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

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12 INTERVIEW OF: SAMUEL ARMES

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16 Monday, July 18, 2022

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18 Washington, D.C.

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21 The interview in the above matter was held via Webex, commencing at 2:03 p.m.

22 Present: Representative Lofgren.

1 Appearances:

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4 For the SELECT COMMITTEE TO INVESTIGATE

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

6

7 [REDACTED] SENIOR ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

8 [REDACTED] PROFESSIONAL STAFF MEMBER

9 [REDACTED] INVESTIGATIVE COUNSEL

10 [REDACTED] CHIEF CLERK

11 [REDACTED] INVESTIGATIVE COUNSEL

12 [REDACTED] INVESTIGATIVE COUNSEL

13

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15 For SAMUEL ARMES:

16

17 ANESSA ALLEN SANTOS

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19 401 East Jackson Street

20 Suite 3300

21 Tampa, FL 33602

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1 [REDACTED] Good afternoon. This is a transcribed interview of Mr. Samuel
2 Armes, conducted by the House Select Committee to Investigate the January 6th Attack
3 on the United States Capitol pursuant to House Resolution 503.

4 At this time, I'd ask the witness to please state your full name and spell your last
5 name for the record.

6 Mr. Armes. Samuel Rutherford Armes, A-r-m-e-s.

7 [REDACTED] Thank you very much, Mr. Armes.

8 So this will be a staff-led interview, and members, if they join, are allowed to ask
9 questions of course. I don't see any on the Webex right now, but if any do join, I will
10 announce them for the record.

11 So I am [REDACTED] I am an investigative counsel. And on the Webex with me
12 today are [REDACTED] investigative counsel; and [REDACTED] investigative counsel.

13 And, at this time, could counsel for Mr. Armes please state your name for the
14 record?

15 Ms. Santos. Yes. Hello. I'm Anessa Allen Santos.

16 [REDACTED] Thank you very much, Ms. Santos.

17 So there is an official reporter transcribing the record of this interview. Please
18 wait until each question is completed before you begin your response, Mr. Armes, and we
19 will try to wait until your response is complete before we ask our next question. You
20 know, on these virtual interviews, it can really be hard for the stenographers to hear us if
21 we're talking over each other, so it's just very good that we be conscious of that.

22 The stenographer also cannot record nonverbal responses, such as shaking your
23 head, so it is important that you answer each question with an audible, verbal response.

24 And we ask that you provide complete answers based on your best recollection.
25 If the question is not clear -- and that happens -- please just ask for clarification. And if

1 you do not know the answer, please simply say so.

2 I also want to remind you that it is unlawful to deliberately provide false
3 information to Congress. In this interview, providing false information could result in
4 criminal penalties for false statements.

5 Do you understand, Mr. Armes?

6 Mr. Armes. Yes.

7 [REDACTED] Thank you.

8 And, just logically, if you need any breaks for comfort or to speak to Ms. Santos,
9 just let us know. We're happy to accommodate. We'll go on mute, we'll stop the
10 video, and we'll give you the time you need to talk. All right?

11 Mr. Armes. Understood.

12 [REDACTED] Thank you.

13 EXAMINATION

14 BY [REDACTED]

15 Q So, Mr. Armes, where are you from? Like, where did you grow up?

16 A I was born in West Plains, Missouri, but then my parents immediately moved
17 to Lakeland, Florida. So I've spent the majority of my life in Florida -- the Lakeland area,
18 then Tampa, and now Orlando.

19 Q My geography of Florida is embarrassingly bad. Where is --

20 A Everything along I-4 in the middle is where I've been most of my life.

21 Q Great. Thank you.

22 And what is your educational background?

23 A So I went to the University of South Florida, and I got a degree in
24 international finance, economics, and intel studies, which was part of a program at USF.
25 I was being groomed to work for the CIA and the FBI.

1 Q Did you ever end up working for either of those agencies?

2 A Not formally, but I've done work for the State Department and for United
3 States Special Operations Command out of MacDill Air Force Base, which is in Tampa.

4 Q And when you say "not formally," how did you end up doing the work for
5 those agencies?

6 A I was a -- I was not a government employee. I was a citizen. And they
7 were both programs through USF, through the intel program that I was at.

8 Q All right. So this was while you were at undergrad?

9 A Yes.

10 Q Okay.

11 And then, after you graduated, can you just walk me through your professional
12 experience since then?

13 A So my professional experience, I essentially -- beyond SOCOM and the State
14 Department in D.C., I also worked in Tallahassee. I worked for a representative there.
15 And then I worked for a lobbying firm in Tampa Bay that lobbied legislation in
16 Tallahassee.

17 My senior year of school, I had the idea to create an association for crypto and
18 blockchain companies. So I've been involved in bitcoin since 2013 is when I first found
19 out about it. And that was actually -- a lot of the work that I did for government was in
20 counterthreat finance or regulatory environments around crypto.

21 So, in 2017, I had the idea of starting Florida's State association to represent
22 crypto or blockchain companies in the State of Florida. So I traveled all around the
23 State, went to a variety of crypto/blockchain meetups. And that culminated in, upon
24 graduating, I officially formed the 501(c)(6) that is now the Florida Blockchain Business
25 Association, and I've been running that ever since.

1 I have had other professional careers along the side, but that has been my main
2 focus, has been, like, passing crypto/blockchain-friendly legislation in the State of Florida.

3 Q Okay. Great. Thank you for that very helpful rundown. I am also
4 embarrassingly uneducated when it comes to cryptocurrency, so that is all above my
5 head.

6 You mentioned a representative in Florida, though. Which one did you work for?

7 A A State representative. And it was State Representative Michael Grant,
8 who was over Charlotte County.

9 Ms. Santos. [REDACTED]

10 [REDACTED] Yes?

11 Ms. Santos. If Sam -- may I at some points assist Sam in expanding the
12 information that he is providing to you during the questioning period? Would that be
13 appropriate or inappropriate?

14 [REDACTED] That'd be appropriate if you wanted to.

15 Ms. Santos. Talk to him a little bit about your strategies, the wargame strategies,
16 that you worked on underneath your professor at school.

17 Mr. Armes. So, when I was at USF and I was being groomed to be in the CIA, FBI,
18 or any intel agencies, a lot of what we did was wargaming exercises. Are you familiar
19 with wargames?

20 [REDACTED] Yes.

21 Mr. Armes. Yeah. So I would often go through day courses where we would
22 wargame different scenarios as a part of my college education. And that actually is
23 partially what served me at SOCOM. So at SOCOM --

24 Ms. Santos. What's SOCOM?

25 Mr. Armes. United States Special Operations Command out of MacDill.

1 Ms. Santos. Thank you.

2 Mr. Armes. -- I reported under Colonel Potter's J36 counterthreat finance unit.
3 And I actually developed for them critical research on cryptocurrency that may have been
4 used by drug cartels or ISIS. And so I did similar scenarios with them, wargaming
5 scenarios, of why these terrorist groups might be using cryptocurrency and how they
6 might go about doing so.

7 [REDACTED] Okay.

8 And just a quick clarification. When you say "getting groomed" to be part of the
9 CIA, FBI, what do you mean by that?

10 Mr. Armes. Yeah, I don't know what a better term would be, but --

11 Ms. Santos. Trained.

12 Mr. Armes. Trained. Yeah, I guess trained.

13 Ms. Santos. Educated.

14 Mr. Armes. Yeah.

15 Ms. Santos. Trained and educated through the university program.

16 Mr. Armes. And my mentor. So the goal was to do everything that I was doing
17 and then, by the time I graduated, actually move to D.C. and work for one of the intel
18 agencies.

19 [REDACTED] Okay.

20 And, Ms. Santos, sorry if I wasn't clear. It's definitely okay if you want to jump in
21 with a question, but let him answer the questions, please. Thank you.

22 BY [REDACTED]

23 Q So, Mr. Armes, which professor you mentioned that you were doing
24 wargames under at USF? Which professor was that?

25 A His name is Walter Andrusyszyn, which is incredibly hard to spell, but it's,

1 like, A-n-d-r-u-s-y-s-z-e-n, Andrusyszyn. He's no longer a professor there now. I
2 believe he's retired. But he was my mentor, and he was the one who got me in a variety
3 of programs.

4 Q Okay. And was he the one who was training you to be part of these
5 organizations, or was that somebody else external to the university?

6 A Partially him, but what he did is he set up the intel certificate, and this intel
7 certificate was a bunch of classes, each kind of training you on different aspects of
8 working in the intel community.

9 Q Okay. Understood. Thank you. So I bet we'll get back to that probably
10 in a little bit, but before we do, I want to ask, do you know an Erika Flores?

11 A I do.

12 Q Okay. And how do you know her? What's the nature of your relationship
13 with her?

14 A So I met her when I was first founding my association in, I believe, 2017.
15 We first -- before I met her, my first contact was actually over WhatsApp. I had joined a
16 crypto/bitcoin Miami chat, and she was known as the queen of Miami when it comes to
17 bitcoin and cryptocurrency and was very active.

18 So, when I first started my association, I went to meetups all over the State of
19 Florida, met the leaders, the most active people in those groups, and Erika was that
20 person in Miami. So I reached out to her in 2017, told her about me starting the
21 association, and we started developing a formal work relationship thereafter.

22 She was a board member of my association. I don't recall the dates, but I believe
23 it was somewhere between 2018 to 2020 when she was a board member.

24 And so anything that I have done, cryptocurrency, blockchain, normally, if it's in
25 Miami, she would be someone that I consulted with. And as a board member, she was

1 actively advertising my association and her people to join in the Miami region.

2 Q Got it. And are you still in contact with her today?

3 A I haven't talked to her for quite some time as of late, but, generally, sure. I
4 don't remember the last time I talked to her, but I have talked to her this year. So, yes.

5 Q Great. Thank you.

6 Did you communicate with her, like, over -- you said WhatsApp. Did you use any
7 other messaging applications?

8 A We did everything. We did text message. We did Telegram. We did
9 Signal. We did email. I don't think we ever did Facebook. I'm sure we did Instagram
10 as well. Off the top of my head, those were all the platforms.

11 Q And do you have a sense of whether any of those messages from, let's say,
12 December 1, 2020, until January 6, 2021, would still be accessible by you?

13 A The Instagram ones, probably. I actually haven't checked. Facebook, if
14 they're there, probably. I don't think I've checked Facebook either.

15 But Signal and Telegram, no. Signal was always auto-delete. Telegram was
16 always auto-delete, which is very popular with people in crypto.

17 Unless there is a group chat -- I'm sure there are some group chats of me and her
18 and other crypto people on Telegram. Those would probably be accessible, as well as
19 some of these larger chats that I've talked about. Like, there's an entire
20 crypto/blockchain Miami chat that I am in, she is in. I still see her talking in there. That
21 would be accessible as well.

22 Q Okay.

23 And I know I spoke to Ms. Santos about this earlier, but did you check through
24 those messages to see if any of them relate to issues around January 6, 2021, or a
25 document known as "1776 Returns"?

1 A I did. So I have no such messages regarding that document or the
2 discussion of January 6th. My first time actually seeing the document was with my
3 lawyer last week. And then my first time actually hearing the "1776 Returns" was when
4 you mentioned it on the phone.

5 Q Okay.

6 So then let's skip ahead a little bit. I'll just ask you, did you write the "1776
7 Returns" document?

8 A I did not.

9 What I did do, unfortunately, and to be completely transparent, is -- I do recognize
10 some of the images and the language in there. So I created my own documents some
11 time ago, between the timeframes of August -- when would it have released? Sorry.
12 One second.

13 So between August and September of 2020 I would've made, like, my
14 own -- what's the word?

15 Ms. Santos. You can refer to your notes. There you go. Right here.

16 Mr. Armes. Oh, okay.

17 So can I, like, walk back and just give you, like, a general scenario and then walk
18 through?

19 So, given my education and kind of everything that I've discussed, I had really
20 watched heavily the riots in the U.S., especially during COVID, the pandemic, as well as,
21 you know, riots from the left and the right. And given my working background, I saw the
22 release of the TIP document, the Transition Integrity Project document, in August, and
23 upon seeing that and given my prior knowledge of just how these things play out, I began
24 tinkering with a Google document on my own, just what I thought might happen in a
25 worst-case scenario based off of that document that was released by TIP. It was not

1 specific to any group. It was just how I thought things might happen in a scenario where
2 a certain President doesn't leave the White House or there is just mad chaos in the
3 streets because no one knows who's in charge.

4 So I started kind of typing up what was on my mind in that document, which had
5 everything to do with, like, strategy and what I think people might do and how I think
6 they might act. And then --

7 Ms. Santos. We just have some notes here to assist him with recalling to
8 recollection the important information that he would like to share with the committee
9 today. It's obviously a highly stressful situation, and he fully desires to be completely
10 candid and transparent with this committee.

11 We're happy to share the discussion points with you as well. It's not a private
12 document. It's just in case the nerves get the better of him.

13 Mr. Armes. So I'm trying to walk you guys through kind of my reasoning behind
14 why I would even make, like, my own document from my own notes for this purpose.

15 [REDACTED] Yeah.

16 Mr. Armes. Part of it was, for example -- I don't know how familiar you are with
17 the Terri Schiavo case here in Florida, but it was a case that I had studied quite a bit.
18 And the purpose of that case essentially showed me that, when balls are very loose or
19 when government authorities are kind of confused and people don't know who to obey
20 or who to answer to, anarchy kind of breaks out, and certain parties take advantage of
21 that anarchy.

22 So the funny quote is, there are different laws and rulings in the State of Florida
23 regarding Terri Schiavo, and I think a local police force had joked if they had enough
24 ammo to fend off the Florida National Guard, right? Because they were obeying a
25 different authority than the State Troopers.

1 So all of that is on my mind. I see the TIP document. And so I begin thinking
2 about everything that I know and my prior training, and I kind of put that into practice on
3 a piece of paper, right? And this is a document completely of my own, that I'm just kind
4 of trying to get my thoughts on paper on, you know, what might happen. Because it's a
5 horrifying period in our history. I was very nervous about what might happen if things
6 really start to get heavy and was just kind of thinking of worst-case scenarios.

7 So I begin kind of typing away very loosely. To the best of my recollection, it was
8 maybe a three- to five-page document. I did have images on there. I took screenshots
9 of Google Maps. I pinpointed where I thought people would be gathering if they did
10 protests of any kind. And I recall some other things in there as well.

11 But suffice it to say -- jump to the future. I remember having a phone call with
12 Erika at some point in between August and January, August 2020 and January 2021.
13 And we mostly talked business. Certainly she would sometimes give me details on her
14 personal life, but our relationship, at least in my mind, was primarily focused on business.
15 But we would occasionally talk about what was going on in the world.

16 And I ended up -- she -- I ended up talking to her about some of this stuff, and I
17 told her that I had written a document -- because I had also -- I do this all the time,
18 actually, where I just think of scenarios in my head and I kind of journal them out. So I
19 had a whole list of, not documents like what we're talking about, but just anytime I'd
20 think of scenarios in my head, I try to write them out and get them off my mind, and then
21 I just don't think about them again. But --

22 BY [REDACTED]

23 Q Could you hold off on that for one second, Mr. Armes? Just give me a little
24 detail, if you can, about this three to five pages. What was your viewpoint on it? Were
25 you imagining that President Trump wouldn't leave office? Or did you think that the

1 election was being stolen from President Trump? What was the tension point you were
2 working on?

3 A So I want to say it was almost neither of those. The practical viewpoint I
4 was looking at is, what if there is just any kind of scenario where you just didn't know who
5 was in charge? What would happen if, from election day to 2 weeks out, we didn't
6 know who the President was?

7 And, given that we know the former President was a very unpredictable character,
8 certainly one of my thoughts was, what if he just doesn't leave, right? I mean, there
9 were multiple options, right?

10 But my viewpoint of the document was simply, how are people going to take
11 advantage of the situation? Because I think, in times of chaos, you have radical parties
12 that actually don't care about what the actual circumstances are; they just view it as an
13 opportunity to push forward their agenda, right? So that was kind of what I was
14 thinking of. Yeah.

15 And I saw that happen in riots before in the U.S. and throughout 2020, where, you
16 know, people really weren't sure what was going on, and so you saw people take to the
17 streets, do a variety of things that were obviously unlawful. And by the time we figured
18 out what was true and what wasn't, you know, buildings had already been destroyed or,
19 you know, people's lives had already been affected.

20 So that was kind of my frame of reference. I tried to be as agnostic as possible in
21 my line of thinking to try to avoid any, like, internal bias. Does that give you any clarity?

22 Q Yeah. Yeah. That's helpful.

23 So I want you to go back to, you were having this conversation with Ms. Flores.
24 You told her about -- I'm guessing you told her about this document and why --

25 A Yeah. So I had told her that I was kind of brainstorming what I think might

1 happen, and she seemed interested. And she asked if she could see it, and I said sure.
2 And so I ended up sharing it with her on a Google Drive. And after that, I thought
3 nothing of it.

4 I would've never imagined that it turned into the document that I was shown last
5 week, would've had zero clue, zero idea. I mean, it's pretty horrifying to think that that
6 document was even used and actually took from what I had written, which -- obviously,
7 you know, it's horrific for me to even imagine that something that I would've written
8 would've been used to source this kind of, like -- I guess call it "terroristic document,"
9 right, if I want to be nice about it. But, you know, never in a million years.

10 And because that was never my frame of reference, when I shared it with Erika, I
11 completely forgot about it. So, until you called me, I didn't even think that I would even
12 be in the situation that we are today where I'm talking to you about something that I
13 wrote and forgot about up until now.

14 Q So you did say you recognized some things from the document. So do you
15 have it in front of you?

16 A Yes.

17 Ms. Santos. Yes.

18 So, [REDACTED] just a bit of a preface here. Mr. Armes and I sat down and we
19 went over the "1776" document that's, you know, on the docket today. And we went
20 through it piece by piece, and we have marked those items that we recognize as being
21 wholly sourced from his original document and then items which appear to be
22 extrapolations of some sort from his document.

23 And if it would please the committee, we'd like to walk you through it step by step
24 and talk about those pieces that we recognize.

25 [REDACTED] Well, you beat me to what I was going to ask to do, so that'd be

1 great.

2 BY [REDACTED]

3 Q And, actually, before we do that, do you have that original document still?

4 A Yeah, that's a point of contention right now, because I have three Google
5 Drives because I'm cheap and I just delete stuff when I don't want to expand the data
6 amount, and because I never even thought I'd be in this scenario, I think I deleted it.
7 And by "I think," I've spent countless hours trying to look for it on all my Google Drives. I
8 know there may be a way to still get a hold of it, because I know sometimes it's stored in
9 databases somewhere, but I, to the best of my recollection, have not been able to find it.

10 It was also -- Erika -- and she did this often, but she had me share it with some
11 new email that she had made, and I also don't recall what that email was to even search
12 for it. And because my document obviously had none of these buzzwords like "1776
13 Returns," once again, I still haven't been able to find it. But certainly I'm still looking.

14 Ms. Santos. To that point, I happen to be a tech lawyer, and I've spent a lot of
15 years working with data, network architecture. And so I contacted some folks in the
16 industry that know quite a bit about privacy and data security measures as it relates to
17 Fortune 500 companies worldwide. And we talked about data-retention policies,
18 customer-facing policies as well as that, which actually happens.

19 And so we would like to also submit to the committee that, should you like to
20 subpoena any information, including any audit logs, in relation to his Google email
21 accounts, that we would be more than happy to cooperate with the committee, provide
22 all of the information that we have, so that the subpoenas would return some results
23 from the audit logs of Google's data centers.

24 [REDACTED] We appreciate that. Thank you, Ms. Santos.

25 BY [REDACTED]

1 Q And, actually, again, before we go step by step, which I think will be very
2 helpful, just for the record then, did you ask Ms. Flores to forward this document to
3 Enrique Tarrio?

4 A Nope, not at all. Never.

5 Q Do you know Enrique Tarrio at all, like, personally?

6 A I want to say, personally, I've met him maybe twice. And that was because
7 Erika had a lot of men that she was pursuing in boyfriend relationships. I wasn't sure
8 what their relationship was, but it was actually a very contentious thing in the Miami
9 community.

10 So sometimes I would go to do work in Miami, I would meet up with Erika, and
11 there was a time when Enrique was there with her. Ran into other people as well. She
12 did add him to this Telegram group of all the crypto/blockchain people in Miami, and he
13 would talk in that group.

14 But certainly not a friend of mine. Was never interested in pursuing any kind of a
15 relationship, as I was pretty familiar with what he stands for and represented, so I kept
16 my distance. But I was never entirely sure how close he was with Erika. So, obviously,
17 given the situation, a lot closer than I had ever presumed --

18 Ms. Santos. Tell [REDACTED] and the committee about your meeting with Erika in
19 West Palm and Enrique was there.

20 Mr. Armes. So there was a time -- so, you know, because Erika and I were
21 business partners, anytime she was in the Miami area and I was coming down to Miami,
22 I'd always make an effort to see her if there was anything that we had to discuss about
23 business.

24 So I believe one time she had an Airbnb in, I believe it was West Palm Beach, to
25 the best of my recollection. And when I arrived at that Airbnb, she was there with

1 Enrique, which obviously made me incredibly uncomfortable. But I stuck around to talk
2 to her for a bit.

3 And Enrique was trying to get me to help him figure out a way to make money off
4 of selling T-shirts online, which was a pretty weird request. And they wanted me to,
5 like, brainstorm with them on, like, T-shirt ideas and setting up some kind of warehouse
6 in Miami to help underserved kids.

7 So that and seeing him at a restaurant with Erika were the only two times I've met
8 him in person. Yeah. And had zero interest, you know, ever even meeting him.
9 Those weren't even planned meetings. He just happened to be there with Erika, who I
10 was there to meet with.

11 BY [REDACTED]

12 Q And you mentioned that he was in one of your crypto group chats and he
13 actually talked. Did he ever talk about things that would be relevant for the select
14 committee -- you know, January 6th, the stolen election, things about President Trump?

15 A Yeah, I don't know because he -- so, when I say my group chats, I don't
16 run -- I'm not the owner of these Telegram groups. So there is probably 15,000 people
17 in Florida who are part of crypto/blockchain Telegram groups as well as Discords and
18 WhatsApp. So, just given the nature of my association, I am in almost all of those to try
19 to promote what I'm doing. He was only in the Miami one. And I never kept track. I
20 mean, I maybe checked the Miami chat once every couple of weeks, just simply due to
21 time. So there could be something there, but I have no clue in the world, just because I
22 never closely monitored it.

23 Q Okay. And is that one of those weird chats that you might be able to still
24 access back from that time period? Because we would be interested in seeing what Mr.
25 Tarrio said, if he said anything, you know, that wasn't just about crypto but was about

1 protesting the election or --

2 A Yeah. What I could do -- and I don't know how this would work -- is, I could
3 give you an invite link. So Telegram has an option where you can set it so new members
4 can scroll up and see previous history. I don't know if it's enabled for that group. If it
5 is, all I would have to do with you is share it so you could get in there, and then you could
6 scroll up yourself.

7 The only other option would be, I guess, yeah, I'd have to do it myself, if that
8 feature is there --

9 Ms. Santos. Sam, I can help you produce the results.

10 Mr. Armes. Okay. In screenshares, screenshots?

11 Ms. Santos. Yes.

12 [REDACTED]

13 [REDACTED] We can talk about it after --

14 Ms. Santos. Yeah. I am a well-known crypto lawyer in the State of Florida, and I
15 also participate in a number of these same chats.

16 Just to provide a little bit of context, when there's 10,000 members in a Telegram
17 chat, the messages come hundreds, sometimes more than a thousand, a day. And --

18 Mr. Armes. Sorry, I'm cramping.

19 Ms. Santos. Okay. Take a moment. Take a moment. Take a moment. Go
20 ahead and -- that's all right. Take a moment.

21 [REDACTED] Do you want a quick --

22 Mr. Armes. No, no. I'm good. I just did a --

23 Ms. Santos. Charley horse. Charley horse. Just --

24 Mr. Armes. I'm good. I just did leg day today, and I maxed out my PR squats,
25 and now it's hurting.

1 Ms. Santos. Take a moment.

2 He's on the floor.

3 Mr. Armes. No, I'm good, I'm good. Man, this is embarrassing.

4 ████████ You're all right. I understand what you're feeling.

5 Ms. Santos. It's okay. Take a moment.

6 Mr. Armes. No, I'm good, we're good. I'm back.

7 By the way, that PR was 425 pounds.

8 ████████ That will now be in the congressional Record, so that's good.

9 Mr. Armes. Yeah, that's cool.

10 Ms. Santos. So I can probably -- so since -- I can probably --

11 Mr. Armes. So let's get -- do you want to go to the document?

12 Ms. Santos. I will assist the -- just relax. Just exhale.

13 Mr. Armes. No, I'm good, I'm good. Let's go.

14 Ms. Santos. Pause. Pause.

15 So I will assist him with checking the Facebook -- I'm making notes -- the

16 Instagram. We've talked about the social media, but he's young and he uses those so

17 little he forgets about them.

18 So I've got notes here. We're going to check our Facebook messages. We're
19 going to check Instagram. Okay. I'm going to assist him with sourcing the Telegram
20 chat messages involving Enrique.

21 ████████ Thank you. And if Mr. Tarrio said anything about the election or
22 January 6th too.

23 BY ██████████

24 Q So my next question to you was going to be: Do you have any idea why
25 Ms. Flores would tell us that you wrote "1776 Returns" and that you asked her to send it

1 to Mr. Tarrio?

2 A I guess she's just blame-shifting. I mean, she's just throwing me under the
3 bus for a document that -- and I don't know if she even authored the document. All I
4 know is that I shared stuff that I had written, material that I had written with her. I don't
5 know who even created the "1776" document. All I know is that I shared it with her.

6 So she probably -- I mean, I don't know if this is -- I'm extrapolating. But on the
7 end point, right -- because I originated this idea in my mind of what I think might happen.
8 And, obviously, given that I've now seen this, she took my ideas as an inspiration, and her
9 or some group of people then turned it into "1776 Returns."

10 And that's why I can confidently say I've never seen this document in my life. It
11 uses stuff that I talked about, but even the name, I've never even heard of the name,
12 right? So, yeah, I'm just a scapegoat, I guess is the best way to word it.

13 Q Okay.

14 Well, then, why don't you take us through the document and let us know what
15 was yours, what was redone. Just go ahead.

16 A So I'm going to start just with the first page, right? So none of this is mine.
17 Didn't write a single piece of this. You know, this is obviously an appendix or, like --

18 Ms. Santos. Table of contents.

19 Mr. Armes. -- table of contents. Didn't do any of that.

20 Turning the page, page 2 of 9, that image, that image was taken from the
21 document that I had authored.

22 Ms. Santos. Talk about the circles and --

23 Mr. Armes. The circles --

24 Ms. Santos. -- what you were thinking about --

25 Mr. Armes. Yeah.

1 Ms. Santos. Yeah. So slow it down -- yeah.

2 Mr. Armes. The circles indicate areas that I thought people would be coalescing.

3 Once again, this is a -- from the frame of reference, this is regardless of what happens
4 with the Presidency, this is, if there is a bunch of people in D.C., from left or right, who are
5 rioting and they have a certain goal or there's bad actors, what are they going to do?
6 Right?

7 So those red circles are places that I thought were of interest where people I think
8 would gather, right? Strategic locations that I think they would try to create chaos.

9 BY [REDACTED]

10 Q All right. So, on the second page, you didn't circle the Capitol.

11 A Correct. Yes.

12 Q Can you explain why not?

13 A I just thought they would congregate around the Capitol.

14 Q You didn't think they would congregate at the Capitol; you thought they
15 would congregate at other places?

16 A I thought they would congregate everywhere, to be honest. I mean, I
17 thought they would congregate -- and I don't know if what I'm saying is actually in the
18 document that I wrote.

19 But, in general, I thought they would congregate at anywhere there was a
20 government office. So I was thinking the Supreme Court, I was thinking the Capitol, I
21 was thinking the House and Senate Office Buildings, I was thinking the Lincoln
22 Memorial -- the majority of where you kind of see protests already. Yeah, even the
23 other day, we saw protests around the National Mall. They seem to go around the same
24 spots each time.

25 So yes, I thought the Capitol. I also thought the White House or outside the

1 White House, you know. And every time I say "at the Capitol" or "at the White House," I
2 mean, I haven't been to D.C. in a long time, but I always assumed it was in areas that
3 were allowed for protests, right? Never, oh, actually in the Capitol Building or on
4 property that you're not supposed to be on. Because I'm used to seeing lawful protests,
5 but protests nonetheless.

6 Q Okay.

7 So, just to -- so the circles then, you circled the other buildings, but you didn't put
8 a red circle around the Capitol. Is that just -- is there a reason for that?

9 A They're all red on my document.

10 Ms. Santos. We show three red circles.

11 Mr. Armes. Are we looking at the --

12 BY [REDACTED]

13 Q The U.S. Capitol is not circled. So the buildings that are circled in red are, I
14 think, Dirksen, Cannon, it looks like the Supreme Court. It's hard to see on the exhibit.
15 But the Capitol is the one in the middle that's not circled, in the middle, the green grass.

16 A Yeah. So you're asking why I didn't circle the Capitol?

17 Q Yeah.

18 A I don't know.

19 Q Okay. That's fine.

20 Ms. Santos. Is it a possibility that your original document may have circled the
21 Capitol and perhaps that circle was removed?

22 Mr. Armes. I have no clue. I don't know.

23 Ms. Santos. Okay.

24 Mr. Armes. I don't know.

25 Ms. Santos. All right. So --

1 [REDACTED] has a question, I believe.

2 [REDACTED] Yes. Sorry to interrupt. I just want to note for the record that
3 Zoe Lofgren, a member on the committee, joined.

4 [REDACTED] Oh. Thank you.

5 Welcome, Ms. Lofgren. I'm sorry. I couldn't see you on my Webex.

6 Ms. Lofgren. I've been on all along.

7 [REDACTED] Okay. Thank you.

8 So why don't you continue on, Mr. Armes -- unless you have a question,
9 Ms. Lofgren?

10 Ms. Lofgren. No, I'm fine.

11 [REDACTED] Thank you.

12 BY [REDACTED]

13 Q All right. Please go ahead.

14 A Yeah. So the overall goal I don't recall. What I do recall is the targeted
15 buildings, which is obviously inherent in that I circled those buildings on the image, right?
16 Once again --

17 Ms. Santos. Can you walk through what portions of the targeted buildings were
18 related to or extrapolated from or not at all related to your document? So be a little
19 more --

20 Mr. Armes. I don't, to the best of my recollection, recall exactly. All I know is I
21 didn't put "CNN -- at least egg doorway." That I know I for sure didn't put. I don't
22 know if I put all the office buildings. But, yeah, that's all to the best of my recollection.

23 But what I talked about was, if things were going to happen, once again, to
24 reiterate, where do I think people would congregate.

25 Ms. Santos. Was your document more of a narrative, or did you list things out

1 sort of --

2 Mr. Armes. I don't know. It was just my thoughts. So it didn't
3 have -- probably both.

4 Ms. Santos. Okay.

5 Mr. Armes. It was just whatever was on my mind.

6 So page 3 of 9, so "Manpower Needs," I didn't write any of that, to the best of my
7 recollection. I did reference and talk about how -- what I thought people would be
8 doing.

9 So, for example, in any demonstration, you always have a leader, someone kind of
10 calling out what to do. So I believe I made reference to that there would be people
11 ordering the crowd around. But I don't recall doing it in this specific detail or
12 even -- like, it says "Lead: Covert Sleeper." I don't recall writing that at all.

13 "Second: Takes place of the lead in case of being discovered." Don't recall
14 writing that at all. "Will also need to make a fake appointment."

15 So, yeah, once again, took a general idea of mine, which I just see by seeing, you
16 know, protests, and extrapolated it in detail.

17 "January 1-5 -- preparation," I didn't write any of that. That's the middle
18 sentence.

19 And then "January 6 -- execution date overview," I didn't write any of this. I
20 think it is referencing how I talked about how people would, one, prepare for whatever
21 actions they might do and that you would have people scouting out areas, right, and that
22 we should take precautions for people who might be scouting out areas.

23 But, once again, this is like a detailed plan of action, whereas what I said was what
24 I think might happen and what to look out for.

25 BY [REDACTED]

1 Q Did your original document mention January 6th at all?

2 A I actually don't recall. It may have, but I don't know. Because I know the
3 TIP document that kind of inspired me to do a lot of this, like, thinking talks about
4 January 6th, I believe, as, like, a main day. But to the best of my recollection, I don't
5 recall actually mentioning January 6th. But it is possible.

6 Q Okay. Thank you.

7 A Page 4 of 9, "Part 2: Execution," I didn't touch any of that. I don't recall
8 any single bit about that.

9 One thing that they did take was, I noticed they talked about pulling fire alarms in
10 different places and locations. I did in my document talk about how people would try to
11 use distractions in general to essentially just confuse the powers that be, whoever that
12 might be. And so that could involve getting in, blocking roads with, like, crowds, which, I
13 mean, we still see quite often, or pulling fire alarms at large, like, shopping centers, which
14 we've also seen before when people want to cause chaos.

15 So I did mention that. But I mention, once again, keeping my perspective of
16 what I think might happen, not saying, "Hey, let's go do this." Just what I thought
17 people might do.

18 The "Part 3: if necessary, distract," this is really farfetched, especially the "Only
19 to be done if they won't allow patriots into buildings we OWN!!" Never, ever would've
20 authored a sentence like that.

21 "Distract law enforcement in the area" -- so that whole middle part, no.

22 "Part 4: Occupy," that's completely nothing having to do with what I ever wrote.
23 The whole list of whatever those are, demands -- "Free and fair elections," "Liberty or
24 Death" -- not at all. I know for a fact that's not in the document.

25 "Part 5: Sit In." I probably mentioned when I was talking about what people

1 might do that they might try to do sit-ins, which I've seen before, when people go into
2 office buildings and do sit-ins. I think there was one, like, a year ago or even before
3 January 6th where people just went and sat in.

4 Once again, there's a lot of extrapolation. Like, "What's the ending point for
5 this? Who does government respond to?" has nothing to do with me and what I
6 would've thought of.

7 Page --

8 Q And --

9 A -- 5 of 9 -- go ahead.

10 Q And, then, you would not have written "No Trump, No America," I'm
11 guessing?

12 A No. No. Correct. Correct. Every one of those dash points I would have
13 never written.

14 Q Okay.

15 A "We the people require our representatives to represent" -- never would've
16 written that, ever, nor did I write that.

17 Page 5 of 9, "Notes." So, once again, this is, like, an extrapolation. And so, by
18 the way, I have on our document, I have a highlighter of orange in things that I don't
19 believe my document had but that I think was extrapolated from my document, so
20 anything I might have put in an idea like I've already discussed and then they went into
21 detail and marked it.

22 So I talked about how people would probably be wearing masks to protect their
23 identity and how that would be a big way that they cause chaos.

24 A lot of this I kind of already talked about, how I thought people would block
25 streets.

1 So I'm going to move over to page 6 of 9. "Man Power Assignments -- fill this
2 out," I didn't touch this at all. This was not in my document at all.

3 Where they list a lead, hypeman, don't know what those were. Obviously,
4 they're stated, I guess, in the front, but I didn't write that either.

5 So nothing on page 6 is from me.

6 "Patriot Plan Logistics." Nothing on page 7 is from me.

7 And then page 8 is definitely not from me. I know that for a fact.

8 And then page 9, it's just another image that I think is my image that I had in my
9 document. There's no red circles or anything, so I can't say for sure that that was on my
10 document, but it could've been, since it's just an empty duplicate of what I had on page 2.

11 Q Okay. Thank you. That was very helpful.

12 And I guess, just from your experience with wargames, do you have any
13 idea -- have you ever heard the phrase "Storm the Winter Palace" before?

14 A No, I have not. Although, is that from, like, Napoleon or Russia or
15 something?

16 Q It comes from a 1920 reenactment of the Bolshevik Revolution in 1917 when
17 they stormed the provisional government that had taken over the czar's palace.

18 A Ah. I mean, I'm familiar with that period of history, but I've actually -- to
19 my discredit, I guess, I've actually never heard that term, "Storm the Winter Palace."

20 Q That's okay.

21 I guess, then, for the record, do you have any association with the Proud Boys?

22 A No.

23 Q Okay. Do you have any association with any other militia groups?

24 A No.

25 Would -- is that an association?

1 Ms. Santos. So, again, in the interest of being completely candid and
2 transparent, [REDACTED] you might recall that in our phone call, our brief phone call last
3 week, I mentioned that Sam was recently questioned in regards to someone -- oh, yes,
4 yes, I just remembered -- in regards to whether or not he was physically present at the
5 January 6th event. And it was because -- it was an Oath Keeper?

6 Mr. Armes. Yes.

7 Ms. Santos. I get those confused. Pardon me. An Oath Keeper had a
8 misunderstanding in the nature of his relationship with Mr. Armes and included his name
9 on a hotel room. But Mr. Armes was not aware of this and had no such relationship
10 with this gentleman, did not want the relationship with this gentleman. This gentleman
11 did invite Mr. Armes and encouraged him to participate in the Oath Keepers, which Mr.
12 Armes vehemently rejected.

13 And Mr. Armes did provide substantial conclusive evidence that he was, in fact, at
14 work that week of the Capitol riots in Tampa.

15 Mr. Armes. And that association, once again, comes from a crypto-related --

16 Ms. Santos. Yes.

17 Mr. Armes. -- conversation. So --

18 Ms. Santos. So, to the -- is that the only people you know who are --

19 Mr. Armes. Yes.

20 Ms. Santos. -- in -- those two individuals, so Enrique and then this other guy, and
21 that was it? You don't --

22 Mr. Armes. Yes. That is it.

23 Ms. Santos. Okay.

24 [REDACTED] What is that individual's name?

25 Mr. Armes. James Beeks.

1 Ms. Santos. Yes. That's right.

2 Mr. Armes. James Beeks.

3 ██████████ Do you know how to spell his last name?

4 Mr. Armes. B-e-e-k-s? I think.

5 Ms. Santos. And I do have that -- I have records of that correspondence and the
6 name and contact information of the Federal prosecutor in that case, which I'm happy to
7 share with the committee if it would so please them.

8 ██████████ Thank you.

9 BY ██████████

10 Q But can you expand a little bit on your relationship with him? It doesn't
11 seem, you know, ordinary for someone to just put your name on a hotel room,
12 especially --

13 A Yeah, I know. That -- I mean, to -- I guess I can't, but I've already talked to
14 people within the government about this, but he viewed me as a romantic potential.
15 And that was never in my mind, one, a possibility; two, ever made clear; and, three, he
16 was just a radical guy who I also tried to distance myself from but who was in some of the
17 same cryptocurrency circles given my line of work.

18 And so he had went to the Capitol and, in the hopes of me coming, put my name
19 on the hotel room as well.

20 Q Did he, like, message you privately about doing this or contact you about
21 inviting you to January 6, like, through text, emails? How was he doing this?

22 A So, same thing. So this would've been Telegram and Signal, mostly deleted
23 message. He did invite me to come up, but I had told him no, that I wasn't interested.

24 And then you had another question. What was your other question?

25 Q No, that answered the question.

1 A Yeah.

2 Q So I guess, then, did he talk to you about the plan for January 6th?

3 A No. I don't even know if he knew of a plan or not. I have no idea what he
4 knew. I was just questioned on my relationship with him because he had put my name
5 on a hotel room, which -- I did not even know my name was on the hotel room until the
6 day of that interview, actually.

7 Q Did you ever meet Mr. Beeks in person, or was this just communication?

8 A We met in person because he lived in Orlando and would come to my
9 crypto/blockchain meetups here in Orlando.

10 Q Okay.

11 A So, once again, it was another cryptocurrency/blockchain connection, which
12 I feel like is making my community look very bad.

13 Ms. Santos. I have a feeling that --

14 Mr. Armes. I promise we're not all like that.

15 Ms. Santos. I feel like that, at the end of this conversation, we need to have a
16 followup rehabilitative conversation about the joys of crypto.

17 Mr. Armes. There are plenty of law-abiding citizens who do not think like this
18 within the crypto community. But we do --

19 Ms. Santos. I echo --

20 Mr. Armes. -- I guess, attract crazies.

21 Ms. Santos. -- that. We do attract crazies, but we're overwhelmingly
22 governmental-friendly.

23 [REDACTED] Okay. Thank you.

24 BY [REDACTED]

25 Q Mr. Armes, before you, you know, found out your name was on the hotel

1 room, were you aware that Mr. Beeks viewed you as a possible partner, or romantic
2 partner?

3 A No. I mean, I -- I try not to discriminate against anybody in their, you know,
4 sexual preferences, so I have a lot of friends who are gay and trans and all that kind of
5 stuff. And, you know -- so certainly sometimes people make advances, and I'm
6 just -- maybe just not aware, because I surround myself with a diverse group of people.

7 So he probably took me being friendly as me responding to his advances,
8 but -- yeah, was never aware. Never my intention. And, you know, kind of as I said,
9 I've been through that conversation before with, not one of your colleagues, but other
10 people within government.

11 Q Yeah. We are separate from the Department of Justice, so sorry to make
12 you do this twice.

13 Did you talk to Mr. Beeks about the 2020 election?

14 A I'm sure we did. Mr. Beeks -- yeah, I guess I'll have to go through this again.
15 Mr. Beeks would talk to me about all kinds of ideas, which is one of the reasons
16 why I really wanted no association with him, because he believed that our entire
17 government was fake and that we're owned by the country of England and that America
18 is a corporation, which is a popular Oath Keeper belief system. So he talked to me about
19 all kinds of conspiracy theories like that. And so you can imagine, I'm sure everything
20 happening in government today, just, he takes as another part of that, right?

21 So, certainly, I'm sure we would've had a conversation or two, but I really -- I
22 would ignore a lot of his calls, not respond to any of his Signal messages, and just kind of
23 keep my distance, like I said, because I'm not interested in hanging out with people like
24 that.

25 Q So you're not -- are you aware of the Sovereign Citizens Movement?

1 A I am now.

2 Q Okay. So you were not a part of that?

3 A No. No, I am not.

4 Q Understood.

5 I think then -- actually, do you know someone named Jeremy Liggett in Florida?

6 A L-i-g --

7 Q Yeah, L-i-g-g-e-t-t.

8 A Jeremy Liggett. To the best of my recollection, I have never heard that
9 name in my life. Jeremy Liggett? Is he into cryptocurrency?

10 Q I'm not sure. But it was just a question based on this document, so --

11 A No, I've never heard of him in my life.

12 Q Okay.

13 I think -- give me just 1 second to make sure there's nothing else that I need to do.

14 Oh, actually, did Ms. Flores ever talk to you about things that Mr. Tarrio had said
15 to her about the election?

16 A No, nor did I ever ask. I was never interested -- even though she would
17 often tell me about her -- sometimes tell me about her variety of relationships with men, I
18 was never interested and not a fan of her even being around Enrique. So I think she
19 knew better than to talk to me about him. So, no, she never told me anything about
20 him, to the best of my recollection.

21 Q Great.

22 And, then, do you have any inkling -- just, you know, take the word "inkling" for
23 what it is -- about who might have drafted "1776 Returns" if it wasn't Ms. Flores?

24 A No.

25 Oh, about Jeremy?

1 Ms. Santos. Jeremy Liggett.

2 Mr. Armes. No, I've never seen him in my life.

3 Ms. Santos. For the record, I'm showing him -- I'm showing Sam a photo of
4 Jeremy Liggett, and he does not --

5 Mr. Armes. Yeah, I've never seen him in my life.

6 Ms. Santos. -- recognize Jeremy Liggett. Okay.

7 Mr. Armes. I have no idea, because I -- I mean, even the fact that we're having
8 this conversation, once again, I have no idea what Erika was fully involved in, who her
9 contacts were, what her connections were. If I had previously, I certainly would've
10 never shared my thoughts on a piece of paper with her, given her intentions that I now
11 know about.

12 So I have zero clue of who could've made the "1776" document, but what I can tell
13 you is, she is the only person that I shared it with. Even though I didn't even -- you
14 know, I've talked to people about stuff like this. Once again, it's just how my brain
15 works. But she was the only one who asked to actually see it, and she's the only one
16 who I shared it with, to the best of my recollection.

17 So what she did with it when she had it, I have no idea.

18 ██████████ Well, that's helpful. Thank you.

19 So, Ms. Santos, we very much appreciate the cooperation.

20 Mr. Armes, thank you for, you know, helping out and giving us your side of the
21 story.

22 So we'll be in touch, Ms. Santos, about, you know, those texts and the Telegram
23 chats. If you can share the write-up you all did --

24 Ms. Santos. Yes.

25 ██████████ Yeah. That would be --

1 Mr. Armes. I'm willing --

2 Ms. Santos. We will be happy to share with you a few extra documents here.

3 So Sam typed up a short rough timeline of document creations to the best of his
4 recollection; also the discussion points around today; and I will scan in the marked copy
5 of our document which indicates those parts that Sam recognizes as direct copies and
6 those that are extrapolations.

7 And just for the record, you know, we would like to reiterate that this is a most
8 unfortunate total misappropriation of Sam's intellectual property, to which he absolutely
9 did not consent to this activity here. This was not permitted in any way, shape, or form.

10 [REDACTED] Okay.

11 I thank you again.

12 We'll go off the record at 3:00 p.m.

13 [Whereupon, at 3:00 p.m., the interview was concluded.]

1

2 Certificate of Deponent/Interviewee

3

4

5 I have read the foregoing ____ pages, which contain the correct transcript of the
6 answers made by me to the questions therein recorded.

7

8

9

10

11

Witness Name

12

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14

15

Date

16