mr. Williamson's document production.

17 BY MR. █:

18 Q I'm curious about various messaging or social media apps, as well, that you
19 may have looked for documents in.

20 Did you use WhatsApp?

21 A I did not. I have never had WhatsApp.

22 Q Okay. How about Twitter? Did you look in Twitter for any responsive
23 documents?

24 A I did. I believe I turned over a couple of direct messages to you all, at least
25 one that I'm aware of.

1 Q Okay. Very good. And I may ask you about that. And I'm sorry if I don't
2 know the format, only because I'm not a Twitter user myself.

3 And I did see something from Facebook. So I imagine you searched that as well?

4 A I did.

5 Q Okay. How about Parler and Signal? Did you use either of those, and did
6 you search those?

7 A Rarely I would use Signal. I did search those.

8 Parler I don't believe I ever used when I was in the White House. Maybe --

9 Q Okay.

10 A Maybe once through an account for Mr. Meadows. But I looked and made
11 a best faith effort. Didn't find anything.

12 Q Okay. Very good.

13 And then did you look for any computers that you may have used that may
14 contain relevant documents?

15 A Yes.

16 Q You didn't find anything?

17 A I made a best faith effort and searched through everything that I had.

18 Q Okay. Very good. I appreciate that, Mr. Williamson.

19 And we're going to go through a number of the documents that you provided
20 today. If there's anything that we don't go over that you think would be helpful that you
21 provided or otherwise, please reference that, and we can look at that and try to pull that
22 up as well.

23 But as for your background, I understand you went to Patrick Henry College and
24 graduated in 2015. Is that right?

25 A Correct.

1 Q And then from there did you join Congressman Mark Meadows the same
2 year? Was that your first job out of college?

3 A It was, correct.

4 Q Were you working here in D.C.?

5 A I was. At the time I lived in Virginia, but I was working in his D.C. office, yes.

6 Q And I understand that you were a legislative correspondent. You worked
7 up to a legislative assistant, then press secretary, communications director. And
8 ultimately, around February of 2020, you became his chief of staff in Congress. Is that
9 right?

10 A Correct.

11 Q I also understand that you went with him to the White House when he
12 moved to become chief of staff for President Trump around then, February or March of
13 2020?

14 A Correct.

15 Q Did he ask you to do that?

16 A He did.

17 Q And when you got there, I believe you were deputy assistant to the
18 President and senior adviser to the chief of staff. Is that -- was that your title?

19 A Yes.

20 Q Okay. What did you do? What were your roles and responsibilities?

21 A Advising the chief of staff on a number of matters, primarily including
22 comms. I would be an adviser for him on agency coordination if someone from an
23 agency needed a meeting. And I would coordinate between different offices within the
24 West Wing through the chief of staff's office.

25 Q Was your office in the West Wing itself?

1 A Yes.

2 Q Okay. Now, I understand you became acting director of communications
3 around December of 2020. Is that right?

4 A Correct.

5 Q Did you change offices, or did you stay in the same office you had always
6 been in?

7 A I stayed in the same office I always had been in, though I did have a
8 part-time office that was over in the communications wing of the West Wing. So I
9 technically had two offices.

10 Q All right. So I'd like to know or figure out kind of the location of both of
11 your offices.

12 So your primary office, not the one in the communications wing, where was that?

13 A It was in the chief of staff's office. If you just go up in the West Wing, when
14 you enter from the front door, it's just a quick right turn. And then my office was on the
15 left immediately when you walked in the door.

16 Q Is --

17 A Go ahead.

18 Q Is that on the Oval Office level? And forgive me. I just don't know the
19 layout of the White House all that well.

20 A It's on the Oval Office level, the second floor of the West Wing.

21 Q Okay. And so were you adjacent, right to Mr. Meadows' office the whole
22 time?

23 A No. There was a lobby, an office common area in between our two offices.

24 Q All right. It sounds like you were advising the chief of staff, though, pretty
25 regularly. Would you see him daily?

1 A Almost daily, yes.

2 Q And usually would you see him multiple times a day?

3 A Correct.

4 Q Was he your direct report, meaning did you report directly to him?

5 A Yes, most of the -- on most matters, yes.

6 Q Are there matters where you reported to somebody else?

7 A For when I was senior communications adviser as well, which I believe I got
8 that position in April of 2020, I would have reported to Alyssa Farah and Kayleigh
9 McEnany as well.

10 Q Okay. And then when you became the director of communications, did
11 they report to you, Alyssa and Ms. McEnany?

12 A Alyssa was not in the White House at that time, and Kayleigh did not, no.

13 Q Okay. Who did she report to?

14 A I believe the President.

15 Q Did you report to the President as well? I mean, I guess, in the chain of
16 command ultimately, but I mean direct.

17 A Well, ultimately, yes, but by that point most of the communications job was
18 a managerial role focusing on off-boarding staff, staff salary, staff coordination,
19 messaging of the source. But, yes, ultimately did report to the President and the chief
20 of staff.

21 Q When you say ultimately at that point, are you talking about the
22 December-January timeframe?

23 A No. What I'm talking about when I say ultimately is we all report to the
24 President.

25 Q I see.

1 A But I would have mainly reported to the chief of staff for all of my duties,
2 check-ins, work, et cetera.

3 Q Other than Mr. Meadows, who did you work most closely with, particularly
4 in the December and January timeframe?

5 A Probably the most closely I would have worked with would have been one of
6 the assistants in the chief of staff's office, Cassidy Hutchinson. I would have worked
7 with Deputy Press Secretaries Sarah Matthews and Brian Morgenstern. And I would
8 have worked closely with Deputy Press Secretary Chad Gilmartin.

9 Q Okay. And what was Cassidy's role? I'm sorry if you said that. Ms.
10 Hutchinson?

11 A I don't recall what her exact title was. I think she was special assistant to
12 the President and one of the executive assistants to the chief of staff.

13 Q And I believe you, when you became acting director of communications, it
14 sounds like you worked with Ms. McEnany as well.

15 A I did.

16 Q Can you talk about that? I guess the messaging piece in particular. What
17 was your role in December and January with respect to messaging that was going out of
18 the White House?

19 A By that point most of it was coordinating on messaging related to COVID, the
20 COVID task force we had going on. If you recall, at the time we were dealing with a
21 stimulus package. It was messaging going in that direction.

22 But like I said, Alyssa Farah had left the communications office, I believe, in early
23 December of 2020. And so the main reason for putting someone in that job was to
24 manage outgoing staff, manage staff that may have been leaving, deal with
25 administrative issues, and coordinate based upon that.

1 But other than that, the main messaging focuses that I would be dealing with
2 would have been coronavirus and the end-of-year stimulus package.

3 Q Okay. And that's really helpful.

4 I guess, just zooming out a little bit, what was your role in reviewing messaging?
5 Is that something that would go through you? Would you have approval authority?
6 Edit authority? Can you talk about that a little bit?

7 A Well, so sometimes for content or speeches or White House documents you
8 would get opportunities to review or edit through staff secretary emails. That was
9 common protocol in the White House.

10 So, yes, if I would have gotten an email and reviewed it and had any suggestions, I
11 could have done that if I had felt necessary.

12 Q What about speechwriting? Did you have any role in that, looking at
13 messaging, editing?

14 A Generally, no, I would not have looked at or written any of the speeches in
15 advance or looked at copies in advance, unless staff secretary had emailed them over.

16 Q I see.

17 What about tweets? What was your role, if any, with respect to tweets that
18 would go from the President or Mr. Meadows' account?

19 A Generally, no role in the President's Twitter account. I ran Mr. Meadows'
20 Twitter account. So I would have drafted and seen all tweets coming back-and-forth
21 there.

22 Q Who was in charge of the President's Twitter account other than the
23 President?

24 A The only one I was tangentially aware of was Dan Scavino, and that was it.

25 Q Did he have authority to post on behalf of the President?

1 A I don't know. I would assume so.

2 Q Do you know if the President actually posted his own tweets?

3 A I don't know.

4 Q And what about the President himself? How often would you see the
5 President in a week on average? And understanding that I'm asking you to somewhat
6 guess.

7 A That's -- I would be guessing. On average maybe once or twice a week,
8 sometimes less than that. Occasionally I would pass him in the hallway more than that.
9 But it would really depend on the week. There was a broad period there.

10 Q And did you -- I understand that some people had walk-in privileges into the
11 Oval Office. And that's a term I'm using. Maybe it's not a term of art. But I
12 understand the President welcomed staff walking in. Is that something that you would
13 do to speak with the President?

14 A I very rarely used walk-in privileges to go in the Oval Office, if ever.

15 Q When you say you would see him on average maybe once or twice, again,
16 understanding that you're guessing, is that to actually have substantive discussions with
17 him? Or you would just see him around the White House?

18 A It would depend on the week. Most of the time seeing him around,
19 occasionally discussing matters, but mostly seeing him around, but just depend on the
20 week.

21 Q Is it fair that the conversations you would have with the President generally
22 revolved around your job responsibility as communications -- acting communications
23 director and senior adviser to the chief of staff?

24 A Mostly chief of staff related.

25 Q Okay. So he might be asking you questions about policy, in addition to

1 communications?

2 A No. We -- honestly we rarely -- the President and I rarely interacted one on
3 one. I mostly would interact with the chief of staff and would communicate that way.
4 Anything I needed to get to the President, I would tell the chief of staff. Anything that
5 the President felt was necessary to do, I would work with the chief of staff on it. I was
6 not as much of a front-facing aide at that point or really at any point throughout.

7 Q So did you participate in meetings with Mr. Meadows, with the President as
8 well?

9 A Very rarely that I can recall.

10 Q Okay. And we'll go through some specific examples, but this is really
11 helpful background for me in just setting the scene more or less.

12 Mr. [REDACTED] On that background, I'd just ask if anybody has any questions.

13 No? Okay.

14 BY MR. [REDACTED]

15 Q All right. So we talked about this. But you joined the White House
16 around March of 2020, which is roughly 7 months or so before the election.

17 What was your role with respect to the campaign and President Trump's
18 reelection efforts, if any?

19 A I did not have a campaign role.

20 Q Did you volunteer at all with the campaign?

21 A No, not that I -- I don't believe I ever interacted or had any role with the
22 campaign even in a volunteer capacity, no.

23 Q And I think I know the answer to this question. But so you weren't a paid
24 staff member of the campaign at any point either?

25 A I was not.

1 Q Did you speak with campaign staff in your role in the White House?

2 A Rare. So we had a morning conference call a couple times a week with
3 communication aides on the campaign side. I would be in the room for a couple of
4 those a week. But other than that, any conversations would have been in passing or
5 informal. It was -- it would have been very rare.

6 Q Those morning conference calls, what was the purpose of those?

7 A Just to make sure that everybody had everything they needed, just to get a
8 heads-up of what each side would be messaging on that day, et cetera.

9 Q Was the White House ever asked to push messages from the campaign or
10 vice versa?

11 A No.

12 Q Okay. No to both of those?

13 A Correct.

14 Q And who from the campaign side was on those calls?

15 A I don't recall exactly who. The only one that I recall would have been Tim
16 Murtaugh and Erin Perrine.

17 Q How about Jason Miller? Was he on those calls?

18 A I don't recall if he ever was on one.

19 Q Okay. And that was primarily -- the question was before the election. Did
20 that continue after the election as well in November?

21 A I don't recall.

22 Q Do you remember speaking with campaign staff generally, even if those calls
23 didn't continue after the election?

24 A I don't recall ever speaking to any campaign staff after the election. Maybe
25 in passing, but I don't recall.

1 Q Okay. There is one message -- and, again, I'm not trying to -- this is not a
2 game of gotcha. I mean, we're really interested in information.

3 There's one message I saw with Jason Miller that we're going to talk about --

4 A Oh, yes.

5 Q -- in January. But are there any other messages or communications, just
6 one-offs, that you remember?

7 A No. No. Are you referring -- when you say the texts, you've referring to
8 the texts between Jason Miller, myself, and Kayleigh McEnany. Is that right?

9 Q That's exactly right, about the flags at half-staff.

10 A Right. I don't recall if Jason was employed by the campaign at that point.
11 I'm not sure that that's accurate. But, yes, I did have that text exchange with Jason.

12 Q Fair point.

13 A But other than that, no. To answer your question, no, I don't recall any
14 one-offs or any other communications with campaign aides.

15 Q Fair point. I appreciate that distinction, because you're right, at some point
16 the campaign more or less ceased to exist as the entity that it was.

17 So did you have continuing conversations or interactions with people who, I
18 suppose, had been on the campaign outside the White House?

19 A No, not that I remember. Again, maybe in passing. But I don't remember
20 any and certainly didn't have any documentation that I can find.

21 Q Okay. So is it fair to say you didn't really have any role in kind of election
22 strategy with respect to messaging or the challenges that were going on in certain States?

23 A At that point very limited, if any at all, correct.

24 Q You say limited. And just to be precise, do you remember having any role
25 with respect to campaign strategy or --

1 A Well, that's -- having any role, I don't know what that means. I turned in
2 some documents where I would have gotten some texts from the chief of staff or other
3 aides, flagging different information.

4 But if by having any role you mean editing documents or developing strategy or
5 anything like that, it would have been very limited in the sense that I would have been
6 being a sounding board for people, perhaps doing social media, giving feedback on that.
7 But nothing in terms of State-level efforts or anything of the sort, if that's what you're
8 asking.

9 Q Understood.

10 All right. So I want to go to election day.

11 Where were you on election day?

12 A I was at the White House. I was there all day, doing my normal duties
13 throughout the day. And I was most -- I was in the West Wing most of the entire time.

14 Q I understand there was a big -- I don't know if it's a party, a watch party,
15 whatever it was. A lot of people gathered together in the West Wing to watch returns.
16 Were you part of that?

17 A There were multiple gatherings of people. I spent the evening moving
18 about different rooms. But at some point or another I would have been a part of
19 multiple gatherings, correct, in the West Wing.

20 Q Do you remember approximately what time you left on election night or the
21 next morning?

22 A I don't remember. It would have been approximately 2 or 3 a.m. but I
23 don't remember exactly what time it was.

24 Q I understand there was a gathering in the residence at some point as well
25 with the President before he spoke to the country -- or from the campaign rather. Were

1 you a part of that gathering?

2 A What gathering? Are you referring to a meeting before the President
3 spoke --

4 Q Yes.

5 A -- gave his speech?

6 I would not have been a part of any meeting before that. No, I was not. I was
7 actually out in the main area with the attendees and back with press on the opposite side
8 of the stage.

9 Q Did you help prepare or review the comments that the President delivered
10 that next morning, on the 4th?

11 A No.

12 Q Now, I understand --

13 A I apologize. By the next morning, you mean the night of the election, the
14 speech he gave, correct, when he was --

15 Q Yes. Very fair question, Mr. Williamson. Yes, the early morning speech
16 on November 4th, not into the day of the 4th.

17 A Yes. I did not -- correct -- I did not help review or edit that document in any
18 way.

19 Q So I understand there have been public reporting that at some point either
20 Mr. Giuliani or Mr. Epshteyn, somebody who was with the President on election night,
21 encouraged the President to just say "we won" in several swing States. Are you familiar
22 with that actually happening?

23 A I am not.

24 Q Okay. So you don't know whether it happened or not, correct?

25 Mr. Howell. Are you asking whether he tweeted it, the President tweeted it, or

1 whether Giuliani or whoever else you mentioned recommended it?

2 Mr. ████████ This is a report that somebody had recommended that to the
3 President in one of these gatherings?

4 And just to be clear, Mr. Williamson, you're not -- you don't know whether that
5 happened or did not happen?

6 Mr. Howell. Whether a report happened about that? Just to be clear, what are
7 you asking him?

8 Mr. ████████ Fair point.

9 BY MR. ████████

10 Q So I'm asking whether you know if Mr. Giuliani or somebody else told the
11 President that night to just say "we won."

12 A I have no firsthand knowledge of whether or not that happened, no.

13 Q Do you have secondhand knowledge of that?

14 A Just from what I've seen in the media. But I don't know if that actually did
15 happen.

16 Q All right.

17 Now, in that early morning speech on November the 4th, the President talked
18 about a number of things, including fraud in the election, going to the Supreme Court to
19 stop the count.

20 I understand you didn't talk to him or have any role in that speech. But had
21 there already been talk in the White House that you're familiar with about what I'll call
22 Stop the Steal messaging, meaning rampant fraud in the election?

23 A None that I can recall or none that I was a part of.

24 Q Okay. So you didn't participate in crafting any of that messaging that you
25 recall as you sit here today.

1 A None that I recall, no.

2 Q Some other folks from the White House, including Peter Navarro, have been
3 very public about that messaging and their thoughts on that messaging.

4 Do you know who Peter Navarro is?

5 A I do.

6 Q Can you talk a little bit about his role in the White House and his relationship
7 to you officially?

8 A I was a -- he was a trade adviser in the White House, I believe. We
9 interacted in passing pretty rarely, maybe about once a week. I always got along well
10 with Peter.

11 Did you ask anything else or just my relationship with him?

12 Q No, that's fine.

13 Did you work with Peter at all on anything related to the election, and particularly
14 looking into allegations of fraud in the election or other malfeasance?

15 A I don't recall, no. I don't believe I did.

16 Q Do you remember him doing that in the White House?

17 A I believe -- I vaguely remember hearing that he was drafting things, but I
18 don't recall ever speaking with him on it or doing anything other than that.

19 Q Who do you remember hearing that from?

20 A I don't remember, to be honest.

21 Q Okay. Did you think anything of it at the time?

22 A I did not.

23 Q Were people talking about him doing this in the White House?

24 A I don't recall. I don't recall who I heard it from. I don't even remember
25 how many people would have been talking about it. You hear things in passing, and you

1 don't really remember from who or how many times.

2 Q Absolutely. Fair enough. And I know -- I recognize this has been now
3 over a year. So totally understand, Mr. Williamson.

4 I assume, though, that just in your role as a communications person you're seeing
5 what the President is talking about and doing.

6 And in that period after the election did you have concerns from a
7 communications or otherwise -- other standpoint -- about the President's comments with
8 respect to fraud or malfeasance in the election?

9 A Well, let me first start off with your first point about seeing and dealing with
10 everything in messaging. That's not necessarily the case, just to clarify. I perhaps
11 would have gotten draft comments through staff secretary or an email. It's possible
12 that there are certain ones I didn't review. I don't remember. So just to clarify that, it
13 doesn't automatically mean I saw everything that went through.

14 As far as concerns, I mean, look, I serve at the pleasure of the President -- or I
15 served -- and was there to do my job. I was not really focused on my personal concerns
16 at that point.

17 Q All right. So putting personal concerns aside -- and totally understand,
18 Mr. Williamson -- was there a give-and-take about this type of messaging?

19 I mean, your job then as communications director -- or acting communications
20 director -- in December and into January, and I assume you needed to advise the
21 President and the President's staff about what works, what doesn't work, what the
22 President should say, what he shouldn't say.

23 So was there a back-and-forth on this issue of election fraud within the White
24 House that you recall?

25 A What do you mean by was there a back-and-forth? Did I have a

1 back-and-forth with anybody about it?

2 Q Yeah.

3 A Oh, sure, sure. I mean, I had my own personal concerns about what I felt
4 would be successful versus what wouldn't be successful. I believe I turned over
5 documents to you all to that effect.

6 So, sure, I had some concerns about whether or not it would be successful. But,
7 in large part, I was there to do my job. And like I said, we serve at the pleasure of the
8 President and for our principals, and I was proud to do that.

9 But, yes, to answer your question, there were obvious -- anytime you're dealing
10 with something, any policy issue, you may have concerns about whether or not they'll be
11 successful or how they're being executed.

12 Q And we are going to talk about some of your text messages kind of on the
13 personal side of things as well.

14 But to the extent that those conversations were happening officially and advising,
15 with the intent to advise, as you said, the principals, Mr. Meadows, ultimately the
16 President, can you explain what those conversations were like? Was there pushback?
17 What were your recommendations?

18 A I don't recall much of what my recommendations would have been at the
19 time. I really don't recall. Most of it would have been speaking with the
20 communications team. It would have been -- I may have occasionally met with the chief
21 of staff, and it may have come up. But I don't remember whether or not it did, and I
22 don't remember what those conversations would have been.

23 Q Do you remember anybody advising anyone in the White House that these
24 allegations of fraud are not accurate or not true?

25 A I vaguely remember passing conversations about whether or not the

1 allegations that were coming up were accurate or whether or not they would be
2 successful, whether or not it was true what people were saying. Sure, there were a
3 number of conversations about that.

4 I don't recall specifically with who, unless you want to be more specific. But, yes,
5 sure.

6 Q Do you remember any resistance to those types of conversations? So, in
7 other words, and just hypothetically, I can imagine someone in a situation like this saying,
8 "You know, we need to be careful about this messaging, some of this stuff that's coming
9 out is not true," and somebody else saying, "Well, no, this is helpful," whatever it might
10 be.

11 Were there any situations like that where you're kind of diving in and people are
12 pushing against one another on whether to do this messaging or not?

13 A I don't recall being a part of many contentious conversations on the matter,
14 if at all, no.

15 Q Fair enough.

16 What about the President? There have been reports that, for example,
17 Mr. Meadows at one point said that the President would ultimately accept the outcome
18 of the election. And that's just based on the public reporting.

19 Did you ever hear anything like that within the White House, that ultimately the
20 President would accept that he lost the election?

21 A What are you referring -- are you referring to -- when was the comment
22 you're asking about originally made? I'm not sure.

23 Q Yeah, post-election, pre-January 6th, there are reports that Mr. Meadows
24 talked with others -- not the President himself -- but talked with others and said,
25 essentially, "We know that we lost and the President will ultimately accept that." He

1 didn't --

2 A Oh, I see what you're saying.

3 No, I would not have been involved in any of those conversations. I didn't know
4 what they were referencing, no.

5 Q Okay. And did you ever hear Mr. Meadows acknowledge that the
6 President had lost the election?

7 A Not that I can recall. I don't recall discussing it to that point with him, no.

8 Q Did you ever recall any conversations with Mr. Meadows about the extent to
9 which there was fraud in the election?

10 A No, I don't recall.

11 Mr. [REDACTED] All right.

12 Now if you'd pull up exhibit No. 2, [REDACTED].

13 Ms. Cheney, I see that you just turned on your camera.

14 Ms. Cheney. Thank you, [REDACTED]. I just want to ask a quick question to follow up
15 on those.

16 Mr. Williamson, a number of witnesses have told the committee that they noticed
17 that there was a real timing -- that there was a distinction.

18 So, you know, in the immediate period after the election when there were
19 challenges that were clearly legitimate, clearly the President had the right to bring those
20 challenges in court, that there was a sort of a sense that everybody understood that that
21 was kind of one sort of approach, but that there may have been a shift once most of
22 those challenges had been lost, which would come around the end of November or so.

23 Do you recall that?

24 The Witness. Congresswoman, my involvement and discussions on legal
25 challenges of those nature would have been very limited. And so I don't really recall

1 much of the shift. I wouldn't be able to speak on what it is they're talking about.

2 Like I said, my involvement on those conversations or -- conversations would have
3 been pretty limited. So I'm not sure I can speak to exactly what they're referencing.

4 Ms. Cheney. Did you feel that there was a shift in terms of your view of the
5 challenges that were being made?

6 The Witness. I, bluntly, Congresswoman, I wasn't really focused on it. I was
7 focused on doing any job and I don't recall what my personal feelings about it were in the
8 moment. And I wouldn't be able to speak on to what those people were mentioning
9 when they spoke with you all.

10 Ms. Cheney. Thank you.

11 Mr. [REDACTED]. Thank you, Ms. Cheney.

12 BY MR. [REDACTED]:

13 Q I'd just note for you, Mr. Williamson, that Mr. Kinzinger, another member of
14 the select committee, has joined as well.

15 A Sure.

16 Q So if you could pull up exhibit No. 2, please.

17 Exhibit No. 2 is a text message that you provided. And it looks like at the top
18 there it says "Josh" under the letters JW. Can you see that okay?

19 A Yes.

20 Q Who is that?

21 A I believe that's Josh Wingrove. He's a reporter for Bloomberg News.

22 Q Very good.

23 On November 18th, 2020, it's the third message he sent you down from the top in
24 the black, he asks you, "Can you say if Mark is going to the Capitol today? Meeting
25 McConnell?"

1 It says -- you responded -- I believe you're responding saying, "Correct. Sorry for
2 the late reply."

3 Did you get a readout of this meeting that Mr. Meadows had with Leader
4 McConnell?

5 A I don't recall getting a readout, no.

6 Q Okay. And the reason I'm asking is, similar to the question I asked you
7 before, is that reports -- it's been reported that Mr. Meadows had a conversation with
8 Majority Leader McConnell in November and said that the White House essentially was
9 pursuing all its legal challenges, like Ms. Cheney said, but ultimately recognized that they
10 might come up short and that the President would accept defeat.

11 Do you remember anything like that, whether this meeting or not?

12 A Sir, I was not there with him at that meeting. I don't recall getting a
13 readout. To my recollection, it was mostly about end-of-year stimulus, which was
14 something that we were focused on doing by the end of the year.

15 But like I said, I was not with him. And I don't recall getting a readout. And I
16 don't recall hearing anything, other than what I saw in public reports of it you just
17 mentioned about the election.

18 Q Got it. Great. And to be clear, you know, a lot of these messages I
19 understand are from reporters and that they're just asking you questions. So I'll
20 probably be asking you, "Did you get readouts? You understood what happened after
21 the fact or otherwise?"

22 A Sure.

23 Q Very quickly. Jared Kushner, did you work closely or speak with Jared
24 Kushner during your time in the White House?

25 A I did.

1 Q What was that relationship like from an official standpoint? What was your
2 role?

3 A I had a very good relationship with Jared. Always liked him. Always
4 respected him. Got along with him. We worked well together.

5 Q Okay. And I understand that Jared Kushner may have conveyed the same
6 message, essentially that the President had lost the election.

7 Are you familiar with Jared ever saying anything like that?

8 A I don't recall having any conversations with Jared about post-election
9 matters. I may have seen various things in the press, but I don't recall ever having a
10 convo with him about that by myself.

11 Q Do you know, even if secondhand, just from your information being inside
12 the White House, do you know if he was advising the President about that, that the
13 President had lost the election?

14 A I don't know. I don't know. Anything that I knew about his convos with
15 the President on those matters would have been strictly what I saw in press reports or
16 heard from reporters perhaps. That would be it.

17 Q And to your knowledge, just for background as well, I mean, you're unique in
18 the sense that not a lot of people worked in the White House and have kind of the eyes
19 and ears perspective of what's going on, even if you're not a participant in every single
20 conversation that goes on.

21 And to that end, I mean, to your knowledge, did the President ever acknowledge
22 that he had lost the election, either privately to you or anybody else in the White House
23 that you know of?

24 A Privately to me? No. As to the second part of your question, I don't
25 know.

1 Q All right. And most of the exhibits we're going to go through are in order, if
2 you have them, but there are a couple that we have to jump around.

3 So I'm going to ask you to go to exhibit No. 56, please, [REDACTED].

4 And this is a message that you provided to the committee. It says Mark
5 Meadows on the top.

6 Can you just tell me what platform this is from?

7 A That is from Twitter.

8 Q Okay. So this would be a direct message to you? To Mr. Meadows?

9 A Correct. It was a -- it's a Twitter direct message. The way that I would
10 operate sometimes is, if I saw something on my own account that I wanted to flag for
11 Mr. Meadows, I would DM it from my account to his account and then show it to him that
12 way. I believe that's a screenshot from my account, and it's a DM I think that I had
13 messaged to him just to show him and make him aware of it.

14 Q I see. Are you SpyGator?

15 A I am not, no.

16 Q I see. Okay. So you imaged that comment or tweet and sent it to
17 Mr. Meadows?

18 A No, sir. I saw that tweet on my news feed and sent it as a direct message
19 to Mr. Meadows' account and pulled it up on Mr. Meadows' account to show him. So
20 that is me direct messaging someone else's tweet to Mr. Meadows.

21 Q Understood. You can probably tell I'm a novice at Twitter. So I appreciate
22 that clarification.

23 A Sure.

24 Q If you go to exhibit No. 57 -- actually I'm sorry. Yeah, in 56, I'll just read the
25 message.

1 The tweet that you direct messaged to Mr. Meadows said, "I heard on the Rush
2 Limbaugh radio show today that Mark Meadows is recommending that the President
3 concede the election. That really surprised me!"

4 Do you know if Mr. Meadows actually ever recommended that?

5 A I don't.

6 Q Okay. You don't have knowledge one way or the other he did or he did
7 not?

8 A I don't.

9 Q Okay. If you go to exhibit No. 57.

10 Did Mr. Meadows ever respond to that direct message, by the way, saying not
11 true or anything like that?

12 A Not that I remember. It would have been me that was managing his
13 Twitter account, sir, and I don't recall ever responding. I don't believe I did.

14 Q Okay. Did you follow up with him about that?

15 A With who?

16 Q Mr. Meadows.

17 A I don't recall exactly, but I believe I showed it to him just to make him aware
18 of what was said on the show in question.

19 Q Okay. And then exhibit No. 57.

20 Ms. Cheney. Dan, I've got just one more question on that.

21 Mr. . Of course.

22 Ms. Cheney. So, Mr. Williamson, when you say you showed it to him, what does
23 that mean? You showed him your phone? You showed him his phone? How would
24 you show this to him?

25 The Witness, Congresswoman, it would have varied. To my recollection, in this

1 case I think I just took my phone and pulled it up on the screen and would have showed it
2 to him in person that way. But it would have varied depending on the circumstance.

3 Ms. Cheney. And did he say anything to you in response?

4 The Witness. I don't remember, ma'am. I don't remember.

5 Ms. Cheney. Is that the only discussion? Do you remember another discussion
6 with him about this idea that the President was about to concede the election or that
7 Meadows was recommending it?

8 The Witness. I don't recall, Congresswoman. It's the only one that I recall.
9 It's possible there were others, but I don't recall.

10 Ms. Cheney. Thank you.

11 BY MR. [REDACTED]:

12 Q Mr. Williamson, if we go to exhibit No. 57. And some of this, to be clear, is
13 trying to see if any of this refreshes your recollection as we walk through some of the
14 materials that you gave us.

15 But in the middle there of this message from David, and I guess I'll start there,
16 who's David, DJ?

17 A That is David Jackson from the USA Today.

18 Q Okay. David Jackson, he says, this is David Jackson, "Sorry to bother...is this
19 right? Mr. Trump had been resisting any move towards a transition. But in
20 conversations in recent days that intensified Monday morning, top aides -- including Mark
21 Meadows, the White House chief of staff; Pat A. Cipollone, the White House counsel; and
22 Jay Sekulow, the President 's personal lawyer -- told the President the transition needed
23 to begin. He did not need to say the word 'concede,' they told him, according to
24 multiple people briefed on the discussion."

25 And then you responded and said, "Hey, David, apologies, but I can't comment for

1 now. Will update you as I'm able."

2 So are you familiar with these conversations that Mr. Jackson was asking you
3 about?

4 A I was not. I was not.

5 Q Did you follow up with Mr. Meadows about this meeting or alleged meeting?

6 A I don't recall specifically. It was common, when I got a text from a reporter,
7 to check with Mr. Meadows if he wanted to comment. But a lot of times, if I wasn't
8 aware, I would just make a judgment call as to whether I thought Mr. Meadows would
9 want to comment.

10 But to answer your question, I don't remember whether or not I talked to him
11 about this one specifically, no.

12 Q All right. So then to zoom out a little bit, I mean, I imagine there was talk in
13 the White House, it's been publicly reported, that this issue of GSA ascertainment and
14 formally starting the transition was a topic at the time.

15 What do you remember about that?

16 A Of whether GSA was going to start the transition after the election? Very
17 little. Those discussions I really wasn't a part of logically.

18 There may have been passing discussions I was a part of as to whether or not or
19 when it was going to happen, when GSA would begin that process. But outside of that, I
20 don't remember many specifics.

21 Q Okay. So tell me about those conversations you just mentioned about
22 when GSA was going to begin that process.

23 A Oh, well, when I say passing conversations, that would have been just
24 hearing from a fellow aide about a date that it might happen or when it was going to
25 happen, or I perhaps would have talked to my fellow press aides about reporters we were

1 hearing from inquiring on the matter.

2 But it really would have been limited to that, nothing beyond just talking about
3 what we were hearing or what reporters would have been asking us.

4 Q Okay. So let me ask a specific question. Do you remember hearing about
5 delaying this GSA ascertainment or asking GSA to delay ascertainment based on fraud or
6 the election more generally?

7 A Not that I recall. I may have seen something in the press. Or by the time
8 anything came out, I would have heard it from a reporter. But I don't recall ever being a
9 part of any of those top-level conversations about a possible delay, no.

10 Mr. [REDACTED]. Okay. And I understand that Ms. Lofgren has also joined, another
11 member of the select committee.

12 BY MR. [REDACTED]:

13 Q Okay. So now I want to totally shift gears, Mr. Williamson, and jump to
14 January 6th. And then at the end we'll go back and talk about other dates and issues.

15 A Sure.

16 Q But I do want to draw your attention directly to January 6th.

17 And just to let you know, I'm going to try to walk through it as precisely as we can
18 up to minute by minute, if you have that recollection, and based on what we're able to
19 understand from the documents you provided.

20 So the morning of January 6th, around when did you get to work?

21 A I don't remember exactly. Generally, I would get to work around 8 a.m.,
22 8:30 a.m. I don't remember when exactly that morning, sir.

23 Q Okay. Where did you go when you got to work on January 6th?

24 A Well, so like I said earlier in the convo, I was working out of two offices at
25 that time. I don't remember which one I went to first. Generally, it would have been

1 the chief of staff's office. I would have gone into my office in the chief of staff's office
2 off to the side.

3 Q Okay. Do you remember talking to Mr. Meadows, the chief of staff, when
4 you arrived at work that morning?

5 A I do not.

6 Q But you do remember going to see him, check in?

7 A I don't recall checking in with him that morning, █. I don't.

8 Q Okay. All right. So what do you remember, I guess, about that morning
9 before -- I'll just -- as a marker for us, there's the before the rally on the Ellipse and then
10 after the rally on the Ellipse.

11 So what do you remember that morning before the rally on the Ellipse?

12 A Yes. The first thing I remember was being in the communications wing of
13 the West Wing and talking with some of my press and communications aides about when
14 and if we would go out and see the President's speech on the south lawn. That was the
15 first thing that I remember. I believe that would be around 10, 11 a.m.

16 Q Okay. And who were those aides that you were with?

17 A You mean when we were discussing? It don't recall who exactly. The only
18 one I definitely recall, it would have been two. It would have been Chad Gilmartin and
19 Sarah Matthews.

20 Q And when you were talking about going to watch the speech, was it -- why
21 would you go watch the speech?

22 A It was very common for us to go out and observe when the President was
23 speaking at any time, whether it was in the Rose Garden, north -- or south lawn, really
24 any event. It was pretty common for the press team to go out and watch. So this was
25 no unlike -- or this wasn't unlike any other time like that.

1 Q Did you have an official task or responsibility with respect to this speech?

2 A I did not.

3 Q Did Mr. Gilmartin or Ms. Matthews, that you're aware of?

4 A Not that I'm aware of, no.

5 Q Were you in the Oval Office at all that morning before the rally on the
6 Ellipse?

7 A No, not that I recall.

8 Q All right.

9 Now I want to talk and just walk through some documents, see what you know
10 about them, understanding some of these did not come from you, Mr. Williamson.

11 Mr. [REDACTED]. So if you could pull up exhibit No. 3, please, [REDACTED].

12 BY MR. [REDACTED]:

13 Q Can you see that okay?

14 A Yes.

15 Q All right. So this is a daily diary of the President's -- or, excuse me, of
16 President Donald J. Trump for January 6th, 2021.

17 Are you aware of this document generally, the daily diary?

18 A You mean, am I familiar about a daily diary for the President? Yes. Yes.

19 Q Yes.

20 A Not this one specifically, but yes.

21 Q Can you explain the daily diary, what your understanding of it is generally,
22 not this one in particular?

23 A It just tracks the President's movements, meetings throughout the day.

24 Q Who creates this?

25 A I don't know.

1 Q Are you familiar with a person given the title "the diarist" or something to
2 that effect?

3 A I may have heard of it in the past. To be honest, I don't know who
4 generally creates it. And I don't know who did it in our West Wing, the White House.

5 Q Do you -- does the communications or press team have any role in editing
6 the document?

7 A Not that I'm aware of. I know I did not have any role in dealing with the
8 document when I was in that position.

9 Q Okay. Now, I want to walk through these events.

10 So it says at 8:23 in the morning the President talked with Dan Scavino.

11 If you're a participant to or present at any of these conversations or events, please
12 let us know. But are you familiar with the President's call to Dan Scavino that morning
13 at 8:23?

14 A No.

15 Q Have you heard about it at all?

16 A No.

17 Q All right.

18 It looks like the President was also trying to get in touch with Steve Bannon that
19 morning at 8:30.

20 Do you know anything about the President's communications with Mr. Bannon
21 before the rally on the Ellipse?

22 A No.

23 Q Do you know Mr. Bannon?

24 A I've met him in passing.

25 Q Have you ever had any substantive conversations with him about the

1 election or anything?

2 A No, not that I recall.

3 Q All right.

4 So it looks like one of the next events is at 8:34 the President talked with Kurt
5 Olson.

6 Do you know who that is?

7 A No.

8 Q Do you know anything about that conversation?

9 A No.

10 Mr. [REDACTED]. Bear with us just one moment. I see Mr. Aguilar is waiting to join
11 as well. And I believe he has now joined. So Mr. Aguilar, a member of the select
12 committee, is on as well.

13 BY MR. [REDACTED]:

14 Q It looks like at 8:37 the President spoke with Mr. Bannon. And then at 8:45
15 he spoke with his lawyer, Rudy Giuliani.

16 Do you know Mr. Giuliani?

17 A I have spoken with him a few times. I do know him, yes.

18 Q When did you speak with him?

19 A The last time I spoke with him would have been May of 2020.

20 Q So before the November election.

21 A Correct.

22 Q Why did you speak with him in May?

23 A If I recall, the chief of staff was doing his podcast in May of 2020, if I can
24 remember the exact date. I think it was around then.

25 Q And was your interaction with him mostly scheduling, kind of setup, or did

1 you talk about issues?

2 A We just spoke to each other, exchanged pleasantries, "How are you?" when I
3 saw him the day we did the podcast.

4 Q That was in person?

5 A Correct.

6 Q Did you talk about the election at all?

7 A No.

8 Q Now, getting back to this 8:45 call with Mr. Giuliani, do you know anything
9 about the conversation the President had with Mr. Giuliani that morning?

10 A No.

11 Q All right. And then it looks like at 8:56 the President asked to place a call to
12 Mr. Meadows.

13 Do you understand the process of how the President would request a call or asked
14 to be connected with somebody?

15 A Sure, vaguely. I wasn't involved in that process. But I know -- I've heard
16 about it in the past, yeah.

17 Q Can you explain it just generally for us?

18 A Well, it would depend on exactly where. But usually he would ask his
19 executive assistant, Molly, to just place a call through the switchboard and they would
20 connect with whoever he was asking. And that's how the phone call would happen.

21 Q I see. And it looks like at 9:03 that actually happened, the President spoke
22 with Mr. Meadows.

23 Do you know anything about that conversation?

24 A No.

25 Q Did Mr. Meadows tell you he spoke with the President that morning?

1 A Not that I recall. I don't believe so.

2 Q Do you remember Mr. Meadows ever talking to you about the speaker
3 lineup at the rally scheduled for later that day?

4 A I do not.

5 Q All right.

6 Did you have any role in the speaker lineup at the rally on January 6th?

7 A No.

8 Q Moving down to 9:16. Looks like the President spoke with the switchboard
9 operator to place a call to Senator Mitch McConnell.

10 Do you know anything about the President's call or trying to place a call with
11 Mr. McConnell?

12 A No.

13 Q It looks like the President also asked for a call to Representative Jim Jordan
14 at 9:20.

15 Do you know anything about the conversation or the reason for calling
16 Representative Jordan?

17 A I do not.

1

2 [11:10 a.m.]

3 BY MR. [REDACTED] :

4 Q And it looks like the President actually did have that call, about a 10-minute
5 call, 10 minutes later. So you didn't receive a readout from the call with Representative
6 Jordan?

7 A No, sir.

8 Q Is that unusual that -- that you wouldn't have received information about the
9 President's call activity?

10 A No.

11 Q And the only reason I'm asking is just, to me, it would make sense that a
12 communications or the acting communications director might know about these in case
13 they receive questions on it. But I don't know that, and so it's not unusual, is what
14 you're saying, that you wouldn't know about these?

15 A President made a lot of calls, [REDACTED]. It's -- it was not unusual for us not to
16 know about calls throughout the day. If we needed to, we would ask. If we were
17 getting inquiries about them, so in those cases, sure. But to answer your question, no.

18 Q All right. At 9:39, looks like the President asked to place a call to Senator
19 Hawley. And just broadly speaking then, did -- are you familiar with the President's
20 outreach to Members of Congress, meaning Senators and Representatives, on the 6th?

21 A Broadly am I familiar with him reaching out to Members on the -- I don't
22 know anything about those convos, if that's what you're asking, no.

23 Q Yes. Or do you know the reason that the President was trying to reach
24 Members of Congress on the morning of the 6th?

25 A No.

1 Q All right. At 9:41, it looks like the President spoke with Mr. Giuliani again.
2 And then he spoke with Stephen Miller for about 20 minutes, roughly, starting at 9:52,
3 25 minutes. Are you familiar with the conversation that the President had with Stephen
4 Miller that morning?

5 A No.

6 Q Do you know why he would be speaking with Mr. Miller?

7 A I -- no. I mean, Stephen was his speechwriter but a policy advisor as well.
8 It could've been a number of things. I'm not familiar.

9 Q Now, as far as the -- and we'll talk about the speech he gave at the Ellipse
10 rally, but do you know if Mr. Miller wrote that speech?

11 A I don't know that for a fact, ████. I don't.

12 Q Have you heard anything about it?

13 A No, I haven't. I haven't.

14 Q At 10:32, it looks like the President spoke with Nick Luna. Who's Nick
15 Luna?

16 A Nick was the President's body man at the time.

17 Q What does that mean?

18 A He would accompany the President, would be in his proximity almost at all
19 times, was a direct aide to him, and would mostly be beside him when he was traveling,
20 et cetera.

21 Q Do you know what he spoke about with Mr. Luna that morning?

22 A I don't.

23 Q Jumping down to 10:45, the President spoke with William Bennett. He's
24 described here as author and former Secretary of Education. Do you know who
25 Mr. Bennett is, other than that description?

1 A I do.

2 Q All right. Can you talk about his role, if any, with respect to Mr. Trump in
3 the White House?

4 A I don't know what role he had or what their conversation this morning was
5 about.

6 Q Okay. But even more generally, did the President seek guidance from
7 Mr. Bennett?

8 A I don't know, ████. I -- I've met Mr. Bennett once. I know who he is, but I
9 don't know how many times the President spoke to him. This -- as you're interviewing
10 me now, this is the first time that I've seen that he spoke to the President on that day,
11 that I can recall.

12 Q Fair enough. When did you meet with Mr. Bennett, if you remember?

13 A Oh, it was years ago. We met in passing at an event, but it wasn't when I
14 was in the White House.

15 Q All right. And it looks like 11:04, jumping a few lines down, the President
16 spoke with Senator Perdue. Do you remember anything about that conversation?

17 A I do not.

18 Q Then at 11:08, it says the President went to the Oval Office. Do you
19 remember seeing the President before the rally on the Ellipse on January the 6th?

20 A No.

21 Q Based on this diary, it shows that the President met with Donald J. Trump,
22 Jr., Eric Trump, Ivanka Trump, Lara Trump, Kimberly Guilfoyle, and Stephen Miller. Do
23 you know anything about that meeting?

24 A I don't. I think by that time I may have already been out on the Ellipse, but
25 I'm not for certain. But I do not know anything about that meeting, no.

1 Q Were you ever briefed on that meeting?

2 A Not that I can recall, no.

3 Q Ever asked to provide information about that meeting from reporters or
4 anybody else that you can recall?

5 A I -- it's possible that I was asked. I don't believe that I was, that I can recall.
6 But I -- I never received a briefing and I never inquired on it.

7 Q That morning, did you see any of those people who are listed there, so
8 Donald Trump, Jr., Eric Trump, Ivanka Trump, Lara Trump, Kimberly Guilfoyle, or
9 Mr. Miller, in the White House before the rally?

10 A Not that I can recall, no.

11 Q At 11:17, the next page of the diary, it shows that the President talked on a
12 phone call to an unidentified person, and we'll talk about that. But do you remember a
13 phone call that the President placed with the Vice President before the rally on the
14 Ellipse?

15 A I was not familiar with it at the time. I've read various media reports about
16 calls that were made, but I -- to answer your question, I was not familiar, no.

17 Q Fair enough. So you said you weren't familiar with it at the time and you've
18 read media reports. Have you talked to anybody who was a participant in that meeting
19 and overheard the President's call with the Vice President?

20 A I have not.

21 Q Have you talked to Mr. Meadows about the call that the Vice President and
22 the President had that morning?

23 A I -- I don't believe so. Not that I can recall certainly.

24 Q All right. And then it looks like at 11:38, the President went to the south
25 grounds of the White House and moved from the White House to the Ellipse.

1 Mr. ██████. Bear with me just a moment. I guess I'd ask at this point, does
2 anybody have any questions about what we've gone over so far?

3 Ms. Cheney. I have got a question, ██████

4 Mr. ██████. Ms. Cheney.

5 Ms. Cheney. Mr. Williamson, when the President called Mr. Meadows, would he
6 always call through the White House switchboard?

7 The Witness. Congresswoman, sometimes he would. Sometimes he would call
8 down to the chief of staff's office if he needed him. It would vary depending on the
9 situation. For this specific morning, I don't know how exactly they got in touch or what
10 they spoke about.

11 Ms. Cheney. So if the President was in the Oval Office and the chief of staff was
12 in his office, the President could just pick up the phone on his desk and buzz the chief of
13 staff directly? Just explain sort of how that communication worked.

14 The Witness. That's possible that could happen sometimes. The President's
15 assistant would phone down to the chief of staff's office and ask for him. Sometimes he
16 would call him directly. It would just depend on the scenario.

17 Ms. Cheney. And what about when the chief of staff and the President were in
18 different locations? Did the President always call through the White House
19 switchboard?

20 The Witness. I don't know, ma'am. Most of the time when Mr. Meadows was
21 gone, I wouldn't have been with him, so I wouldn't know how exactly they got in touch
22 with each other.

23 Ms. Cheney. And what about when Mr. Meadows wanted to reach the
24 President?

25 The Witness. A lot of times he would call the White House switchboard or

1 if -- same, vice versa if he was in his office and the President was in the Oval Office,
2 Mr. Meadows could just go down or send an aide, ask when he was available, et cetera.

3 Ms. Cheney. Did they communicate with each other via cell phone?

4 The Witness. I don't know how the President was communicating on his end.

5 Mr. Meadows would have his cell phone or the desk phone that he had available, yes.

6 Ms. Cheney. Did the President, to your knowledge, ever communicate with a cell
7 phone?

8 The Witness. I -- I don't know, Congresswoman.

9 Ms. Cheney. Thank you.

10 BY MR. [REDACTED]:

11 Q To follow up on that, I know you said you don't know if the President
12 communicated by cell phone. Did you ever hear about the President communicating by
13 cell phone from Mr. Meadows or other White House staff?

14 A No, not that I can recall.

15 Q Do you have the President's cell phone number that he uses?

16 A I do not.

17 Q All right. So I'm going to show you exhibit No. 4. This is titled,
18 Presidential call log from the White House switchboard. Have you seen Presidential call
19 logs from the switchboard before?

20 A I may have seen them at points, yes, not that I can specifically recall,
21 but -- but I'm familiar with the Presidential call logs.

22 Q And is that supposed to capture all the calls that go in and out of -- or to or
23 from the President, rather?

24 A I believe so.

25 Q Okay. Now, we're not going to go through all these because we just did

1 that through the diary, but I would note at -- on page number -- between 3 and 4, there
2 are no entries for phone calls to or from the President after 11:04 and 6:54, including the
3 11:17 phone call reflected on the diary.

4 So do you know why a phone call wouldn't be reflected on the -- this switchboard
5 but also reflected in the diary? I mean, to Ms. Cheney's point about cell phones, if the
6 President did use a cell phone, I imagine it would be on here, correct?

7 A I don't know. And to answer your question, I don't know what the process
8 is for that or what the discrepancy would be. I don't know.

9 Q Did you ever have to look into any issues where you're responding to
10 questions or dealing with something about calls that the President had made where you
11 needed to find a record and it didn't exist in the switchboard logs, for example?

12 A No, not that I can recall, no.

13 Q All right. If you can go to exhibit No. 5, please. This is titled, "Private."
14 Looks like a private schedule for the President. Are you familiar with private schedules
15 for the President?

16 A Yes.

17 Q Can you just explain what that is, how that's different from other schedules?

18 A A public schedule may have just events that are available to press that will
19 be open pool. The private schedule may just be for personal use for aides to just be
20 aware of what else the President had on his schedule that day that may not be a public
21 event.

22 Q And, now, there's some handwriting at the top there. Do you -- can you
23 see it on your screen though?

24 A Yeah.

25 Q All right. So at the top of exhibit No. 5, there's handwriting that, to me,

1 reads 11:10, talks about a number of people, including Eric Trump, Don Jr., Kimberly
2 Guilfoyle, I believe that's IMT. Is that Ivanka Trump? Is that how she was referred to
3 sometimes, to your knowledge?

4 A I don't know. I've never seen Ivanka's name as IMT.

5 Q All right. COS, is that how -- is that shorthand for chief of staff, to your
6 knowledge?

7 A Yes.

8 Q All right. Eric Herschmann and General Kellogg. So it looks like, based on
9 this note, chief of staff may have been in a meeting with the President. Do you
10 remember ever talking to Mark Meadows about his participation in a meeting with the
11 President before the rally on the Ellipse?

12 A No.

13 Q And then at 11:17, it looks like there's a call -- it says C with Senator Kelly
14 Loeffler. It looks to me like that's a notation for approximately 11:20. And then 11:20,
15 C with VPOTUS, followed by parentheses with nothing inside them.

16 So are you familiar with any of those -- either of those calls? I believe we already
17 spoke about the Vice Presidential one, but what about Senator Loeffler?

18 A I am not.

19 Q All right. Do you recognize the handwriting?

20 A Do I recognize the handwriting at the top? I do not.

21 Q You don't. Does it look like Mr. Meadows' handwriting to you?

22 A It doesn't, but I don't recognize whose it is.

23 Q Okay. And I'll just ask another one. Does it look like the President's
24 handwriting to you?

25 A No. But I don't know.

1 Q All right. With respect to the rally, how did you get there?

2 A I walked, went out the -- went out the west exec door and then walked
3 toward the south lawn. Went out the west exec gate, made a left toward the south
4 lawn, and then walked around the fencing up to the area, which I believe I submitted a
5 photo for you all and a video that shows where I was standing, over to the right side of
6 the stage. And we walked the entire time.

7 Q Who were you with?

8 A That I can recall that I was with on the walk over would have been Sarah
9 Matthews, deputy press secretary; Chad Gilmartin, assistant principal -- or principal
10 assistant press secretary; Lyndee Rose, who was the press secretary's assistant; Jalen
11 Drummond, who was a press assistant; and Brian -- I believe Brian Morgan Stern, who
12 was a deputy press secretary and deputy comms adviser. That's all that I can remember
13 off -- that I think I was with.

14 Q Is it fair to say you all went to watch -- I know we talked about some of them
15 earlier having a role or not having a role, but the whole group you were with, you were
16 just there to watch the speech and the rally?

17 A Correct.

18 Q Did you stay in that same spot the whole time?

19 A Correct. Correct, yes. We were -- there was a big area where some staff
20 from the West Wing could stand, a number of people passing through, but we stood
21 there the entire time, that I can recall, and then we walked straight out the back at the
22 end.

23 Q Did you ever go into the crowd? It sounds like you didn't, but the public
24 attendees?

25 A No. Now, we did -- when we were going to that area, we did pass through

1 the very front of the crowd that was fenced off so that we could get around to that side.
2 But we never went into the crowd or spent any time out there, other than to just get to
3 that penned off side for staff.

4 Q Did you interact with the Secret Service at all at the rally?

5 A Not that I can recall, maybe a passing, hello, how are you, to Secret Service
6 aides as I usually did when I would pass them. But other than that, no.

7 Q Did you ever talk to them about the people who were attending, meaning
8 like what they were finding in magnetometers or any issues with the crowd that they
9 were seeing?

10 A No.

11 Q Do you remember hearing about any of that?

12 A No.

13 Q Did you ever go to the tent area? And I think it's like off stage arrival. I
14 don't know exactly what the term is used for it, but the tent where the President arrived.

15 A I did not.

16 Q Did you talk to the President at the event at all, either before or after his
17 speech on the Ellipse?

18 A No.

19 Q All right. So we're going to get into the speech, but I'd turn it over to see if
20 anybody has any questions about what we just covered.

21 Okay. Can you pull up number -- exhibit No. 6, please, [REDACTED]?

22 Earlier you said you didn't have a role, I believe -- and I don't want to put words
23 into your mouth, so please feel free to correct me. But I believe you said you didn't
24 generally have a role in speechwriting or commenting or editing, unless it came to you for
25 a reason.

1 Do you remember having any role in the speech that the President gave on the
2 Ellipse on January the 6th?

3 A I do not.

4 Q Do you remember ever seeing a copy of the speech in advance?

5 A I do not remember seeing a copy in advance, no.

6 Q Do you remember ever talking to anybody about the speech that the
7 President planned to give on the Ellipse?

8 A I don't, no.

9 Q All right. Just a finer point on that, I think the answer that you just gave
10 covers it, but do you ever remember talking to Stephen Miller about what the President
11 would say at the Ellipse on January 6th?

12 A I don't, no.

13 Q All right. Exhibit No. 6, if you can see it here, is a document with -- at the
14 top it says "Save America March," and it looks to me like it's a copy of the speech that the
15 President gave -- or a draft, excuse me, draft copy of the speech that the President
16 intended to give or that was written for him.

17 And there's some parts that are in black, and if you can see, there's also some
18 parts that are in red. So specifically the end of the second paragraph, for example, is in
19 red. Do you know why there would be some text in black and some in red in draft
20 speeches for the President?

21 A I do not.

22 Q Do you -- do you ever see red as being lines or topics that the President
23 himself wanted added?

24 A I don't know. There could be a number of reasons. I don't know why
25 specifically, no.

1 Q Are you familiar with any way the speechwriters would denote edits made
2 by the President as opposed to what was originally in a draft?

3 A Generally, no. I had seen a couple where things would be crossed out and
4 things written over, but I don't know if that was standard practice; and if it wasn't, I don't
5 know what the standard practice was.

6 Q When you say it's crossed out and written over, are you talking about actual
7 handwriting the way you'd see it?

8 A Correct.

9 Q All right. As opposed to like a strikeout function or something in a Word
10 processing software?

11 A Yes, correct.

12 Q Now, you may not be familiar with this, but this speech did not include some
13 of the lines that the President delivered on January 6th, including lines about walking
14 down Pennsylvania Avenue, going to the Capitol, and saying things like, I'll be with you;
15 we fight like hell, and if you don't fight like hell, you're not going to have a country
16 anymore.

17 Do you remember any discussion about lines like those before the President gave
18 his speech at the Ellipse on January 6th?

19 A No.

20 Q Do you remember any conversation about the President marching or
21 wanting to march to the Capitol on January the 6th?

22 A No, I don't believe so.

23 Q Did you ever hear anything or learn at any point that the President
24 expressed a desire to march to the Capitol on January 6th?

25 A Not that I can recall.

1 BY [REDACTED]:

2 Q Before you leave that, [REDACTED], can I -- Mr. Williamson, it's [REDACTED]. I just
3 have a couple followups on that.

4 When you went to the Ellipse that morning, what was your expectation as to what
5 would happen after the speech, for you and for the President both?

6 A For me, my expectation was I would go back to my office, and for the
7 President it was that he would go back to the Oval Office.

8 Q Did you ever hear any discussion before the speech about the prospect of
9 him actually going to the Capitol on foot or in his vehicle?

10 A I don't recall, no.

11 Q When you -- you heard the speech, I take it, you were present when he
12 delivered it?

13 A Present in the area for staff off to the side of the stage, correct.

14 Q Okay. And when he said, I'm going with you or I'll be there with you, we're
15 going to walk down Pennsylvania Avenue -- I'm paraphrasing -- what was your personal
16 reaction when you heard that?

17 A I didn't make anything of it. I'm not sure that I even remember hearing it in
18 the moment. It was cold. There were a lot of staff back there that I was talking to. I
19 don't even remember hearing it.

20 Q So when it -- he said he was going to go to the Capitol, you don't -- either
21 don't remember him saying it or don't remember it causing any concern or any reaction
22 among you or others that you were with on staff?

23 A Me, no. Again, I don't remember hearing it so that it would not have
24 caused any concern that way. And I don't recall any convos before or after about the
25 matter, no.

1 Q Was it typical for the President to ad lib during speeches and go deliver
2 remarks that were not on a written product that you or others had seen in advance?

3 A Sure.

4 Q Did that happen most of the time, some of the time? Did it depend on the
5 context? Tell us more about your perception of his sort of approach to ad-libbing.

6 A I mean, it was typical, in speeches that I would see, he would do it on
7 occasion. Again, I can't comment on the text of this one because I don't recall seeing it
8 beforehand, so I wouldn't know what was an ad lib and what wasn't. But generally, he
9 would ad lib if he felt necessary or if he felt it was good to do.

10 Q Were there also times, Mr. Williamson -- and I understand this is not
11 something for which you were responsible -- where he would make unscheduled
12 movements, where he would go somewhere physically, walking or driving, that had not
13 been previously planned, scheduled, on a -- something that you had seen in advance?

14 A On occasion.

15 Q Do you remember any in particular?

16 A No.

17 Q Do you have any idea about January 6th, whether there was any -- any plan
18 or discussion of him going -- movements that were not coordinated or planned?

19 A No, I -- I was not a part of any of those convos, and I don't recall ever hearing
20 about them before or after the fact.

21 Q Yeah, okay. Thank you.

22 Mr. [REDACTED]. Go ahead, [REDACTED].

23 Mr. [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] has a question for you as well.

24 BY MR. [REDACTED]:

25 Q Yeah, just a question. You mentioned that you didn't talk to anybody about

1 kind of the President's planned speech before the speech on the Ellipse. Did you have
2 any discussions with people about other speakers that spoke at the Ellipse at that rally, so
3 Rudy Giuliani or Dr. Eastman?

4 A I don't recall. I don't believe so, no.

5 Q Would it have been typical to have kind of officials like yourself have
6 discussions about what other speakers at an event the President's at were going to speak
7 on?

8 A It would depend on the event. For this one, I -- I don't recall any convos
9 before. But for some events, sure, you know, Rose Garden events that were more
10 official related, but it would depend on -- on the scenario. For this one, I don't recall any
11 convos about speakers before or speakers around when the President was supposed to
12 take the stage.

13 Q Okay. And do you remember hearing those other speakers during the
14 rally?

15 A I don't. For most of the time we were walking out in that direction, and
16 I -- to be honest, I don't even remember hearing anyone speak by the time we got out
17 there. I believe all the speeches before the President may have already been completed
18 and they were waiting for the President.

19 Q Okay.

20 A But I don't know that for a fact. I can't remember.

21 Q Okay. Thanks.

22 BY MR. [REDACTED]:

23 Q All right. So in exhibit No. 3, which is what we looked at earlier, the daily
24 diary, and we don't need to necessarily pull it up, but it showed the President returning to
25 the White House around 1:19 p.m.

1 Do you remember when you left the rally and got back to the White House?

2 A I don't. I don't, no. I left at the conclusion of his speech or maybe even a
3 little before it was over, but I -- it would have taken us maybe -- I don't remember exactly
4 when I got back, no.

5 Q Okay. Do you think it was before 2 o'clock, though?

6 A I think it was before then.

7 Q All right. When you were there, did you see people leaving the Ellipse and
8 starting to move towards the Capitol?

9 A No, my back was turned. I was walking back toward the White House after
10 the speech.

11 Q Did you see anybody in body armor just in the crowd or kind of dressed in
12 fatigues or similar military type wear?

13 A No.

14 Q Okay. So I want to talk to you about once you got back to the
15 White House. Where did you go when you returned to the White House after the rally?

16 A I went briefly to my office on the communications side of the West Wing,
17 and then I ordered lunch and went down to the, what we call the Navy Mess to get lunch,
18 which was on the first floor of the West Wing, right outside the Situation Room. So I
19 went to get lunch. I don't remember how much time passed by. I think it was quite a
20 bit of time because there was a little bit of a line, and then I returned back to my office on
21 the communications side of the West Wing.

22 Q This may seem like a minor detail, but do you remember if you ate lunch in
23 the mess or you took it back up to your office?

24 A I took it back up to my office.

25 Q Was anybody in your office while you were eating lunch?

1 A I don't remember. I don't remember. I -- I believe that when I ordered
2 lunch, Deputy Press Secretary Sarah Matthews was in my office. I don't remember if she
3 was in there when we were actually eating lunch.

4 Q All right. On the schedule, it says that at around 1:20 a valet -- the
5 President met with a valet. Can you explain what the valet is, if you know?

6 A I don't. I wouldn't have known anything about that meeting. Valets they
7 refer to as people that the President would travel with when he was moving about in his
8 vehicle or moving about the West Wing, but I don't really know much beyond that.

9 Q Is there more than one valet at the White House?

10 A I'm not sure.

11 Q All right. Do you know who Timothy Harleth is? I believe he was the chief
12 usher.

13 A I may have met Timothy in passing and spoken to him, but I don't -- I'm not
14 familiar beyond that.

15 Q Do you know whether his role is different from the valet?

16 A I don't.

17 Q Where were you when you first learned about the attack on the Capitol?

18 A I was in my office on the communications side of the West Wing.

19 Q With whom?

20 A The only one I can recall being there was Sarah Matthews, deputy press
21 secretary.

22 Q How did you first learn about the attack?

23 Mr. Howell. Could we take just one moment real quick?

24 Mr. [REDACTED]. Yeah, of course.

25 The Witness. I'm also -- yeah.

1 Mr. Howell. We've been going for an hour and a half. Maybe now is a good
2 time for a bathroom break.

3 The Witness. Yeah, a couple minutes.

4 Mr. [REDACTED]. Sounds great. Do you want to resume at 11:45, or do you need
5 more time than that?

6 The Witness. That's fine.

7 Mr. Howell. Forty-five is great.

8 Mr. [REDACTED]. All right. Let's go off the record then. Thank you.

9 [Recess.]

10 BY MR. [REDACTED]:

11 Q All right. So it is 11:46. We are back on the record in the deposition of
12 Mr. Ben Williamson.

13 And I believe the question that I asked is, where were you where you first learned
14 about the attack and how did you learn about it?

15 Mr. Howell. Are you able to clarify for Mr. Williamson what your definition of
16 attack on the Capitol is?

17 Mr. [REDACTED]. Sure. The violence at the Capitol on January the 6th.

18 Mr. Howell. So you're asking my client specifically where he was when he
19 become aware of some violence -- of any violence, any particular violence are you
20 referring to or any violence at all --

21 Mr. [REDACTED]. When he first learned about violence -- violence at all at the
22 Capitol.

23 Mr. Howell. Okay. So not -- and do you -- can you define "violence"? Are you
24 referring to human-on-human violence? Are you referring to property damage? What
25 are you referring to?

1 Mr. [REDACTED]. Sure. That's all very fair, and I guess part of it I would ask
2 Mr. Williamson when he first learned about any events going on at the Capitol that
3 precipitated violence or that included violence. So I think it's been widely reported and
4 known that rioters went to the Capitol, breached the barricades around the Capitol,
5 ultimately broke into the Capitol and were inside the Capitol for a long period of time.
6 There were violent episodes throughout that. So that's what I'm talking about when I
7 talk about the attack on the Capitol.

8 BY MR. [REDACTED]:

9 Q And to your point, I'll first say, when did you first learn that rioters were
10 either approaching or had proceeded past any barricades at the Capitol?

11 A I was in my office and I had the TV on in the office, which was on a quad
12 screen setup, four networks, one in each corner. And I was in my office eating lunch,
13 and I don't remember what time exactly, but there was a point where I saw the situation
14 starting to devolve over at the Capitol a little bit from there.

15 Q Okay. Do you remember what you saw that made you think it was starting
16 to devolve?

17 A Yes. There was a pepper spray exchange between some of the group that
18 was over at the Capitol and Capitol Police, I don't remember from which direction. And
19 there were obviously barricades that were being used against Capitol Police that I could
20 see on the screen. And that's the last thing that I remember seeing.

21 Q All right. Now, and forgive me because we had the break, but were you
22 with Ms. Matthews at that point? Do you remember?

23 A I don't remember exactly at that point, [REDACTED]. I don't remember.

24 Q Do you remember being with Ms. Matthews, seeing what was happening at
25 the Capitol and then you split off essentially, she went to talk to Ms. McEnany and you

1 went to talk with Mr. Meadows? Do you remember anything like that?

2 A I don't remember exactly when. At some point when that was going on, I
3 know she was in my office. I don't recall her ever splitting off to see Ms. McEnany.
4 That's possible. And I -- to answer the last part of your question, I don't remember if
5 that coordinated for -- with when I went to go see Mr. Meadows.

6 But individually, I can answer those two things. I don't remember what Sarah
7 exactly did, but at some point, I did go off to split off and see Mr. Meadows, that's
8 correct.

9 Q All right. Before you split off or before you went off to see Mr. Meadows,
10 what was the conversation like? What were you talking about with Ms. Matthews?

11 A I don't remember much of what was said if anything at all. I think obviously
12 we were both, you know, upset about what we were seeing, but I don't recall exactly
13 what was said between the two of us.

14 Q Can you explain that. Why were you upset?

15 A Oh, it just -- obviously, it was a difficult situation at the Capitol. It was -- it
16 looked like the situation was devolving, and so that was really it. And obviously both
17 Ms. Matthews and I used to work at the Capitol, so naturally we were concerned about
18 what was going on there.

19 Q You still had friends there, I imagine?

20 A Yes.

21 Q Do you remember when, relative to events at the Capitol, you went and
22 spoke to Mr. Meadows? And I guess I'll use breaking windows at the Capitol as a
23 moment in time. Do you remember if you spoke to him before the rioters began
24 breaking windows?

25 A I don't remember exactly what time or where it was in relation to the broken

1 windows, no.

2 Q All right. You did say that you went -- broke off and went to speak to
3 Mr. Meadows. Why did you do that?

4 A I believe I had sent him a text saying that we may want to put out some sort
5 of statement because the situation was getting a little hairy over at the Capitol. And
6 then it was common for, after I would text him, I would just go down and see him in
7 person for really anything, just, you know -- just not knowing whether he would have his
8 phone on him or not. And so that was why I went down to see him was just to kind of
9 follow up after I sent a text about what was going on.

10 Q All right. So let's pull up exhibit No. 7. And while that's coming up, you
11 think you went to speak with him after you sent this text?

12 A Yes, I'm fairly certain that's correct.

13 Q Do you remember seeing him or talking to him before you sent this text,
14 which is at 2:02 p.m., on January the 6th, and up on the screen?

15 A I don't remember, no. I don't remember.

16 Q Okay.

17 Mr. ████████ Ms. Cheney, I see you turned on your camera.

18 Ms. Cheney. I just wondered, Mr. Williamson, do you remember seeing bike
19 racks being breached?

20 The Witness. Yes, on the TV, correct, Congresswoman.

21 Ms. Cheney. Okay. And that would've been before you went to talk to
22 Mr. Meadows?

23 The Witness. I don't remember exactly what time, but I believe so, yes. I
24 believe seeing that on the TV before I went over.

25 Ms. Cheney. Okay. Thank you.

1 BY MR. [REDACTED]:

2 Q All right. So we've pulled up exhibit No. 7, which is the text message I
3 believe you've been referring to and that I just mentioned, 2:02 p.m., on January the 6th.
4 You say, "Would recommend POTUS put out a tweet about respecting the police over at
5 the Capitol -- getting a little hairy over there," as you just mentioned. That's a tweet
6 that you -- or, excuse me, a text message that you sent to Mr. Meadows?

7 A Yes.

8 Q And just for context, the recipient, at least that's shown on this text message
9 at the top, says "OLD Mark." You also provided a text message to just Mark Meadows.
10 Is there a difference between that? Are there two different phones you were texting?

11 A No. There was only one phone -- well, that would've been his work phone
12 at the time, which I don't think I had texted him on. I think when I took these screen
13 shots at two different periods I had labeled it differently in the process of gathering
14 documents for you all just to make it clear. If there's a discrepancy there, I apologize.
15 But these should all be from the same number, other than I think one document, which I
16 think was a text exchange in our work phones, but I'm not sure if there is or not.

17 Q I see. But this is certainly Mark Meadows?

18 A Yeah, this is Mark Meadows, correct.

19 Q So you -- you made that comment about putting out a tweet. Can you
20 explain why, what you thought that would -- or what you hoped that would accomplish
21 and what it should be?

22 A Oh, I think I say it in the text there that it would be -- would recommend
23 putting out something about respecting the police, because I could see that there was a
24 group of people there that were obviously engaging in behavior toward police that was
25 inappropriate.

1 Q And why a tweet in particular was your recommendation?

2 A It'd be common way of putting out a statement that was easily distributed.

3 Q Did -- was there a difference in your mind between a tweet or a press
4 conference or a video as far as reaching people the fastest?

5 A Not necessarily, no. I -- generally, when the President wanted to get
6 something out quickly, we would talk about doing a tweet, and that's all that I was
7 thinking of in the moment.

8 Q And is that because, to your understanding, the President's supporters
9 followed him on Twitter?

10 A No, not necessarily. It's -- again, it's just the way that we would talk about
11 getting something out the quickest was through the President doing a tweet.

12 Q All right. You went down to speak with Mark Meadows after this. What
13 was that conversation?

14 A Very brief. I went down and told him the same thing I have in the text, that
15 I can recall. And I don't remember anything that was said between us other than I told
16 him that. And to my recollection, he immediately got up and left his office.

17 Q Do you know where he went?

18 A Yes. I followed him down the hallway, and I followed him into the outer
19 Oval corridor, which is the hallway between the Oval Office hallway and the outer Oval
20 section of the Oval Office. I followed him into that little corridor hallway. I saw him
21 walk into outer Oval. I maybe took a step into outer Oval and then left. And I don't
22 know where he went outside of that, but it looked like he was headed in the direction of
23 the Oval Office.

24 Q So did you actually see him enter the Oval?

25 A I did not. I turned around and left because I needed to get back to my staff.

1 Q In that conversation, you said there was little exchange with Mr. Meadows.
2 Did he -- did he do anything to indicate whether he agreed with your recommendation or
3 disagreed?

4 A Yes. He immediately looked like he had heard what I had to say and was
5 jumping to it. He got up and immediately walked down the hallway. And like I said, I
6 followed him in that direction. And that was all that I could remember from that.

7 Q But you don't remember what he said to you, though, other than just
8 saying --

9 A I do not. I don't. And I apologize for interrupting. I don't. I don't
10 recall anything that was exchanged back and forth other than what I had said, which is
11 depicted in the text you just had put up on the screen earlier.

12 Q Now, I understand that the President may have been in the dining room off
13 the Oval. Do you know where the President was at that time?

14 A I do not.

15 Q Did you ever see the President that afternoon in the Oval Office?

16 A I did not.

17 Q Did you ever see him in the dining room?

18 A I did not. It's possible that I may have passed him at some point while he
19 was in there, maybe a door was open or something. But I did not see him that
20 afternoon in the dining room, no.

21 Q If the President was in the dining room when Mr. Meadows walked in that
22 direction, would Mr. Meadows have to go the route he took to get to the dining room, or
23 is there another way to the dining room?

24 A There are two entrances to the dining room. I don't know which way he
25 would've taken. You could take one through the Oval or you could take one through the

1 outer hallway. But you would have to know that there's no window from the door to
2 the hallway into the dining room. It was very common for people to go in the Oval and
3 then into the dining room to find the President if he was there.

4 Q All right. Did you speak with Mr. Meadows after that?

5 A We had -- to my recollection, we had one other conversation later that
6 afternoon, and I believe it was right before the second statement came out -- or the video
7 came out, and I don't remember specifically what time. I want to say 4 p.m. hour,
8 around there. But I recall seeing Mr. Meadows in the chief of staff's office for a brief
9 period in time before that video came out.

10 Q Did he tell you that he, in fact, had met with the President?

11 A I don't recall exactly what he said. I remember telling him myself that I
12 thought it would be good for the President to do a video, and the chief of staff agreed.
13 And that was all that I can really remember from the conversation specifically.

14 Q Okay. And we will talk about that video.

15 Mr. [REDACTED]. And, Ms. Cheney, I see that you've come on camera.

16 Ms. Cheney. Thanks, [REDACTED].

17 Mr. Williamson, I just wanted to go back. You mentioned that there might have
18 been a moment where you walked by, I think you said, an open door and saw the
19 President. I just wanted you to clarify that for us.

20 The Witness. Sure, Congresswoman. So I don't recall ever seeing the President
21 in the dining room, to be clear. What I was saying was, there's sometimes where if
22 you're walking down the hallway from the chief of staff's office to the Oval Office,
23 perhaps a mil aide or one of the President's Secret Service or another aide could be
24 exiting the dining room from the dining room area into the Oval Office hallway. And
25 occasionally, throughout my time at the White House, I would be walking down that

1 hallway, and I would glance and see the President in the dining room when somebody
2 was in the process of exiting into the hallway. So that's what I was clarifying. To be
3 clear, I don't remember seeing the President in the dining room at any point that day.

4 Ms. Cheney. Thank you.

5 The Witness. Sure.

6 Mr. [REDACTED]. All right. So it is 11:59. I think -- I'm going to move to the next
7 exhibit in the line of questioning, so I think now is a natural point to break. Why don't
8 we do this, we come back -- would 45 minutes work for lunch and then resume for the
9 afternoon?

10 Mr. Howell. Sure. Is that good with you?

11 The Witness. That's fine. Yeah, I don't even need that much. However long
12 you need is fine. I'm good whenever.

13 Mr. Howell. The shortest period of time you all need is good with us.

14 Mr. [REDACTED]. Okay. Thank you. And, Mr. Howell, if it goes shorter, can I reach
15 out to you directly?

16 Mr. Howell. Yes. We're not going far.

17 Mr. [REDACTED]. All right. Sounds great. Thank you, all. We'll go off the record.

18 [Recess.]

1

2 [12:49 p.m.]

3 Mr. ██████████. It is 12:49, and we are resuming the deposition of Mr. Ben
4 Williamson.

5 BY MR. ██████████:

6 Q And right before the break, we were talking about the text message in
7 exhibit No. 7 that you sent to Mr. Meadows at 2:02 p.m. recommending that the
8 President put out a tweet. And I believe -- I just want to make sure -- but I believe you
9 said you went and spoke to Mr. Meadows shortly after sending that text message. Is
10 that right?

11 A That's what I recall, correct.

12 Q Okay. Do you remember roughly how long after that you went to go see
13 him?

14 A I don't.

15 Q Okay. And the conversation that you had with Mr. Meadows, it sounded
16 like it didn't last very long. Is that fair?

17 A It was pretty brief, correct.

18 Q And he went towards the direction of the Oval. I know you said you don't
19 know exactly where he went, but he went into outer Oval, and then you split from there,
20 correct?

21 A That's my recollection, yes.

22 Q Very good.

23 Just briefly on that point, at that point, I think you said that Ms. Matthews was
24 upset. You were upset by what you were seeing. You go talk to Mark Meadows.

25 What was the just feeling in the White House at that time when you just -- when

1 you sent this and went to talk to Mr. Meadows?

2 A Well, like I said, from my perspective, the situation was getting a little out of
3 hand and I thought it important to go see the chief and mention it.

4 Beyond that, it was just a focus on doing the job, making sure I was
5 communicating what I felt needed to be communicated.

6 Like I said, after having that brief interaction with the chief, walking with him
7 down the hallway, I went back to my office. And it mostly was the same after that.

8 Obviously, people were not pleased with the images they were seeing on the TV --

9 Q When you say --

10 A -- if that answers your question.

11 Q Yeah, sure. When you say people weren't pleased, who in particular are
12 you talking about?

13 A So the only one I remember in my office was Sarah Matthews, the deputy
14 press secretary. There were a number of reporters that were coming in and out of my
15 office to check in.

16 Q Okay.

17 A And those were really the people that I was referring to. You know,
18 obviously, I was briefly interacting with other aides in the press office. I don't really
19 remember what much specifically was discussed. But that's who I'm referencing.

20 Q Even if you don't remember exactly what was discussed, I mean, were those
21 aides expressing concern with the situation at the Capitol?

22 A I don't remember. I remember a couple brief conversations about
23 expressing concern, but I don't remember specifics about who and what.

24 Q If you look at exhibit No. 8.

25 Mr. [REDACTED]. And, [REDACTED], if you don't mind pulling that up.

1 And before we start on this, I see that Mrs. Murphy, another select committee
2 member, is going to be rejoining shortly. And I believe Mrs. Murphy has now joined.

3 BY MR. [REDACTED]:

4 Q So exhibit No. 8 that's up on your screen looks to be some letterhead from
5 chief of staff and then some writing.

6 Do you recognize, first of all, that type of letterhead?

7 A I do.

8 Q What is that?

9 A It's just chief of staff card letterhead that we had in our office. I had some
10 at my desk in the chief of staff's -- or in my office in the chief of staff's location.

11 Q Okay. So any -- you were able to use this letterhead?

12 A Yes, in theory I was.

13 Q Do you recognize the handwriting on the note, that letterhead, exhibit No.
14 8?

15 A I don't.

16 Q Does that look like your handwriting?

17 A It doesn't.

18 Q Does it look like Mr. Meadows' to you?

19 A No.

20 Q All right. And it says, "Anyone who entered the Capitol," looks to me like it
21 says "illegally" that's crossed out, and then, "without proper authority should leave
22 immediately."

23 Do you remember talking to anybody or hearing from anybody a message like
24 this?

25 A No. The first time I saw this card was when you all sent it over this

1 morning.

2 Q All right. And separately from seeing the card itself, just what it's talking
3 about. I mean, was somebody suggesting, that you recall, that the President send out a
4 message like this, even if not these words exactly?

5 A Not that I recall, no conversations that I was part of.

6 Q Okay. And based on your experience in working with people at the White
7 House, do you have any idea of who may have written this?

8 A No.

9 Q If you go to exhibit No. 9. This is a tweet from the President at 2:24 p.m.
10 on January the 6th. It says, "Mike Pence didn't have the courage to do what should
11 have been done to protect our Country and our Constitution, giving States a chance to
12 certify a corrected set of facts, not the fraudulent or inaccurate ones which they were
13 asked to previously certify. USA demands the truth!"

14 Were you involved at all in this tweet, drafting, reviewing, editing, suggesting,
15 anything with respect to this tweet?

16 A No.

17 Q Do you know who was?

18 A I do not.

19 Q Okay. Do you know if Dan Scavino may have had any participation in this?

20 A I do not.

21 Q Do you remember seeing this tweet?

22 A I don't. I may have seen it on my phone at some point afterward, but in
23 the moment I don't remember actually seeing it after it went up, no.

24 Q Do you remember anybody in the White House talking about this tweet on
25 January the 6th?

1 A I do not.

2 Q Okay. Do you remember anybody in the White House talking about this
3 sentiment, that the Vice President didn't have the courage to do what needed to be done
4 in the joint session of Congress?

5 A I don't. I was not a part of any of those conversations if they occurred.

6 Q Okay. And you didn't hear about them secondhand either is what you're
7 saying?

8 A Correct.

9 Q All right. Now, it's been reported that the President had a call with Senator
10 Tuberville, and I think he may have been looking for Senator Lee or vice versa.

11 Do you know anything about that?

12 A I don't. The only thing I know about that phone call is what I've read in the
13 press, but nothing else.

14 Q Did you ever talk to anybody after the fact about that, after even reading it
15 in the press?

16 A Not that I recall, no.

17 Mr. [REDACTED]. All right. If you can go to exhibit No. 10, please, [REDACTED].

18 BY MR. [REDACTED]:

19 Q Up on here is about -- it's a tweet about 14 minutes later, approximately,
20 issued by the President. "Please support our Capitol Police and Law Enforcement.
21 They are truly on the side of our Country. Stay peaceful!"

22 Do you remember this tweet?

23 A I do.

24 Q All right. What can you tell us about this?

25 A I just remember seeing it go up sometime after my text to Mr. Meadows and

1 my discussion with him. And I think I remember seeing it on my phone in my office
2 when it went up, if I remember correctly.

3 Q Okay. Did you have any role in drafting this?

4 A I did not.

5 Q Do you know if Mr. Meadows did?

6 A I don't.

7 Q Do you know if anybody else in the White House did, Dan Scavino, Stephen
8 Miller, or otherwise?

9 A I do not know.

10 Q Okay. It's been reported that Ivanka Trump had a significant role in getting
11 her father to issue messages or statements on January the 6th. Do you know anything
12 about that?

13 A I had heard that Ivanka was in the building. I don't remember from who
14 that I heard that. But I do not -- I do not know anything about her conversations with
15 the President or meetings with the President other than what I've read in the press. The
16 answer is no.

17 Q Okay. Did Mr. -- so Mr. Meadows never told you that Ivanka was doing
18 anything?

19 A I don't believe so. I do not recall a convo between me and Mr. Meadows
20 about Ivanka at any point that day or the day after, no.

21 Q Do you remember talking to anybody about Ivanka's role that day? I know
22 she was in touch, it sounds like, with General Kellogg, for example.

23 A I vaguely remember a couple conversations with reporters who were asking
24 about tips they had heard over the phone, but I don't remember anything beyond that.
25 And I never followed up on those questions or tips, due to a fast-moving situation.

1 But to answer your question, no, I don't. I didn't hear about it from anybody
2 within the White House.

3 Q Did you talk to Ivanka at all that day?

4 A I did not.

5 Q Have you talked to her since about January 6th?

6 A I have not, not that I recall.

7 Q So at 2:20 -- or, excuse me, 2:44, so roughly 6 minutes after this tweet went
8 out, Ashli Babbitt was shot and killed at the Capitol.

9 Where were you when you first heard about that, if you recall?

10 A I don't recall. I was following the events throughout the day mostly from
11 my office, but I don't recall where I was when I heard that.

12 Q Do you remember talking about -- maybe you didn't know Ms. Babbitt by
13 name, but the shooting at the Capitol with other people in the White House?

14 A I don't remember.

15 Mr. [REDACTED]. And it looks like Ms. Lofgren has rejoined the deposition as well.

16 BY MR. [REDACTED]:

17 Q So do you remember anybody bringing it up as a concern that somebody had
18 been shot in the Capitol?

19 A Not specifically, no.

20 Q Do you remember it generally?

21 A I don't. I don't. I vaguely remember seeing on the TV in my office that
22 there had been shots fired. I think when I saw them, they were unconfirmed reports.
23 But I don't remember having a conversation with anybody about it in the White House
24 after the fact. It was a fast-moving situation, obviously, as you can imagine.

25 Q Was Ms. Matthews still in your office at that point?

1 A I don't remember if she was at that point or no.

2 Mr. ██████. Can you go to exhibit No. 11, please, ██████?

3 BY MR. ██████:

4 Q Exhibit No. 11 is a document with "THE WHITE HOUSE" in all capital letters at
5 the top.

6 Do you recognize this letterhead?

7 A I do.

8 Q All right. What's this letterhead?

9 A It is just general White House card letterhead.

10 Q Like notepads or individual cards?

11 A Yeah, note cards.

12 Q Okay. Anybody in particular have access to these or generally available?

13 A Generally available. There may have been some limitations that I'm not
14 aware of. I had some in my office.

15 Q Do you recognize the handwriting on this exhibit?

16 A I do not.

17 Q All right. It says, "1X civilian gunshot wound to chest @ door of House
18 Chamber."

19 So you never saw this note and you didn't write this note?

20 A No. The first time I saw it was when you sent it over this morning.

21 Mr. ██████. You can take that down. Thank you, ██████.

22 BY MR. ██████:

23 Q So, generally, it looks like, from some of the information we have received,
24 you may have been one of the first people to text Mr. Meadows suggesting that the
25 President do something.

1 And in the hour, roughly, after Mr. Meadows received your text, he got
2 approximately 27 other texts from the President's family, Members of Congress,
3 reporters, with all kinds of messages about how bad it was up on the Hill, that he needs
4 to stop this now.

5 Was the fact that everybody was -- or a lot of people were trying to contact him,
6 did that make its way to you? Did he talk to you about this?

7 A It did not. We had not had any discussion about who was contacting him
8 or reaching out to him.

9 Q Did he say that he was getting messages just generally from a lot of people?

10 A I don't recall that, ████. I don't recall him ever mentioning that.

11 Q And so, just generally, his reaction around this time, I mean, how was he
12 taking things in, and, if you know, what was he communicating to others?

13 A I don't know what he was communicating to others. Like I said, I only saw
14 him, that I can recall -- the first time I had seen him after I was seeing the events unfold at
15 the Capitol, he immediately got up, went down to the Oval Office. And that was the last
16 time that I saw him before a couple hours later.

17 But by that point I wasn't with him. I don't know what his reactions were, who
18 he was speaking to, anything of the sort, if that answers your question.

19 Q It does, yes. Thank you.

20 The shooting of Ashli Babbitt and the shooting at the Capitol, did that change the
21 general feel at the White House at the time?

22 A I don't remember. I don't remember exactly when I became aware of that
23 shooting. I don't recall specifically any conversations about that after I had seen
24 unconfirmed reports on TV.

25 And so it would be difficult for me to say whether or not it had impacted the

1 mood. I mean, obviously, there was concern among staff for everyone's safety and
2 well-being.

3 But I wouldn't be able to comment specifically on a line between the shooting and
4 no shooting. I just don't remember when I became aware of that.

5 Q Okay. Do you remember the President ever coming out of the Oval Office
6 or walking around, you know, your floor, which is on the same floor as the Oval --

7 A Not that I'm aware of, and I never heard that he did. I apologize, I
8 interrupted. Not that I am aware of, and I never heard or saw that he did.

9 Mr. [REDACTED] All right.

10 If you can go to exhibit No. 12, please.

11 So this is a document that you did provide to us.

12 I see, Ms. Cheney, you're back. Did you have a question?

13 Ms. Cheney. I did. Thank you very much. And I apologize if you covered this.

14 But I just wondered if -- we were just talking about the note at exhibit 11. Does
15 that look to you like Molly Michael's handwriting?

16 The Witness. I don't know that I've ever seen Molly Michael's handwriting,
17 Congresswoman, not that I would be able to pick out of a group.

18 Ms. Cheney. Thank you.

19 BY MR. [REDACTED]:

20 Q All right. So exhibit No. 12, and this is a document that you provided to us,
21 a screenshot of your text messages with Alyssa F. I'm assuming that's Alyssa Farah?

22 A Correct.

23 Q If you can go -- or start right there, actually.

24 She texted you at 3:13 p.m., "Is someone getting to POTUS? He has to tell
25 protesters to dissipate. Someone is going to get killed."

1 And then that's your response, correct, in blue?

2 A Correct.

3 Q You say, "I've been trying for the last 30 minutes, literally stormed in outer
4 Oval to get him to put out the first one. It's completely insane."

5 So can you explain your answer to Ms. Farah for us?

6 A Yeah, correct. That's summarizing what I told you all a few minutes ago,
7 that I had gone down to the chief of staff's office. I spoke to the chief, told him that I
8 thought we should put out a statement, followed him down in the direction of the Oval
9 Office.

10 My "literally stormed in outer Oval," I was obviously pretty fired up at the time, as
11 you can probably tell from the message. I went in that Oval Office outer -- outer Oval
12 Office corridor, saw Mr. Meadows turn in the direction of the Oval, and then I turned my
13 back and left to go back to my staff.

14 And then the "it's completely insane" text is just referring to the situation at the
15 Capitol and just sort of seeing the images on the TV.

16 Q At that point, of course, I don't know if you knew this at the time, but Ashli
17 Babbitt had already been shot. They had the shooting in the Capitol and people in and
18 around the various Chambers.

19 Is that what you're referring to, do you remember?

20 A I don't remember. I don't recall specifically in the moment being aware
21 that there were shots fired, no.

22 Q Now, when you went to the outer Oval -- and I'm sorry if I asked you this
23 before the break -- but did you talk to anybody else there? So Molly Michael, Nick Luna,
24 anybody else who was there?

25 A I did not, not that I recall.

1 Q Okay. Do you remember seeing General Kellogg or I believe Mr. Pottinger?

2 A No.

3 Q Do you remember seeing anybody in that area other than those we just
4 mentioned?

5 A No. I only -- the only person I remember seeing was just following behind
6 Mr. Meadows. I stopped short of the area where I would have been able to see really
7 anybody else.

8 Q Did you talk to Kayleigh McEnany about putting out any kind of statement
9 about the situation in the Capitol?

10 A I don't recall. I don't recall ever speaking to Kayleigh that afternoon.

11 Q So she then goes on, Alyssa Farah, in this exhibit, which is exhibit No. 12, and
12 says, "He should call into FOX and tell them to stand down and leave the Capitol."

13 And then it continues onto page 2. And you say, "I told the chief he should get
14 on camera or call in 20 minutes ago. Hoping it breaks through. God almighty."

15 So it sounds like you told the chief that the President -- meaning Chief Meadows.
16 Is that right?

17 A Well, that text is referring to me -- I recall telling the chief that the President
18 maybe should consider getting on camera in the next 20 minutes or so. But I don't
19 really remember specifically anything other than that.

20 Q Okay. Was that different than the conversation you had recommending a
21 tweet?

22 A I don't recall. I might have been referring to a second conversation that I
23 know we had that day, but I don't know if that was before or after this text exchange.

24 There was another conversation, that I think the documents I turned over indicate
25 that we had a second conversation in advance of the video from the President that went

1 out. I may have been referring to that in this text message, but I'm not exactly sure of
2 the timeline.

3 Q Okay. You know, I neglected -- I'm sorry, I have to go back on the last
4 page -- the first page, rather. You said at one point, "Terrifying. My phone is getting
5 blown up from Capitol people."

6 Can you explain that?

7 A Oh, I don't remember who I was talking about specifically. I think reporters
8 were asking what was going on. That's all, really, that I remember.

9 Q And did you tell the chief of staff or anybody else that you were getting a lot
10 of questions or comments about this?

11 A I don't remember. And I also, given that I work in media, I had tweet alerts
12 on for a number of reporters, of reporters that were in the Capitol, just given I deal with
13 their work. So I was seeing a number of tweets and things of that sort.

14 But to answer your question, I don't recall telling the chief or really telling anyone,
15 other than this text, that I was hearing from anybody.

16 Q Okay. And, you know, some of these -- I know the top of this thread
17 started on January the 6th at 3:13. Can you go into your phone and get us the exact
18 time for some of these messages? Is that something we can do to follow up?

19 Mr. Howell. We'll consider that. I don't want to do like a rolling production
20 type deal. If there are some limited requests, we're happy to probably entertain those.
21 But I don't think we're going to go through and get time stamps for everything.

22 Mr. [REDACTED]. Yeah. No, it would be a limited request for messages specifically
23 like this. And we'll make that request to you if you're not able to do it now.

24 Mr. Howell. Okay. Can you just give us one moment to discuss?

25 [REDACTED]. Yes, of course.

1 [Discussion off the record.]

2 Mr. Howell. We think we'll be able to accommodate that.

3 Mr. ████. Okay. Thank you. I appreciate that. Then we'll follow up. I
4 think it makes more sense to keep moving on this --

5 Mr. Howell. Sure.

6 Mr. ████. -- than to have you do that right now.

7 I see, Ms. Cheney, you've turned on your camera as well.

8 Ms. Cheney. Thanks very much, ████.

9 I just wanted to ask. So, Mr. Williamson, when you say your phone was getting
10 blown up from Capitol people, are those text messages? And have you turned those
11 over already?

12 The Witness. Anything that I had related to that day, Congresswoman, like I said,
13 made a good faith effort to search everything and turn them over. Some of it, like I said,
14 was referring to tweets.

15 I got a DM from a Capitol reporter that was over there asking for a response that I
16 turned over. Some of it was tweet notifications throughout the day. Some of it was
17 reporters that were actually in the building just asking what was going on.

18 But. Yes, a good faith effort to turn everything over.

19 Ms. Cheney. Okay. If you could just check. Obviously, we're interested in the
20 fact that -- the discussion about all of the messages that you were receiving. Any that
21 are responsive, we'd be interested to see.

22 And I also -- you mentioned having your tweet -- having tweet notifications. Was
23 it standard practice for people in the press office to have tweet notifications?

24 The Witness. It was for me, Congresswoman. I don't know about my
25 colleagues. But for me, it was common for reporters that I follow for an interest of

1 keeping up with news as it's coming in, I'd like to have notifications set for reporters that I
2 respect.

3 So it was common practice for me. I don't know about others.

4 Ms. Cheney. But you were certainly not the only one in the press shop who
5 understood the importance of keeping up on Twitter with reporters who were covering
6 the White House or the Hill?

7 The Witness. Surely, Congresswoman, but I don't know what they would do with
8 Twitter. I think it would be fair to assume one way or the other, but I don't know. I
9 didn't see their phones whenever tweets would come in.

10 Ms. Cheney. Okay. Thank you.

11 BY MR. [REDACTED] :

12 Q Mr. Williamson, just to wrap up on this, on exhibit No. 12, page 2 in
13 particular, was there any pushback that you received from Mr. Meadows or otherwise
14 about having the President go on camera in particular?

15 A No.

16 Q And then it says -- Ms. Farah responds and says, "100. If POTUS won't then
17 Mark must." Do you know what she meant by that?

18 A No. I assume she meant if the President doesn't say something Mark
19 should, but I don't know. You would have to ask Ms. Farah.

20 Q Did you talk to Mr. Meadows about him putting out a statement?

21 A No, not that I recall.

22 Q Do you remember putting out a statement yourself or considering putting
23 out one on behalf of the White House or the President?

24 A No.

25 Mr. [REDACTED]. I believe Mr. [REDACTED] had a question for you.

1 BY MR. [REDACTED]:

2 Q Yeah, just one. Just bringing back up exhibit 7, I think it is.

3 And it sounds like to me like you took -- as soon as you saw violence happening on
4 the Capitol, you took very prompt action to basically alert your supervisors in a
5 responsible way. In this case, that was Mr. Meadows. Is that correct?

6 A Correct.

7 Q So this is the tweet we've looked at before stamped 2:02 p.m. on January
8 6th. This is the tweet that you sent to Mr. Meadows.

9 And after you sent that tweet at 2:02, you said you promptly went over to talk to
10 Mr. Meadows, right, and that's when Mr. Meadows then went to the Oval Office?

11 A Correct.

12 Q And is it correct that it was right after the 2:02 tweet that you went over to
13 talk to him? So you didn't stand around and chat with other people for 10 minutes or
14 so. You went directly right after that to talk to Mr. Meadows?

15 A I don't remember exactly when, sir, but it would have been thereabouts,
16 relatively soon after that, yes.

17 Mr. Howell. And, Joe, are you referring to the 2:02 text message as opposed
18 to --

19 Mr. [REDACTED]. I'm sorry, yes. Sorry, yes. I should have said text message, not
20 tweet. Yes, that's right, in exhibit 7.

21 Okay. Thank you. That's all I have.

22 Ms. Cheney. [REDACTED], I have one more question.

23 Mr. [REDACTED]. Yes, of course.

24 Ms. Cheney. Mr. Williamson, when you -- this is back on page 2 of exhibit
25 12 -- when you said, "I told the chief he should get on camera or call in 20 minutes ago,"

1 and then you said, "Hoping it breaks through," what did you mean by "Hoping it breaks
2 through"?

3 A Congresswoman, as I recall, I had a brief convo with the chief about the
4 President doing a video or getting on camera in some form. And because I was speaking
5 indirectly through the chief, I didn't know whether that idea had been accepted or not.

6 So I think in this text what I'm referring to is that I hope it ends up happening, just
7 because I wasn't getting the President's reaction or speaking with him directly.

8 Ms. Cheney. Okay. Thank you.

9 Mr. [REDACTED]. Bear with me just a moment. I'm writing a note.

10 All right. If you can pull up exhibit No. 13, please, [REDACTED].

11 BY MR. [REDACTED]:

12 Q Exhibit 13, as it's coming up, is a tweet that the President issued at 3:13 p.m.
13 It says, "I am asking for everyone at the U.S. Capitol to remain peaceful. No violence!
14 Remember, WE are the party of Law and Order - respect the law and our great men and
15 women in Blue. Thank you!"

16 Do you remember seeing this tweet when it came out?

17 A I remember seeing it, correct.

18 Q Do you remember seeing it on the 6th?

19 A Yes.

20 Q Okay. What do you remember about when you saw this tweet? Did you
21 have any -- let me back up a little bit.

22 Did you have any role in drafting or editing this tweet?

23 A No, not that I remember. Certainly not directly. Like I said, in my second
24 convo with Mr. Meadows when we had discussed a followup message or a followup
25 video, it's possible that some of this language was discussed that I don't remember

1 specifically, but I did not have any role in drafting or sending out this tweet, no.

2 Q Okay. So you believe that the second conversation that you had with Mr.
3 Meadows was before this tweet?

4 A I don't remember, [REDACTED]. It's possible that it was, but I don't remember
5 specifically exactly when. When was this tweet -- when did this tweet go out? I can't
6 even see the time stamp on here.

7 Mr. [REDACTED]. If you go down a little bit, [REDACTED].

8 BY MR. [REDACTED]:

9 Q It's at 3:13 p.m.

10 A I don't remember.

11 Q Okay. Can you just tell us a little bit about that conversation with Mr.
12 Meadows, the second one?

13 A Yeah. Just went back and I -- he and I talked briefly. I found him in his
14 office and suggested it may be a good idea for the President to perhaps consider doing a
15 followup video and, you know, encouraging peace, respect for Capitol Police, and
16 discouraging any kind of violence.

17 And then I left, and that was really it. I don't remember -- I don't really
18 remember much of the conversation. But Mr. Meadows obviously agreed that it was
19 important to encourage peace, and then that was really it from the convo.

20 Q How long do you think that conversation lasted?

21 A I don't know. It would have been maybe 2 or 3 minutes.

22 Q And you said you found him in his office. Was anybody else there?

23 A Not that I recall.

24 Q And did he say that he had already talked to the President about any of this?

25 A I don't remember. I don't recall him saying anything about that he had

1 spoke with the President or anything like that.

2 Q You said you thought it would be a good idea to do a followup message or
3 video. Followup to what?

4 A The first tweet, if I remember right, or just a video in general. And, like I
5 said, I had gotten a suggestion from Alyssa Farah to maybe consider doing a video. So
6 that's, I think, what I was referring to in the moment.

7 Q Do you think that the -- did you think, excuse me, that the first tweet the
8 President issued about this was not enough, didn't go far enough?

9 A █, in the moment, just trying to do my job and relay what I thought should
10 happen. I think it was good that the President encouraged people to respect police, but
11 obviously was trying to make sure we could do everything possible to get people out of
12 the Capitol that weren't supposed to be there and make sure that peaceful people and
13 Capitol Police were protected.

14 Q Okay. And this tweet, does that generally track the suggestion that you
15 made to Mr. Meadows?

16 A I don't remember specifically what my wording suggestion was to Mr.
17 Meadows. So I wouldn't be able to say one way or the other whether it tracks.

18 Q Right. But it's a general message, right, to respect the police, peace at the
19 Capitol? Did you suggest that he tell people to go home?

20 A I don't remember. I don't remember what we specifically discussed. And
21 I don't remember using the specific words, "Go home."

22 Mr. █ If you can go to exhibit No. 14, please, █.

23 BY MR. █:

24 Q So exhibit No. 14 is a document that you provided to us, a text message with
25 somebody named Jonathan and initials JS, while that's coming up.

1 Do you know who that is?

2 A I do. It's Jonathan Swan. He's a reporter for Axios.

3 Q At 3:19 p.m., he says, "Impeachment would get a solid majority of Senate Rs
4 right now." And then he follows up, "where is Mark?" And that's your response in
5 blue, I assume, "In and out of the Oval, in his office, working on National Guard and LEO."

6 So how did you know? It sounded like you had, from what you've told us, limited
7 interactions. How did you know that he was in and out of the Oval, in his office, and
8 working on National Guard and LEO specifically?

9 A Being in and out of the Oval was because I had seen him go in the Oval and I
10 had seen him out of the Oval. So that was what that was referring to.

11 He may have mentioned on the side when we talked that he was speaking with
12 various officials about getting support for law enforcement out there. I don't remember
13 specifically what was discussed, but that was probably what I was referring to in this text.
14 But I don't remember specifically what he said in our convos about that.

15 Q Okay. Just to be clear, the in and out of the Oval, I think what you said
16 before is you went into the outer Oval with him and then didn't see exactly where he
17 went, but you do think he went in and out of the Oval, correct?

18 A I had assumed at that time, █, that he went in the Oval when I followed
19 him into the outer Oval section, correct.

20 Q And that's the basis for this text message?

21 A That is the basis, correct.

22 Q Now, the National Guard and LEO, what do you remember Mr. Meadows
23 telling you about that?

24 A I don't remember specifics. I vaguely remember at the time us -- him
25 discussing that it would be good to get law enforcement support, but I don't remember

1 specifically what was discussed beyond that.

2 Q Okay. Do you remember him saying anything that he was working to get
3 law enforcement support, more than just it would be nice to have it -- or good to have it,
4 rather?

5 A I think he mentioned that he was or that we needed to, but I don't
6 remember him saying anything beyond that, no.

7 Q Okay. So you don't remember what he said -- or what he was -- excuse me,
8 let me start over.

9 You don't remember what he said he was doing to get law enforcement or
10 National Guard support, if anything?

11 A Correct. I don't recall.

12 Q The next message then is, "And Trump is in the dining room?" That's from
13 Jonathan. You responded, "Don't know. I think so."

14 So what made you think that the President was in the dining room specifically?

15 A I think I had heard from a couple reporters coming up to my office that
16 he -- they had gotten tips that he was in there. And so I think I was referring to those.
17 But, like I said in the text, I wasn't sure where he was, because I had not seen him that
18 day.

19 Q Then he goes on. He says, "Man it's hard to watch." And you say,
20 "Beyond. Destroying every good thing we did."

21 What do you mean by that?

22 A I just felt that violence toward police was not what we stood for and was not
23 appropriate. That's what I was referring to.

24 Q "We" being the administration, the kind of royal we?

25 A Correct.

1 Q And so you -- it looks like you associated what was happening with the
2 people at the Capitol destroying the accomplishments of the Trump administration. Is
3 that right?

4 A No, ████, I don't think that's fair. What I was talking about in the moment
5 was that actions of people that were violent toward police did not reflect well on the
6 movement as a whole and that I thought it was inappropriate.

7 I wasn't specifically focused on just administration accomplishments or anything
8 like that. I was broadly talking about the perception and the fact that there was
9 violence going on toward police and individuals in the Capitol.

10 Q And the perception being that it would be somehow linked to the
11 administration, right, when you say "we" there?

12 A Right. Just that it had a potential to really reflect poorly beyond just the
13 obvious immediate concern, which was that somebody could get really hurt, which was
14 the main concern at that point.

15 Q Now, this message continues -- or this thread, rather -- with Mr. Swan. It
16 says, "It's on Trump too. He did this. Is it true Trump is going to do something on
17 camera?"

18 And then this is the last message that we have that you produced from Mr. Swan
19 on that day. Do you have other messages with Mr. Swan on January the 6th?

20 A No. I turned in everything I have. I think this probably cuts off after I
21 didn't respond. And then we probably went on to discussing something much later that
22 wasn't relevant to J6 or anything like that.

23 Q Okay. So you never responded to anything else with respect to Mr. Swan
24 on the 6th?

25 A Correct.

1 Mr. ██████. All right. If you could go to exhibit No. 15, please, ██████.

2 BY MR. ██████:

3 Q And I'm going through, Mr. Williamson, as close to chronologically as I can,
4 based on the time stamps on your tweets, but if there's something in between here, of
5 course, we'd be interested in knowing about that.

6 So exhibit No. 15 is a text exchange that you had with someone named Tamara.

7 Is this Tamara Keith?

8 A That is Tamara Keith, a reporter for NPR.

9 When you say time stamp of my tweets, you mean time stamp of my texts, right?
10 Is that what you're referring to?

11 Q Yes. Thank you for clarifying that. I am falling into that trap myself. But
12 yes, text messages, that's right.

13 A That is Tamara Keith. She's a reporter and friend of mine from NPR.

14 Q Okay. So she texted you at 3:27 p.m. and says, "Is the President going to
15 give a speech?? This is crazy."

16 So you didn't respond to that, but did you do anything to follow up or look into it,
17 kind of figure out the answer to that question?

18 A I don't remember speaking to Tamara that day. I was getting a number of
19 texts from reporters and visits from reporters, as you can see in my documents, and
20 couldn't respond to all of them. I don't remember ever speaking with her that day.

21 Q Okay. Did you do anything at that time to look into, though, whether the
22 President was going to give a speech?

23 A At that specific time, I don't recall whether or not I did. Like I said, I had
24 already had at least one conversation with Mr. Meadows about the President putting out
25 a statement. I don't recall ever discussing a speech.

1 Q Then at 9:22 -- I'm going to jump ahead, just because it's easy and we have
2 the text message right here -- she asks you, "Are you still working at the White House?"
3 Did you consider resigning that day?

4 A I did not.

5 Q Other people did, correct?

6 A Yes. People did resign, so I would assume they considered that.

7 Q Did you talk to the people who resigned that day about why they did so?

8 A I talked to one person that I can recall on the concept of resigning.

9 Q Who was that?

10 A It was Sarah Matthews.

11 Q And what did she tell you?

12 A I don't remember much of what she said. I remember her indicating that
13 she was obviously disturbed about what had happened that day, but beyond that I don't
14 remember what -- much of what she said.

15 Mr. ████████. And we're going to get to the video that the President released in a
16 moment, but any questions from members or other staff?

17 Ms. Cheney. I have a couple questions, ████████.

18 Mr. Williamson, can you -- you mentioned that you were getting a lot of incoming
19 from texts, but also reporters in person.

20 Can you talk a little bit about that, just in terms of where, when you weren't in Mr.
21 Meadows' office or in the outer Oval, you were back in your office, the extent to which
22 you had interactions with reporters who were in the press pool or who may have been in
23 the press room?

24 The Witness. Yes, Congresswoman.

25 So I was in my office. And for those that may not be familiar with the layout of

1 the West Wing press office in relationship, the West Wing press office is connected to the
2 press pool area, which is a floor below the West Wing.

3 And so it's always been tradition that reporters are able to freely come and go
4 between their area of work and the press office of the West Wing.

5 And so periodically throughout that day, or really on any given day, reporters
6 would be able to come up and visit and just check in, ask questions, see how things were
7 going, or just talk.

8 And so when I say getting visits from reporters, that's what I'm referring to, is
9 reporters stopping by, seeing how things were going, asking if we had any updates, things
10 of the sort. And I believe I turned over a number of texts that I got from reporters that
11 day who were asking by phone if they weren't there in person.

12 So if that answers your question.

13 Ms. Cheney. Yeah. And do you remember specifically -- and I appreciate the
14 texts that you produced, definitely.

15 Do you remember specifically which reporters talked to you that day in person?

16 The Witness. I only remember two. I remember one being Ben Tracy from
17 CBS, and I vaguely remember the other one being Peter Alexander from NBC. Beyond
18 that, I don't remember specifically any others that came up in person.

19 Ms. Cheney. And do you remember the details about when they approached
20 you?

21 The Witness. The only specific detail, Congresswoman, is I remember Mr. Tracy
22 with CBS asking if we planned to have the President do a speech or speak on camera.

23 And at the time, I didn't know the details of what was going to happen. I don't
24 remember the specific time of when he came up. But I told Mr. Tracy I would -- that I
25 didn't have any detail. I would try to let him know when I could. And then he left after

1 that.

2 Ms. Cheney. And was that before you went to see Mr. Meadows for the first
3 time or in the middle? Do you recall the sequence?

4 The Witness. I don't recall specifically, Congresswoman. I don't recall.

5 Ms. Cheney. Okay. And then Peter Alexander?

6 The Witness. I don't recall, Congresswoman, exactly when he came up.

7 Ms. Cheney. Okay. Thank you.

1

2 BY MR. [REDACTED]:

3 Q Mr. Williamson, so after that 3:13 tweet about being the party of law and
4 order and respecting the police, that was at around 3:13. And then the next event that
5 we see on the President's schedule is at 4:03 he goes to the Rose Garden -- that's based
6 on the diary that we had showed you earlier -- to do a videotaping.

7 Did you have any role in preparing the remarks for the video that the President
8 released on January 6th?

9 A I did not.

10 Q Do you know who did?

11 A I don't.

12 Q Based on your knowledge of the White House, who do you think might have
13 had a role?

14 A I don't, [REDACTED]. At that point, a lot of staff had left or off-boarded. And so I
15 don't know who exactly would have. It wouldn't have been like a traditional processes
16 back in the summer, if you will. We were operating on a different -- with a different
17 staff structure. So I don't know.

18 Q Typically, the people writing remarks, would that be in the press shop, the
19 speechwriting shop, videographer shop if there is one?

20 A Well, without commentary on this specific video, typically when the
21 President would give a video address, it would have been written usually by Stephen
22 Miller. And then it would have been -- draft remarks would have been sent around by
23 staff secretary, with the opportunity for review and edits.

24 And then the President would be -- would go before our film team, digital team,
25 tape, and then the tweet would go up by any of the approved means.

1 But I -- that day, I didn't have any involvement in drafting the speech or seeing it
2 beforehand.

3 Q Okay. Do you know if at any point the President was ever reluctant to issue
4 a video statement?

5 A I did not speak to him before he did the video, and I did not hear from other
6 people as to whether or not he was. So the answer is, no, I don't know.

7 Q You don't know either way, is what you're saying?

8 A Correct. Not that I can ever recall hearing.

9 Q You are familiar with the video, though, that he released on January the 6th?

10 A Yes.

11 Q Did you ever hear how many takes the President did of the video before the
12 final version?

13 A I don't recall ever hearing about the filming process of the video, no. I
14 think I've read reports that happened after the video came out, but I don't think I ever
15 heard before that, no.

16 Q Do you know who edited the video? And we've heard that there was some
17 editing that took place, maybe on Mr. Luna's computer, somewhere near the Oval Office
18 with various people.

19 A I do not.

20 Q You didn't participate in any of that process, the editing process?

21 A I did not.

22 Q Did you review it before it was released?

23 A No.

24 Q Is that uncommon for you, as the acting communications director, not to see
25 something like that before it goes out?

1 A Not necessarily. Sometimes I would see texts before things would go out.
2 It was very rare that I would see a video before it would go out.

3 If you'll look at the timeline, I was only acting communications director for about a
4 month. So there weren't many videos in that timeline that we were doing that I can
5 recall.

6 But no, it was not uncommon for an actual video to go out before I would see it.

7 Q Do you know if Ms. McEnany would have been involved in the message for
8 the video?

9 A I don't know. I don't recall ever speaking to her about the video production
10 that day, and I don't know if she was involved.

11 Q Okay. You're anticipating my questions, which is great and it helps speed
12 things along, so I appreciate that.

13 I will ask you to look at exhibit No. 16, though. And this is a document, the title
14 on the top is "Remarks," underlined.

15 And I won't read the whole thing, but the first paragraph is, "I urge all of my
16 supporters to do exactly as 99.9 percent of them have already been doing -- express their
17 passions and opinions PEACEFULLY." And at the end, it says, "I am asking you to leave
18 the Capitol Hill region NOW and go home in a peaceful way?"

19 Did you ever see this document before?

20 A No. This morning was the first time I ever recall seeing it.

21 Q Do you ever remember hearing any remarks or draft remarks like this, even
22 if you didn't see this exact document?

23 A I don't recall ever seeing or hearing about those draft remarks, no.

24 Q Okay. And this is directed to, it says, "my supporters." I mean, was the
25 notion at the White House at the time that the President needed to issue a statement like

1 this to get people to leave Capitol Hill, and the Capitol specifically?

2 A I can deduce that from this document. But, yes, the primary concern was
3 making sure that everyone was kept safe.

4 Q Okay. And was it your view that the people at the Capitol who were doing
5 this were his supporters as well, and if the President issued a message it would reach
6 them and have an effect?

7 A I didn't know who was in the Capitol. I didn't know what their -- anything
8 about them, frankly. But, obviously, I felt that if we could put out a statement or a
9 tweet or anything of the like, I felt it was necessary for us to do that.

10 Q Did you think it was antifa at the time?

11 A Not necessarily. I didn't know who it was. I was just seeing what I was
12 seeing on the TV from reports.

13 Q Did you have any information suggesting it was antifa?

14 A No.

15 Q Now, ultimately the President issued or released a video, and we have it
16 here if you think it would be helpful to watch. But he talks about, he says something to
17 the effect of, I know your pain. I know you're hurt. The election was stolen. This was
18 a fraudulent election. We love you, you're special, but go home. And that's me
19 paraphrasing to some extent.

20 Do you remember when that video came out?

21 A I don't remember specifically when it came out, no.

22 Q Not time-wise, but do you remember being in the White House and learning
23 that this video had been released?

24 A Oh, I apologize. Yes. I remember seeing it for the first time when it was
25 aired on cable news, I believe.

1 Q Okay. And who were you with when you saw that?

2 A I don't remember exactly who I was with. I remember speaking to Deputy
3 Press Secretary Judd Deere within a few moments of the video coming out, but I don't
4 recall if he was standing there when I watched it.

5 Q Okay. And before we get to that conversation with Mr. Deere, the
6 President's message is that this election was stolen, that it was fraudulent, we love you, I
7 know your pain, go home.

8 Did you think that that was an effective way of reaching the people at the Capitol
9 to get them to stop?

10 A Honestly, █, in the moment, I was just watching the video and hoping that
11 people would leave. I didn't have a whole lot of time to process what would and
12 wouldn't work. I was just mainly focused on trying to make sure the situation was
13 resolved and doing my job in that way.

14 Q And if you were asked -- it sounds like you weren't -- but if you were asked,
15 is that the message that you would send to the people at the Capitol on January 6th?

16 A I wouldn't be able to speculate on that.

17 Go ahead.

18 Mr. Howell. Yeah. I was just going to say we're getting into some pretty
19 speculative answers. I mean, he's happy to keep answering your questions. That's a
20 call for some deep speculation.

21 The Witness. I mean, I'll make a good faith effort, █, just really quick.

22 I was in the moment, you know, wanting to make sure, like everybody else, that
23 people were kept safe and my friends were kept safe and that police were respected.

24 I wouldn't be able to comment on what I would or wouldn't have done if I was
25 given any draft documents or whatever. I wasn't in that situation.

1 BY MR. [REDACTED]:

2 Q Okay. I appreciate that, Mr. Williamson. It sounds like there was a lot
3 going on and you were concerned with your friends, like you just said, and everybody else
4 at the Capitol at the time.

5 So I do want to talk to you about your conversation with Mr. Deere. You
6 mentioned having a conversation with him about the video. Can you tell us about that?

7 A Very brief. He, to my recollection, he just mentioned to me that a video
8 would be coming out. I don't recall him saying anything specific about what was in the
9 video. And I'm, to be honest, I'm not even sure if he was out there when the video was
10 occurring.

11 But I just remember him flagging that a video was going to be coming at some
12 point, and that was really the extent of the conversation from there.

13 Q Okay. So he knew that this video would be coming out before you did?

14 A Yes. I believe -- that I can recall, the person I learned about the video from,
15 that it was happening, I believe was Judd.

16 Q All right.

17 Now, I understand that Judd, around this time, may have said something to the
18 effect of that Senators or Members were considering withdrawing their objections during
19 the joint session.

20 Do you remember Mr. Deere ever saying anything like that?

21 A I don't, not to me. And I never heard him say it to anybody that I can recall.

22 Q Do you remember being with Mr. Miller, Stephen Miller in particular, in
23 Kayleigh McEnany's office that afternoon?

24 A On January 6th?

25 Q Yes.

1 A No, I don't recall that.

2 Q Do you remember being in Kayleigh McEnany's office that afternoon?

3 A I was. I was actually in her office, I believe, when Judd mentioned that a
4 video may be coming.

5 Q Did she have any response to that?

6 A I don't remember Kayleigh being in there when Judd and I had that
7 conversation.

8 It was very common for some of us to meet in Kayleigh's office if she wasn't there.
9 She was very open about letting staff use it when they needed. So I don't remember her
10 even being in there when we had that conversation.

11 Q Okay. Do you remember her being in there at all?

12 A I don't. I don't.

13 Q Do you remember -- earlier I asked you about being in her office with
14 Stephen Miller. Do you remember being with Stephen Miller separately on January 6th?

15 A No.

16 Q All right. Do you remember ever talking to Stephen Miller about what was
17 going on on January 6th?

18 A That day, no, I do not, not on January 6th.

19 Q Do you remember talking to him afterwards about January 6th?

20 A We had a brief convo on January 7th, I believe it was, where he was talking
21 about the speech he was writing that the President would give the next day. And I don't
22 remember when the speech actually occurred, but it was the one where he talked about
23 a transition and addressed the violence of January 6th.

24 I don't remember what day that convo was. I think it was the next day, but I
25 don't recall. But that's the only interaction I had with him around that time period.

1 Q Okay. So he drafted the speech, to your knowledge, that the President
2 gave on January 7th or thereabouts?

3 A Again, I don't remember if the speech happened January 7th, but if we're
4 talking about the same one, yes, my understanding is he drafted that speech.

5 Q Very good. And we'll get to that in a minute. Maybe that will help.

6 But do you remember Mr. Miller saying anything else about the events of January
7 6th?

8 A No.

9 Q Do you remember -- and I asked this in the context of Judd Deere -- but do
10 you remember generally conversations or planning with respect to resuming the joint
11 session on January 6th and whether Senators or Members would be pushing or pursuing
12 their objections or anything else like that?

13 A I do not recall, no.

14 Mr. [REDACTED]. If you can go to exhibit No. 18, please.

15 BY MR. [REDACTED]:

16 Q And this is a text message string that you provided to us from Cassidy. Is
17 that Cassidy Hutchinson?

18 A It is.

19 Q All right. And this is on January 6th, and you guys are talking about
20 basically bringing people home. And it says in the middle message, "Mark and Tony
21 want all of us to leave by 5:15." And I'm summarizing here, but really gone, not just
22 pretending to be gone.

23 Do you remember this?

24 A I do.

25 Q Can you explain what was happening at the time?

1 A Well, this text is referring to, you know, it was common for us to give rides to
2 staffers that didn't have cars. We would give them rides home pretty frequently. All
3 summer we would do that when there were violent protests going on around the city.

4 And then this was an exchange between us about me bringing an assistant in the
5 chief of staff's office home, because she didn't have a ride.

6 The part about Mark and Tony, that refers to Mark, obviously the chief, and then
7 Tony Ornato, who was one of the deputy chiefs.

8 I didn't really ask questions about what this was referring to. I assumed that it
9 was referring to, because everybody was on heightened security alert, they just wanted
10 as many staff out of the West Wing as possible, particularly junior staff. And so I would
11 try to drive people home if they didn't have a car and make sure they were kept safe.

12 Mr. [REDACTED]. Okay. And while you were giving your answer, I just want to state
13 for the record that select committee member Mr. Aguilar has joined as well.

14 BY MR. [REDACTED]:

15 Q So you said Mark and Tony wanted all of us to leave by 5 and 5:15, and I
16 think you mentioned a heightened security posture.

17 I mean, what was the feeling around the White House at that point? I mean, was
18 there genuine concern about White House staff security?

19 A Bluntly, we had been on heightened security alert all summer, because there
20 had been quite a few things going on around the campus. But certainly with the events
21 that day, we were trying to make sure that we just took every precaution possible at that
22 point in the afternoon. I don't know about any internal security conversations or
23 procedures that were happening, though.

24 Q Did you ever talk to Tony Ornato about January 6th?

25 A I don't recall ever having a convo with Tony about that or that day or about

1 it.

2 Q And just so we're talking about the same person, that's the former Secret
3 Service -- or then former -- or then he's on a detail from Secret Service, and I think he was
4 deputy --

5 A Correct.

6 Q -- chief of staff? Okay.

7 A Right.

8 Q And, to your knowledge, did the White House actually empty out, just like
9 these texts suggest was being ordered?

10 A I don't know. When I was told to leave, I got up as many coworkers as
11 needed a ride and I left.

12 Q Okay. Did you come back and do another trip too or just that one?

13 A No, just that one.

14 Q And when you left, did you continue to have contact with people in the
15 White House about what was going on?

16 A I don't remember. I may have had a couple phone convos as usual after
17 leaving work, just debrief with people. But I don't remember any specific convos other
18 than the one I had with Sarah later that night that we've already discussed. But I don't
19 recall other than that.

20 Q Do you know if Mr. Meadows went home around the same time?

21 A I don't know when he went home that day.

22 Mr. [REDACTED]. Can you go to exhibit No. 19, please?

23 BY MR. [REDACTED]:

24 Q This is a tweet from the President at 6:01 p.m., after he released the video,
25 which was around 4:15ish. It said -- wait for it to come up. He said, "These are the

1 things and events that happen when a sacred landslide election victory is so
2 unceremoniously and viciously stripped away from great patriots who have been badly
3 and unfairly treated for so long. Go home with love and in peace. Remember this day
4 forever!"

5 Did you have anything to do with the creation, editing, or otherwise putting out of
6 this tweet?

7 A No.

8 Q Do you know who did?

9 A No.

10 Q Did you ever talk to anybody about this tweet or how it came to be?

11 A No.

12 Q Did you ever talk to anybody about this tweet after it came out, like
13 expressing concern or why did this go out?

14 A Not that I remember. I think this actually came out when I was driving, and
15 I don't even remember seeing it in the moment or afterward, to be blunt with you. So,
16 to answer your question, no, not that I recall.

17 Mr. [REDACTED]. Okay.

18 Now, if you can go to exhibit No. 20, please, [REDACTED].

19 And this may be a little bit hard to see, but see how it comes up.

20 Okay. Are you --

21 Mr. Howell. Real quick here, [REDACTED]. In about 5 minutes, can we take just a quick
22 5-minute break?

23 Mr. [REDACTED]. Absolutely, yes. In fact, I think that will work out perfectly as far
24 as kind of order of operations here.

25 So can you see what's on the screen, Mr. Williamson?

1 The Witness. Yes.

2 Mr. [REDACTED]. Okay. So this is -- just so you know, I'll offer up to you what this is.

3 This is certain calls from January 6th from the phone records that we received for your
4 personal cell phone number.

5 And some of it's blacked out. I did that only to make it easier to read. They
6 looked like they didn't connect. They were just missed calls or calls that didn't go
7 through. So I want to focus on the ones that did.

8 It looks like at 2:28, on the very first line that's not blacked out -- if you could go
9 up a little, [REDACTED]. Yep.

1

2 BY MR. [REDACTED]:

3 Q It looks like at 2:28 p.m. on January the 6th you received a call from an [REDACTED]
4 number ending in [REDACTED] with the potential party being Deborah Meadows.

5 Do you remember receiving a call from either Mr. Meadows or his wife at 2:28?

6 A I do not.

7 Q Okay. Now, this shows -- if you look in the third column from the right,
8 that's how many seconds the call lasted. It's 202 seconds, so roughly 3-plus minutes, if I
9 can do my math right.

10 You don't remember having a call with Mark Meadows or his wife around that
11 time?

12 A I do not.

13 Q Okay. And that was about the time of the tweet with -- related to the Vice
14 President and not having the courage -- again, I'm kind of summarizing here.

15 Do you ever remember having a phone call where you talked about that tweet
16 and the Vice President?

17 A I do not. And I can with pretty great certainty say that we did not discuss
18 anything related to that tweet, but I don't remember exactly what it was about.

1

2 [1:48 p.m.]

3 BY MR. [REDACTED]:

4 Q Okay. And this phone number that's here ending in [REDACTED], do you know if
5 that actually is Mr. Meadows' or Mr. Meadows' wife? It's hard to tell with phone
6 records sometimes.

7 A I don't know. I don't know which one of them it is.

8 Q At that time, did you have more than one phone number for Mr. Meadows,
9 a private number, I should say, other than the work phone number?

10 A I am not sure. If you want to follow up with Mike, I'm happy to at least
11 look into going back and seeing what I had. I mean, I don't remember having more than
12 one for him or if I did or not.

13 But to zoom out and more properly answer your question, I don't remember
14 having a conversation with him or Mrs. Meadows at that time. If I can remember, I'm
15 happy to follow up with you through Mike, I guess, would be the best way to deal with
16 that.

17 Q That's great. I appreciate that, Mr. Williamson. Thank you.

18 So skipping the next one, which is only 2 seconds, if you go down to the third
19 unredacted, it's Vera Williamson. I'm just assuming that may be family of yours?

20 A She's my mom.

21 Q She's your mom. Okay. And on January 6th, I imagine that she was
22 probably concerned about her son. Is that fair?

23 A Yeah, sure.

24 Q Okay. I don't want to get into necessarily that, unless you think it's
25 relevant to the committee, but I do want to respect the conversations you had with your

1 mother.

2 A I appreciate that.

3 Q All right. Skipping down then to the next block towards the bottom, this is
4 starting at 7:14 p.m. and going roughly till 11:48 that night. It looks like you have a
5 couple of calls with Sarah Matthews around 7:15 and 8:25. Do you remember the
6 conversations you had with Mr. -- or excuse me -- with Ms. Matthews roughly as, I don't
7 know, 10 to 13 minutes worth of calls?

8 A Yeah, those were what I mentioned earlier. I think she had mentioned the
9 possibility of resigning, and I believe those were what those convos were pertaining to.

10 Q And did you talk about the messages that the President had put out that day
11 with Ms. Matthews in those calls?

12 A Not that I recall.

13 Q It goes on. There's some calls, a few of them, about four with somebody
14 who may be K. Collins. Is that Kaitlan Collins? Do you remember talking to her that
15 night?

16 A It is. Yes, I do.

17 Q And that's a CNN reporter?

18 A It is. Yes, she's my -- a CNN reporter and a friend of mine.

19 Q And do you remember what you talked about with Ms. Collins?

20 A I don't. To be honest, before you sent this document over this morning, I
21 didn't remember specifically speaking to Kaitlan that night.

22 Q Okay. And some of the questions I ask are just to try to see if it jostles any
23 memories loose. I mean, do you remember talking about the President's tweets or
24 messaging or video with Ms. Collins?

25 A No, I don't specifically. It's possible that they came up and she asked, you

1 know, what was going to happen moving forward or what the plans were. But I don't
2 know specifically what we talked about. I don't recall.

3 Q In between those messages with Ms. Collins, you have a 330-second call with
4 Mr. Meadows. Do you remember what you and Mr. Meadows talked about on the
5 phone that night after you left the White House?

6 A The only thing I specifically recall was him making sure that I got home safe
7 and the coworkers that I had taken home were safe. That's the only thing that I
8 remember specifically.

9 Q Do you remember him saying anything about the events of January 6th or
10 the President's response to the events of January 6th?

11 A I don't.

12 Q Did you ask Mr. Meadows for permission to talk to Ms. Collins? And the
13 only reason I'm asking is because it goes from Ms. Collins to Mr. Meadows and then back
14 to Ms. Collins a couple times.

15 A Did I ask Mr. Meadows for permission to speak to Kaitlan Collins? No, I did
16 not.

17 Q Correct. Like go on the record, for example, with Ms. Collins?

18 A No, not that I recall.

19 Q All right.

20 A I -- no, not that I recall.

21 Q And then there's some calls that follow. Elizabeth -- and these are
22 potential names based on what's available. But Elizabeth Cadd, do you know who that
23 is?

24 A I don't.

25 Q All right. Ivy Louise Broom, do you know who that is?

1 A No.

2 Q Do you know who these numbers belong to, the [REDACTED] number ending in
3 [REDACTED]?

4 A I don't. I would just give the same answer. I'm happy to consider going
5 back and, if it's helpful, looking at who those numbers might belong to. But I don't know
6 any of those names.

7 Q Did you ever talk to the President on the phone that night?

8 A No.

9 Q Have you ever texted with the President?

10 A No.

11 Q Do you know whether he texts?

12 A I don't.

13 Q At any point that day on January 6th, did you talk to the Vice President or
14 members of his staff?

15 A I did not speak to the Vice President that day. I do not recall speaking to
16 his staff that day.

17 Q Do you remember talking to Marc Short, for example?

18 A That day? No, I don't.

19 Q Did you ever talk to members of his staff about what happened on
20 January 6th?

21 A Ever as in like after that day?

22 Q Correct.

23 A Sure. I would have a couple conversations with just members of his staff I
24 was personal friends with, just making sure they were okay and the like, but nothing
25 really about specifics that day or their movements or anything of that nature. It was

1 more just checking in on personal friends that I cared about.

2 Q Okay. And did they ever say anything about the Vice President's
3 perspective on what happened that day?

4 A They did not.

5 Q All right. Did they offer their own perspective as with respect to January
6 the 6th or the President's response to it?

7 A They did not. Like I said, these were dear friends, and I cared about them,
8 they cared about me, and we were just checking in on each other. We didn't really take
9 at that level.

10 Mr. [REDACTED] Okay. And before we break, I'd just ask if any members or staff
11 have any questions about what we've just been through?

12 Ms. Cheney. Thanks, [REDACTED].

13 Ben, did you say on the 6th when you -- you talked about reporters who were
14 blowing up your phone. Do you remember hearing from any friends on the Hill? You'd
15 obviously been on the Hill.

16 The Witness. I don't. There were a couple of in-person convos,
17 Congresswoman, that I had afterwards, just making sure, like I said, checking in with
18 personal friends on how they were doing. But in the moment I don't recall having any
19 convos with people that were inside the building. And like I said, in my best-faith effort
20 to turn up anything, I didn't find any records of anything that were, you know, relevant to
21 what was going on inside that day.

22 Ms. Cheney. Okay. I wanted to ask you, we have a text that Judd Deere sent to
23 Kayleigh, and I know you haven't seen this text. So this is just to help us establish a
24 timeline.

25 The Witness. Sure.

1 Ms. Cheney. So at 1:44 -- and we'll get this to you -- Judd sent a text to Kayleigh,
2 saying: I'm getting asked if we have any reaction to people storming the Hill office
3 buildings. I'm inclined to let it go right now but flagging.

4 So that's at 1:44. And then we know that the Metropolitan Police declared a riot
5 at 1:49. And it looks like you texted Mr. Meadows at 2:01, I believe. So I just want to
6 understand sort of the timeframe there.

7 First of all, were you -- did you talk to Mr. Deere at all in that time period around
8 1:44?

9 The Witness. Not that I can recall, Congresswoman. Very confident that I did
10 not. I believe the first time I saw Mr. Deere was right before the video came out later
11 that day. Like I said in my -- excuse me -- in my earlier answers, I was in my office in the
12 communications wing most of the time. The information I was getting was from cable
13 news coverage, unconfirmed reports --

14 Ms. Cheney. Yeah.

15 The Witness. -- reporters outside on the Hill and reporters giving me info that
16 way. So to be honest, I wasn't even aware that Kayleigh and Judd were in
17 communication to that level --

18 Ms. Cheney. Okay. I mean, it's a tight timeframe with the declaration of the
19 riot and then just within a few minutes after that you're talking to Mr. Meadows.

20 The Witness. Sure.

21 Ms. Cheney. So --

22 The Witness. Sure.

23 Ms. Cheney. It's understandably tight. I just wanted to make sure we had that
24 sequence correct.

25 The Witness. Sure.

1 Ms. Cheney. Thank you.

2 Mr. [REDACTED]. [REDACTED], it's [REDACTED]. Can I just ask quickly one -- a couple more questions
3 about the video?

4 Mr. [REDACTED]. Of course.

5 BY MR. [REDACTED]:

6 Q So, Mr. Williamson, I appreciate that you weren't present in the Rose Garden
7 when the President shot that video that was ultimately released. But do you know
8 whether or not he used a teleprompter when he recorded that particular video?

9 A I don't, [REDACTED], no.

10 Q What was his standard practice if he were to record short videos, in your
11 experience, to use a teleprompter or to speak extemporaneously?

12 A I mean, sometimes extemporaneous, sometimes teleprompter. It would
13 depend on the day.

14 Q I take it that there is the capacity in the White House pretty spontaneously
15 to set up a teleprompter in -- for a Rose Garden talk. That would have been possible if
16 he wanted to use it for that speech. Is that right?

17 A I believe so. I don't know that for a fact, but I believe so.

18 Q Okay. And I asked you a little bit about this before. But even if he had
19 prepared remarks on the teleprompter, was it standard practice for him to not strictly
20 follow the script but ad lib?

21 A It happens sometimes. Sometimes he followed. Sometimes he
22 would -- he would ad lib.

23 Q Okay. So, again, on this one in particular, the 4 -- whatever -- the 4:17
24 statement that was released, no idea whether that was teleprompter or not,
25 extemporaneous or scripted, any information about that?

1 A No.

2 Mr. [REDACTED]. Okay. Thank you.

3 Mr. [REDACTED]. Any other questions from members or staff?

4 Okay. It sounds like, Mr. Howell, is now a good time to take a quick break?

5 Mr. Howell. Yeah, we just need 5 minutes.

6 Mr. [REDACTED]. Five minutes? Okay. That sounds good. I'll be back on then
7 2:03 to 2:05. I'll watch for you guys when you're ready.

8 Mr. Howell. Okay. Thanks.

9 Mr. [REDACTED]. All right. We're off the record.

10 [Recess.]

11 Mr. [REDACTED]. Let's go back on the record.

12 It is 2:06 p.m., and we are back on the record in the deposition of Mr. Ben
13 Williamson.

14 And, Mr. Williamson, I know Ms. Cheney has a few follow-up questions for
15 some conversation and events on January 6th.

16 Ms. Cheney. Thanks, [REDACTED].

17 Mr. Williamson, I -- in terms of the picture that you painted, which we very much
18 appreciate, about sort of what was going on back and forth between the press office and
19 Mr. Meadows' office and the Oval Office, we also know that Kayleigh McEnany was going
20 back and forth. And I wondered if you recall discussions between -- or if you were
21 involved in discussions between Kayleigh, Chad Gilmartin, Sarah Matthews about the
22 response.

23 Mr. Howell. Congresswoman, are you asking for a discussion involving all of
24 them or separate discussions with each individual?

25 Ms. Cheney. Both. But as that day, in particular as we're -- you know, we're in

1 this time period between, let's say, 1:44 and 4:17, could you just describe for us the
2 discussions that you had? You know, start with -- with Kayleigh McEnany.

3 The Witness. Sure, Congresswoman. I -- I honestly don't remember speaking
4 to Kayleigh much at all that day more than in passing. My office was situated in the far
5 corner of the communications office of the West Wing. The press secretary's office is on
6 the opposite side of the communications wing.

7 So to sort of paint you a broader picture, from my office, if I'm sitting in there, I
8 wouldn't be able to see her going in and out from where I would have been seated. So
9 I -- most of the time, given that I was in my office, I never saw her going back and forth to
10 the Oval, which it sounds like you said that you have information that she was.

11 As far as conversations with her, I don't remember speaking to her directly. I
12 vaguely remember conversations that █ alluded to earlier about Sarah Matthews,
13 deputy press secretary, considering speaking to Kayleigh about perhaps what we should
14 say or what the President should say. But I don't remember specifically what was
15 suggested, and I don't recall ever engaging with Kayleigh directly myself that day.

16 I will say that it's possible that we did in passing and I just don't remember, but I
17 certainly don't think it was anything more than a quick passing comment or two, if
18 anything.

19 Ms. Cheney. Okay. And what about Chad Gilmartin?

20 The Witness. The only time I think I ever even -- the only time I ever remember
21 speaking to Chad Gilmartin that day was right around lunch, right after the President
22 concluded his speech. Beyond that, I don't remember the substance of any discussions
23 with Chad throughout the afternoon.

24 The only thing I do remember is he was one of the colleagues that I would
25 regularly give a ride to home, given we lived in the same area of town. And I believe he

1 was one of the participants or colleagues that rode home with me later that day, but I
2 don't recall ever discussing anything related to the events of that day or his conversations
3 with Kayleigh or the President with him.

4 Ms. Cheney. Okay. Do you recall -- at one point there was an argument in
5 Kayleigh's office with Kayleigh and Sarah Matthews and Chad Gilmartin about the
6 response and what the President needed to say. Do you recall?

7 The Witness. I don't recall even hearing about that, Congresswoman, and I
8 certainly was not a part of that convo.

9 Ms. Cheney. Okay. So as these hours are unfolding then, were you involved at
10 all in discussions about what the message should be, besides your discussion with
11 Mr. Meadows, but just in terms of the communications operation, the press operation?

12 The Witness. My comments were directed to Mr. Meadows on what I felt should
13 be done. I felt that was the best, most effective way to get it up the chain. And, you
14 know, Mr. Meadows is very responsive to staff. And, you know, like I said, immediately
15 when I went in and spoke to him, he got up and went down the hallway. So I felt that if I
16 had something that needed to be shared, I should go to Mr. Meadows, and that's what I
17 did.

18 I don't recall specifics of speaking with press office colleagues, to more directly
19 answer your question. It -- you know, when I spoke to Judd Deere that day about a
20 video, we spoke for a brief conversation. Beyond that, I don't specifically remember.

21 Ms. Cheney. Okay. Thank you.

22 The Witness. Sure.

23 BY MR. [REDACTED]:

24 Q All right. Mr. Williamson, so I'd ask that we bring up exhibit No. 21.
25 Earlier, you mentioned Mr. Miller potentially being involved in drafting one of the

1 speeches that the President gave after January the 6th.

2 A Yes.

3 Q Did you ever see a copy of the speech that the President gave the next day?

4 A I was read aloud a copy of the speech. I don't believe I ever saw a hard,
5 physical copy.

6 Q Read aloud. Where were you when you received this oral briefing?

7 A The chief of staff's office.

8 Q Who else was there?

9 A That I can recall, it was me, Stephen Miller, and the chief of staff.

10 Q And I assume, but I don't want to assume, that it was Stephen Miller doing
11 the reading aloud?

12 A Yes.

13 Q Okay. Was he seeking your input or the chief of staff's input?

14 A He was there just giving us what he had drafted. And, yes, Stephen always
15 welcomes input.

16 Q Do you remember providing input?

17 A I do not.

18 Q Do you remember the chief of staff providing input?

19 A I don't.

20 Q All right. Do you remember what you thought of the speech at the time,
21 the draft as it was?

22 A I don't. I don't. I remember Stephen reading it, and I don't remember
23 what commentary I gave on it, to be honest with you.

24 Q Do you remember what prompted this speech, the need for it?

25 A I don't.

1 Q So I understand that, and I believe this has been reported, but that there
2 was -- some people had concern that the President may be liable for the events on
3 January 6th or otherwise be attributed to it and that he should give a speech discussing
4 the violence in more clear terms than he had the day before. Does any of that ring a
5 bell as to what was going on in the White House at the time?

6 A I don't know anything about that, and I don't recall ever being a part of any
7 of those conversations on that.

8 Q Okay. All right. So on exhibit 21, which is up on the screen here, this
9 looks -- it's titled, "Remarks on National Healing." And compared to the video, the
10 speech -- excuse me -- a video of the speech that the President released on the 7th, that
11 appears to be a draft of the speech.

12 So, first, I'll ask you, do you recognize -- towards the bottom of the screen there
13 there's some additional language. Do you recognize the handwriting?

14 A I don't, no.

15 Q Okay. Does that look like it could be the President's?

16 A I don't know. It doesn't to me, but I don't know.

17 Q Okay. Do you feel like you'd recognize the President's handwriting if you
18 saw it?

19 A No. I recognize his signature just from notes I've seen over the years that
20 he writes people, but I'm not extraordinarily familiar with the President's handwriting, no.

21 Q All right. And is it fair to say that's not your handwriting?

22 A It is not mine. That is correct.

23 Q And is it fair to say it's not Mr. Meadows' handwriting?

24 A It does not look like it to me. That is correct.

25 Q Okay. Now, just to set the scene of kind of reviewing things, does the

1 President often review paper as opposed to electronic files?

2 A I believe so, █. By that point, I was not as involved in Stephen Miller and
3 the President's speech drafting and editing process, but my understanding is that it would
4 be mostly hard copy.

5 Q Okay. And did you participate in any kind of briefing or drafting of this
6 speech with Mr. Miller and the President?

7 A Not with Mr. Miller and the President. The only -- the only involvement I
8 had with this speech was what I told you a few minutes ago where Stephen audibly read
9 the text of the speech to me.

10 Q All right. And you never talked to the President about the speech or his
11 remarks?

12 A I did not, not that I recall, no.

13 Q All right. One of the lines that's crossed out in this draft speech is: I am
14 directing DOJ to ensure all lawbreakers are prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law.
15 We must institute a message not with mercy but with justice. Legal consequences must
16 be swift and firm.

17 Do you know why, based on what was going on in the White House, why a
18 statement like that would be cut from a speech?

19 A Do I know why that was cut or why it would be cut? No.

20 Q Correct.

21 Do you know anything about the President expressing concerns or reservations
22 about instructing DOJ or asking DOJ to prosecute the events of what -- excuse me -- the
23 events of January 6th and those who participated in them?

24 A No.

25 Q Okay. He also -- or somebody in this speech also crossed out: There

1 towards the bottom of the screen, it says: I want to be very clear. You do not
2 represent me. You do not represent our movement.

3 Are you aware of any concern in the White House about linking the people who
4 participated in the events of January 6th at the Capitol with the President or his
5 followers?

6 A No. I wasn't involved in that section of the speech or the crossing out of it.
7 I was not familiar with it until now, what is on the screen.

8 Q Do you know if anybody expressed reservations about the fact that people
9 who participated in the attack on the Capitol were supporters of the President?

10 A No. The primary focus was making sure people were safe, both in the
11 Capitol and people that were peaceful in the areas, and Capitol Police certainly. But, no,
12 I -- beyond that, no.

13 Q All right. And if I could have you turn to exhibit 23, unless there are any
14 other questions about the draft speech or the speech the President gave.

15 Okay. Exhibit No. 23, please. And what this is I'm showing you, it's coming up, I
16 believe it's a White House document. And I'll just read the first couple of lines: What
17 the people who entered the Capitol did on Wednesday was inexcusable and unforgivable,
18 and it was wholly antithetical to the central values that I have tried to promote in the
19 MAGA movement. Make America Great Again is about respecting our history and
20 traditions and our democratic values and not tearing them down.

21 And then it goes towards the bottom of the screen: I want to be unequivocally
22 clear. I utterly reject and condemn the violence, vandalism, and chaos that occurred at
23 the Capitol. I'm horrified and humiliated that anyone could have thought they were
24 carrying out such wholly un-American actions in my name.

25 I believe I read that right. There may have been a few just unintentional errors

1 there.

2 Have you ever seen these draft remarks before?

3 A Not that I can recall, no.

4 Q Okay. Do you remember ever being briefed on these draft remarks like
5 Stephen Miller did for the speech on the 7th?

6 A I do not.

7 Q All right. Do you -- are you aware of any other kind of competing
8 statements that were never issued from the White House that people drafted up after
9 January 6th?

10 A Not that I can recall, no.

11 Q Okay. If you go to the -- or to page 3 of this exhibit, exhibit No. 21, I'll offer
12 to you that this is just another copy of it but this time with some writing on it and crossing
13 out.

14 Mr. ████████. If you could go just down a little bit, ████████, please. Yeah, right
15 there. No. Yeah.

16 BY MR. ████████:

17 Q Do you see the handwriting on there?

18 A I do.

19 Q Okay. Do you recognize that?

20 A No.

21 Q All right. And I'll just ask you the same question. Does it look to you like
22 it could be from the President?

23 A I don't know, but it doesn't look like anything that I've seen and read before,
24 no. But I don't know that it is.

25 Q Does it look like Mr. Meadows' at all?

1 A I don't know, no.

2 Q Were you ever asked to draft any remarks, whether it be for a speech, a
3 written message, or a tweet, following January 6th?

4 A Following January 6th, I don't recall ever being asked to do that or ever
5 drafting anything, no.

6 Q Okay. Do you know who had the primary responsibility for drafting
7 messages or speeches about January 6th, specifically in the White House?

8 A My understanding is Stephen Miller did most of it, but I don't know who
9 drafted specific speeches or if, you know, perhaps if there may have been someone else
10 that did it at a certain time. I don't know.

11 Q And just to put a finer point -- and this will be my last point -- a finer point on
12 the handwriting there. Does that look like it could be Stephen Miller's?

13 A I don't know.

14 Q Don't know.

15 All right. So I want to go back. I know I said we wouldn't jump around too
16 much, but back to exhibit No. 7, and we'll pull that up. And this is that text exchange
17 with Mr. Meadows on January 6th, but I want to go one day before that. And it's a text
18 dated January the 5th at 3:57 p.m. There's nothing from earlier that day with
19 Mr. Meadows, and there's nothing from later that day on January 5th. He says "They
20 cut it." And, again, this is pre-rally, pre-January 6th. Do you know what Mr. Meadows
21 is talking about when he said "they cut it"?

22 A That's -- █, to be clear, that's me saying they cut it and Mr. Meadows
23 saying "good work."

24 And to answer your question, no, I do not remember what that's referring to.

25 Q And thank you for correcting me here. You're exactly right. That was you

1 saying "they cut it" and him saying "good work."

2 So to the bottom of the page on January the 8th, so 2 days after the events of
3 January 6th, you say to Mr. Meadows: Took care of it. They took it out.

4 And he says: Thanks.

5 Do you remember what that was about?

6 A I do not.

7 Q Do you -- could it have been about a speech or remarks?

8 A █, it was common for when the press office or, you know, if we were
9 putting out a statement on any given policy issue or whatever, it was common for, like I
10 said, for that to be submitted to relevant staff through staff secretary. And if I had a
11 concern or if Mr. Meadows had a concern, I was the person responsible for
12 communicating amongst communications and press aides. So that was not uncommon
13 at all.

14 I don't remember what specifically this would have been about. I know at the
15 time we were doing a number of things on coronavirus. We were doing a number of
16 things related to the stimulus that was happening. So it could have been any number of
17 things. I don't remember what it was about.

18 Mr. █. All right. I'll have you turn, █, or pull up exhibit No. 39.

19 BY MR. █:

20 Q And this is an exchange, while █ pulling it up, with somebody named
21 Chad, the initials C.G. I imagine that's Chad Gilmartin. Is that right?

22 A That is Chad Gilmartin, correct.

23 Q Okay. And on January the 7th at 5:18 p.m., you say to Chad: Hey, was
24 this was run by people? Chief, Jared, and others are flipping a bit.

25 Chad responds: Kayleigh spoke to the President who approved the briefing.

1 You say: Okay.

2 Was this about the video that the President released on January 7th, talking about
3 the events of January 6th?

4 A No. It was referring to -- if I remember correctly, it was referring to the
5 briefing that Kayleigh gave the day following, which I'm sure that you spoke to her about.
6 But that's what it was referring to.

7 Q Okay. And what -- why were people flipping, as you say?

8 A Oh, it -- just whenever sometimes, you know, obviously chief and Jared were
9 two top-level executive aides in the White House. And so whenever things happen,
10 there's a lot of coordination that goes involved. And I'm not sure that they were briefed
11 on the plans in advance. And like I said, when there's coordination issues, I'm usually
12 the person responsible in the chief's office that goes and tracks those down.

13 So that's what I was referring to there, was just making sure that some sort of
14 approval process had been followed, and that's what Chad was responding to when he
15 said the President had approved it.

16 Q Okay. So just so I understand, was there a particular message that people
17 were flipping out about?

18 A No. No. It was the approval process of whether or not the briefing had
19 been run by people of a concept of doing the briefing.

20 Q So the mere fact of the briefing occurring as opposed to what was said at the
21 briefing, is that what you're saying?

22 A Yes. That what is I'm referring to in the text.

23 Q Okay. Was there anything in the briefing substantively that upset people in
24 the White House?

25 A No, not that I ever heard of.

1 Mr. [REDACTED]. All right. All right. So I do want to have you go, if you could, pull
2 up exhibit No. 24, [REDACTED].

3 BY MR. [REDACTED]:

4 Q And this, Mr. Williamson, is a message that we talked about eons ago now it
5 feels like but at the very beginning with Jason Miller and Kayleigh McEnany about flying
6 the flag at half-staff after January the 6th. It's from Jason Miller.

7 It says: Kayleigh, Ben -- POTUS has agreed to take the White House flag down to
8 half-staff in honor of the officer, and potentially officers as a second death is being
9 reported, who died in the Capitol attack. He was adamant that we not do a press
10 release or a big PR push.

11 And I'll just stop right there. In that, do you understand he, the person who was
12 adamant, was the President?

13 A That was my understanding, yeah.

14 Q Okay. And I'll continue reading: It'll get noticed. It'll get reported on.
15 We want to make clear nobody is a stronger supporter of law enforcement than President
16 Trump, but we don't want to blast it out. I spoke with Chief Meadows who asked me to
17 relay this to you both, and he is taking care of calling Tony Ornato. Thanks gang.

18 So how did this issue of taking down the flags to half-staff come about?

19 A I don't know. The first I remember hearing about it was from this text from
20 Jason to me and Kayleigh McEnany.

21 Q Did you do anything to follow up on this issue?

22 A I don't remember doing anything to follow up, no. My understanding was
23 that it had already been approved, and the reason for the text was to make myself and
24 Kayleigh aware of what was happening.

25 Q All right. Now, you say in response: Perfect. Agree wholeheartedly.

1 Thanks.

2 So what did you agree with in that message?

3 A What Jason said, lowering the flag, that POTUS is a strong supporter of law
4 enforcement, et cetera.

5 Q What's the problem? What's the concern about doing a press release or a
6 PR push with respect to lowering flags to honor fallen Capitol Police officers?

7 A I don't -- I didn't have any commentary on that. That was an issue that it
8 sounded like the President had decided. At the time I remember thinking that, you
9 know, he probably didn't want to make it look like he was trying to draw attention to
10 himself, away from the police. But I don't know. I was not involved in that
11 decision-making process. My comments were just about honoring Capitol police that
12 had fallen.

13 Q And did you end up speaking with Chief Meadows about it?

14 A I don't remember ever having a convo with him about this, no.

15 Q Did you ever speak to Ms. McEnany about it?

16 A I don't remember. I think we -- I believe I turned over a document, a text
17 exchange, a very brief one that I had with Kayleigh about -- about it. But I don't recall
18 whether it was about specifically this or not, no.

19 Q So my other question is: Why is this coming from Jason Miller? I mean,
20 he's a former campaign person at that point who's not in the White House.

21 A I don't know, ████. Jason and the President are close. And my
22 understanding was that the President had spoken to him and that when the President
23 told a close aide something that he wanted done, the close aide texted two of his current
24 aides.

25 Q Very good. If we can go to exhibit No. 40, please. So what this is, this is a

1 text with -- well, it's Kayleigh with initials K.M. I assume that's Kayleigh McEnany?

2 A Correct.

3 Q Okay. And this is on Sunday, January the 10th. So now we're about 4
4 days removed from January 6th. And you tell her: In thinking about it, I think we
5 absolutely should name both.

6 She says: Totally agree. I already told staff sec to include both.

7 You say: Good call. 100 percent back you up if you get any pushback.

8 She says: They should be circulating a draft with both names soon, along with
9 acknowledgment of all Capitol police and law enforcement. Okay. Thank you for your
10 help.

11 Is this about a statement or proclamation or something to that effect about the
12 Capitol Police officers involved in January the 6th?

13 A I think so. I don't remember exactly, but I think so.

14 Q Can you explain what was happening with respect to that issue at the White
15 House in maybe a little bit more color to this conversation with Ms. McEnany?

16 A No, I don't. I don't recall much. All I know -- so Kayleigh and I had a
17 phone convo that was very brief before this where she was updating me. And the text
18 here shows back that I had just texted back, saying I think it's a good idea to name both,
19 basically agreeing with her. And then she just mentioned what she had done. I don't
20 remember anything beyond that about processes within the White House.

21 Q And when you say name both, does that mean Capitol Police officers who
22 had died?

23 A I believe so, yes.

24 Q And one of your comments that I'd like to ask you about is this in the middle
25 of the page here it says: Good call. 100 percent back you up if you get any pushback.

1 Why would there be pushback to that and from whom?

2 A I believe what I was referring to in that text was I think that one name had
3 been approved -- or a statement including one name had been approved and a statement
4 including the second name maybe hadn't been drafted yet or maybe the news had come
5 out at a different time.

6 And so I think I was assuring Kayleigh that if she, you know, got pushback for
7 including an updated statement that hadn't gone through the approval process chain,
8 that I would have her back and say that I had approved it. I think is all that I'm referring
9 to there is just an approval process chain.

10 Q Okay. Was there any pushback?

11 A Not that I can recall, no.

12 Q You said you had a call with Ms. McEnany before this. Can you describe
13 just a little bit more particularly that call?

14 A I don't remember much of what was discussed, [REDACTED] only what's in this text.
15 I think she just said that she had drafted out a statement honoring the Capitol Police
16 officer, officers that had fallen. I said I totally agreed, and then the follow-up text
17 exchange occurred. I think it was a pretty brief convo.

18 Mr. [REDACTED]. All right. I'll pause here, see if anybody has any questions.

19 No. All right. Then we can proceed. Go to exhibit 25, please.

20 BY MR. [REDACTED]:

21 Q So I'll give a little context for this. It's been widely reported that the former
22 President thought that the Vice President had power to do more than just open
23 envelopes and count votes during the joint session, and ultimately Vice President Pence
24 issued a letter the morning of January 6th. And in the middle of the first page, there's a
25 paragraph that says -- it's a paragraph starting "given" pretty much in the middle and it

1 ends and says: Some believe that as Vice President I should be able to accept or reject
2 electoral votes unilaterally. Others believe that electoral votes should never be
3 challenged in a joint session of Congress.

4 When was the first time you heard about this idea about the Vice President's
5 authority during the joint session of Congress?

6 A When was the first time I heard about the Vice President's authority? I
7 don't recall, [REDACTED]. I've never -- there were plenty of reports floating around in the media
8 of people saying things. I don't ever remember having any conversations about it within
9 the White House among staff. Obviously, I've been aware of the VP's role in that
10 process just out of common knowledge for a while. But I don't remember specifically
11 when, ever hearing about anything related to the VP presiding while I was working in the
12 White House.

13 Q Okay. So one of the things you just said is that you aren't a participant in
14 any conversations. Do you remember that this was a topic being considered by anybody
15 in the White House in the weeks or months leading up to January the 6th?

16 A It may -- I remember hearing about it in passing, but I -- what I was saying
17 was that I was not a participant in those top-level convos as far as the VP's role or
18 strategy therein.

19 Q What do you remember hearing about in passing? Because we're
20 interested in that as well, not just the conversations that you participated in.

21 A Right. Well, most of what I heard would have been from reporters telling
22 me what they were hearing, because I wasn't in any of the meetings. And I felt it best
23 practice to not talk about meetings that I wasn't in. So most of it would have been bits
24 that reporters were asking me about. I'm pretty sure those are probably in the texts
25 that I turned over. But beyond that, very limited things that I would have heard or

1 participations that I would have been involved in as far as the VP's role specifically.

2 Q Very good. Do you know who Jenna Ellis is?

3 A I do.

4 Q Did you ever talk to Jenna Ellis?

5 A Have I ever talked to her or do I talk to her? What do you mean?

6 Q Yeah. Have you -- did you talk to her while -- and I'll limit the scope here of
7 the time. I think that's fair. In December and January, did you ever talk to Jenna Ellis?

8 A I don't believe I did, no. I think the last time I talked to her was before the
9 election, if I can remember correctly. And then I've spoken to her recently just on a
10 social level, but I don't recall ever communicating with her during the time in question.

11 Q Okay. So I'm going to -- I'm going to talk to you about this idea of alternate
12 electors. But just so we're on the same page, define that term, so to speak. And if you
13 have a different understanding, you know, please let me know.

14 But as you're probably aware, there -- in seven States approximately a group of
15 electors for the electoral college met and voted for then-President Trump and then-Vice
16 President Pence, despite the fact that they lost in those elector States. And so I'm going
17 to refer to those people who met and cast those votes as alternate electors.

18 Are you following what I'm saying, just so we're on the same page?

19 A Yes, I'm familiar with that. Go ahead.

20 Mr. Howell. Yeah. I was just going to say thank you for sharing a term at the
21 outset like that.

22 The Witness. Yeah.

23 Mr. Howell. We're good.

24 The Witness. Appreciate it. I'm familiar with how the elector process. And I
25 appreciate the definition, yeah.

1 BY MR. [REDACTED] ::

2 Q Okay. Very good. So do you remember ever talking to Ms. Ellis about
3 alternate electors meeting and casting votes for the President?

4 A I don't recall ever talking to her about that, no.

5 Q Okay. Do you remember ever talking to anybody about alternate electors
6 who would meet and cast votes for the President and Vice President?

7 A I don't recall. Other than maybe reporters checking in about it, I don't
8 recall ever speaking to anyone about it.

9 Q Did you ever follow up on the questions that the reporters were presenting
10 to you?

11 A No. The only time I would have ever followed up on something like that
12 would have been in the documents that I sent over. There were a couple tweets about
13 various meetings that were happening or, you know, signatures on petitions that I think I
14 had a tweet with Mr. Meadows about. But that's pretty much the extent of what I
15 would have been discussing or involved in. No specifics as far as State-level strategy or
16 decisions by electors or anything of that nature. It was more just, you know, tweeting
17 after the fact or something like that.

18 Q Did you know that these groups of alternate electors were going to be
19 meeting and casting votes for the President and Vice President before they happened on
20 December 14?

21 A I don't believe I heard about that in advance. I think I heard about it from
22 the media.

23 Q All right. On December 14th, which is the day the electoral college met,
24 Stephen Miller went on FOX News and said -- I believe I have this correct, but he said,
25 quote: As we speak, an alternate slate of electors in the contested States is going to

1 vote; and that they would, quote: Right the wrong of this fraudulent election result and
2 certify Donald Trump as the winner of the election.

3 Did you ever talk to Mr. Miller about alternate electors or his appearance on FOX
4 News on December 14th?

5 A Not that I can recall.

6 Q Was it common just, you know, atmospherically, I guess, was it common for
7 Stephen Miller or somebody else to go on to TV without necessarily clearing it through
8 the communications department or press shop, that you're aware of?

9 A No. Generally, the press or comm shop would be aware of people that
10 were going on TV. You know, by that point, I don't recall the process of whether or not
11 I'd heard he was going on in advance and certainly don't recall speaking to him about it
12 before or after. But, no, generally, White House press and comms would be aware of
13 principals that would be going on TV, sure.

14 Q And at that point, December 14th, were you acting as the communications
15 director?

16 A I don't remember specifically. I would have to go back and look. I don't
17 remember. Don't remember.

18 Q Okay. Fair enough. When you say it would be typically cleared through
19 press and comms, does that mean it would go through both? And to be clear, would
20 appearances by principals like him go through both the press shop and the comm shop to
21 the extent that there's a distinction?

22 A No. So, generally, you know, if a network wants a principal in the White
23 House on, we are generally good with that. And the only approval process is sort of a
24 process of, you know, if you have a concern, you can raise it. But if you don't, then they
25 can go on TV.

1 And so the booking department would handle what networks wanted what
2 guests. If the guest was good to go on, they would go on. And if the comms
3 department at the senior level had any strategic concerns, they could raise those.

4 I don't -- like I said, I don't remember hearing about Stephen's TV appearance in
5 advance or discussing it in advance.

6 Q Now, we understand that Mr. Meadows was involved in at least a few
7 discussions about the issue of alternate electors with Jason Miller and others. Did you
8 ever talk to Mr. Meadows about alternate electors?

9 A No, not that I can recall.

10 Q Did you ever speak to Boris Epshteyn about alternate electors?

11 A No, not that I can recall.

12 Q And if -- if you're not aware, I'll just offer this up to you. He was on TV, in
13 fact, just this weekend, saying that the campaign was aware of this alternate electors
14 meeting and sending up votes, electoral votes, for the Vice President to consider on
15 January 6th.

16 So do you know if anybody at the campaign, that you're aware of personally -- let
17 me rephrase this question.

18 Did you talk --

19 A Who said that on TV? Boris said that on TV this weekend?

20 Q Boris Epshteyn.

21 A Okay. Okay. Just making sure. Sorry. Go ahead. Sorry to interrupt.

22 Q Yeah, sure. Did you talk to anybody at the campaign or people who
23 formerly worked at the campaign about the idea of alternate electors?

24 A I don't believe so, not that I can recall, no.

25 Q All right. So on January 1st -- if you can pull up exhibit 28, please -- it's

1 been reported that Johnny McEntee sent a text around potentially to Marc Short and
2 maybe others, a brief memo about the Vice President's authority and what he can and
3 can't do as the presiding officer of the joint session of Congress. Do you remember ever
4 receiving any texts from Johnny McEntee on this issue?

5 A I do not remember receiving texts from Johnny on this issue, no.

6 Q Do you know who Johnny McEntee is?

7 A Yes.

8 Q Who is he?

9 A Johnny was a personal aide to the President. He's a friend of mine. He
10 ran the personnel department at the White House.

11 Q And did you ever hear that he was sending around this text or even just
12 talking about the Vice President's authority on January the 6th?

13 A No. The first time I heard about it, that I can remember, was through
14 media reports that were actually pretty recent.

15 Q Did you ever talk to him about it?

16 A I don't remember ever meeting with Johnny about that issue, no.

17 Q Okay. And I'm sorry, I should have been more clear. After the media
18 reports -- you said he's a friend of yours -- have you talked to him since about this issue of
19 the Vice President or alternate electors?

20 A No.

21 Q Do you remember ever hearing from other people that Mr. McEntee was
22 sending around a text message or a memo about the Vice President's authority?

23 A I do not.

24 Q Ask you to turn to exhibit No. 29, please. So this is a document, as it's
25 coming up, that's on the White House I believe it was card stock or note cards. And the

1 first page of exhibit 29 says: This is probably our only realistic option because it would
2 give Pence an out.

3 And then, hyphen, Johnny.

4 Do you recognize that handwriting?

5 A I don't.

6 Q Okay. Does it look like it could be Johnny McEntee's, to your knowledge?

7 A Given that he signed it, correct, it could be.

8 Q All right. Are you aware of any other Johnnys in the White House who'd be
9 writing a note like this?

10 A I'm not.

11 Mr. ██████ All right. You can go to page 2 of that.

12 And actually, you know what? I'm sorry. Before we get to page 2, can you go
13 back to page 1, please? Zoom into the middle there.

14 BY MR. ██████:

15 Q It looks like this is torn. I know there have been reports from quite a while
16 back about the President having a habit of tearing papers or notes that he looks at when
17 he's done with them. Are you familiar with the President's habit?

18 A No. And I never saw him do that.

19 Q All right. If you can go down. This page 2 of exhibit No. 29. It says:
20 Pence can let the States decide.

21 And then there's a bullet -- a number of bullet points.

22 It says: The VP doesn't need to declare Trump the winner or reject all the ballots
23 of the disputed States.

24 That's the first bullet point.

25 Then the third bullet point is: On January 6th, the VP could only accept half the

1 electoral votes from the disputed States instead of all.

2 And it goes on to talk about the Vice President's authority.

3 Have you ever seen this memo or piece of paper before?

4 A Not that I remember, no.

5 Q Do you remember hearing about any piece of paper like this with bulleted
6 options for the Vice President on January 6th?

7 A I've heard about a number of documents circulating in the press, but this
8 specific one does not come to mind.

9 Q Okay. And you didn't have any real-time knowledge other than from what
10 you saw in the press is what you're saying?

11 A You're correct.

12 Q Okay. Then if you can go to exhibit 58, please. And this is just newly
13 added today for those who are following along.

14 This is a document from the White House on that chief of staff I believe card stock
15 or note cards that you explained earlier.

16 The top of it says -- it's underlined: Brief POTUS.

17 And then it says: Marc Short on VP role for Jan. 6, 2021.

18 Do you recognize the handwriting on this?

19 A No.

20 Q Don't know whose it is?

21 A I do not.

22 Q All right. Do you remember anybody having to brief Marc Short on the Vice
23 President's role for January 6th?

24 A I don't, no.

25 Q Do you remember hearing about the Vice President meeting with the Senate

1 Parliamentarian about his role on January 6th?

2 A I remember hearing things in the press, but I do not remember hearing
3 about it from anyone in the White House, no.

4 Q So do you -- you don't know who wrote this note as you look at it today?

5 A I do not.

6 Mr. All right. You can take that down, [REDACTED]. Thank you.

7 BY MR.

8 Q So it's been reported that on January the 4th, there was an Oval Office
9 meeting with Dr. John Eastman, Greg Jacob, Marc Short, and the Vice President. Are
10 you aware of that meeting?

11 A I became aware after the fact from press reports in real time. I was not
12 aware of the meeting, that I can recall, no.

13 Q Okay. So you learned about it from the press. Did you ever do anything
14 to follow up and find out what happened at that meeting?

15 A Not that I can recall. Now, we're talking about the January 4th meeting?

16 Q January 4th meeting.

17 A No, not that I can recall. I believe at the time I was actually on Air Force
18 One when that meeting was occurring. I wasn't even in the building that I remember
19 hearing about it from the timeline.

20 Q And that meeting, I should be clear, it did include the President. So would
21 you have been on Air Force One without the President?

22 A Yes. It's very common for aides traveling with the President to go in
23 advance before he leaves, as long as you're not traveling on Marine One, the helicopter
24 that leaves the south lawn.

25 Q Where were you going on the 4th?

1 A I believe that was the day of his Georgia speech.

2 Q And you remember leaving earlier that day or sometime that day to go to
3 Georgia?

4 A I don't remember exactly when, but it was sometime that day.

5 Q Okay. And you asked of me a question which was: Was that the January
6 4th Oval Office meeting?

7 Is there something else you're thinking about that you do recall?

8 A No. I was just making sure -- when I was answering your question about
9 things I became aware of in the press, I was making sure those things matched up.

10 Q So on January 4, there's also been reported that there was a meeting with
11 Katrina Pierson, the President, Bobby Peede, and Max Miller in the dining room off the
12 Oval. Do you know anything about that meeting?

13 A I don't remember ever hearing about this meeting, no.

14 Q On January the 5th, if we can pull up exhibit No. 32, the President tweeted at
15 11:06 a.m. I believe that's the time. It's not reflected there, but the President
16 tweeted: VP -- excuse me -- the Vice President has the power to reject fraudulently
17 chosen electors.

18 Do you remember anything about this tweet?

19 A No.

20 Q Did you have any role in this tweet? Editing? Creating? Sending out?

21 A No.

22 Q Do you know who did?

23 A I don't.

24 Q All right. Do you remember any questions about this tweet after the fact
25 when it came out?

1 A No, I don't.

2 Q So I understand there's a meeting that day on January the 5th, and I guess I'll
3 ask you first: When did you get back from Georgia?

4 A That night.

5 Q So the night of the 4th?

6 A Correct.

7 Q All right. Going back to the 5th, I understand there's a meeting that day in
8 the Oval between the President and the Vice President. And it may have been a lunch, if
9 I'm not mistaken. Do you know anything about that meeting in the Oval Office?

10 A No, nothing beyond what I read in the press after the fact.

11 Q Okay. So you never asked any questions that you followed up on to learn
12 about it?

13 A Not that I can recall. It's possible that reporters asked whether they were
14 meeting or what they talked about. I may have followed up about whether they had
15 met, but I generally wouldn't comment on the substance of those meetings anyway as
16 common practice. So the best answer is no.

17 Q Now, you wouldn't -- just to be clear, you said you wouldn't comment on the
18 substance. Did you -- would you learn about the substance and just not comment on it
19 or never learn about it at all?

20 A That would depend on the situation. Sometimes I would know about it and
21 wouldn't comment. Sometimes I would not even ask because I knew I wouldn't be able
22 to comment anyway.

23 Q So on a meeting like this, you don't remember ever receiving a readout of
24 the substance of this meeting that occurred on the 5th between the President and the
25 Vice President?

1 A Correct. I do not remember asking.

2 Q It's been reported that the President was upset with the Vice President after
3 this because the Vice President disagreed with the President about his role in counting
4 electoral votes. Do you remember any discussions or learning about the President being
5 dissatisfied with the Vice President because of his role on January 6th?

6 A No, nothing beyond things I was hearing from reporters. And it was pretty
7 limited to that. And beyond that, I did not --

8 Q I just lost you for a moment, Mr. Williamson. I don't know if the --

9 A That's fine. Can you hear me now?

10 Q I got you now, yes.

11 A So what I just said was that -- you asked if I was aware of the President being
12 dissatisfied with the Vice President. My answer was I did not hear anything about that
13 meeting, other than what I was hearing from reporters, tips that they were chasing down.
14 And I did not ask or inquire further, that I can recall.

15 Q Okay. So you never talked about these meetings between the President or
16 Vice President, whether the 4th or a the 5th or later, with Mr. Meadows, for example?

17 A Not that I can recall, no. No, not that I can recall.

18 Q Okay. I also understand that, at least it's been reported, that Marc Short
19 was prohibited from entering the Oval or some part of the White House because of an
20 apparent rift -- or disagreement, I should say -- I don't want to overcharacterize
21 it -- between the President and the Vice President and perhaps Marc Short and his role in
22 that.

23 Do you know anything about that?

24 A I do not.

25 Mr. [REDACTED] If you could pull up exhibit No. 33, please.

1 BY MR. [REDACTED]:

2 Q So what I'm going to show you, this is a campaign message. It's a
3 statement from President Donald J. Trump. And this was issued on January the 5th.
4 And it says, in part: Our Vice President has several options under the U.S. Constitution.
5 He can decertify the results or send them back to the States for change and certification.
6 He can also decertify the illegal and corrupt results and send them to the House of
7 Representatives for the one vote for one State tabulation.

8 Do you remember hearing about this message either before it was released or
9 after?

10 A I don't remember either before or after, no.

1

2 [2:52 p.m.]

3 BY MR. [REDACTED] :

4 Q Okay. So I understand that some people in the White House -- or, excuse
5 me -- Marc Short may have followed up with Jason Miller or others who had been
6 associated with the campaign about that. Do you know anything about that, that
7 followup?

8 A I do not.

9 Q All right.

10 And then I'll have you go to exhibit No. 15, please. This is, again, that exchange
11 you had with Tamara Keith from NPR, but now we're going to look at a different portion
12 of it.

13 And this may be a point that I ask you to follow up on, Mr. Williamson and
14 Mr. Howell. There's a message at the very top that you'll see when it comes through.

15 At the very top there, something is cut off, and then it says, "conversation re:
16 Pence" -- excuse me, "Pence's ceremonial role tomorrow." So I assume that's a message
17 from the 5th, just based on what's described there.

18 But are you willing to provide us the full message that Ms. Keith sent to you?

19 A Yes, I'd be happy to do that. If that was an error, I apologize. I'm happy
20 to go back, and we can follow up later with that.

21 Q Okay.

22 A It looks like, as you can see there, I didn't respond, so I don't remember what
23 exactly it was about.

24 Q Okay. Fair enough. So you're right; it does look like you didn't respond.
25 Do you remember ever following up, though? I mean, did this prompt you to look into

1 this issue about the ceremonial role of the President -- or, excuse me, the Vice President
2 on January the 6th?

3 A I don't believe so, no.

4 Q Okay.

5 If you'd go to exhibit 34, please. This is a text message exchange with Alex,
6 initials "A.L." Do you know who that is?

7 A I do.

8 Q Who is that?

9 A It's Alex Leary with The Wall Street Journal, I believe, reporter.

10 Q Okay. And had I just read the message I'm about to read to you, I would've
11 seen that as well, but I appreciate you confirming it.

12 On January 5th at 7:51 p.m., you got another message about this. It says, "Hi,
13 Ben, it's Alex Leary with WSJ. That was a fun trip last night....on total background, can
14 you confirm this?" And then he sends you an article from The New York Times with the
15 headline, or byline, "Pence Said to Have Told Trump He Lacks Power to Change Election
16 Result."

17 Do you remember getting this message?

18 A I don't. I remember it from when I was gathering and producing
19 documents, but, no, I don't remember in the moment getting this message, no.

20 Q And do you know if you responded to that message?

21 A I don't believe I did. If it's not in the text, I probably scrolled down and saw
22 that I didn't respond. I'm happy to put that in the followup bin with you all just to
23 check, but I don't believe I responded.

24 Q Okay. I appreciate that. And we'll put that on the list as well.

25 Do you remember if this article ever prompted you to look into either these

1 meetings or conversations about the Vice President's role?

2 A No. That was looped in with the others. I didn't comment, really didn't
3 follow up. I left the election stuff to the election experts at that --

4 Q And who were those?

5 A What's that?

6 Q Who were the election experts?

7 A Oh, the President's campaign team, the legal team, or more of the senior
8 staffers in the White House that were involved in this sort of thing.

9 Q All right.

10 And, to that end, I mean, did you ever speak to Mayor Giuliani about these issues,
11 the Vice President's role on January 6th or alternate electors?

12 A No, I don't believe I ever spoke to the mayor during any of this point in time.

13 Q All right.

14 All right. Exhibit No. 35 -- and this is going to be very similar to what we just
15 looked at and my followup question -- is a text message with Peter with initials "P.A."
16 Do you know who that is?

17 A Yes. It's Peter Alexander with NBC News.

18 Q All right.

19 So, on January the 5th, he texts you and says, "Happy New Year, Ben! With a
20 thumbs up, would you confirm Pence told President Trump today that he did not believe
21 he had the power to block congressional certification of Biden's victory, a person briefed
22 on the conversation said??"

23 So you've now received at least three, maybe more, messages on this issue, but
24 you never followed up on it or tried to figure out what all these questions were or why
25 they were coming to you?

1 A No. Again, I did not comment on the matter with Alex Leary, with Peter
2 Alexander, or really with anyone that I can recall.

3 Q All right. Do you know who the source for Peter might be who's feeding
4 him, you know, this information?

5 A No. And I don't ask reporters about their sources. I do sometimes, and
6 they just laugh, as they should.

7 Q All right. I'll do one more and then see if anybody has questions.

8 If you can go to exhibit 36, please. So this is a tweet by the President now very
9 early morning on January 6th. I think it actually says 6:00 a.m. on the image of the
10 tweet that we have, but I understand that this occurred around 1:00 a.m., to the extent
11 that informs any of your answers.

12 But it says, "If Vice President @Mike_Pence comes through for us, we will win the
13 Presidency. Many States want to decertify the mistake they made in certifying incorrect
14 & even fraudulent numbers in a process NOT approved by their State Legislatures (which
15 it must be). Mike can send it back!"

16 Do you remember when this tweet -- maybe not at 1 o'clock in the morning, but
17 do you remember this tweet coming out?

18 A I don't.

19 Q Do you remember any questions you received about this tweet?

20 A I don't recall any. I think there were a number of other tweets maybe in
21 between then and when I got to work or when I was getting ready for work, but I don't
22 remember being asked about that one specifically.

23 Q Okay.

24 Now, I just want to widen the aperture a little bit on this, on this topic that we've
25 been discussing. What's your understanding of what the White House or President in

1 particular expected to happen in the joint session of Congress on January 6th?

2 A I was not involved in any of those strategic convos or planning, [REDACTED], so I
3 wouldn't be able to speak to what the White House expected to happen. I was focused
4 on doing my job, which was more related to communications on matters like COVID and
5 the stimulus package and things of the sort.

6 Q That's fair.

7 And the reason I'm asking is, I think you could probably appreciate, is that you're
8 getting a lot of questions about this, the President is very public about this, so it seems
9 like it might be an area for followup within the White House, either with Mr. Meadows or
10 others, about what's going to happen on January 6th, given all the publicity.

11 But -- and it's totally fine. I mean, if the answer is, no, you didn't have any
12 involvement, that's the answer. But I'm just trying to rattle the tree and see if it brings
13 up any memories.

14 A No. I appreciate the question, but, like you said, the answer is no. I
15 wasn't involved in any of those meetings. I very rarely discussed the topic at all beyond
16 what I've turned into you all in regards to tweets and the surface-level conversation. So
17 I wouldn't be able to speak to expectations or the mechanical nuts and bolts of what
18 went into those. So that -- that's my answer.

19 Q Very good.

20 Mr. [REDACTED]. Does anybody have any questions about what we've just been
21 through?

22 All right. Sounds like we don't. I'll press ahead then. And let me know,
23 Mr. Williamson or Mr. Howell, if you guys need another break at any point.

24 The Witness. I'm fine. Thank you.

25 BY MR. [REDACTED]:

1 Q So now I want to go back even further. I know we've been kind of jumping
2 around to focus on topics, but I do want to go back in the post-election period.

3 Exhibit 41 is a series of exchange -- a series of text messages, excuse me, that you
4 exchanged with Ms. Matthews.

5 Give me just one moment. I'm sorry.

6 I have the numbering wrong in my notes. I apologize for the delay. Well, you
7 know what? I'll just tell you generally what it says and see if you remember it. But it
8 may have been with Ms. Hutchinson, in fact.

9 But it says -- you sent a message in early November where you said, "We're still
10 going to be work spouses when POTUS leaves, right?" Something to that effect. Do
11 you remember the message that I'm talking about? I'm sorry I don't have it pulled up
12 here.

13 A That was to Cassidy Hutchinson.

14 Q Okay. And I fully realize that you're joking around and that people often
15 joke around at work, but I want to get to the sentiment. I mean, the sentiment, in your
16 mind, at that period, it sounds like, is that you recognized that the President lost the
17 election and that there would be life after the Trump administration. Is that fair?

18 Mr. Howell. Well, can you ask the question in a more direct way? I think you're
19 kind of inserting a speculation as to what he thinks there. Just ask him a direct question;
20 he'll be happy to answer it.

21 Mr. [REDACTED]. Of course.

22 BY MR. [REDACTED]:

23 Q In light of that message, I mean, did -- was -- is it fair to say that you thought
24 the President lost the election?

25 A [REDACTED], I'm going to be honest with you. I would not read any broader

1 implications into a text between myself and Ms. Hutchinson about being work spouses.
2 We frequently joke with each other. We're dear, dear friends. She's one of my best
3 friends to this day. I would not read any implications into that.

4 I'll make a good-faith effort. We were talking about, if the President leaves, if it
5 turns out we were leaving the White House, would we still be work spouses. That's
6 what the text was talking about.

7 Q Fair. And I'm not so focused on the "work spouses" part of it as the other
8 part, "when the President leaves." And I appreciate that, for making a good-faith effort
9 to answer that.

10 If you go to exhibit 37 -- and this one is right -- it's a series of text messages with
11 Alyssa Farah.

12 Thirty-seven, please?

13 And while he's bringing that up, I'll just note that one of the messages says, "Mrm
14 agreed." Is that how you referred to Mr. Meadows?

15 A Yes.

16 Q Okay. And, in fairness, that was Alyssa, but you understood "Mrm" to be
17 Mr. Meadows?

18 A Yes.

19 Q So, on page 2, you say, "I'm really worried about Kayleigh being the front
20 facing spox for the campaign blowout."

21 What prompted you to send that message?

22 A I don't remember. I think there were a number of times where she was
23 briefing and obviously most of the questions were directed toward the campaign. And I
24 think that's what prompted it, if I remember right.

25 Q And Ms. Farah says in response, effectively, yes. She asks you if you're in

1 the next day. And then she says, "I can't say this clearly enough: we lost. We have
2 so much to be proud of, but we [F'ing] lost. I'm really worried about this a) dragging
3 staff into a failed legal challenge b) giving people a false sense of hope."

4 You say, skipping one of the messages, "Couldn't agree more... I mean, it's fine to
5 fight, and I get it -- our supporters want us to do it. But there's a middle ground, classy
6 way this could be executed. And what we're doing is... not that."

7 And then you say, "And I worry for the same reasons you do. Particularly for our
8 team. Some of them seem to think this could actually work."

9 So can you just explain this exchange that you had with Ms. Farah and give us a
10 little bit of context for it?

11 A Yes, of course.

12 The first part is just about wanting to make sure we pursued every good-faith legal
13 challenge that we could, which, obviously, we wanted to do.

14 My frustrations in this text about the way it was being executed was more on a
15 planning front or a legal strategy front. You know, I'm sure you're familiar that, the
16 day -- I believe it was the day before this text, there had been a campaign press
17 conference that was inadvertently put at the wrong location. So it was that sort of
18 thing.

19 And then the last part of the text was just, you know, concern for junior aides that
20 I was managing and working with and wanting to make sure that they were -- had a
21 clear-eyed picture, that they were going to be prepared for next steps, and that they
22 were fully taken care of. And I know that's what my mindset was at the time.

23 Q When you say "prepared for next steps," you're talking about
24 post-administration?

25 A Possibly, yes, if they needed to leave or needed to land another job, or if it

1 did turn out that we were going to be leaving, that they would be -- that they would be
2 set up for next steps, yes.

3 Q Okay. And when you say the "legal strategy front" and you say "there's a
4 middle ground," what is that? What do you mean by that?

5 A I'm talking about pursuing every good-faith legal challenge that there
6 appears to be evidence for.

7 Q Okay. And was there a distinction in your mind between that, those
8 good-faith legal challenges for which there may be evidence, and, say, what was
9 happening at the Four Seasons press conference that you referred to?

10 A You say "what was happening." I mean, there were a number of things
11 that was happening. I mean, yes, I wanted every avenue to be pursued that there was
12 evidence for that was appropriate. There were a number of times where it didn't feel
13 like the President was best represented on those fronts, and that's what I was expressing
14 concerns over.

15 I don't remember specifically what I was talking about in the moment. And, to
16 be honest, I don't remember many of the specifics from that time period anyway. But
17 that's what I was referring to in the text.

18 Q Okay. When you say you thought there was some times when you thought
19 the President wasn't being best represented, are you referring to Rudy Giuliani and the
20 efforts he was making?

21 A Not necessarily, but I -- I personally love the mayor. I wouldn't want to talk
22 badly about him.

23 But there were a number of instances over the course of legal challenges -- or of
24 the legal challenges where I think all of us felt a better job of execution could've been
25 done.

1 But, again, I don't remember specifically what I was referring to in that moment.

2 Q Okay. Now, there were instances where you thought a better job could be
3 done. You've mentioned the Four Seasons press conference. Are there others that
4 come to mind?

5 A Not really. No.

6 Q All right.

7 If you go to the next page, which is page 3 of this -- so this is November 11, 2020.
8 And there's a tweet from Marc Elias that I believe Ms. Farah would have sent to you.

9 And it says, "Today in court, a Pennsylvania judge asked a lawyer for Trump
10 point-blank whether he was alleging fraud." And then in the -- you can see in the
11 transcript, the highlighted transcript portion, it says, effectively, no.

12 She says, "Why are we still doing this." You put an exclamation mark on it. And
13 then you say, "Makes no sense to me. And worse, It's like we're putting a half-ass
14 effort... into a half-ass case."

15 So can you explain that a little bit, Mr. Williamson?

16 A It looks like I'm responding to the tweet she sent from Marc Elias where the
17 attorney was asked about fraud and said he wasn't sure whether he was or not. So that
18 was what my commentary was -- reflected on.

19 Q Now, ultimately, the court cases didn't go the President or the campaign's
20 way. In your mind, was that the end of it, as far as the good-faith challenges to the
21 election that you referred to earlier?

22 A I don't know, ████. I -- to be honest, I was not following these cases very
23 closely. I had a job to do at the White House that was well outside of the court cases
24 and things of that nature, so I was not following these cases particularly closely. So I
25 would not be able to say what the line of demarcation was at any certain point, or if there

1 was one, frankly.

2 Q Did you think there were options that the President had or the legal team
3 had beyond good-faith court challenges?

4 A I'm not suring -- I'm not sure what you're referring to, but, no, I did not
5 consider that.

6 Q Okay.

7 All right. If you go to page 5 of the same exhibit, exhibit No. 37 -- and, again, I
8 fully appreciate, Mr. Williamson, that there's kind of a joking banter among friends going
9 on here, and I'm not so much interested in that, just more of some content here.

10 In the very top message, you say, "Come hell, high water, or Sidney Powell, the
11 turkeys WILL be pardoned."

12 So I want to ask you about Ms. Powell. Did you have any interactions with
13 Ms. Powell during your time in the White House?

14 A I did not that I can recall.

15 Mr. ██████████. And I'll just note for the record, too, that I believe Mr. Aguilar
16 rejoined.

17 BY MR. ██████████:

18 Q Did you ever see her in the White House? And, to be clear, I'm talking
19 about Ms. Sidney Powell.

20 A I don't remember ever seeing her in the White House, no. I'm very
21 confident that I did not. I don't believe I did.

22 Q Okay.

23 And on page 6 of the same exhibit, this is now a February 3rd text message with
24 Ms. Farah. And I'm just going through, now, your messages with her. Looks like she
25 reached out about her leaving and the events of January 6th and after, potentially.

1 But you say in parentheses, in the second message on that page, quote, "(And as
2 you can imagine pretty much nobody in the building was exactly... thrilled, shall we say.)"
3 The next message: "About the whole Capitol incident that is."

4 Can you just explain what you meant by that?

5 A Yes. I mean, that's pretty consistent with what I had told you earlier, was
6 people were upset about what was going on at the Capitol. And certainly anytime you
7 see Capitol Police officers being disrespected or that kind of behavior, it's not something
8 people are -- in our White House are ever pleased with. So that's what I was referring to
9 there.

10 Q Got it.

11 Mr. [REDACTED]. And Ms. Lofgren and Mrs. Murphy have also rejoined, just for the
12 record, as well. I believe they rejoined a few minutes ago, if not more.

13 The Witness. Sure.

14 BY MR. [REDACTED]:

15 Q Somewhat moving on topics, it looks like the various States and election
16 issues in various States became -- are you still with us? Can you hear me okay,
17 Mr. Williamson?

18 A Yeah, I can hear you.

19 Q Okay. All right. So it looks like States and a focus on various States and
20 election issues began bubbling up in November.

21 And exhibit No. 38 is a series of text messages with someone named Sara, and
22 that's "S.C." And I can't remember if we've already been over her, but do you know who
23 that is?

24 A I think it's Sara Carter, a reporter, but I don't know. It's possible it's a
25 different last name. But I'm fairly certain it's Sara Carter.

1 Q Okay. On the 19th at --

2 A Forgive me, [REDACTED]. [REDACTED], forgive me. I think it's Sara Cook with CBS News,
3 who was a reporter.

4 Q Thank you for that.

5 On the 19th of November at 4:13 p.m., she texts you, "Hi, Ben. Can you confirm
6 (even on background) whether the President called the two GOP Wayne County officials
7 Tuesday night to thank them for their support? We're hoping to confirm for evening
8 news tonight."

9 And then, "Sorry," she corrects herself to say "canvassers."

10 So I understand that the President called one or both, Monica Palmer and
11 somebody named William Hartmann, I believe, who are Wayne County, Michigan, Board
12 of Canvassers. Do you know anything about the call that the President had with those
13 people or anybody on the Board of Canvassers?

14 A No.

15 Q Did you ever do anything to look into this message or messages like this
16 about State officials and certifying the election?

17 A I don't believe so. It's possible I, by word of mouth, ran it by another press
18 aide and asked them to follow up, but I myself did not follow up that I can recall.

19 Q Do you remember hearing anybody talking about the President's outreach to
20 various legislators, State officials at the local level or State level related to the election?

21 A Ever? No, not really. Occasionally we would be asked by press about calls
22 he was making or -- there was a group, I think I have a text that I turned over to you all
23 about a lunch at one point, but did not really follow up on those calls. I don't know who
24 was at that lunch that I'm referencing and know very little beyond that.

25 Q So you don't know why, either firsthand or secondhand or otherwise, the

1 President called two local county canvassers in Michigan.

2 A No. I don't know that he ever did. I'll take your word for it about the
3 report, but I don't know that he ever did.

4 Q All right.

5 If you continue on to page 2 of this exhibit, which is exhibit No. 38, there's a
6 text -- and I realize we're going slightly out of order, but just because it's the same
7 exhibit -- text at 3:25 p.m. from Sara, I believe Ms. Cook.

8 "Hey Ben. Any chance you can confirm the report that several Republicans
9 (Biggs, Brooks, Gosar, etc) involved in the rally before the assault on the Capitol sought
10 clemency from POTUS, but after meeting with legal advisors on Saturday, he isn't
11 expected to? I have a source telling me they won't be getting pardons but hoping to
12 confirm they asked. Even on background is very helpful."

13 Do you know anything about those Members of Congress or other Members of
14 Congress seeking a pardon or clemency from the President?

15 A I do not.

16 Q Did you ever follow up on this question to find out the answer?

17 A I don't believe I did, no.

18 Q Did you ever hear about any of them seeking a pardon or clemency?

19 A No. Other than this text or perhaps another text from a reporter, I don't
20 believe I ever heard anything about it.

21 You have to understand, it was very common for reporters to reach out about
22 things they have that perhaps they have a single source for. And, at times, unless
23 there's a real sense that they've heard it from multiple people or that it is a more
24 well-sourced story -- and not to comment on Sara particularly or anything, but -- you
25 know, sometimes you don't even run it up the chain unless you feel like there's more of a

1 backing to it.

2 So the short answer to your question is "no."

3 Q I understand that. This seems like a fairly significant story, though. And I
4 don't want to, kind of, judge what you view as significant or not; I'm just offering my own
5 2 cents on that.

6 So this isn't something that, say, you went and spoke to Mr. Meadows about.

7 A No, I don't recall ever speaking to Mr. Meadows or anybody about that
8 issue.

9 Q All right.

10 In one of the text messages you provided us -- and this is one we've gone to a few
11 times, with Josh; it's exhibit No. 2 -- he asks you, "Can you confirm Michigan lawmaker
12 visit tomorrow?" -- this is November the 19th -- "At POTUS invite?"

13 So it has been reported that Senator Mike Shirkey from Michigan, as well as
14 Speaker Lee Chatfield, also of Michigan, visited the White House around that time and
15 met with the President in the Oval Office. Are you familiar with that meeting?

16 A Not beyond just knowing that it -- that I had heard it occurred. But I don't
17 know any specific details about what was said in the meeting or anything of that nature.

18 Q Who'd you hear that from?

19 A I believe I heard it from reporters. And I want to say there may have been
20 passing conversations between press aides about whether or not we should comment.
21 And I'm not sure we ended up commenting at all. I don't remember it specifically.

22 Q Okay. Do you know why the President would be meeting with Senator
23 Shirkey and Speaker Chatfield at the time?

24 A No.

25 Q Did you ever follow up with Mr. Meadows about this meeting?

1 A I don't recall, █. There -- like I said, there may have been -- I vaguely
2 remember passing conversations with aides, press aides, about whether we should
3 comment, and it's certainly possible that I asked Mr. Meadows if we should comment.
4 But the extent of my convo with him, if it happened, would've been whether or not we
5 put out a comment about it happening. I do not remember and I don't believe we
6 discussed any substance about or of the meeting.

7 Q Okay.

8 So there were a number of other calls -- and just to follow up on this, again, to see
9 if you know about any of them -- a number of calls to State officials and meetings at the
10 White House, and that included Monica Palmer, Aaron Van Langevelde, who were with
11 the State Board of Canvassers in Michigan; Bryan Cutler, the Pennsylvania speaker of the
12 House; Jake Corman, the Senate pro tem in Pennsylvania; Clint Hickman, Maricopa
13 County Board of Supervisors; Rusty Bowers, who's a State senator in Arizona; and then, as
14 you noted, Pennsylvania lawmakers who came to the Oval Office around November the
15 25th.

16 So the outreach to those and other State officials, are you familiar with any of it?

17 A No, not that I can recall.

18 Q What about Doug Mastriano? He's, I believe, the Senate majority leader in
19 Pennsylvania.

20 A No.

21 Q Okay. And I may have his title wrong. I do know he's a senator in
22 Pennsylvania. Don't know anything about him?

23 A No.

24 Q Okay.

25 I understand that the Pennsylvania lawmakers, they may have come down with

1 Mr. Giuliani, Mr. Kerik, and maybe a few others after a hearing that took place in
2 Pennsylvania. They came down as a group and met in the Oval Office. Does that ring
3 any bells for you?

4 A Don't remember hearing about anything like that at the time, no.

5 Q All right.

6 Mr. [REDACTED]. Any questions on the State contact that we've gone over so far, or
7 anything else for that matter?

8 The Witness. I do not.

9 BY MR. [REDACTED]:

10 Q Okay.

11 All right. So, on December 1, 2020, Attorney General Barr, then-Attorney
12 General Barr, told the AP that DOJ and the FBI had not uncovered any evidence of
13 widespread fraud that could change the outcome of the 2020 election.

14 That was a pretty significant news story. Do you remember this?

15 A Yes.

16 Q What do you remember about it?

17 A I just remember seeing it flash up on AP. I was doing work when it came
18 out, and I remember seeing it then, and that's pretty much it.

19 Q How was that news story received at the White House?

20 A I don't remember really. I saw it and I went and I flagged it for the chief of
21 staff. He didn't say anything, or we didn't really have a convo about it. I immediately
22 went back to my office, and that was that. I really didn't talk much about it with
23 anybody.

24 Q Why did you think it was important to flag for the chief of staff?

25 A I flagged all news items about Cabinet members or whatnot to the chief of

1 staff. That was a big part of my job.

2 Q And you said he didn't have a reaction. Do you remember anything that he
3 said in response to you telling him about this?

4 A No.

5 Q Did he say he already knew about it or give you any indication that he
6 already knew about it?

7 A He did not. I only remember showing it to him on my phone very briefly
8 and then leaving, because I had several things on my mind that I had to do.

9 Q All right.

10 If you can turn to exhibit 41, please, [REDACTED] and page 3 in particular.

11 My understanding is that Attorney General Barr was at the White House the day
12 this story broke, on December 1st or thereabouts. Do you remember the Attorney
13 General being at the White House?

14 A I vaguely remember passing him outside of the Oval Office in the waiting
15 area on my way back to my office.

16 Q Where were you coming from or going?

17 A To my office, back from the chief of staff's office.

18 Q Okay. And he was in the waiting area. Was he waiting to go into the
19 Oval? Is that what you believed?

20 A I don't know.

21 Q Do you know who he was there to meet with?

22 A I don't. I'm friendly with the Attorney General, but we were busy and
23 didn't get a chance to speak at that time.

24 Q Okay.

25 So, in this message, this series of messages in exhibit No. 41, on page 3, you get a

1 question, looks like, from Sarah Matthews that says, "Is Barr meeting with Meadows?
2 Saw the DOJ statement saying he's not meeting with [the President] and just want to
3 confirm that's accurate so I can point people to it."

4 You say in response, "Came by earlier and you were on the phone -- yeah he's in
5 the office. I'd probably just point to DOJ's statement? The one Katherine Faulders
6 tweeted. That Barr isn't meeting with POTUS, and it was scheduled before the AP
7 meeting."

8 So, admittedly, this is -- I have a hard time tracking it. Can you explain what's
9 going on there?

10 A I don't really remember [REDACTED]. I think what this text is about is, obviously,
11 when the AP story came out, Sarah checked in with me. I think what I'm talking about
12 here is that the meeting -- that Barr was not at the White House to meet with the
13 President when the story came out, that it was unscheduled. But, to be honest, I'm not
14 exactly sure what I was referencing in this text message.

15 Q There are reports from a meeting between the Attorney General and the
16 President, that a meeting they had was very intense and that the President was
17 "volcanic." And that's not my word; that's a word that's been reported.

18 Of course, there's -- I guess it's very hard to judge "volcanic," but are you aware of
19 a tense meeting between the Attorney General and the President on this issue of election
20 fraud?

21 A I was not a part of any meeting, nor did I hear about any meeting from
22 anyone in the White House. I remember hearing about it from folks in the press, but I
23 was not a part of that meeting. And I don't recall ever following up on the contents of
24 that meeting. It's possible I had a passing conversation with somebody about it, but I
25 don't remember.

1 Q Okay. Do you have any knowledge of any consideration of replacing
2 Attorney General Barr with new leadership at the Department?

3 A No. Again, I would get occasional inquiries from reporters about whether
4 that was being considered, but I would rarely do more than check in with the chief of staff
5 to see if there was anything he wanted to say or that the Department of Justice wanted
6 to say about that kind of an issue. I would not have been involved in any discussions
7 about those matters.

8 Q On that point, Mr. Williamson, obviously, Mr. Barr was a Cabinet official at
9 the time. So would you have -- did you remember speaking to Mr. Meadows at all
10 about Attorney General Barr and the Department of Justice and leadership at the
11 Department?

12 A What do you mean by "at that time"? You mean in December, around
13 here? Or --

14 Q Yep, anytime post-election up through early January.

15 A Our discussions about the Attorney General would've been limited to
16 reporters checking in about whether the Attorney General was leaving. That's all that
17 we would have discussed. And I don't remember specifically any contents of those
18 discussions, how many times. It would've been a few, and all would've been pretty
19 brief, if that answers your question.

20 Q Do you remember anything that Mr. Meadows said about Mr. Barr and his
21 time leading the Department of Justice?

22 A I don't, no.

23 BY MR [REDACTED]

24 Q Okay.

25 So it's been reported that the President considered firing Department of Justice

1 leadership, who at that time was Jeffrey Rosen and Richard Donoghue, and installing
2 Jeffrey Clark. This all happened in late December and early January. Do you know
3 anything about that?

4 A Not that I can recall, no.

5 Q Do you remember having any discussions with anybody in the White House
6 about replacing DOJ leadership --

7 A No.

8 Q -- in late December, early January?

9 A I do not. And, again, any convos that I had about that would've been
10 limited to press inquiries about whether or not those things were going to happen. But
11 it would've been limited to that.

12 Q And that's okay. I mean, I'm interested in you following up and running
13 those issues down. So did you run down those issues to find out whether it was going to
14 happen?

15 A I don't believe so. Not that I remember.

16 Q When I say "Jeff Clark," do you know who that is?

17 A I do.

18 Q All right. Have you ever met him?

19 A I don't know that I have. Don't know that I have.

20 Q How do you know Jeff Clark?

21 A I know of him. I was generally familiar with his work. But I don't know
22 that I know him personally.

23 Q When you say "generally familiar with his work," what do you mean?

24 A I was just aware that he -- of his relationship or proximity to the President,
25 but that's really it. Beyond that, I'm not sure.

1 Q Can you explain that, the relationship or proximity that Jeff Clark had with
2 the President?

3 A Well, what I mean by that is just the reports I would be getting from people
4 in the media about whether or not he might possibly replace someone at the Department
5 of Justice or whether he might be instituted over there. But I don't know anything
6 beyond that.

7 Q All right.

8 And did you ever follow up with anybody -- my standard question here -- did you
9 follow up with anybody about Mr. Clark and him replacing leadership at the Department?

10 A I don't recall. I don't believe I did, no.

11 Q Okay.

12 Do you know Representative Scott Perry?

13 A I do.

14 Q Do you know him personally?

15 A Not well, but we've spoken several times in the past, and he's a good man.
16 I like him.

17 Q Did you ever talk to him about the November 2020 Presidential election?

18 A No, I don't believe I did.

19 Q Did you ever talk to him about January 6th or the joint session of Congress?

20 A No, I don't believe I did.

21 Q Did you ever talk to him about Jeff Clark?

22 A No, I don't think so.

23 Q Okay. It's been suggested that Mr. Perry may have introduced Jeff Clark to
24 the President. Do you know anything about that?

25 A I do not. Just other than what I've seen in the press, I don't know anything

1 about it.

2 Q Do you know if Mr. Perry had any meetings with the President in the
3 residence between November and January?

4 A No.

5 Q As far as residence meetings go, do you know who documents those or who
6 would have knowledge of those meetings?

7 A I don't. Not really. No.

8 Q All right.

9 Exhibit No. 42 is a motion for leave to file a bill of complaint in the Supreme Court,
10 essentially a Supreme Court filing, that started -- a lawsuit -- Texas v. Pennsylvania and a
11 series of other States, filed by Texas.

12 Are you familiar with that lawsuit?

13 A I am not really, no.

14 Q "Not really." Do you know it happened?

15 A I saw it in the documents you've sent over, and I may have read some things
16 in the press, but that would be the limit.

17 Q Do you remember ever discussing this lawsuit with anybody at the
18 White House?

19 A I do not recall ever discussing it, no.

20 Q One of the things that happened in this lawsuit was that 16 -- or maybe 17
21 attorneys general signed on as amicus, basically in support of this complaint that Texas
22 filed.

23 Do you know anything about the White House or anybody from the campaign
24 trying to drum up support and have State attorneys general file anything in this lawsuit?

25 A I don't recall ever hearing anything about that, no.

1 Q All right.

2 And exhibit 44, which we don't need to bring up, but it's another filing in this case
3 where over 125 Members of Congress signed on to this lawsuit as well, this Texas v.
4 Pennsylvania.

5 Are you aware of any efforts in the White House or the campaign to get Members
6 of Congress to join this lawsuit?

7 A Not that I can recall. Nothing that I would've seen outside of just press
8 reports.

9 Q Okay. So the Supreme Court rejected this lawsuit, I want to say a few days
10 later, perhaps sometime around December the 11th. And I understand that the
11 President was not pleased with that result in the Supreme Court. Do you know anything
12 about that?

13 A No. I never spoke to him about it. Didn't hear any reaction or speak with
14 people that would've.

15 Q Do you know Representative Mike Johnson from Louisiana?

16 A I do.

17 Q Do you know him personally?

18 A Yes.

19 Q Okay. So there's an email that was leaked publicly through the press from
20 his personal email account to every House Republican that said President Trump was
21 anxiously awaiting the final list of Members who would sign on to a brief in this lawsuit.

22 Do you know anything about that and Mr. -- or, excuse me, Representative
23 Johnson tracking that?

24 A No, I don't.

25 Q Have you ever talked to Representative Johnson about the November 2020

1 Presidential election?

2 A No, not that I can recall. I saw him at the White House a number of times
3 throughout the year I was there. We may have had a passing convo about how things
4 were looking, but I don't ever recall speaking with him about anything related to State
5 electors or any post-election matters, no.

6 Q Do you know if he was there to meet about election issues, including
7 January 6th and the joint session?

8 A No, I don't.

9 Q Do you know why Representative Johnson was at the White House? And
10 I'm focused particularly on the period of November through January.

11 A I don't. I don't recall ever seeing him specifically in that period. Before
12 then, it was common for Members to be there for events or bill signings or, you know,
13 meetings amongst different coalitions, so it could've been any number of things. I don't
14 remember him being there after the election, or, if he was, I don't remember what it
15 would've been for, or don't know what it would've been for.

16 Q All right.

17 Mr. [REDACTED] I'm going to take a brief pause there to see if anybody has any
18 questions about what we've been going through.

19 All right. Hearing none, I will continue on.

20 And, Mr. Williamson, please let me know if you need a break, too, at any point.

21 The Witness. I'm fine.

22 As long as you're good.

23 Mr. Howell. No. Let's keep rocking.

24 The Witness. Thanks.

25 Mr. [REDACTED] All right. We're making good progress here, so I appreciate it, and

1 we'll continue to be cognizant of the time and your time.

2 BY MR. [REDACTED]:

3 Q So it's been reported that, in December -- on December 18th, there's a
4 meeting in the Oval Office: Sidney Powell, Mike Lindell, General Michael Flynn, and a
5 few others. Are you generally familiar with the meeting that I'm talking about?

6 A Only from press reports, yes.

7 Q All right. And we're going to talk about some of the questions that you
8 received on this meeting.

9 But I understand that, beforehand, the President asked Deputy Secretary Ken
10 Cuccinelli -- I believe that was his title at DHS -- whether the President had authority to
11 seize voting machines. Do you know anything about that?

12 A I do not.

13 Q Never spoke to anybody about the President or Homeland Security or
14 anything else seizing voting machines?

15 A No, with the usual caveat that it's possible reporters asked and I engaged
16 with them on it. But I did not have any meetings or discussions with White House
17 personnel about that matter, no.

18 Q Okay.

19 If you can go to exhibit 45, please, [REDACTED].

20 So this is a text exchange you had with somebody named Rebecca, "R.B." Do you
21 know who that is?

22 A Yes. It's Rebecca Ballhaus from The Wall Street Journal.

23 Q On November 19th at 8:24 p.m., it says, "Hi Ben -- sorry to interrupt your
24 night. Also hearing there was a meeting earlier this week in which Potus asked
25 Cuccinelli about DHS taking control of voting machines or otherwise investigating. I'm

1 told Meadows pushed back in that mtg."

2 Did you do anything to follow up on this question?

3 A I don't remember. It's possible I flagged it for the chief, but I don't
4 remember having any conversation about that, no.

5 Q Okay. Because that is something where the chief is mentioned specifically,
6 right? "Meadows pushed back in that mtg." You don't recall talking to Mark Meadows
7 about that?

8 A I don't specifically recall that, no.

9 Q And just to ask, because I'm a lawyer, you say, "I don't specifically
10 remember." Do you remember generally talking to Mr. Meadows about that?

11 A No.

12 Q Then -- I am going to jump forward in time very quickly but return back to
13 that meeting -- on January 5th in this exhibit, Rebecca texts you and says, "Hi Ben -- we're
14 hearing some rumblings that Meadows played a role in the u.s. attorney's resignation in
15 Georgia this week." And then she asked if you have a minute of time.

16 And she follows that later on that day, says, "I'm told the White House asked
17 Pak" -- U.S. Attorney Pak is how I understand it -- "to arrest Kemp prior to his
18 resignation."

19 Did you ever follow up with anybody in the White House about the U.S. attorney's
20 resignation in Georgia or this statement that the White House asked Pak to arrest Kemp?

21 A I don't recall, no.

22 Q Did Mr. Meadows ever tell you separately, whether a followup or not, about
23 the U.S. attorney's resignation in Georgia?

24 A Not that I remember.

25 Q Okay.

1 So exhibit 46 -- bear with me just a moment.

2 All right. Exhibit No. 46 has been in the news recently. It's a memo or a draft
3 executive order about seizing voting machines.

4 Do you know anything about this draft order or memo regarding seizing voting
5 machines related to the 2020 election?

6 A I don't.

7 Q It's been reported that potentially Sidney Powell or Phil Waldron had some
8 role in this or issues related to this. Do you know who Phil Waldron is?

9 A I don't know that I've heard of Phil Waldron.

10 Q Okay. So you don't think you ever met Phil Waldron?

11 A Not that I can recall.

12 Q Would you know what he looks like?

13 A I don't think so, no.

14 Q Okay. Because I was going to follow up and ask if you remember ever
15 seeing him at the White House. It sounds like the answer is "no." Is that correct?

16 A That would be correct.

17 Q Okay.

18 So, on exhibit 47, the next exhibit, it's a text message exchange with "J.S.,"

19 Jonathan. I believe that's Jonathan Swan from Axios?

20 A Uh-huh. Correct.

21 Q On the bottom of the first page -- excuse me, on the second page, on
22 January the 30th -- so I understand this is removed in time and after you're outside of the
23 White House -- it talks about this story that he's writing about the meeting on
24 December 18th in the Oval Office, the one that we were talking about with Ms. Powell.
25 It involved Derek Lyons, Pat Cipollone, Eric Herschmann, I believe participation from Rudy

1 Giuliani on phone, and Sidney Powell potentially becoming special counsel to investigate
2 voter fraud.

3 I understand that this happened -- this text message happened after you left the
4 White House, but do you know whether the comments that Jonathan Swan sent to you
5 are true?

6 A No.

7 And let me just go back. You said this happened after I had left the
8 White House? What are you -- oh, it was on January 30th. I see what you're saying.

9 No, I don't know -- I don't know whether it was true. I vaguely remember
10 running this by the chief of staff after Jonathan called me and -- or texted me the details,
11 but I don't believe we ever got at any substantive discussion about the merits of it. We
12 just -- the chief told me that he was not going to comment, and that was the extent of our
13 conversation.

14 Q Okay.

15 So, about 3 days later, roughly, you responded. And this is on page 3 now. It
16 says, "I have no words," and then there's a kind of smiling/crying emoji there.

17 So, in your conversation with Mark Meadows about this, I know you said that he
18 wasn't going to make a comment or give you a comment, but did he tell you anything
19 about this meeting?

20 A No, not that I can recall. I don't believe we discussed anything
21 substantively beyond that he wasn't going to comment. I don't recall anything else
22 beyond that.

23 Q Okay.

24 So Derek Lyons was a part of this meeting. Did you ever talk to him about this
25 meeting or anything related to this meeting?

1 A I don't ever remember speaking with Derek about the meeting, no.

2 Q Okay.

3 And this was published by Axios, and I think the title of the story was something
4 like, "Off the Rails: Inside the Craziest Meeting of the White House," something to that
5 effect.

6 A Yes.

7 Q Do you remember that?

8 A I do.

9 Q Did you talk to anybody about this article or the meeting itself?

10 A Not -- I mean, perhaps in passing, but not that I remember, not substantive.
11 Like you said, I had been gone from the White House by that point, so the duties of
12 responding to this sort of thing were a bit less pressing by that time.

13 Q And around the time of the meeting itself, which is December the 18th, do
14 you remember hearing anything about it, about what happened in this meeting?

15 A Yes, very vaguely. So I actually was driving. I had left the White House
16 before this meeting took place, and I was driving, and I remember hearing that there was
17 a meeting going on. But I did not know the substance of what was being discussed, I did
18 not know all of the participants or any of the details until later, I believe when this story
19 came out, possibly vaguely at some point before that.

20 But, to answer your question, yes, I was aware that there was a meeting
21 happening around that time.

22 Q And, at the time, what did you understand the meeting to be?

23 A I don't know. I don't know. I vaguely remember hearing that it was
24 election-related, but I don't know what it was other than that. I was -- I had left the
25 building by that point for the day.

1 Q Who called you to tell you about this meeting?

2 A I believe it was Judd Deere and I were communicating about it, and he was
3 just letting me know that the meeting was happening.

4 Q Did he say anything about it, offer any insight or color commentary, as it
5 were?

6 A No. I don't believe -- Judd was not a part of the meeting. Neither he nor I
7 was. So --

8 Q Why do you think he felt the need to call you after you had already left to
9 tell you about this?

10 A Oh, Judd was a great colleague. He would call me all the time; I would call
11 him all the time. We just were very communicative.

12 And so, if there was something going on or, you know, if we hadn't called a
13 lid -- actually, that's the specific reason, was that I don't believe we had called a lid, a
14 press lid, for the day. And we had reporters calling us back and forth as to why we
15 hadn't. And I think it was because the President was still active in meeting with people.
16 So that was why he probably would've flagged it for me.

17 But, in general, Judd and I would flag things for each other pretty frequently.

18 Q And can you just tell me what it means to call a press lid?

19 A Yes. It's basically to let the press know that they won't be seeing the
20 President for the rest of the day except in unforeseen circumstances.

21 Q Why did that matter in the context of this meeting?

22 A Well, sometimes if the President is having a meeting or if he's speaking with
23 aides or if he's still in the Oval Office, then he decides not to call a lid in case he wants to
24 call a press conference or speak to the press or whatnot. But that's why that would've
25 mattered in this specific context.

1 Q All right.

2 Now, the next day, December the 19th, after this meeting, in exhibit No. 48, the
3 President issues a tweet. I believe that's in the afternoon, around 1:42 p.m.

4 A The next day after the meeting you just asked about?

5 Q That's correct.

6 And it's up there on the screen. The tweet says, "Peter Navarro releases 36-page
7 report alleging election fraud 'more than sufficient' to swing victory to Trump." Then
8 there's a hyperlink. "A great report by Peter. Statistically impossible to have lost the
9 2020 Election. Big protest in D.C. on January 6th. Be there, will be wild!"

10 So I believe this is the first time the President mentioned the rally on the 6th. Do
11 you recall this tweet?

12 A Vaguely. Vaguely. Not -- not much.

13 Q What do you remember about it?

14 A I vaguely remember seeing it, just from seeing it in the documents you
15 handed over or produced that you wanted to ask about.

16 Q Do you --

17 A I don't remember it in the moment.

18 Q Okay. So did you have any part in writing this tweet?

19 A No.

20 Q Do you know why there was a focus on January 6th at that point,
21 December 19th?

22 A Do I know why? No. I assumed it was because that was the day that the
23 rally had been planned, but I don't know.

24 Q Are you aware of any discussions going on at the White House or with the
25 campaign before this, before December 19th, about the importance of January 6th to the

1 President?

2 A No.

3 Q Is that the first time you -- well, assuming you saw it that day, is that the first
4 time you heard about a protest on January 6th?

5 A I don't remember if that was the first time. I don't remember when exactly
6 the rally was planned. There were several press reports indicating; there may have
7 been one that I can recall. But I don't remember exactly when was the first time.

8 Q Other than press reports, when was the first time you heard about the
9 President participating in a rally on January 6th?

10 A I don't know, [REDACTED]. I don't know.

11 Q Do you remember ever talking about the President's participation in the rally
12 on January 6th?

13 A Not the first time when that would've been. There would've been passing
14 discussions about him speaking or, you know, whether or not we were going to have a
15 rally that day. I don't specifically remember any conversations about if and when the
16 President would participate.

17 Q All right.

18 Two days later -- you can go to exhibit No. 49.

19 So 2 days later is December the 21st of 2020. And on page 8 of this exhibit -- a
20 little bit farther down, please.

21 So December 21, 2020, 4:54, this is a text exchange with Chief of Staff Mark
22 Meadows, and this is at 4:54 p.m. It looks like you are drafting something.

23 But it says, "Several members of Congress are in the Oval Office meeting with
24 President @realDonaldTrump right now, preparing to fight back against voter fraud.
25 The evidence of corruption is there. And it's time we stand up to it. Stay tuned."

1 And then you follow up about an hour -- a little over an hour later and say, "It's
2 already going crazy. Think it worked."

3 What is this?

4 A That appears to be a draft of a tweet that I had sent the chief and then me
5 telling him after it that it was getting a lot of engagement and making some news.

6 Q Why did you draft this tweet?

7 A I draft all of the chief's tweets.

8 Q You say, "It's already going crazy," and your explanation just now is that it
9 was getting engagement. Can you explain what that means?

10 A News outlets were picking it up, retweets, cable news segments --

11 Q Okay.

12 A -- et cetera.

13 Q If you could go to exhibit No. 50, please.

14 I believe that this, exhibit 50, is the actual published tweet that you put out. Is
15 that the tweet that you wrote and published on Twitter from Mark Meadows' account?

16 A Looks like it, yes.

17 Q All right. Now, that meeting in the Oval Office around that time, on
18 October 21st, were you a part of that meeting?

19 A I was not.

20 Q Sounds like Mr. Meadows at least told you something about the meeting.
21 So what did you know about it?

22 A I became aware of the meeting after the fact. He mentioned to me that it
23 had happened. And the extent of my conversations were -- with Mr. Meadows or the
24 chief were about the tweet and basically how to publicize it. I don't recall any of the
25 substance of the conversation beyond that.

1

2 [3:54 p.m.]

3 BY MR. [REDACTED]:

4 Q So he didn't tell you anything that happened in the meeting with the
5 Members of Congress?

6 A Not that I can recall, no. And, bluntly, [REDACTED] I don't know that I can recall
7 the specific Members who were there.

8 Q Okay.

9 A So, no.

10 Q I was going to ask you that, if you saw any Members coming or going. It's
11 been reported that in that meeting it was the President, potentially the Vice President,
12 and 15 Members, including Jim Jordan, Andy Biggs, Mo Brooks, Matt Gaetz, Marjorie
13 Taylor Greene, Louie Gohmert.

14 Do any of those names ring a bell as to what either you learned about the meeting
15 or people you saw in the White House that day?

16 A No, I don't recall seeing any Members in the White House that day.

17 Q All right.

18 And the part that says they're "preparing to fight back against mounting evidence
19 of voter fraud" -- so are you saying that Mr. Meadows just dictated that to you, or is that
20 something you came up with based on what he told you?

21 A Something that I came up with based on what he told me and what my
22 understanding of the meeting -- what the meeting was about. So I would've just drafted
23 that, shown him, asked him if this was an accurate portrayal of how to say it, then get
24 approval, and then you go.

25 Q So let me ask it this way, then. What was your understanding about what

1 this meeting was about?

2 A Again, it was very limited. I didn't -- I don't recall really talking with Mr.
3 Meadows or the chief or anyone much about it at all.

4 My job in this was to package it in a way that would work for a tweet and
5 ultimately get in the press and create some news. And so, if I drafted a tweet like this
6 and show it to someone who was in the meeting and they say, yes, that's accurate, then
7 that works. I don't recall having any conversations, really, beyond that.

8 Q All right.

9 It's been reported that, specifically, that the purpose of this meeting was to enlist
10 Republicans to challenge electoral votes in Arizona, Georgia, Michigan, Nevada,
11 Pennsylvania and Wisconsin.

12 Do you remember hearing anything about that, specifically challenges to electoral
13 votes in the joint session that came out of this meeting?

14 A I don't, no.

15 Q Okay.

16 Marjorie Taylor Greene tweeted a video after this meeting. She said, "Just
17 finished with our meetings at the White House this afternoon. We had a great planning
18 session for our January 6th objection. We aren't going to let this election be stolen by
19 Joe Biden and the Democrats. President Trump won by a landslide."

20 Did Mr. Meadows tell you anything about that or anything related to objections in
21 the joint session?

22 A No.

23 Q And did you talk to anybody else who was in that meeting about the
24 meeting?

25 A Not that I can remember, no.

1 Q At that time -- so we're looking at around December 20th -- the President
2 had already tweeted about a wild protest in Washington on January 6th. Here is this
3 meeting where it's reported about objections to January 6th.

4 At that time, do you remember any talk in the White House about protests or
5 marches scheduled for January 6th?

6 A I don't know at that time. I at some point remember hearing that there
7 would be a rally or a protest on the South Lawn, but I don't remember exactly when that
8 was.

9 Q And did you hear that from the press or from within the White House?

10 A I don't remember. I would've heard it from probably a mix of both, but I
11 don't remember specifically who.

12 Q Even if you don't remember from whom you first heard about this, who in
13 the White House did you talk about this rally or marches or protests on the Ellipse?

14 A I don't remember. I would've had very rare discussions about the rally with
15 anybody in the White House. I was not involved in the planning or logistics of it.

16 Q Very generally, and, again, kind of zooming out, the meeting we just talked
17 about on the 21st reportedly included Members of Congress. Did Mr. Meadows act as a
18 liaison with Members, in his role as chief of staff or just because he recently came over
19 from Congress?

20 A I don't know. We did not really speak about that in my capacity.

21 Q You also came with him, though. Did he maintain those relationships that
22 he had just had on the Hill before joining the White House?

23 A Sure.

24 Q And did he talk -- in those relationships, did he talk about January 6th or
25 planning objections to the joint session?

1 A I don't know. I wasn't a part of those convos.

2 Q And he never told you about that.

3 A No. Other than the documents that we've been discussing here and
4 exchanges there, he did not discuss his convos with Members, or lack thereof.

5 Q I'm going to run through a series of names here, and I'm just going to ask
6 whether you or, to your knowledge, Mr. Meadows met with these folks in the lead-up to
7 the joint session of Congress.

8 So Representative Mo Brooks?

9 A No.

10 Q Okay. And that applies to both -- your noes will -- I'll assume they apply to
11 both you meeting with them or members of their staff and Mr. Meadows meeting with
12 them and members of their staff. Is that fair?

13 A That's -- no. Let's -- I don't know who specifically Mr. Meadows met with.
14 It's possible that he met with people and I was in the other office or was doing other
15 things and wasn't familiar with it. I would prefer to only answer questions as to who I
16 met with.

17 But how about I do this? If you want to know what I know about him and other
18 Members, I can say that I'm familiar or not familiar with Members that he met with. But
19 I can tell you about mine for definitive purposes, if that makes sense.

20 Q Okay. All right. Let's start there then.

21 So did you meet with Mr. -- or, excuse me, Representative Brooks or members of
22 his staff in the --

23 A I did not. No, I did not.

24 Q How about Representative Perry?

25 A Not that I can recall, no.

1 Q And, to be fair, other than what we already talked about with respect to him.

2 That's fine.

3 A Right.

4 Q Representative Jim Jordan?

5 A Not that I can recall, no.

6 Q Okay. Representative Marjorie Taylor Greene?

7 A Not that I can recall, no.

8 Q Representative Andy Biggs?

9 A No, I don't believe so.

10 Q Representative Gohmert, Louie Gohmert?

11 A No.

12 Q Okay. And, of those names, do you remember or do you know if Mr.
13 Meadows met with them or members of their staff in the month leading up to January
14 6th?

15 A I do not.

16 Q Okay.

17 After this meeting on December 21st, I understand that Mr. Meadows went to
18 Georgia and met with some election-related officials down there. Do you know
19 anything about his trip to Georgia?

20 A Very limited. The only thing that I ever knew about it or found out about it
21 was a phone call between me and him just letting me know that there may be press
22 reports about him being down there from an Atlanta paper that's down there. That's
23 pretty much the extent of what I knew about it and know about it.

24 Q Did he tell you why he was going there?

25 A I don't believe so, no. I think he was going down there for some sort of

1 audit or -- canvassing audit or something of the sort, but I don't know for sure.

2 Q Okay. And so that would be related to the campaign, I suppose? Is that
3 your understanding?

4 A Sure. I don't know specifically, but that was my understanding.

5 Q Did he have a role on the campaign that you're aware of?

6 A I don't know.

7 Q Now, it's been widely reported that the President and I believe Mr.
8 Meadows was a participant in a call with Secretary of State Raffensperger in Georgia.
9 Did you participate in that call?

10 A No.

11 Q Did you listen in?

12 A Did I listen in on the call? No.

13 Q Did you ever talk to Mr. Meadows about that call?

14 A No. It's possible that I asked him about followup press reports about the
15 call or, you know, confirmed or whatever things about the call with him that were based
16 on press reports. But, no, we did not have any substantive discussions about the call
17 before or after.

18 Q That was a pretty significant news story at the time, as well -- and I guess I
19 use "significant" to say widely reported -- news story at the time about the President's
20 call on this.

21 What was the mood in the White House, the attitude in the White House about
22 this call where the President asks Secretary of State Raffensperger to effectively find
23 enough votes to ensure his reelection?

24 A I don't recall any discussions about that call. I'm trying to remember if
25 there were any, but I don't remember having any discussions with anyone in the White

1 House about it.

2 And, bluntly, I'm not even sure I discussed it with Mr. Meadows until, I want to
3 say, a recording of the call came out much later, and I think there were more reports after
4 that. But I don't recall any conversations before then.

5 Q What were your conversations like with Mr. Meadows after then?

6 A You mean later down the road when a recording came out?

7 Q Yeah. And, to be clear -- that's fair. I think you said that you remember
8 having a conversation with Mr. Meadows about this call after the recording was released,
9 and so that's what I'm focused on. What were those conversations?

10 A To be clear, I only vaguely remember running those things down based off of
11 press reports that were coming out or questions that reporters had been having. But
12 they would've been very brief. It would've been to the extent of, "Do you want to
13 comment? Is there anything you want to clarify?" And I don't remember our
14 discussions beyond that.

15 Q Was Mark Meadows upset that this call had been leaked?

16 A I don't remember any reaction or any sort of comments he had beyond just
17 me asking him questions and us going from there.

18 Q Do you remember any reaction that the President had, either that you saw
19 or heard or that you heard about?

20 A I don't remember, no.

21 Q I think, and I don't know this for sure, but I think Ms. McEnany took a series
22 of questions on this call over the days, or other people in the press shop. Is that
23 something that you engaged with them about?

24 A What do you mean? Engage with the press, seeing about how to respond
25 to those?

1 Q Correct. Yes.

2 A I don't remember ever engaging with them on that. It's possible that there
3 were brief conversations about it, but I don't remember --

4 Q Okay.

5 A -- no.

6 Q In this call -- and I understand you weren't on it, but, in this call, the
7 President went through a list of allegations that are fairly familiar, I think, to people who
8 were listening to the President and the campaign talk about the election. And those
9 allegations related to signature matching on ballots, double votes, dead people voting,
10 dropboxes, out-of-State issues, and Dominion voting machines, to name a few.

11 And my question is this: By December 7th -- so well before the President's
12 call -- Secretary of State Raffensperger said that they looked into the election, and when
13 they looked into the election, the evidence that was there, the facts say that the election
14 was fine, these issues were not in fact issues.

15 How did the secretary of State's announcement on this stuff affect the White
16 House messaging, if at all, about the election?

17 A I don't remember speaking with anyone about the secretary's comments.

18 Q How about more generally? You know, as these allegations were out there
19 and floating around about the election, various States and localities were addressing
20 them. Like, the Dominion voting machine issue in Antrim, Michigan, that was pretty
21 quickly addressed.

22 Did those public statements by State officials affect the messaging that was
23 coming out of the White House or the President, to your knowledge?

24 A No. Like I said, I was -- my involvement in the messaging on
25 election-related matters was very, very limited. And so I wouldn't know whether it

1 affected it or not, given that I really wasn't involved in those meetings or discussions.

2 Q Okay.

3 Mr. [REDACTED]. I think this might be a good time to take a quick break. I
4 understand that our video may be out. I don't know if you can see us or not.

5 The Witness. Your video is out. That is correct.

6 Mr. [REDACTED]. It is? All right. Can we take a 5-minute break then, just a quick
7 comfort break? Then we'll get back on and hopefully fix this issue.

8 The Witness. That's fine.

9 Mr. [REDACTED]. Thank you.

10 We'll go off the record.

11 [Recess.]

1

2 [4:12 p.m.]

3 Mr. ██████████ It's 4:12 p.m., and we are back on the record in the deposition of
4 Mr. Ben Williamson.

5 BY MR. ██████████:

6 Q I want to go to exhibit 49, please.

7 And what I did, Mr. Williamson -- we got your text messages from you as a series
8 of images, and this exhibit is trying to piece them together as best we can in the order of
9 the timestamps that you provided. But if anything's out of order or you remember
10 something differently, please just let us know.

11 A Okay. Thanks.

12 Q On page 1, it looks like Mr. Meadows sent you news about a State court case
13 in Nevada and what happened, what was going to be coming up and, kind of, next steps.

14 And can you just tell us about your role in this and what Mr. Meadows was asking
15 you to do, if anything, in these text messages?

16 A That was a draft tweet. As you can see, my response text is pretty similar
17 to his text. There's some slight edits. This was a draft tweet about the ruling in the
18 Nevada State court. I had no role in that process.

19 Q Okay. So he was just telling you what to say. You're not doing your own
20 research or coming to your own conclusions about the litigation. Is that right?

21 A Correct.

22 Q Why was he having you tweet about campaign litigation?

23 A Because I tweet for him. And that was what that was for, was for
24 him -- him suggesting a tweet, me fixing it or providing slight edits and then tweeting on
25 his behalf.

1 Q And you do that through his Twitter account, the one we saw earlier in
2 relation to that December 21st tweet?

3 A Correct.

4 Q All right.

5 If you go to page 2, it looks like that tweet continues on and edits to it.

6 But, if you go to the bottom of the page, there's another tweet, and this is about
7 General Michael Flynn. I'm not so interested in the content of that one, but he responds
8 and says, "Perfect. Put on Parler too."

9 So what is Parler, and how were you guys using it?

10 A Parler was the other -- it was a conservative free speech social media app.
11 We rarely used it. I think, at the time, it was right before some litigation started with
12 Parler. But, occasionally, when I had a tweet like this, he would have me post it on the
13 Parler app as well. It's basically another version of Twitter -- or Twitter, sorry. My
14 voice cut out.

15 Q Do you remember what Mr. Meadows' handle or username was on Parler?

16 A I don't. I think it would've been @MarkMeadows or @RepMarkMeadows,
17 but I don't know. Like I said, we rarely used it, and I have not maintained his Parler
18 account over the last year, so --

19 Q Why was he interested in building up a following on Parler?

20 A I don't know that he particularly was interested in it. He never talked to
21 me about it. You know, at the time, if you can remember, there was quite a bit of news
22 around Big Tech at this time. And so that may have been a part of it, but I don't know.
23 We didn't really talk about it much.

24 Q He just told you to set up an account and start posting on the account?

25 A I don't remember him specifically telling me to do that. I may have done it

1 on my own volition. I don't remember. But -- but, yeah, occasionally, when I would
2 post a tweet, he would suggest just putting it on that app as well.

3 Q Okay.

4 If you go to page 4 of the same exhibit, this is more news about campaign
5 litigation -- or, I shouldn't say news, excuse me. It's a filing in the 11th Circuit, campaign
6 litigation, and then a followup, it looks like, draft tweet or Parler post.

7 If you go on to the next page, he does say, "Can you post the above on Parler. I
8 would like to see if we can grow followers." And you say, "Done."

9 So this is just more of the same? Just, he's giving you messages -- or asking you
10 to put messages up on Twitter and Parler?

11 A Correct. I think that the tweet up there that you just referenced was -- I
12 think it was Thanksgiving week, if I remember right, because I was not with him. But he
13 had called me and asked me if I could tweet about that given case. And, per usual, I
14 drafted something up, sent it back to him, and he said, you can post it on Parler as well,
15 as was, you know, pretty typical for Facebook, Twitter, other apps like that.

16 Q All right.

17 So these are a few cases going on in the 11th Circuit, which is kind of southeast
18 United States. The one we just looked at was Nevada.

19 It looked like Mr. Meadows was at least aware of some of the litigation going on
20 around the country. Is that your understanding as well?

21 A Sure. I wouldn't want -- I don't want to speak for anybody other than
22 myself, but sure. He at least appears to have been following it.

23 Q Fair enough. And I'm certainly not asking you to speak on his behalf. Just
24 kind of your understanding of what was going on.

25 Did you talk to him about the litigation going on around the country?

1 A Very briefly. The extent of our convos would've been what you see here,
2 which is just him following it, anything that was relevant to perhaps boost on social media
3 or discuss in the news. That would've been the extent of it. Beyond that, the answer
4 is no.

5 Q And a very specific question, but, you know, virtually all of the lawsuits
6 related to the election filed by Mr. Trump or his campaign or, kind of, campaign
7 surrogates, they didn't go anywhere. The plaintiffs lost in those cases.

8 Did those losses or court decisions about the losses affect, to your understanding,
9 any of the messaging from the President, Mr. Meadows, or others?

10 A I'll go back to what I said earlier. I was not heavily involved in those
11 messaging or strategy meetings, so I would not be able to say how they affected one way
12 or the other. To be honest, I had a very limited following of these cases myself. So I
13 wouldn't be able to say one way or the other on that.

14 Q If you can go to page 10 of this exhibit. And, just for the record, we're still
15 on exhibit No. 49, now page 10.

16 A Yep.

17 Q All right. So there's a picture of Josh Hawley, with a link to an article from
18 The Hill. And Mr. Meadows says, "We probably ought to put out something positive
19 about this." And the byline of that article, or the headline, is "Hawley to challenge
20 Electoral College results in Senate."

21 And then it looks like you draft a message, to which Mr. Meadows says, "Great."

22 But I'm more interested about the substance of this. Were there any plans that
23 you're aware of to engage with Members about the objections to the electoral college
24 certification on January 6th?

25 A Were there any plans that I was aware of? No, just things I would've heard

1 in press. Beyond that, not really.

2 Q Okay. But nothing being discussed at the White House that you're aware
3 of, either from the press side or from the policy side, from Peter Navarro, Mr. Meadows,
4 or, of course, the President?

5 A Well, we just discussed the meeting that I was aware of amongst Members
6 of Congress, but the level at which I would've been aware of details of that or involved in
7 that would've been very, very minimal.

8 Q Do you have any details about the plan for objections in the joint session of
9 Congress on the 6th?

10 A No. I did not discuss it with Members or really anybody in the White House
11 that I can recall.

12 Q Do you know why Mr. Meadows wanted to highlight or put out something
13 positive about Senator Hawley's commitment to challenge the electoral results?

14 A No.

15 Q All right.

16 So, if you go on to page 2 -- or, excuse me, page 11, the next page, to be clear, Mr.
17 Meadows sends you a message, says, "If you think it is a good idea. Let's highlight the
18 Ted Cruz effort." You say, "I do. Working on a tweet, will have you something in a
19 few."

20 And then you, it looks like, screenshot a message from Newsmax about Senator
21 Cruz "leading an effort of 11 Senators to block election certification."

22 So why do you think it was a good idea, to use your words, to post a tweet about
23 this?

24 A I don't remember my thinking in the moment. I think he just had asked me
25 if I thought it was a good idea, and I said, sure, it would be good to highlight people

1 supporting the President. And so that's what I did. Drafted something up, and that
2 was that.

3 Q So, on that point, you said it'd be good to highlight -- or point out people
4 supporting the President. Again, I don't want to put words in your mouth. Was it
5 about support for the President more so than the objections to the electoral college
6 certification?

7 A I wouldn't characterize it one way or the other. It's just, he was -- you
8 know, we had already supported Senator Hawley, I believe, at this point in time, and so I
9 felt it was a good thing to do, to support other Hill allies.

10 I mean, I give advice to aides based on what I think I know the President would
11 appreciate and given the whole context of the full picture. And so that's what I did here.

12 Q Okay. And so you thought the President would appreciate tweeting out
13 stuff about Senator Hawley and Senator Cruz.

14 A Sure.

15 Q Do you know if -- did you have any interaction with Senator Cruz or Senator
16 Hawley, either themselves or their staff, about objections to the electoral college
17 certification?

18 A With them, no. And with their staff, no, not that I remember.

19 Q Okay.

20 I'm going to run through a series of tweets, and these are all about the rally in
21 Washington. First is exhibit 51.

22 Mr. [REDACTED]. And, before we do that, I'll just pause to see if anybody has any
23 questions about what we just went over.

24 Mr. [REDACTED]. I guess, to go back to the exhibit we were just looking at, and just as
25 an example, the Ted Cruz tweet, did you ever -- as you were kind of working on these

1 things or packaging things like this, did you ever talk to the White House Counsel's Office
2 or anybody about their views on actions like Ted Cruz's or Josh Hawley's?

3 The Witness. No, I don't recall ever speaking with anybody in that office about
4 it.

5 Mr. [REDACTED] Thanks.

6 BY MR. [REDACTED]:

7 Q All right. And with apologies to [REDACTED] for switching between exhibits, and
8 that was my fault, but can you go to exhibit 51, please?

9 All right. So this is a tweet from December the 27th at -- I believe that's 5:51
10 p.m., if I can see that correctly. It says, "See you in Washington, DC, on January 6th.
11 Don't miss it. Information to follow!"

12 Did you help prepare or edit or otherwise send out this tweet?

13 A No.

14 Q Do you know who did?

15 A No.

16 Q And, at that time, on the 27th, do you know what the expectations for
17 January 6th would be -- or the President's expectations, to be specific?

18 A No. I didn't speak to him about it. I assumed that this was talking about
19 the rally.

20 Q Okay. What made you assume that?

21 A Because that's when it was going to happen.

22 Q Okay.

23 I believe in exhibit 14 -- and we don't need to necessarily pull it up, but -- Jonathan
24 Swan asked you on January 5th whether you thought that the President would do a
25 speech on January 6th.

1 Did you ever look into that, find out whether the President was planning to do a
2 speech on the 6th?

3 A I don't remember. I am sure that I asked someone in person, but I don't
4 remember any conversations about it or any specific -- on that. It would've been very
5 brief and just me following up on a press question.

6 Q And, to be clear, I'll just correct myself. That was a question posed by
7 Mr. Swan on the 27th of December, the same date as this tweet.

8 A Okay. Yeah. No, I don't -- I don't recall anything like that.

9 Q Okay.

10 Exhibit 52, please, the next one.

11 So this is the next tweet, issued approximately 3 days later. The President
12 tweets out, "JANUARY SIXTH, SEE YOU IN DC!" in all caps with an exclamation mark.

13 This seems to be kind of a growing theme, something of growing importance to
14 the President. Are you familiar with that or the President's thinking about January 6th?

15 A No.

16 Q Did you ever ask anybody about it, in light of the relatively steady stream of
17 tweets that were coming out?

18 A No, not really.

19 Q And I'm sorry, I missed the last part of that. You said "not really"?

20 A Oh, I just said "no, not really," other than the things we've already discussed
21 about Member meetings, tweeting about various court cases, things of the sort.

22 Q All right.

23 And then the next day, in exhibit 53, the President tweets out on January 1st, "The
24 BIG Protest Rally in Washington, D.C., will take place at 11.00 A.M. on January 6th.
25 Locational details to follow. StopTheSteal!"

1 Did you help prepare, edit, or otherwise send out this tweet on behalf of the
2 President?

3 A No, none of the above.

4 Q Do you know who did?

5 A I don't.

6 Q And do you know anything about the timing, so plans to actually make this
7 thing happen and when it would happen?

8 A By "this thing," you mean what, the rally?

9 Q Fair point. Yes, the rally.

10 A No. I was not involved in any of those planning sessions that I can recall.

11 Q Do you know who was from the White House's side?

12 A No.

13 Q Would that be something, if you -- or based on your understanding, would
14 that be something that goes to, like, the Max Millers and Bobby Peedes of the world?

15 A I don't know. I don't know what happened in this specific case.

16 Q Okay.

17 All right. Exhibit 55. This is another tweet that the President, it looks like,
18 responds to or retweets from Kylie Jane Kremer.

19 Do you know who that is?

20 A I've heard of her. I don't know that I know her personally.

21 Q What have you heard of her that you recall?

22 A I think I've honestly seen her on the news and seen her on Twitter, et cetera.
23 That's about the extent to which I have heard of her.

24 Q Do you remember her ever visiting the White House or discussing anything
25 with White House officials or employees, including the President?

1 A No, not to my knowledge.

2 Q So she says in this tweet, "BE A PART OF HISTORY! January 6th -- arrive by
3 9AM." And the President -- that's not all she said, but the President says, "I will be
4 there. Historic day!"

5 Do you know anything about his response tweet to her?

6 A I do not, no.

7 Q And we briefly hit on this before. I understand you were traveling, at least
8 part of the day, to Georgia on the 4th and that there was a meeting I asked you about in
9 the dining room with somebody named Katrina Pierson and others. At that
10 meeting -- I'm just offering this for context, but, at that meeting, we understand the issue
11 of the National Guard being present for January 6th came up.

12 Do you know anything about discussions to use the National Guard for any reason
13 on January 6th?

14 A No. I only know what I've read in the press. I did not have any
15 discussions about that meeting that I can recall.

16 Q All right. And that was a relatively big issue post-January 6th. Did you
17 ever do anything to look into activation of the National Guard or the National Guard's role
18 on January the 6th?

19 A Was that a question? I'm sorry. What were you asking?

20 Q Yes, it was. Did you ever do -- so I guess I started with a statement that
21 that was a live issue after January 6th. A lot of questions about that and inquiry about
22 that. So did you, in your role, do anything to look into activation of the National Guard
23 or otherwise using the National Guard on January the 6th?

24 A I see what you're asking. No.

25 Q Okay. Do you know if anybody in the White House ever talked to you

1 about that?

2 A No. I vaguely remember it coming up briefly like I had referenced in my
3 text with Mr. Swan. But outside of that, no, I don't remember any specifics.

4 Q All right.

5 Now, backing up just a bit -- and we're marching through some of the tweets.
6 But, on January the 2nd, which is the same day as the call that the President and Mr.
7 Meadows had with Raffensperger, Secretary Raffensperger, there was a call with
8 Dr. Eastman, Phil Kline, Mark Martin, about 300 or so State legislators, Peter Navarro,
9 John Lott, and Members of Congress. And that was all based on one or more reports of
10 this call.

11 Are you familiar with the call I'm talking about?

12 A Only from what I've read in the press. I was not familiar with it in the
13 moment.

14 Q All right. So you were not a participant in that call, or attendee?

15 A No, not -- no, I was not.

16 Q And did you ever have to look into what happened on that call in your role as
17 communications director?

18 A I don't believe so, no.

19 Q Do you remember ever receiving any other questions about that other than
20 the one you pointed out?

21 A Not that I remember. No, I don't.

22 Q I understand there was a briefing to Members of Congress, and
23 Mr. Waldron, Phil Waldron, who we talked about earlier, understanding you didn't really
24 know him or know of him, but he sent Mr. Meadows an email that he was going to be
25 giving a briefing to Members on the Hill. And attached to that email was a PowerPoint

1 deck that's been in the press recently about options for January 6th.

2 Do you know anything about the briefing that Mr. Waldron or others provided to
3 Members of Congress on January the 5th?

4 A I don't.

5 Q Do you remember Mr. Meadows saying anything at all about briefing
6 Members of Congress on the election ahead of the joint session?

7 A I don't recall him saying anything about that, no.

8 Q Do you remember anybody in the White House talking about that, including
9 Peter Navarro or others?

10 A I don't.

11 Q All right.

12 I think we touched upon this, but I just want to be very clear. On January the
13 3rd, there was a meeting in the Oval Office regarding DOJ leadership, and I believe
14 Mr. Rosen -- Jeffrey Rosen, Mr. Donoghue, Jeffrey Clark, Pat Cipollone, the President, and
15 Mr. Meadows were there, where they discussed replacing Mr. Rosen with Mr. Clark.

16 Are you aware of that meeting?

17 A No, not that I can recall. I don't recall hearing about that in the moment.

18 Q Do you remember ever talking to Mr. Meadows about that meeting, either
19 now or -- excuse me, then or more recently?

20 A I don't recall, no.

21 Q Okay.

22 Mr. [REDACTED]. And I'll pause there to see if anybody has any questions about the
23 issues that we've gone over.

24 Okay.

25 BY MR. [REDACTED]:

1 Q All right. So we're wrapping up here, and, Mr. Williamson, I just have a few
2 additional questions.

3 And one is, do you think that the violence at the Capitol on January the 6th was
4 justified, was necessary, related to the election?

5 A I don't believe violence is ever necessary or justified.

6 Q Okay. And the President has said more recently -- but he said that the real
7 insurrection was not on January 6th but on November the 3rd.

8 Do you agree with the President about that?

9 A I'm sorry. You're going to need to repeat that. Were you reading a
10 tweet? What were you saying?

11 Q No, that's -- fair enough. So the former President, President Trump, has
12 said that the real insurrection was not on January 6th, but it was on November 3rd,
13 election day.

14 Do you agree with that sentiment?

15 A I have my reservations about the way in which the election was conducted,
16 but obviously have my issues with the way that certain people behaved at the Capitol on
17 January 6th as well. And that's really all I have to say about it.

18 Q Okay. Do you believe that the President -- or, excuse me, former President
19 Trump won the election?

20 A Like I said, I have my reservations about the way the election was conducted,
21 but that's really all I have to say about it. Joe Biden is the President.

22 Q Understood. And your reservations about the way it was conducted, do
23 you think that that led to a fraudulent outcome, that President Biden actually lost?

24 A I mean, we could have a long conversation about what the implications of it
25 are. I have issues with certain elements of the way the election was conducted. But,

1 in the way that it was conducted, Joe Biden won. He's the President. And that's really
2 all the thought that I've given to it at this point.

3 Q Okay. And the reason I'm asking, just to follow up on that, is because there
4 have been multiple statements about, you know, massive troves of fraud, of evidence of
5 fraud in the election. And so I'd just want to know, if you think there is such evidence
6 out there, we want to know what it is, as the committee investigating issues related to
7 the election and certification.

8 So are you aware of it?

9 A Like I said, I've left the election stuff to the election folks in the White House.
10 I was focused on doing my job. And on the broader point of whether Donald Trump
11 won the election, I don't work in the White House anymore, so I take it we did not.

12 Q Okay. And from the text with Ms. Farah too, I mean, there's certainly
13 additional thoughts that you shared on that, and we don't need to revisit that. But do
14 you think that Vice President Pence did the right thing on January 6th, in his role as
15 President of the Senate?

16 A I wasn't involved in the decision-making. I deeply love the Vice President
17 and will always respect him tremendously. I think he's a great man.

18 Q So do you think he did the right thing by continuing with the joint session
19 and resuming --

20 Mr. Howell. Have we entered into the forced political confessional portion of
21 the deposition here?

22 I'm just -- I know your committee's purpose is to investigate the events
23 surrounding January 6th. It seems to me this line of questioning is going at
24 Mr. Williamson's political beliefs. I don't see how that's any bit within the bounds of
25 what we're here to talk to you today about and we've so forthrightly participated on.

1 This seems to be heading down a troublesome line, so hopefully you'll wrap up
2 this line fairly quickly.

3 Mr. ████████ Well, Mr. Howell, to be clear, I mean, there were people at the
4 January 6th attack on the Capitol that were chanting "Hang Mike Pence," and Mike
5 Pence's role on January 6th is a topic of much discussion related to the attack on the
6 Capitol.

7 So having somebody who understands the role of the President and the Vice
8 President like Mr. Williamson does, getting that information is helpful, not only to us but
9 in crafting and determining whether or not there need to be any legislative changes to
10 change or codify what the expectations are for the Vice President.

11 So that's the basis for the question. I'm not driving at Mr. Williamson's political
12 beliefs, by any means.

13 Mr. Howell. Are you alleging that my client has any involvement with being at
14 the Capitol chanting "Hang Mike Pence"?

15 Mr. ████████ No, not at all. That's just context as for why this matters to the
16 committee.

17 Mr. Howell. Okay. Well, I think it's clear from his testimony he was not at the
18 Capitol. He was not involved in any chants to hang Mike Pence. He just told you his
19 view on Mike Pence.

20 If you'd like to continue down this line of more questions as to his political beliefs
21 and his First Amendment views and, as a non-legal and -election expert, his views on
22 election integrity, I hope you can at least drive and connect it to some legitimate
23 legislative purpose.

24 Because I'm disappointed that, after a day of such -- what are we at -- 7 hours of
25 cooperation, this seems to me a little bit out of line, for the tone we've set thus far.

1 Mr. ██████. And, Mr. Howell, we have other things we can move to. That's
2 perfectly fair. I do take issue with some of that characterization. I did not suggest that
3 your client was there or had anything to do with that. So I just want that to be very
4 clear on the record. It was just context for the question.

5 BY MR. ██████:

6 Q But before your appearance today, did you talk to the President or any of his
7 representatives about your testimony or your document production?

8 A No. What do you mean by "representatives"? As in people that worked
9 for the 45 office or --

10 Q Yeah, sure, anybody. That's right.

11 A No. The only check-in I did have was with attorneys, counsel, related to
12 matters of privilege, but that was very brief and really didn't lead anywhere. So, no, I
13 did not have any contact with the President or anybody like that.

14 Q Okay. All right. And I appreciate that, and I don't want to get into any
15 conversations that you had with attorneys. All of that is privileged and not relevant to
16 the committee.

17 Did you talk to any members of the President's family about your testimony or
18 production of documents?

19 A No, I did not.

20 Q Okay. Did you talk to Stephen Miller about your testimony or production
21 of documents?

22 A No, I don't believe so.

23 Q Any of your former colleagues?

24 A I still work for Mr. Meadows. We briefly spoke that I would be testifying
25 today, but not substantively.

1 I'm still dear friends with Cassidy Hutchinson. I mentioned to her that I would be
2 coming in today.

3 Beyond that, not really. There were nothing that I can recall and certainly
4 nothing substantive.

5 Q Okay. And just a followup: Did any of them make any suggestions as to
6 how you should answer questions or which documents to provide?

7 A No.

8 Q Okay.

9 Are you familiar with Matt and Mercedes Schlapp?

10 A Yes.

11 Q Have you talked to them about your testimony or production of documents
12 before the committee?

13 A Did I talk to Matt and Mercedes Schlapp? No, I did not --

14 Q Okay.

15 A -- about my testimony.

16 Q Okay.

17 Mr. [REDACTED]. All right. And, at this time, I'd like to see whether anybody else
18 has any questions, but I think we're reaching the natural conclusion here.

19 So it sounds like no.

20 And, Mr. Williamson, I very much appreciate your time. I understand that you
21 and Mr. Howell took exception to some of the questions at the end. I will say this: I do
22 think that your perspective is important, and I appreciate the fact that you spent so much
23 time with us answering questions here today.

24 I will say, if you have any followup, if you think of anything that we've talked about
25 and you remember something, we'd certainly be interested in knowing about that. If

1 you have any thoughts or you remember something differently than the way you said it,
2 we'd be interested in knowing that as well.

3 And on the topics that we discussed following up with you and Mr. Howell on,
4 that's something I'll be in touch with Mr. Howell for.

5 But is there anything else, from your perspective, that you think we, as the select
6 committee, should know in our investigation of the attack on the Capitol on January 6th?

7 The Witness. No. Thank you.

8 Mr. [REDACTED]. Okay.

9 Thank you, Mr. Howell. We'll be in touch. But, at this point, unless there's any
10 reason not to, I think we can go off the record.

11 Mr. Howell. Yep.

12 Mr. [REDACTED]. Very good. That's 4:41, and we are off the record.

13 [Whereupon, at 4:41 p.m., the deposition was concluded.]

1 Certificate of Deponent/Interviewee

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4 I have read the foregoing ____ pages, which contain the correct transcript of the
5 answers made by me to the questions therein recorded.

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10 Witness Name

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Witness Name

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Date