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

INTERVIEW OF: DUSTIN THOMPSON

Wednesday, November 16, 2022

Washington, D.C.

The interview in the above matter was held via Webex, commencing at 9:04 a.m.

Present: Representative 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:

7

8 RICHARD BRUNO, [REDACTED]

9 HEATHER CONNELLY, [REDACTED]

10 JACOB GLICK, [REDACTED]

11 SANDEEP PRASANNA, [REDACTED]

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15 For DUSTIN THOMPSON:

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[REDACTED] Good morning. This is a transcribed interview of Mr. Dustin Thompson, conducted by the House Select Committee to Investigate the January 6th Attack on the United States Capitol pursuant to House Resolution 503.

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

Mr. Thompson. Dustin Thompson, T-h-o-m-p-s-o-n.

[REDACTED] Thank you.

Again, this will be a staff-led interview, although members may of course choose to come in and ask questions. At this time, there are no members who are in the room with us, but we'll announce them if any of them do arrive.

My name is [REDACTED] investigative counsel for the select committee. Also with me in the room are [REDACTED], investigative counsel; [REDACTED], investigative counsel; and [REDACTED], professional staff member.

At this time, could counsel for the witness please state their name for the record?

Mr. Stewart. Yes. My name is Andrew Stewart, S-t-e-w-a-r-t.

[REDACTED] Thank you, Mr. Stewart.

There is an official reporter transcribing the record of this interview. Please wait until each question is completed before you begin your response, and we will try to wait until your response is complete before asking another question.

The stenographer cannot record nonverbal responses, like shaking your head or nodding your head, so it's important that you answer each question with an audible, verbal response. If you don't, I may prompt you.

We ask you that you provide complete answers based on your best recollection of events. If a question is not clear, please ask us to repeat it. If you don't know the

1 answer, please say so. You may only refuse to answer a question to preserve a privilege
2 recognized by the select committee, like the Fifth Amendment right against
3 self-incrimination.

4 The first key point that I want to underscore is that this interview is voluntary. If
5 at any time you'd like to stop speaking with us, please say so.

6 Similarly, if at any point you wish to discuss something with your attorney in
7 private, please let us know, and we'll take a break so you both can have that
8 conversation.

9 Do you understand?

10 Mr. Thompson. Yeah.

11 [REDACTED] Great.

12 Second, this interview is not under oath. However, because this is still a formal
13 select committee investigatory proceeding, you are obligated under Federal law to tell
14 the truth to Congress, the same as if you were speaking with the FBI or the DOJ.

15 It is deliberately unlawful to provide -- sorry. It is unlawful to deliberately
16 provide false information to Congress. For this interview, providing false information
17 could result in criminal penalties for perjury and/or false statements.

18 Do you understand?

19 Mr. Thompson. Yes.

20 [REDACTED] Thank you.

21 Third, you are not obligated to keep the fact of this interview and what we discuss
22 confidential. You are free to tell whomever you wish that you met with us, including the
23 prosecutor or judge on your case, or you can tell no one at all. That is your decision.

24 However, we will not disclose the contents of what we discuss today until properly
25 authorized for release by the chair and the rest of the committee.

1 Do you understand?

2 Mr. Thompson. Yes.

3 [REDACTED] Fourth, the select committee is separate and independent from the
4 Department of Justice. We have no involvement with their ongoing prosecutions, and
5 the DOJ is not a partner with the select committee and its investigation whatsoever.

6 The select committee also is not a party to your criminal case and is not agreeing
7 to submit anything on your behalf to your judge.

8 Do you understand?

9 Mr. Thompson. Yes.

10 [REDACTED] So, to recap logistics, please let us know if you need any breaks or
11 would like to discuss anything with your attorney. We'll try to take a break at about the
12 hour mark, just to make sure we all have enough stamina to get through the entire
13 interview.

14 And, as I mentioned earlier, there may be several people asking questions. [REDACTED]
15 [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] will chime in, and I'll be pausing at certain points to see if they
16 have anything to add. And, as with me, if they ask a question you don't understand,
17 please simply ask us to repeat it or rephrase it.

18 All good?

19 Mr. Thompson. Yes.

20 Mr. Stewart. Yes, sir.

21 [REDACTED] Great.

22 EXAMINATION

23 BY [REDACTED]

24 Q So we'll start with a few background questions just to begin. First, Mr.
25 Thompson, where are you from?

1 A Columbus, Ohio.

2 Q How long have you lived there?

3 A Ohio all my life.

4 Q And what is your educational background?

5 A I graduated from the Ohio State University 2008 or '09. I think it was '09.

6 Q And what do you do for a living?

7 A Previously, I was doing furniture repair. I've kind of bounced around; I've
8 done several jobs. But that was my last one I was doing up until trial.

9 Q And throughout the time in question -- we're talking about 2020 into
10 2021 -- what were you doing for your career?

11 A I was doing pest control up until March of 2020, and then I was laid off on
12 March 17th. Then I was unemployed until January 9th of '22.

13 Q Okay. So you say you were laid off in March 2020; is that correct?

14 A Yes.

15 Q Was that related to the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic?

16 A I believe so. Yeah.

17 Q Understood.

18 So, going back to that general timeframe, early to mid-2020, how closely would
19 you say you were following political events throughout former President Trump's term in
20 office?

21 A You said during 2020?

22 Q Yeah.

23 A Yeah. I would say, like, pretty, like -- I don't know -- like, pretty close, I
24 guess, following stuff, like, daily news and stuff, listening to talk radio when I was
25 working.

1 Q Understood. That's helpful.

2 So you say you listened to talk radio. Were there other sources of information
3 like cable TV or certain websites that you used to gather information?

4 A Yeah. For websites, I mean, like, it was Drudge Report and Zero Hedge
5 were two I went to kind of daily. I didn't watch much TV.

6 Q Okay. That's helpful.

7 I'm gonna run through a couple of social media applications and just ask if you
8 used any of them to browse for news.

9 A Yeah.

10 Q So, first, 4chan?

11 A I've been on it. I would never -- I didn't really understand how to use it.

12 Q Okay. 8kun?

13 A No.

14 Q No. Facebook?

15 A No.

16 Q Parler?

17 A No.

18 Q Reddit?

19 A Yeah, I've been on Reddit.

20 Q Any particular subreddits, or is that -- r/TheDonald?

21 A Like, it'd be, like, the front page or something.

22 Q Okay.

23 A Like, main stories, I guess.

24 Q Okay, got it. Telegram?

25 A No.

1 Q TikTok?

2 A I've been on it, but for wasting time. Nothing --

3 Q Understood.

4 A -- productive happens on there.

5 Q Twitter?

6 A Yeah, I would be on Twitter. I followed a few people. No one -- I mean, I
7 followed Trump, I guess, but, like, outside that, nothing really, normally, political.

8 Q Okay. What about Gettr?

9 A No.

10 Q TheDonald.win?

11 A No.

12 Q Gab?

13 A No.

14 Q Okay. Discord?

15 A No.

16 There was, like, Qmap.pub was, like, a QAnon website that I'd have, like, posts
17 about QAnon drops, they were called, like -- and I would check those out.

18 Q Could you say the name of that website again?

19 A Qmap.pub.

20 Q Qmap.pub. Okay.

21 So would you say you subscribed to QAnon beliefs throughout 2020?

22 A I mean, I found it interesting. I don't really see, like, an exact belief system.
23 I feel like it was more asking questions and, you know, letting people come to their own
24 conclusions. But, yeah, I guess, you could say I read them and tried to make sense of it.

25 Q When would you say you started engaging with QAnon theories? Perhaps

1 a better term than "beliefs."

2 A Yeah. I would say, like, 2019 late, 2020, something like that.

3 Q Do you remember what motivated you to first start engaging with those
4 posts?

5 A Actually, I think I heard a bit about it on YouTube.

6 Q Okay. Do you remember what channel or whose YouTube?

7 A I think it was a guy called Plane Medic (ph).

8 Q Okay. And was there any particular issue that attracted you to that corner
9 of the internet?

10 A No. It just seemed just inquisitive, you know, really, just to see what it was
11 about.

12 Q Uh-huh. And for those of us who aren't as familiar, could you kind of walk
13 us through in a capsule form what you believed those questions to be going after and
14 kind of a summation of your engagement with QAnon or what you understood it to be?

15 A Yeah. I mean, it was about the deep state and people that are controlling
16 the government for evil instead of good.

17 Q And how did you view President Trump's relationship to those worries,
18 theories?

19 A I mean, I thought he had involvement in it. Like --

20 Q How do you mean?

21 A Like -- or, I mean, like, that he -- if he wasn't necessarily contributing to it, he
22 was aware of it as well.

23 Q Aware of the problem?

24 A Yeah, the posts. Yeah.

25 Q Oh, the posts. Okay. Okay.

1 And what about his role in this sort of dynamic you described as the deep state
2 controlling the government? As the head of the government, where does he fit in?

3 A Like, I thought he was, you know, trying to do good, you know.

4 Q Okay.

5 A Yeah.

6 Q Understood.

7 And you mentioned that you followed the former President on social media, on
8 Twitter. Were there any other accounts of his that you followed?

9 A No.

10 Q And of the sources of information we just ran through, were there ones that
11 you relied on more than others, if you had to pick one or two that were most important
12 to you?

13 A I mean, yeah, like, I would kind of just look into each one, like, daily for a few
14 minutes, you know, to see what was -- what was new.

15 Q Great. Thank you. This is all very helpful.

16 So, more broadly speaking, did you consider yourself to be a supporter of
17 President Trump?

18 A Yeah. I did.

19 Q And why did you consider yourself to be a supporter?

20 A To be on the side of good.

21 Q Could you walk us through that a little bit more?

22 A I mean, it just seemed like he was getting attacked for things unfairly, and I
23 wanted to -- you know, it felt like he was the underdog. I kind of wanted to support the
24 underdog.

25 Q Were there particular issues where you thought he was the underdog or

1 being attacked that really motivated you to support him?

2 A Nothing stands out, no.

3 Q Okay. That's very helpful.

4 I wanted to move on, kind of going back to a timeline of 2020, but before I did, I
5 wanted to see if [REDACTED] or [REDACTED] had any questions.

6 But, seeing none --

7 [REDACTED] Not right now. Thanks.

8 [REDACTED] Thank you.

9 BY [REDACTED] -

10 Q So I wanted to move back to March 2020. Mr. Thompson, you said that
11 believe you lost your job due to the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. I was curious if
12 you could talk a little bit more about how that impacted your life.

13 A I mean, it was definitely negative. It was March 17th, the day before my
14 36th birthday. And just, you know, not having -- like, my routine was all messed up.
15 Like, you know, trying to find a new job was really hard during the time. Not a lot of
16 people were hiring. And, like, I had just gotten married 3 months prior in January, and I
17 wanted to be a good husband and, you know, contributing member to the family and
18 stuff. So it was hard.

19 Q So did you ever become involved in demonstrations against COVID-19
20 restrictions that popped up in the spring and the summer?

21 A No.

22 Q How about online? There was obviously a lot of conversation about
23 restrictions being put in place, and President Trump was very prominently rallying against
24 those restrictions. Did you engage in those conversations online?

25 A No. I just remember, like, the 2 weeks to flatten the curve, you know, and I

1 thought that was, like, a good idea at the time, but -- no.

2 Q And as President Trump continued to sort of speak about these restrictions,
3 criticize these restrictions, moving into the spring and the summer, do you remember
4 that being an important element of your support for the former President?

5 A I mean, at the time, like, no. I didn't really pay much attention -- I feel like
6 no one knew exactly the best situation, and, you know, people were just trying different
7 things and, you know, just trying whatever they could, really. So --

8 Q Okay. Got it.

9 And you talked about checking some news sources daily, going onto some
10 QAnon-linked forums. Would you say that that increased, sort of, after the pandemic
11 began?

12 A Yeah, because I had more free time. So, yeah.

13 Q And were there any ways in which you felt your perception started to
14 change because you had more time to look at these forums?

15 A No.

16 Q That's helpful.

17 So, a couple months after the pandemic began, obviously there were a lot of
18 activities, protests over the summer, June and July, related to the police killings of George
19 Floyd and Breonna Taylor.

20 Were you involved in any of the protests surrounding those events?

21 A No. Actually, on -- it was Father's Day in July, there was a big protest in my
22 neighborhood. And I went with a friend to Hocking Hills to just get away from it, try and
23 do some hiking, and ended up getting a trespassing charge from a park ranger. But,
24 yeah, no, I was just trying to get away from that kind of stuff.

25 Q You were never involved in any organized counter-protests, anything like

1 that?

2 A No.

3 Q Why did you want to get away from it?

4 A Like, it just -- it almost seemed like -- like a scary event. Like, I mean,
5 people were riding on, like, the hood of trucks and they were, like, taking over the gas
6 station and stuff. And I was just -- you know, just a lot of banging and yelling around the
7 house. Like, I just wanted to get away from it.

8 Q Understood.

9 And, obviously, over the summer, there was a lot of talk about the involvement of
10 antifa in these events. President Trump talked about that quite a lot on Twitter and
11 elsewhere.

12 Were you ever concerned about that, for example, when the event was close to
13 your house?

14 A No. It seemed like it was more of a Black Lives Matter event that was near
15 my house, but I wasn't sure. No.

16 Q Did you understand those groups to be related, Black Lives Matter and
17 antifa?

18 A No.

19 Q No. Okay.

20 How did you view President Trump's general posture towards those events over
21 the summer, if you have any thoughts on that at all?

22 A I mean, I guess I would say, like, the summer of 2020, he didn't think that
23 some of those were necessarily good, from my opinion.

24 Q Yeah. Are there any instances that you remember specifically?

25 A No.

1 Q So, towards the middle of the summer, as these protests were really heating
2 up, there were several groups that became more prominently involved in
3 counter-protests that we already mentioned: Black Lives Matter, and I mentioned the
4 possibility of antifa that was mentioned by President Trump quite a bit, but there were
5 also documented instances of the Proud Boys and the Oath Keepers and other militia
6 groups like the Three Percenters kind of being in and around these events.

7 Were you aware of those groups being involved in the events, just through the
8 news you followed?

9 A Yeah, I had seen some altercations on YouTube and stuff, clashes, I guess
10 you could say.

11 Q And were aware of these groups -- Proud Boys, Oath Keepers -- before the
12 summer?

13 A No.

14 Q And what was your opinion of them generally at that time?

15 A I mean, I didn't know, like, really, like, who was who, and I didn't really try
16 and figure it out. It just seemed like, you know, people with different political beliefs,
17 like, fighting.

18 Q Meaning that the Black Lives Matter activists and the Proud Boys, Oath
19 Keepers were differing political beliefs?

20 A Right.

21 Q And that sense of them fighting, the conflict, was that concerning, was that
22 alarming to you, reading about it from home?

23 A I mean, it's -- it was concerning, I guess. It is -- like, I was just -- like, I felt
24 like the division in America was, you know, at, like, a bad place, probably the worst it's
25 been in a while. So --

1 Q Uh-huh.

2 A -- that was my takeaway from it, really.

3 Q And, at that point, do you remember anything salient from QAnon forums
4 talking about the protests and the ensuing unrest?

5 A Nothing particular, no.

6 Q So, moving into the fall of 2020, do you recall the first time you started to
7 hear concerns about the potential for election fraud?

8 A Yeah, I don't remember exactly, but I remember -- I don't remember exactly
9 when it was, but I remember hearing things like, "Yeah, if I don't win, there was fraud," or
10 something like that from Trump.

11 Q Did you have a view on -- talking about before the election -- did you have a
12 view on these claims that the President was making?

13 A No. I just thought it was kind of talk. Like, I didn't -- no.

14 Q All right. So, by the time election day 2020 came around, did you believe
15 that that the election was going to be stolen?

16 A Not -- not -- no, not the day of.

17 Q So when did you start to believe that the election may have been stolen?

18 A I guess it would've been, like, the next day. Like, I just remember it was,
19 like, 3:00 a.m. and they were like, you know, "We're gonna stop counting votes.
20 Everyone go to bed." And then, like, at 6:00 a.m., I got up and it was like, "Biden won
21 the President." And I was like, "I thought you were gonna stop counting the votes."

22 Q So did you watch President Trump's speech that night, the early morning of
23 the day after election day?

24 A I don't believe so.

25 Q Okay. So, generally, you would say that your beliefs started to shift when

1 you saw the change in ballot totals the morning after?

2 A Correct.

3 Q And then in the days and weeks after, can you walk us through how your
4 beliefs evolved?

5 A I mean, at the time, there was a lot of theories, you know, being thrown
6 around, and I was just trying to follow them. But, at the time, it looked suspicious, I
7 guess you could say.

8 Q And were there any theories that were particularly influential in your mind?

9 A I don't -- I think it was Detroit or something where they were, like, putting up
10 the poster board over the windows to keep people from looking in. It seemed like, you
11 know, it wasn't very transparent.

12 Q Were there certain parts of the country -- you just mentioned Detroit.
13 Were there certain parts of the country that you thought the fraud was most prominent?

14 A No. Not at that time, no.

15 [REDACTED] Could I jump in, [REDACTED]?

16 [REDACTED] Sure. Go ahead, [REDACTED].

17

BY [REDACTED]

18 Q So, Mr. Thompson, thanks again for taking the time.

19 I was looking over your trial transcript, and a couple of times you mentioned sort
20 of believing the outlandish stuff that Trump was saying at the time. You believed his
21 claims about the election lie, and even to the point that you just didn't think President
22 Biden could've won because Trump said so.

23 So I was wondering, you know, trying to square what [REDACTED] is asking you about
24 here, how much of an influence did President Trump have on your beliefs that the
25 election was stolen?

1 A I mean, I'd say quite a bit. You know, like, he was the one saying it, and
2 that's where I was getting all my information from, basically, about the election, was
3 from, you know, Trump and the news, you know. But, basically, when he said it, I
4 believed it to be true.

5 Q And I'm hoping you can extrapolate on that a little bit. Is there a reason
6 you just believed President Trump?

7 A I mean, outside of just saying, like, you know, I wanted to. I guess I found
8 him believable.

9 Q Was is something about his personality, his politics, anything like that?

10 A I mean, like, yeah, he was a good speaker and, you know -- but I just believed
11 him at the time.

12 Q Were you talking to any friends or family or even, you know, people online
13 who might have disagreed with you about the election claims?

14 A I mean, I know I was talking to a buddy that also believed it was stolen and
15 some other people that said it wasn't, but yeah. Not online. Like, on the phone.

16 Q Sure. And how did those conversations with people who didn't think the
17 election was stolen go?

18 A I mean, like, they just didn't think that he -- that Trump won, and they
19 thought Biden had won. And we kind of just agreed to disagree first and --

20 Q Did you ever, you know, search online for evidence to counterbalance your
21 view of what President Trump was saying? Did you ever try to check his claims?

22 A Yeah, no, that's something I've realized in hindsight, but no. I kind of was
23 just checking stuff that kind of affirmed his story and nothing related to the contrary at
24 the time.

25 Q Great. Thank you very much.

1

██████████ Thank you, ██████████

2

BY ██████████

3

Q Kind of building on that point, President Trump was making a lot of claims about the election being stolen that had differing modes, differing culprits. But my question would be to you, who did you think was responsible for the fraud, the stealing of the election?

7

A Like, at the time? Like --

8

Q Yeah.

9

A I would say, like, just the way that the ballots were counted seemed suspicious, I guess. So just the people who counted the votes. I mean --

11

Q So did you think there was some kind of organizational effort behind it or more of isolated incidents?

13

A I mean, like, I just -- I mean, I thought, like, there were people -- there were ballots that were counted that shouldn't have been counted, in places.

15

Q And you mentioned earlier both the idea of your personal support of President Trump being premised on the idea that he was a bit of an underdog and then also your engagement with that QAnon forum, and you explained that to sort of be an idea of the deep state controlling the government.

19

So I'm curious to hear how, if at all, those two ideas factored into your belief that the election was stolen.

21

A The QAnon thing doesn't really factor in to me believing the election was stolen. It was more just, like, the stories, like, that Trump was saying, yeah, that made me believe that.

24

Q Uh-huh. Did you believe President Trump had been targeted for defeat by political enemies?

25

1 A Yeah, I guess you could say that.

2 Q What did you think could happen if President Trump and his supporters
3 refused to say that his defeat was valid? Did you think there was a chance he could stay
4 in office?

5 A No. I felt like it was already decided and it was gonna happen regardless
6 of --

7 Q So, when President Trump was pushing for recounts and stopping the count,
8 you didn't think there was any point to it?

9 A At that point, no, I did think -- yeah, the recounts. I thought there was a
10 chance at that time that something could be uncovered or discovered that could turn the
11 election, as far as, like, counting the ballots and stuff was concerned.

12 Q Oh, okay. Got it. So, in the first couple of weeks after the election, you
13 thought there was a real chance that the result could be overturned.

14 A Yeah.

15 Q Okay. But then at some point, once those efforts failed, you figured there
16 was nothing left to do?

17 A Right.

18 Q Okay.

19 But President Trump, obviously, kept that drumbeat of claims going even after the
20 recounts failed and after those calls to stop the count failed. So how did you interpret
21 his continued claims of fraud at that point?

22 A I mean, like, I thought he believed them. And, like, I thought there was -- I
23 kind of believe them too, that there was fraud. But I don't know exactly where or what.
24 But it seemed like it was possible, and I believed that.

25 Q So, obviously, there was a lot of organizing on the ground surrounding the

1 election results. And I'm curious if you participated in any activities to protest the
2 results after election day.

3 A No.

4 Q Talking about November, December.

5 A No.

6 Q Nothing?

7 A No.

8 Q Did you ever travel to D.C. for events in November or December?

9 A No.

10 Q Did you make any financial contributions to "stop the steal" efforts?

11 A No.

12 Q At this point did you have any affiliation with Proud Boys, the Oath Keepers?

13 A No.

14 Q What about the Three Percenters?

15 A No.

16 Q Groypers?

17 A No.

18 Q No.

19 And we've talked a little bit about QAnon. How would you say your engagement
20 with QAnon forums changed in the weeks and months after the election?

21 A From what I recall, like, he wasn't really -- it wasn't really saying much about
22 the election, but, like, I mean, if there was, like, a new post, I would kind of just go to it,
23 read it, and then kind of see what other people were saying about it. But I don't
24 remember anything offhand particularly.

25 Q And did you think that there was any prominent threat posed by antifa in

1 the, sort of, post-election moment?

2 A No.

3 Q You didn't think they had anything to do with the theft of the election?

4 A No.

5 Q And so at some point you said that you stopped believing that there was
6 anything that could be done to reverse President Trump's loss. Do you remember about
7 when that happened?

8 A I'm sorry. Could you repeat that?

9 Q Sure. So you said at some point you thought that it was game over and
10 that you couldn't overturn President Trump's loss, there was nothing he can do. Do you
11 remember when that happened?

12 A Like, I would say it was probably towards the end of December, you know,
13 beginning of January. I'd say mid-December, end of December is when I first thought it
14 was over, if not a little sooner.

15 Q So that was before you decided to come to D.C. for January 6th?

16 A Correct.

17 Q So can you tell us more about the factors that influenced your decision to
18 travel to D.C.?

19 A I just remember Trump saying it was gonna be, like, I think it was, a wild
20 time. And, like, you know, I felt like I wanted to go because, like, I hadn't gotten out,
21 hadn't been around people in a while, and, you know, these were gonna be, like,
22 like-minded people, you know, kind of, like, my people that I agree with. So I just went
23 to be around those people.

24 Q Do you recall when you first decided to travel to Washington?

25 A It was just the day before or 2 days before. It was pretty last-minute,

1 really.

2 Q You mentioned that President Trump said it was gonna be a wild time.
3 There was a tweet on December 19th where President Trump first mentioned January 6th
4 and said, "Be there, will be wild!" Do you recall seeing that tweet?

5 A I don't think I saw it at the time. It was later in the month that I saw it, if
6 not beginning of January.

7 Q But what do you think President Trump meant by "wild"?

8 A I mean, I thought it was just kind of gonna be like a going-out celebration,
9 like a retirement party or something, but -- you know, makes sense.

10 Q Yeah, it does.

11 So you didn't think at that point when you were reading about what he was saying
12 about the event, what others were saying, you didn't think that there was a chance it
13 would result in him staying in the White House?

14 A No.

15 [REDACTED] Can I just ask, [REDACTED] --

16 [REDACTED] Sure.

17 BY [REDACTED]

18 Q Mr. Thompson, you mentioned seeing the tweet later or, you know, you
19 knew that it would be a wild time. The tweet also talks about the "stop the steal" -- the
20 event was sometimes called "stop the steal" event.

21 Did you really think that it was only going to be sort of a retirement party? Or
22 did you expect President Trump to continue to claim the election was stolen?

23 A I figured he would continue to claim it. I didn't know it was a "stop the
24 steal" event. I remember seeing a lot of signs when I got there about that. But I kind
25 of thought it was, like, a forgone conclusion by that point, that there was no stopping it,

1 but --

2 Q And were people who were talking about going to January 6th, or anyone
3 else online, were you also seeing other people say they expected January 6th to be this
4 kind of retirement party?

5 A No. I mean, I didn't really see anybody saying anything about what they
6 thought it was gonna be. Just -- yeah.

7 BY [REDACTED]

8 Q So, obviously, the event was branded "Save America." "Stop the steal" was
9 also part of the branding online for the event.

10 Did that in any way conflict with your idea that it would be a retirement party?

11 A I guess not, no. You know, like, I mean, I just thought at that point there
12 was nothing really that could be done to stop the steal.

13 [REDACTED] Sorry. Go ahead, [REDACTED]

14 [REDACTED] Oh, no. You can go on, [REDACTED]

15 BY [REDACTED]

16 Q So what websites or social media apps did you review to find more
17 information about the rally itself?

18 A I believe it was just, like, Twitter, probably, where I got information about
19 the when and where.

20 Q Did you ever join any groups on Facebook or elsewhere about the rally?

21 A No. I was never on Facebook. I wasn't on any Twitter groups or anything
22 like that either.

23 Q So, ultimately, what would you say was your goal in traveling to D.C. on
24 January 6th?

25 A Just to be with like-minded people and, you know, just to have a good time.

1 Q Were you concerned about the potential for violence?

2 A No.

3 Q And why did you think it was important for you to be there?

4 A Because I felt like it was, like, the last -- like, my only chance to see Trump
5 and, like -- so, like, the last chance to kind of see him and be around his supporters,
6 people like me. So I went.

7 Q Understood.

8 So I wanted to move more into your arrival to D.C. and your preparation to come,
9 but, before I do, I wanted to see if [REDACTED] or [REDACTED] had any more questions.

10 [REDACTED] Just a quick one.

11 BY [REDACTED]

12 Q Mr. Thompson, so, not to harp on this too much, but in your trial
13 transcript -- you know, we'll get to the speech as you're listening to it. After listening to
14 the speech, you mentioned you felt that President Trump was talking about democracy
15 being at risk, the country being destroyed.

16 Were any of those thoughts in your mind ahead of January 6th? Did you
17 believe -- like, since you believed the election was stolen, did you hope that this rally
18 would do something to, you know, prevent the end of American democracy?

19 A No.

20 Q Okay.

21 [REDACTED] Thank you, [REDACTED]

22 BY [REDACTED]

23 Q Mr. Thompson, when did you actually leave from Columbus to travel to D.C.?

24 A It was the night of the 5th. Like --

25 Q Okay. So -- oh, sorry. Go ahead.

1 A Like, I believe it was, like -- it was late, about 6:00 or 7:00 p.m.

2 Q So you said you had decided a couple of days beforehand. And then you
3 just left that night before?

4 A Yeah, if not -- I mean, I think, really, kind of decided it the day before, on the
5 5th, to go. And it was just kind of figuring out -- like, I was gonna go, maybe, with two
6 people, and then it just ended up being one other person. And we left that night of the
7 5th.

8 Q And who was that other person?

9 A That drove, was Robert, my co-defendant.

10 Mr. Stewart. What's his last name?

11 Mr. Thompson. Lyon.

12

BY 

13 Q Robert Lyon?

14 A Yeah.

15 Q And how did you know Mr. Lyon?

16 A We have been friends for a while. Kind of met through another friend,
17 friend of a friend.

18 Q And did Mr. Lyon express similar ideas to you about what January 6th was?

19 A Yeah, I believe so. He wanted to go kind of because he thought it would be
20 a good time.

21 Q Whose idea was it to travel to D.C.?

22 A I believe it was my idea to go.

23 Q And did you end up staying in D.C. or somewhere else surrounding?

24 A I believe we stayed in Maryland.

25 Q Okay. And you arrived the night of the 5th. Did you do anything when

1 you got there?

2 A No. We got there early morning, like, 1:00 or 2:00 a.m., so we just checked
3 in and went to sleep.

4 Q And do you remember where in Maryland you stayed, the name of the
5 hotel?

6 A Not offhand, no.

7 Q Did you meet up with anyone when you got there, or you just went right to
8 bed?

9 A No, we just went straight to sleep. We had tried to find some food and
10 everywhere was closed, so we just went to bed.

11 Q Okay.

12 And I know I asked this before, but I wanted to reiterate. Did you expect there
13 to be any violence the next day?

14 A I did not.

15 Q Did you do anything to prepare yourself for the next day?

16 A No. I mean, like, besides, you know, packing some drinks and, like, we
17 brought, like, a Bluetooth speaker kind of stuff, but outside of that, no.

18 Q Did you bring any equipment with you?

19 A No.

20 Q There was no protective gear?

21 A No.

22 Q No vests, helmets, anything of that sort?

23 A No.

24 Mr. Stewart. Tell him about the vest you found.

25 Mr. Thompson. I had found a vest at the Eclipse rally and put it on at that time

1 before walking to the Capitol, but I didn't bring it with me.

2 BY [REDACTED]

3 Q Okay. So this is the bulletproof vest that you were wearing at the Capitol?

4 A Correct.

5 Q Okay. So you found that the next day?

6 A Correct.

7 Q We'll get to that in a few.

8 And just while we're on the night before, did you have any awareness, going into
9 the 6th, that the next day was the day that Congress was going to certify President
10 Biden's victory?

11 A Yeah, I was aware of that.

12 Q Did you have any awareness of the Vice President's role in overseeing
13 Congress that next day?

14 A Not until the day of the 6th did I know that he, Mike Pence, played a role in
15 it.

16 Q Okay.

17 A I wasn't aware of that.

18 Q That's helpful.

19 But when you went to sleep the night of the 5th, you did not believe there was
20 anything that you or anyone else could do to influence Congress. Is that correct?

21 A Correct.

22 Q All right.

23 Well, we're just about to get to the 6th itself. We're only at the 45-minute mark,
24 but would you want to take a 10-minute break? We're at about the halfway point.

25 Mr. Stewart. We could even do, like, a 5-minute break, if you wanted to do that.

1 [REDACTED] Great. So let's say we'll go back on the record at 9:55?

2 Mr. Stewart. Okay.

3 [REDACTED] All right.

4 Thanks very much, Mr. Thompson.

5 Mr. Thompson. Yep.

6 [Recess.]

7 [REDACTED] All right. So we can go back on the record at 9:55 a.m.

8 BY [REDACTED]

9 Q And we'll move now to discuss the events of January 6th itself.

10 So, Mr. Thompson, I know you attended the rally on the Ellipse on the 6th. Can
11 you just walk us through what happened when you and Mr. Lyon woke up that morning?

12 A Yeah. Pretty much, we got up and just kind of cleaned up and got out of
13 the hotel kind of the quickest (ph) way that we could.

14 Q And you, at that point, you went towards the Ellipse?

15 A We called for an Uber. And I didn't know exactly where to go. I kind of
16 just told the Uber driver to take us where the people were, the Washington Monument,
17 somewhere in that general area.

18 Q And could you describe the scene when you got there?

19 A He could only get, like, so close, but we could see people walking, and just
20 kind of got out and followed them.

21 Q And how close did you end up getting to the stage?

22 A At some point, we had circled around, and, like, we could see the stage and
23 saw, like, the security magna-things to go through, but we didn't wanna go through those.
24 Just seemed like a hassle; there was this huge line. So we just kind of stayed out and
25 watched it on the screen and listened to it on the speakers.

1 Q So you did not want to go through the magnetometers.

2 A Yeah, there was a line, so it seemed like a hassle, you know, waiting in the
3 line.

4 Q Could you describe the crowd, what the crowd was like outside of the
5 magnetometers?

6 A Large. There was a lot of people.

7 Q What was the mood like?

8 A It was -- people were happy, joyous.

9 Q And, at that point, did you hear people talking about the possibility that you
10 still could stop the steal?

11 A I think people were saying it, but I -- I guess I don't know what they meant by
12 it.

13 Q So, when you kind of got into the crowd on the morning of the 6th before
14 the President was speaking, you still were under the impression this was a retirement
15 party, as you said?

16 A Like -- I mean, I felt like I knew something was gonna happen, but I just
17 didn't know what. And that's kind of why I came to it. It just seemed like something
18 was gonna happen, and I just wanted to be there for it. I didn't know what it was, but I
19 felt like it was an important -- important day.

20 Q That idea that it was an important day, that was what motivated you to
21 come in the first place to Washington?

22 A Like, yeah, you can say that, yeah. I believe that.

23 Q And you said "something important, you just didn't know what." Could you
24 expand on that a little bit? What kind of things did you think could happen?

25 A Like, I really didn't have any idea. I just felt like -- I just kind of had that

1 feeling that something was gonna happen, but I didn't know what.

2 Q Something related to the election?

3 A I thought, like, maybe Trump was gonna do something kind of outlandish or
4 something, but, I mean, I just -- I didn't know what was gonna happen, but I just felt
5 something would.

6 Q Mr. Thompson?

7 A Yeah?

8 Q So you said you thought Mr. Trump might do something outlandish, and
9 then you trailed off.

10 A Oh. I just didn't know what he was -- I thought maybe that was a possibility
11 of something that could happen.

12 Q So the mood of the people, you said, was joyous and happy?

13 A Yeah. The crowd seemed that way, yes.

14 Q Did you see anyone who appeared to be armed?

15 A I did not.

16 Q Anyone in bulletproof vests, helmets, tactical gear?

17 A Not at the -- not at the Ellipse.

18 Q Not at the Ellipse. So did you see anyone who was in that gear on your way
19 to D.C. or on your way to The Mall?

20 A No.

21 [REDACTED] Can I just jump in here real quick?

22 [REDACTED] Sure. Go ahead.

23 BY [REDACTED]

24 Q Back to the magnetometers, Mr. Thompson, did you see people, like,
25 discarding backpacks or putting their clothing or anything else outside of the

1 magnetometers before they went through?

2 A Yeah.

3 Q Did you see a lot of them?

4 A Yeah. I was seeing these, like, piles of backpacks and flagpoles. And
5 some people were watching that for other people. And I just -- there were lots of piles
6 all over the place of stuff like that.

7 Q Did anyone talk about why they were, you know, putting their bags off to the
8 side?

9 A Yeah. Because they weren't allowed to take them in.

10 Q Were they talking about why they weren't allowed to take them in? Was
11 there something in the backpack or on the flag that wasn't allowed in?

12 A I didn't hear them talk about that.

13 Q Okay.

14 And sorry if I missed this, but can you just remind me about what time you were
15 standing in line?

16 A We never stood in line. What time I arrived?

17 Q What time you saw them -- what time did you see people, like, throwing the
18 backpacks? An estimate, like, mid-morning, early morning?

19 A Yeah, yeah. Morning, 11:00, maybe a little later, something like that.

20 Q Great. Thank you very much.

21 A Yep.

22 BY [REDACTED]

23 Q So when you saw those piles of equipment outside of the magnetometers,
24 did that raise any concern in your mind?

25 A No.

1 Q Did it ever occur to you that there could be weapons that could not go
2 through the magnetometers in those bags?

3 A No. I felt like -- I had never been to anything where the President was at
4 before, and so I just felt like, you know, it's the President and he was just very cautious
5 about, you know, not letting anything in.

6 Q Uh-huh.

7 And you said that you picked up a bulletproof vest at some point in the morning.
8 Did that occur during this period when you were outside the magnetometers?

9 A It was after the speech, and everyone was kind of going towards the Capitol.
10 We, like, circled back through the crowd and waited to see if anyone was gonna take it,
11 basically, and we didn't see anyone. It was laying next to a dumpster. And we kind of
12 said that, like, no one's gonna take this, and so we just took it.

13 Q Okay. Well, I do want to get back to that, but we can talk about the speech
14 first.

15 So did you hear any other speakers on the stage before President Trump?

16 A I don't believe so.

17 Q And can you describe your reaction to President Trump's speech generally?
18 And then we can dive into some more specifics.

19 A I mean, it seemed uplifting. It seemed, like, kind of similar to what I've
20 heard him say in the past, just -- I do remember him saying, like, that he was gonna go to
21 the Capitol and -- but it was after his speech that I asked people, I was like, "Are you going
22 to the Capitol?" And they said, "Yes." And then I just kind of followed the group there.
23 But I remember that from his speech.

24 Q So you were surprised to hear the President talking about going to the
25 Capitol?

1 A Yeah. I was. I didn't know that that was a -- that was happening.

2 Q So what impact did those remarks have on you?

3 A Well, I was like, "Well, if he's going there, I wanna go there," you know, see
4 what's happening.

5 Q What was your understanding of what President Trump wanted to do at the
6 Capitol?

7 A I guess stop the certification, but I just didn't know how that was gonna
8 happen, really. But I wanted to go and see what was happening.

9 Q And why do you think he was asking others to come with him?

10 A You know, strength in numbers, I guess, you know, and show their support.

11 Q Do you recall the President saying during the speech, "If we don't fight like
12 hell, you're not gonna have a country anymore"?

13 A Yeah, I don't know if I remember that per se, but I kind of got that
14 impression from the overall speech.

15 Q And when the President -- so what did you take that to mean? That was
16 the overall impression?

17 A I mean, I felt like it was more, like, a figure of speech than, you know,
18 actually, like, calling for violence.

19 Q And at one point the President also told the crowd that they have to show
20 strength and that they won't be able to take back the country with weakness.

21 Do you recall those particular remarks?

22 A Um --

23 Mr. Stewart. Remember the tone [inaudible].

24 Mr. Thompson. Yeah. Yeah, like -- I mean, yeah, "Be strong," you know,
25 "Weakness isn't gonna get you anywhere." Like, kind of more of, like, the normal

1 rhetoric, you know, kind of stuff.

2 BY [REDACTED] .

3 Q And, Mr. Thompson, you said earlier that the President was asking you guys
4 to go to the Capitol. It surprised you, but you understood he wanted to stop the
5 certification.

6 So, in your trial transcript, though, when you were talking about when the
7 President sent everybody to march to the Capitol, you said, "I mean, if the President's
8 giving you, like, almost an order to do something, I felt obligated to do that." And a little
9 while later, you also said that you were ordered by the President to go to the Capitol.

10 So did you take President Trump's speech as a directive?

11 A Yeah. I did.

12 Q And why were you willing to listen to that order?

13 A I mean, he was the Commander in Chief, you know, so I felt that, you know,
14 I'd listen to him.

15 Q And by listening to him, you understood President Trump wanted you to join
16 him in the effort to stop the certification of the vote at the Capitol?

17 A Yes. At that time, I figured that was his plan.

18 Q And did you have any expectation of how that plan would go into effect at
19 the Capitol?

20 A No. Not at that time, no.

21 Q But the idea that -- the idea of going to stop the certification, did that
22 influence your decision to pick up the bulletproof vest?

23 A No.

24 BY [REDACTED]

25 Q Why did you think it was necessary to pick up the bulletproof vest?

1 A Honestly, I just thought it was cool. I didn't have one. I just -- and Robert
2 was wearing a backpack, and so I just put it on. But, just because I didn't have one, I
3 think that's why I grabbed it.

4 Q I'm just drilling that down a little bit more, because, obviously, it's cold; I
5 would assume you were wearing a coat, right?

6 A I had a sweatshirt, you know, a hoodie.

7 Q So, if you were gonna embark on a walk -- it's not the shortest walk in the
8 world from the Ellipse to the Capitol. Bulletproof vest, added weight. Why would you
9 pick that up in the midst of all this hubbub if you thought there was no risk of violence?

10 A I mean, I also kind of saw it as, like, better to be safe than sorry, you know,
11 like -- so I just put it on.

12 Q Could you expand on that? Why did you have to be safe? From whom?

13 A I mean, it felt like -- kind of like the tension was rising and, you know, that,
14 like, something was gonna happen. So I just thought, you know, I should maybe just be
15 prepare in case anything happened.

16 Q And did you mean tension between protesters? Tension between
17 protesters and law enforcement? Protesters and other groups?

18 A No, I would just say just the crowd seemed more, like, more energized and
19 angry after the speech and when they were walking. And then, when I cut back through
20 all of them, like, they just were more, like -- seemed, like, on a mission to get where they
21 were going.

22 Q Do you think they also thought they were following the President's orders?
23 Is that your sense of the crowd?

24 A Yeah.

25 Q So, in a way, these people who were angry were on the same mission that

1 you felt you were on?

2 A Correct.

3 Q And what did you understand them to be doing?

4 A I mean, just kind of following the President's order of we were gonna go to
5 the Capitol and just, I thought, like, protest more, you know, so --

6 Q To go on to protest more. You described the crowd as joyous and
7 celebratory earlier, before the speech. Why angry now?

8 A I mean, it just seemed like, as the day went on and as we were -- like, once
9 we got there, people -- it wasn't as happy. It was more anger.

10 Q But it seems like you perceived that anger before you marched, because
11 that's when you picked up the vest, right, before you marched up to the Capitol?

12 A Like, I just grabbed it just to have it. Like, it wasn't -- I mean, like, I thought
13 something could happen, but I didn't know what, and I just thought it would be better to
14 have it than not have it.

15 Q I'm trying to understand. You had seen the President speak, and the
16 speech was ending. And that's why you had come to D.C. The crowd was getting
17 angrier. You were concerned that something might happen, to the extent that you
18 actually picked up a bulletproof vest.

19 Why go to the Capitol if the crowd was angrier and if you were concerned that
20 something could happen, as you've just said?

21 A I wanted to see what was gonna happen. I wasn't really scared by violence,
22 you know. I just wanted to go see what was gonna happen.

1

2 [10:12 a.m.]

3 BY [REDACTED]:

4 [REDACTED] Even if that something was violent?

5 Mr. Thompson. I mean I knew I wasn't going to be violent, but I just wanted to
6 see what was happening.

7

BY [REDACTED]

8 Q Mr. Thompson, did you get a sense of what was making the crowd angrier as
9 they were heading towards the Capitol?

10 A No.

11 Q Did you hear people talking about Vice President Pence and his decision to
12 go ahead and, you know, certify the electoral college vote?

13 A No.

14 Q Anything about Congress in general or Speaker Pelosi?

15 A I mean, people were just angry. I heard some chants of, you know, like,
16 "Get Pelosi" or "Where's Pelosi"; you know what I mean? But it just seemed like
17 everyone was just angry at Congress, Members as a whole.18 [REDACTED] I'll note for the record that Representative Kinzinger has joined the
19 Webex.20 Welcome, Mr. Kinzinger. Feel free to jump in if you have any questions,
21 obviously.22 So, Mr. Thompson, the anger then was driven by President Trump's speech, or
23 was it natural, you know, before the speech that just kind of happened?24 Mr. Thompson. No. I would say it came from his speech and then just kind of
25 transgressed into the walking to the Capitol.

1 [REDACTED] Thank you.

2 [REDACTED] Thank you, [REDACTED]

3 And welcome, Mr. Kinzinger.

4 BY [REDACTED]

5 Q Mr. Thompson, do you remember the President making any remarks about
6 Vice President Pence during the speech itself?

7 A Yeah. Like, yeah, he has to do his job and not certify the vote.

8 Q And, before this point, you were unaware that Vice President Pence had a
9 role in the proceedings that day, correct?

10 A Correct.

11 Q So, at that point, was it your belief that there could be something done to
12 overturn the results of the election?

13 A Yeah. Yeah. I guess I thought Pence could do something at that point.

14 Q And so you talked earlier about believing you were under a Presidential
15 directive to march to the Capitol.

16 In your mind, was that related to making sure the Vice President did the right
17 thing?

18 A Like, me personally being able to influence the Vice President or the crowd
19 as a whole?

20 Q Exactly.

21 A Yeah. I mean, I thought maybe there was a chance, you know. And, at
22 the time, I was, you know -- I didn't see any harm in like protesting to see if they could
23 influence, you know, his decision.

24 Q And you mentioned that, while you were marching, you heard chants of "Get
25 Pelosi," "Get Nancy," "Where's Nancy?" Is that correct?

1 A Yeah. And it was -- seemed like it was more directed towards Pelosi, if I
2 had to say like any one Member of Congress or the Vice President, like that would
3 seemed like the kind of one person people were focused on from where I was at.

4 Q And did that raise any concerns for you?

5 You mentioned and just discussed that you picked up a bulletproof vest just to be
6 safe, better safe than sorry.

7 What did you take those comments about the Speaker to mean?

8 A I just took it as talk. I didn't think that anything was going to happen to her
9 or anything like that. I just took it as people being angry and saying things.

10 Q So, to summarize, it was your belief that the President had asked his
11 supporters to stage another rally at the Capitol?

12 A Uh-huh.

13 Q And you believed that he would be there?

14 A Yes, I did. Yup.

15 Q Was it your impression as you started to march that he was marching with
16 you?

17 A No. Actually, I had seen like an armored black vehicle leave and head in
18 that direction. And someone had mentioned that, oh, Trump might be in there going to
19 Capitol. So I saw that, and with his comment saying he was going to be there, I thought
20 that that seemed possible.

21 Q So, when you saw the armored vehicle and you believed it was the President
22 going towards the Capitol, did that influence you in your decision to march that way?

23 A Yeah. Yes, it did.

24 Q Can you expand on that?

25 A I was pretty much going there already, but that kind of re-enforced it, I guess

1 you could say. But, yeah.

2 Q Re-enforced the importance of what he had said to you?

3 A Re-enforced the idea of going to the Capitol.

4 Q And, again, this was going to the Capitol with the goal of trying to influence
5 Congress, correct?

6 A Correct.

7 Q And the Vice President?

8 A Correct.

9 Q So could you walk us through what happened as you got to the Capitol
10 complex itself?

11 A Yeah. Like, I remember walking up and like talking with some people.
12 And I was, like, asked -- I was like, isn't there going to be like security, or you know -- I
13 think I said fencing or something.

14 And the guy was like: Yeah, we're going to break through it.

15 And I was like: Okay.

16 And then, by the time I got in there, like everyone was already on the Capitol
17 Grounds, and I believe already had entered the Capitol. I remember, when I walked up,
18 the first thing I saw was these, I would say, two or three people on a motorized window
19 washing thing, and they -- I was like -- they got it working, and they went up to the second
20 floor and had something, and they're hitting the windows. And I just couldn't believe
21 what I was seeing at that point.

22 Q So you said that, when you were still outside the Capitol, you had an
23 exchange, and someone told you that you were going to break down the fencing around
24 the Capitol.

25 At that point, why stay? What did you think was going on?

1 A I mean, I just wanted to see for myself what was happening.

2 Q What was it that you thought was happening?

3 A I didn't think people were going to be able to break into the Capitol, but I
4 just wanted to get as close as I could to see what was really happening.

5 Q Did you come across any police barricades as you approached the building?

6 A I did not.

7 Q So did you understand them to have all been removed by other protesters at
8 that point?

9 A I mean, they were -- I seen them like kind of strewn about and like -- but
10 they weren't acting as barricades.

11 Q And, at that point, you were wearing your bulletproof vest, correct?

12 A I was.

13 Q As you saw the barricades strewn about and protesters, kind of, scaling the
14 walls of the Capitol, as you described, did you become more concerned about the
15 possibility of violence?

16 A Not at that time. I was still just walking, and I didn't see any violence at
17 that time.

18 Q Did you think that the people who were approaching the Capitol were
19 allowed to approach the Capitol?

20 A I thought that there would be some level of, you know, of like where they
21 were allowed to go and where they weren't. But I wasn't sure where that boundary
22 was.

23 Q Did you think they were allowed to be on the motorized window washing --

24 A Yeah. No.

25 Q You didn't think they were allowed to break the windows?

1 A Correct.

2 Q Did you believe that this is what President Trump was hoping would happen
3 or wanted to happen when he told you to march to the Capitol?

4 A I guess -- I assume so because it just seemed -- I would just say, like, almost
5 like natural -- like these people were doing was -- I mean, it just seemed like it was
6 happening like -- I don't know if it was because they wanted to do it or if they felt that it's
7 what Trump wanted, but it was just -- it was what was happening.

8 Q So you thought that the movement towards the building was the organic
9 movement of the crowd?

10 A Correct.

11 Q And how did you get close to the building yourself?

12 A Like, walking up?

13 Q Yeah. Do you remember where you walked up, things like that?

14 A I just -- I was in the grass, and I don't know like which side of the building or
15 anything.

16 Q But were the doors open when you approached it?

17 A No. No. When I -- after I saw the people on the window washer, there
18 was a door to my left that I just kind of opened and people started going into it.

19 Q So this is below -- a few stories below the people who are breaking the
20 windows?

21 A Yeah. This is on the ground level.

22 Q And about what time did this occur?

23 A It was after 2:30. I would say 2:30, a little after.

24 Q And why did you make the decision to enter the building?

25 A I just saw people going in and followed them in.

1 Q Was it your belief that you were still following President Trump's directive
2 when you entered the building?

3 A Yeah. I mean, I know I have my own control, but I was just kind of doing
4 whatever everyone else was doing.

5 Q What did you think was the goal of entering the building for you?

6 A I mean, I just wanted to see what was going on in there, but I didn't really
7 have a goal.

8 Q Did you hear people making similar chants about Speaker Pelosi or Vice
9 President Pence or others as you surged into the building with others?

10 A No. They were just chanting "USA, USA."

11 Q Did you encounter any law enforcement as you entered the building?

12 A No, not the first time. I remember on the second time seeing them, like,
13 down the hallway, kind of like behind like a metal gate, like gearing up to come out, and
14 that's when I left the second time.

15 Q Okay. So we'll get to the second time. But, for now, just focusing on the
16 first entrance to the Capitol.

17 A Yeah. I didn't see officers the first time.

18 Q Did you believe that you were breaking any laws at the time when you
19 entered the Capitol?

20 A I mean, I took a bottle of liquor. I know that's wrong. I mean, people
21 were saying it's the people's building, but I knew people weren't supposed to entering it
22 like this. I felt like -- so, yeah. I knew it was wrong. Yeah.

23 Q Why did you feel compelled do it anyway?

24 A It was just kind of mob mentality maybe, like just kind of going with where
25 people were going. I really -- I'm still working on why I did what I did that day, but I just

1 know I regret it.

2 [REDACTED] Mr. Thompson, do you think -- you mentioned that you went in
3 because President Trump -- was part of President Trump's order.

4 Was it your impression that President Trump was directing you and the crowd to
5 do something wrong, to do something unlawful?

6 Mr. Thompson. I thought by maybe just our presence, like, that that's what he
7 wanted to stop the certification.

8 [REDACTED] So it was your impression that entering the building was part of what
9 President Trump wanted you to do to stop the certification?

10 Mr. Thompson. I mean, yeah, you could say that.

11 [REDACTED] Go ahead, [REDACTED]

12 [REDACTED] I'm sorry. I didn't have a question.

13 [REDACTED] Okay.

14 BY [REDACTED]:

15 Q Can you walk us through what happened when you got into the building the
16 first time? What was the scene like inside?

17 A Chaos. People were -- I went in the door, and then the first door on the
18 right was the Senate Parliamentarian's office, and I went in there, and there was people
19 raiding the fridge and throwing papers all over the place. I saw a guy like jump and kick
20 a door and like knock a panel out of it, trying to -- the door was blocked by a bookcase on
21 the other side. I was just recording stuff on my phone. That was about it.

22 Q Why were you recording things on your phone?

23 A I mean, I was -- I couldn't believe what I was seeing, you know, and then I
24 was -- it's just to document it really and prove it was real.

25 Q What was going through your mind as you entered the Parliamentarian's

1 office and saw other individuals ransacking it?

2 A I mean, I thought this was, like, their way of, you know, expressing
3 themselves or getting justice, like, you know, but I just -- I don't know. At the time, I
4 don't know what I was thinking, but I was just like this is pretty crazy.

5 Q So you said it was a way of expressing themselves, at getting justice.

6 Did you view it as a form of protest to try to get Congress to do the right thing, as
7 the President said?

8 A Yeah. Yeah. That's how they wanted to protest, so I guess, yeah, that
9 makes sense to me. Yeah, that that's how they wanted to protest.

10 Q At that point, as you got into the building, did you still think there was a
11 chance that the election certification could be delayed?

12 A Yeah. Once I saw people in the building, like, I thought that they might
13 have to delay it.

14 Q And, in your mind, did that mean that this had been a success, the
15 operation, the orders that had been given at the rally?

16 A Yeah. I guess so, yeah.

17 Q And, in the office of the Parliamentarian, you also took some items, correct,
18 you mentioned earlier?

19 A Right.

20 Q It was a bottle of liquor and something else?

21 A Yeah. The second time it was a coat rack.

22 Q Okay. So the first time you took a bottle liquor. And could you just walk
23 us through what happened as you took the item?

24 A Yeah. So I took the bottle liquor out, took a sip of it, and gave it to Robert
25 who I believe put it in his backpack and then told him that he needed to come in and see

1 what was going on in there. So me and him went back in. I was --

2 Q Sorry. I'm trying to get it clear. So you took the liquor bottle, and then
3 you kind of went back outside and got Mr. Lyon?

4 A Right.

5 Q At that point, you still had not encountered any law enforcement?

6 A I hadn't seen any.

7 Mr. Stewart. Explain to him.

8 Mr. Thompson. I saw in the photo that there was one in the doorway pointed to
9 the outside, but at the time, I hadn't seen him. Too much commotion going on.

10 Mr. Stewart. Just, for your reference, in the government's position on
11 sentencing, when he says "photo," there is a photo showing him exiting the first time, and
12 maybe 5 feet further into the building, there's, I think, two or three law enforcement.
13 There's a crowd between Mr. Thompson and the law enforcement. So he didn't
14 necessarily see them, but they were there. And then the same is true for the second
15 time. I don't remember if you saw them.

16 Mr. Thompson. Uh-uh.

17 Mr. Stewart. There was law enforcement sort of preventing people from going
18 further into the building.

19 Mr. Thompson. Right.

20 Mr. Stewart. Those images he's referring to are in the government's position of
21 sentencing and were also exhibits during the trial, just for your --

22 [REDACTED] Understood. Thank you, Mr. Stewart.

23 BY [REDACTED]

24 Q So, essentially, both times you entered, you only went into that first hallway
25 near the doorway?

1 A Yeah. And I feel like -- well, the second time, I saw like further down the
2 hallway that there was armed guards and like geared up like with riot gear. And I
3 believe those other offices were kind of like plain clothes officers, but they were probably
4 preventing people from going further down the hallway. But, yeah, I just went in the
5 door and went -- right in the first door on the right was the office, and so I didn't see
6 them down the hallway further. I guess --

7 Q So you went back into the office with Mr. Lyon at this point?

8 A Right.

9 Q And you proceeded to try to take a coat rack at this point?

10 A At first, I took a video of just, like, everything that was kind of like -- what the
11 scene was of the room, and then there was this like radio. And I thought at the time it
12 was like a walkie-talkie, and we each took one, and then I grabbed a coat rack on the way
13 out.

14 Q So the same question as asked with the liquor you took the first time: Why
15 did you think it was the right thing to do to take the coat rack?

16 A I think really I just -- I wasn't thinking. I don't know what I was -- why I took
17 it.

18 Q You mentioned earlier that people were saying, "This is the people's House,"
19 things of that nature. Were those kind of thoughts going through your mind when you
20 were in the Parliamentarian's office?

21 A Yeah. Yeah. Like, maybe it was like the people's property, and yeah.

22 Q And did you hear other folks when you were in the office either time talking
23 about the joint session to certify the election?

24 A Not while I was inside there, no. I don't remember really anything of the
25 conversation. There was just a lot of yelling.

1 Q Okay. Chanting "USA," that kind of thing?

2 A Yup.

3 Q Were people expressing support for President Trump when they were in the
4 building?

5 A Yeah.

6 Q Through chants or --

7 A Yeah.

8 Q Can you explain how?

9 A I mean, I feel like just -- I mean, it's kind of hard I guess, but just by being
10 there, and like you knew they were supporting Trump and what they thought they were
11 doing was probably what Trump wanted them to do.

12 Q Is that still kind of what you were thinking as you were in the building the
13 second time?

14 A Yeah. Like I said, I don't know what I was thinking really, but I was
15 just -- yeah. It's hard to say. I don't really know. Still working through that.

16 Q And you mentioned earlier, just ticking through the topics that we had
17 discussed, on your way to the Capitol, there was some conversation about the Vice
18 President and some conversation about Speaker Nancy Pelosi.

19 Did either of those officials get mentioned by folks while you were in the Capitol?

20 A I think I heard some people saying, you know, "Where is Pence" or "Where is
21 Pelosi," but, I mean, there was just a lot going on, but, I mean, people were saying a lot of
22 things.

23 Q And what did you think they meant when they were yelling "Where is
24 Pence? Where is Pelosi?"

25 A I mean, they thought -- I think that they could get to them or something, that

1 they could stop the certification.

2 Q When you say "get to them," what do you mean by that?

3 A I mean, that's what I took their comments to mean, you know, like they're --

4 Q Did you -- was it your understanding that there was an intention to physically
5 harm the Vice President or the Speaker?

6 A I felt that some people wanted to do that, yes.

7 [REDACTED] Mr. Thompson, given that the certification was actually delayed,
8 do you remember how you felt about that?

9 Mr. Thompson. Yeah. I was happy at the time. I thought it was like a victory.

10 [REDACTED] Yeah. Do you remember talking to people about it, or did you
11 hear people talking about that?

12 Mr. Thompson. Not at the time, no. I don't even remember exactly like when I
13 knew it was delayed, but it was just like at some point that I had found out and was just
14 happy. People were happy about it. That's all I remember.

15 [REDACTED] Was that a victory for the crowd or a victory for President Trump or
16 some combination of the two?

17 Mr. Thompson. Yeah. I would say, yeah, the two because I'm sure the crowd
18 thought that Trump would have been happy, and the crowd was also happy.

19 [REDACTED] Did you see it as President Trump's orders had worked out, they had
20 won the day, they had won the battle?

21 Mr. Thompson. Yeah, in a way. Yeah. But we had kind of accomplished what
22 he wanted to accomplish in having a delayed.

23 BY [REDACTED]

24 Q So is it fair to say that the chaos that you were a part of inside the building
25 was also in a way part of that order?

1 A Yes.

2 Q How so?

3 A Like, just by being there and kind of causing havoc and stuff was what he
4 wanted and what people were doing.

5 Q And it was what he wanted because it would delay Congress from
6 completing its duties?

7 A Correct.

8 [REDACTED] This would be a good time if Mr. Kinzinger or anyone else had any
9 questions.

10 Mr. Kinzinger. No. I'm good. Thank you.

11 [REDACTED] Thank you.

12 [REDACTED] I have a question going way back, [REDACTED], if you are going to
13 transition to after January 6th. But, if you're working through the day, I can hold off.

14 [REDACTED] Working through the day, but go ahead.

15 [REDACTED] No. I'll hold off.

16 BY [REDACTED]

17 Q So, Mr. Thompson, thank you for talking us through all of that. And I'm
18 curious to hear more about when you decided to exit the building the second time, the
19 final time?

20 A The -- I had seen the officers in like riot gear like behind the gate, and it
21 seemed like they were coming towards me, so that's when we left.

22 Q Just behind the gate -- was that a gate inside the building?

23 A Yeah, down the hallway, like at the end of the hallway, it looked like they
24 were behind like a gate, like a brass gate or something I thought.

25 Q Were there other people in the crowd who seemed like they were eager to

1 stay, perhaps have a conflict with the officers?

2 A I mean, I don't know. I was -- there was definitely a lot of people between
3 me and them, and I mean, yeah. I feel like, yeah, some people wanted to stay, but I
4 didn't.

5 Q And why didn't you want to stay?

6 A I was not confrontational, not violent or anything. So, yeah.

7 Q And, at that point, were you aware that the certification had been delayed?

8 A No, not at that time.

9 Q So you decided to get out of there with Mr. Lyon before things got more
10 confrontational. Is that fair to say?

11 A Right. Yeah.

12 Q And did you try to take anything with you as you were leaving?

13 A Yeah. I grabbed that coat rack by the door and took it out. And then.

14 Q So --

15 A -- and then the radio -- I thought were walkie-talkies, I guess. I found out
16 they were -- they translate languages or something, but I thought they were
17 walkie-talkies at the time.

18 Q So the coat rack is fairly large, correct?

19 A Correct.

20 Q I guess I'm curious about why you wanted to try to take that from the room?

21 A I thought it was like a big enough thing and people would see me with it,
22 and, I mean, it looked like a trophy or think kind of being like, yeah, I was in there, and I
23 got this kind of a thing, so.

24 Q So you thought that entering the Capitol was an achievement of sorts that
25 was worthy of a trophy?

1 A Correct.

2 Q And why was that?

3 A I just -- it seemed like that was, I guess, like kind of the end goal by, you
4 know, to go in and get out and it seemed like that was what people wanted.

5 Q -- go in -- go ahead.

6 A Yeah, no, just. Yeah, just seemed like that was the goal, was to get in and
7 get out and have like a trophy or a souvenir to prove it.

8 Q Get in and get out and also delay the certification. Is that correct?

9 A Yeah. That was -- that was part of it.

10 Q So would it have been a trophy to show that you had followed the
11 President's orders?

12 A Yeah.

13 Q And, obviously, the coat rack is a fairly large object that it is sort of
14 potentially pretty hefty if it's wielded against someone.

15 Was there a sense you would be using it as a weapon or needed it for
16 self-defense?

17 A No. Honestly, I took it -- once I got outside, I put it in a bush and just said I
18 was, you know, putting it back where it came from. Then Robert stayed there and
19 wanted to sit down for a while, and so I just left him and the coat rack there and went
20 back to watching what was going on outside.

21 Q Why did you decide to leave your trophy behind?

22 A I -- it was cumbersome, didn't want to carry it. Yeah.

23 Q And, when you were back outside the -- on the lawn of the Capitol, what was
24 the scene like at that point?

25 A There was still people were going out different doors. I saw like

1 confrontations with the police. People were throwing things and pepper-spraying.
2 People were still trying to get in other doors.

3 Q Was there law enforcement there outside?

4 A Yeah. Like at the top of the steps and behind other doors, yeah, people
5 were fighting with law enforcement.

6 Q Was it still your sense that other people were now trying to get their chance
7 to follow the President's orders and go inside the building?

8 A Yes.

9 Q At that point, were you concerned about what the President had asked you
10 to do?

11 A I don't know if that was my thought. I knew what was happening was bad,
12 but I -- it was kind of like a car wreck or something; you can't look away.

13 Q It was bad, but did you think it was justified at that point?

14 A No. No.

15 Q So you at some point didn't think that the President's directive was a worthy
16 endeavor.

17 Is that because you saw violence happening outside, or was it just the chaos
18 outside? What changed your mind?

19 A Changed my mind about? Sorry.

20 Q So you had said earlier you went into the Capitol; you were following the
21 President's orders; you were taking a trophy to say "I had done that." And then, once
22 you got outside, you just indicated you believed that things had gotten out of hand and
23 that it wasn't a good thing.

24 So what changed?

25 A I -- up until that time, I hadn't seen the violence like that, like there was -- I

1 went to different doors, and I never seen the people trying to fight the police like that
2 until that time. And then I realized, like, how it had escalated, what it had escalated to.

3 Q That is a helpful clarification.

4 So you expressed to us that you went in, and you thought the chaos you caused
5 was actually furthering the President's goal of delaying the certification, but it was only
6 when you got outside you saw there was violence involved as well?

7 A Correct.

8 Q And that was a line you personally drew?

9 A Right. I'm not a violent person.

10 Q But you still were under the impression that this was the consequence of the
11 President's order to the crowd?

12 A Correct.

13 Q At that point, did you feel anger towards President Trump for essentially
14 ordering these folks into conflict with law enforcement?

15 A I wouldn't say I was angry. I was more probably just in shock, confused
16 that time.

17 Q And, when you were outside, you saw the law enforcement officers clashing
18 with what had become rioters. Did you believe that the election certification could still
19 be delayed?

20 A Yeah. At that time, I thought -- I didn't see how they could have a
21 certification with people inside the building and that kind of stuff going on outside.

22 Q So you said to us that you learned later that the certification had been
23 delayed, and I think you said to [REDACTED] or [REDACTED] that it had been -- you
24 considered it to be a victory when you heard about it, correct?

25 A Yeah.

1 Q But that was after you had seen the rioters clashing with police, I take it?

2 A Correct. Yeah.

3 Q So -- go ahead.

4 A Yeah. Like, I can see how that's conflicting, but it was just a lot to kind of
5 process at the time. But I guess it almost made like the violence justified if that makes
6 sense, but I didn't -- I don't see violence as justified, but I think that that's what the crowd
7 had to do to get what they wanted, and so that's what happened.

8 Q So, at the time, you saw the violence as part of an effort that was, in your
9 words, justified?

10 A Yeah, I guess you could say that, yeah --

11 [REDACTED] Oh, sorry, [REDACTED]

12 [REDACTED] That was all in your mind directed by the President in an attempt to
13 delay the certification?

14 Mr. Thompson. Correct.

15 BY [REDACTED]

16 Q And was part of the justification, you know, aside from the President's order,
17 was part of the justification that it would keep President Trump in power, that delaying
18 the certification would mean that President Trump was still President?

19 A Yeah. I saw that the delaying of the certification would allow Trump to
20 remain as President at the time.

21 Q Did you think that keeping President Trump in power was in a way to save
22 democracy, to save the country?

23 A I did.

24 Q Did you have that belief because you were listening to President Trump for
25 many months before the election and after the election?

1 A Yes.

2 Q Thank you.

3

BY [REDACTED]

4 Q So why did you think that it was necessary for President Trump to stay in
5 office in order to save democracy?

6 A Just based on what he was saying that like things would be very bad for
7 Americans if he wasn't to stay in power. I mean, like, I don't know -- people
8 would -- Democrats would take your guns, for example, would happen if he wasn't in
9 power.

10 Q So those were the kind of fears that were going through your mind as you
11 entered the Capitol?

12 A I just wanted to not lose rights, I guess, didn't want Americans to lose rights.

13 Q And you were worried that would happen if the certification went through
14 and President Trump was forced to leave office in a couple of days?

15 A Yeah. I thought it could happen, yeah.

16 Q So President Trump's order was then sort of a last ditch effort to keep rights
17 intact?

18 A I'd say like to keep himself in power, but also that, yes.

19 Q Okay. That's really helpful context.

20 Later in that afternoon, President Trump posted a video where he told the
21 protesters at the Capitol to go home.

22 You were not at the Capitol at that point, correct?

23 A No. I was still there. I was unaware of the video, though.

24 Q Okay. So you were on Capitol Grounds?

25 A I believe so.

1 Q So that video was quite a couple of hours later.

2 A Was it 4:30 or something like that I think.

3 Q Exactly.

4 [REDACTED] 4:17 to be exact.

5 [REDACTED] 4:17, give or take.

6

BY [REDACTED]

7 Q So did you do anything -- what were you doing on Capitol Grounds in that
8 sort of 2-hour interim?

9 A I made my way up I think it's called the tunnel, and I was just staying there
10 watching that conflict for I'd say an hour or more.

11 Q So you were watching other individuals have physical conflict with law
12 enforcement?

13 A Correct. Yeah. You couldn't really see exactly what was going on, but
14 they would go into the tunnel, they would come back out. There was obviously fighting
15 going on.

16 Q So why did you stay? Why did you stick around?

17 A I mean, I guess I was curious, and I didn't -- I didn't know maybe that the
18 election had been -- or the certification had happened and -- because -- I don't know why
19 I stayed. I was kind of maybe just in shock, couldn't take my eyes off what I was seeing.

20 Q So you said you weren't sure if the certification had happened.

21 Does that mean that you kind of still thought this was part of a greater effort that
22 President Trump had been asking supporters to participate in?

23 A I'm sorry. Could you repeat that?

24 Mr. Stewart. Sorry. I'm coughing.

25 [REDACTED] All good.

1

BY [REDACTED]

2

Q So you said you weren't sure if the certification had happened while you

3

were standing around?

4

A I wasn't sure if it had been delayed.

5

Q Right. Right. Okay. So did you still believe that the conflicts you were

6

seeing were part of that broad directive that President Trump had gave to the crowd, and

7

you wanted to be there for it?

8

A Correct. Yeah.

9

Q Okay. So you were still part of that broader sense of achievement that was

10

motivating you to take the coat rack and that sort of thing?

11

A Yes.

12

BY [REDACTED]

13

Q And, Mr. Thompson, sounds like you were outside the tunnel for about an

14

hour. I'll just represent to you that some of the worst violence happened between 3:18

15

and 4:30 at the tunnel. Officers were dragged out. Officers were tazed. Officers

16

were getting beat with all sorts of weapons like hockey sticks and flagpoles and crutches.

17

Were you seeing any of that take place?

18

A Yeah. I mean, it looked bad. What I saw was very intense. Yeah. Kind

19

of blurry, but yeah, it was lots of violence.

20

Q And you were -- at the time were you aware that it was rioters versus law

21

enforcement?

22

A I was.

23

Q Okay. And, back to [REDACTED] earlier question, at the time, you believed

24

that this fight between rioters and law enforcement was part of Trump's directive to stop

25

the certification?

1 A Correct.

2 Q Thank you.

3

BY [REDACTED]

4 Q And so, building on [REDACTED] question, at that point, you're able to tell
5 that there is conflict between police officers and rioters?

6 A Correct.

7 Q And that's obviously pretty self-evidently criminal behavior, correct?

8 A Correct.

9 Q So I am just curious about your decision to stay in the vicinity given that this
10 had escalated from chaos and vandalism to now assaulting law enforcement?

11 A Yeah. I don't really know why I stayed, but I just I guess I just wanted to
12 see what was going to keep happening.

13 Q Did you think that the rioters clashing with law enforcement were on your
14 side?

15 A That the rioters were? Yeah.

16 Q Yeah.

17 A I guess, yeah.

18 Q Because you were all on President Trump's side?

19 A Correct.

20 Q And, while you were watching, were you rooting for them, cheering for them
21 audibly?

22 A No. I mean -- no. Honestly, I just feel like my mouth was probably wide
23 open, and I was just staring. But yeah, I wasn't chanting or had any reaction.

24 Q Was the crowd reacting?

25 A Yeah. I mean, it seemed -- like I know I saw someone pass up like a ladder,

1 and then the crowd passed it back. But it seemed like most people were just watching.

2 Q At that point, you still felt no anger towards President Trump or regret that
3 you had gone?

4 A I wasn't upset that I had gone at that point. I guess I was upset with what I
5 was seeing.

6 Q But you said earlier you still kind of thought it was part of the same effort,
7 even if it was something you were not willing to participate in, correct?

8 A Correct.

9 Q To stop the certification?

10 A Correct.

11 Q So eventually you made the decision to leave the Capitol Grounds. Was
12 that related to the President's tweet at 4:30?

13 A No. My phone had died, and I had been shutting it off to try and save what
14 little battery I had. So I hadn't seen that. I was -- real quick, though, I did send a text
15 at 4:05 to Robert. He was, I believe, still like sitting down, and I said: I'm going back in.

16 Everyone interprets that to mean that I was going back in the building. And I just
17 meant that I was going back into the crowd and I'd probably get separated from him.

18 But, at 6, a little before 6, I heard about the curfew -- and then that area where I
19 was standing, the officers came out and tear-gassed everybody, and like it was -- I
20 couldn't breathe, and everyone left. And that's when I, you know, started trying to
21 figure a way to get home or back to the hotel.

22 Q And so, at that point, you were separated from Robert?

23 A Yeah. We had met back down at the -- like he had texted me like
24 somewhere where he was at, and we met up, yeah.

25 Q Okay. So you fled the Capitol. And how did you end up getting

1 back -- like leaving D.C.?

2 A We left D.C. the next morning.

3 Q Oh, sorry. I meant, like, you were staying in Maryland. How did you get
4 away from the immediate vicinity of the Capitol?

5 A We had stopped on -- I didn't know where we were. I had ordered an
6 Uber, and then my phone died. So we were staying at the spot where I told the Uber to
7 come. And officers approached and said that we couldn't wait for the Uber there. And
8 then, when they noticed the coat rack, they wanted me to stop and talk to them. I
9 just -- I took off running because I -- after seeing the altercations and being past curfew, I
10 knew I wasn't supposed to be there, wasn't supposed to have a coat rack. So I just ran
11 and ended up getting to the hotel, and getting an Uber from there back to my other
12 hotel.

13 Q So, just trying to understand, apologize if I missed this. You did end up
14 taking the coat rack from where you had left it in the bushes?

15 A Right. Yeah. We went back and got it at the end of the night.

16 Q This is, again, as a souvenir, not as a crude weapon of sorts?

17 A Correct.

18 Q When the officers approached you, you said you were fearsome because of
19 the altercations.

20 Could you describe what was going through your mind when they approached
21 you? Did you think you had done something wrong at that point?

22 A No. So, first, they told us to not be there and like pointed us where to go
23 and we started walking. And then we got 50, 100 feet away, and they wanted us to stop
24 and come back and talk to them. And that's when I took off running.

25 Q Okay. So, at first, they didn't ask you if you had been in the Capitol or

1 anything like that?

2 A No.

3 Q And you were still wearing the bulletproof vest at that point?

4 A I was.

5 Q Did Mr. Lyon take off running with you?

6 A He did not.

7 Q But did you meet up with him later on that night at the hotel?

8 A Yes.

9 Q So you ended up leaving the next morning or that night?

10 A The next morning.

11 Q And, obviously, that night, news coverage all over, online, on cable news was
12 about the attack on the Capitol and the subsequent delay of the certification.

13 What was your reaction to seeing that once it was all over national news?

14 A Honestly, I didn't really -- I was still probably processing everything, but I just
15 remember hearing that the -- they came back to certify it at like around 8, and I went to
16 sleep shortly after that.

17 Q Was that disappointing?

18 A No. I mean, I figured it would happen, but like -- so, no, it wasn't
19 disappointing, but I was kind of more thinking about what had happened during the day
20 and how I might be in trouble honestly.

21 Q So, at that point, the sort of hope that the certification could be delayed and
22 President Trump could be able to remain in office, that had faded from the forefront of
23 your mind?

24 A Right. It was more self-preservation at that point.

25 Q Got it. And do you remember that night feeling anything in particular

1 towards President Trump as you shifted into, as you said, self-preservation mode?

2 A No. I wasn't like thinking about anything that night for a while, honestly.
3 I just wanted to start trying to distance myself, I guess, from the whole situation, and kind
4 of figure out like what I -- who I had become and what was I doing.

5 Q So I am curious to just return to the shift that you had because when -- it
6 seems like, when you were entering the Capitol, you -- and even as you were watching
7 some of the violence, even though you didn't participate, you saw it as part of a singular
8 mission that the President had directed the crowd to go to the Capitol to try to delay the
9 certification, and you stayed at the site of the conflict for hours -- which fair to say you
10 were not sort of ashamed to be there at that time, correct?

11 A Correct.

12 Q So when did you start to feel like you needed to distance yourself, and then
13 why?

14 A I mean, just having time to process what had happened, you know, and
15 thinking about who I am and who I wanted to be and not someone who contributes to
16 that kind of behavior, you know, wants to be associated really with that kind of behavior.

17 Q So, at the that point, you no longer believed that it was justified?

18 A Correct. Yeah.

19 Q And would you say that was because there was news media putting it in
20 broader context, the Capitol had been attacked, that sort of thing?

21 A It probably, I'm sure, factored into it I guess, but like the hope that it was
22 more of maybe for a self-reflection kind of a thing. But, I mean, obviously, hearing
23 about, you know, how bad it was and, you know, that I was a part of it didn't make me
24 feel good.

25 Q And when you say how bad it was, are you referring to sort of the injuries

1 that were --

2 A Violence. Yeah.

3 Q -- incurred?

4 A Correct.

5 Q But still not as much the sort of political implications to what you had done;
6 you still had been pleased that the certification was delayed?

7 A I mean, not really because I mean it still happened like pretty soon after.
8 So it seemed like a, you know, whatever sense of a small victory there was short-lived, I
9 guess, and it obviously the -- you know, the means didn't justify the end, you know, so.

10 Q That's what you felt at that point?

11 A Right.

12 Q All right. Well, we've been going for about an hour, and we do have some
13 wrap-up questions on sort of the aftermath of the 6th, but if you want to take another
14 5-minute break, we could come back at 11:12, and then we can wrap up about another
15 half hour?

16 Mr. Stewart. That's fine.

17 [REDACTED] All right. Great. Thank you very much.

18 We can go off the record at 11:07.

19 [Recess.]

20 [REDACTED] We can go back on the record at 11:13 a.m.

21 [REDACTED] Thank you, [REDACTED]

22 BY [REDACTED]

23 Q Back to the 4:17 tweet, Mr. Thompson. I know your phone was dead.

24 Was anyone else around you talking about President Trump telling rioters to go home?

25 A I do think I heard about it from other people, but it was kind of convoluted,

1 and there was like a sentiment of the crowd that didn't believe it I feel like, and yeah.
2 Like I had heard about it, but --

3 Q Did -- and just to follow up, you didn't get the sense that people were
4 turning on their heels and leaving who had heard the tweet?

5 A Correct.

6 Q Also, at 2:24, early in the afternoon, President Trump tweeted basically that
7 Vice President Pence didn't have the courage to do what was necessary or what President
8 Trump wanted him to do, which was stop the certification.

9 Were you aware of that tweet at that time?

10 A No, I can't say I was.

11 Q Did you hear anybody talking about that tweet or claiming Vice President
12 Pence didn't have the courage to do anything?

13 A I did hear people say like Pence let us down and Pence is a traitor or stuff
14 like that. Yeah, I did hear that. I didn't really know what it was reference to, but I felt
15 people had turned on him kind of.

16 Q Okay. Thank you.

17 And then you're still around the Capitol at 6 p.m. So, at 6 p.m., President Trump
18 tweets again, more or less saying, go home, this is a glorious day, remember it forever, in
19 a sort of celebratory tweet of what happened on January 6th.

20 Were you aware of that tweet?

21 A I was not.

22 Q Okay. Thank you. And this next question jumping way back.

23 Before President Trump starting talking about election fraud issues, talking about
24 the possibility of a stolen election, was election fraud even a political issue that you cared
25 about?

1 A Like, the word now is like voter integrity, but at the time I just -- it's not
2 something I really thought about. But, I mean, I wanted to know that elections were
3 fair, you know, but it wasn't like a forethought or something that I concerned myself with
4 as a possibility.

5 Q Great. Thank you very much.

6 [REDACTED] Thank you, [REDACTED]

7 BY [REDACTED]

8 Q And, Mr. Thompson, I wanted to fast forward to current day.

9 Looking back on January 6th and the events of that day, what are your thoughts
10 about what happened?

11 A You know, it's basically just a -- historic day for all the wrong reasons, you
12 know, ashamed of my participation in it. And, yeah, just how to be better in the future, I
13 guess. Yup.

14 Q How to be better in the future, talking about yourself?

15 A Not get -- yeah, myself. Yeah, not, you know, end up in situations like that.

16 Q Do you still believe that marching and entering the Capitol was an effective
17 way to express yourself, as you said earlier?

18 A No, I don't.

19 Q But do you still believe that was what the President wanted you to do that
20 day?

21 A I do.

22 Q And what do you think about that, having had time to digest?

23 A Yeah. I feel kind of -- more or less, you know, used as a pawn, you know,
24 someone taken advantage of, you know, lied to.

25 Q A pawn to what end?

1 A I just -- you know, someone else's game. I don't really know what the end
2 goal was.

3 Q Well, you've said a couple times throughout this interview that there was a
4 still a hope that President Trump would remain in power, so do you think that was what
5 was going on?

6 A Yeah. To -- yeah. To hold onto power was the goal, and I felt like I was
7 used to get to that end.

1

2 [11:18 a.m.]

3 BY [REDACTED]:

4 Q Even though it failed.

5 A Correct.

6 Q So, kind of relatedly, have your feelings towards President Trump changed
7 since that day?

8 A They have. Like, really, all towards politics. But for him, like, I just kind of
9 try and put him -- put it out my mind, put it behind -- like, not give it any attention. And
10 right now I feel best, but, like, I mean, there's probably some animosity there, but it's also
11 with myself, which is kind of where I'm at right now.

12 Q Could you expand on that more? You said there's some animosity?

13 A I mean, I'm upset that, like, you know, I feel like he told people to come
14 there, and then, like, the arrests, and, you know, now I'm here. I just -- yeah, this stuff's
15 out of --

16 Q Is it fair to say you felt misled?

17 A Correct. Yes.

18 Q On that same line of questioning, do you still believe that the 2020
19 Presidential election was stolen?

20 A No, I do not.

21 Q So the issues of voter fraud, allegations of ballots being improperly counted,
22 you don't believe that is what actually happened?

23 A No, I do not.

24 Q What changed your mind about that?

25 A I've just seen, like, the evidence and the debunking. Like, they've gone

1 through them all and explained how, like, what you saw, what you thought was
2 mishandling of ballots was actually how, like, things go. And, like, the, you know, call to
3 Georgia to find votes was just really bad. You know, like, doesn't make sense, but --

4 Q Uh-huh. So -- oh, go ahead.

5 A Just working -- I'm working with therapy, a therapist about, you know, the
6 kind of deprogramming and learning where I went wrong with conspiracy theories and
7 believing, like --

8 Q So why do you think you were so drawn to those theories in 2020?

9 A I feel like there was a lot of factors. I believed them before, but, now, with
10 kind of just being laid off and being home alone, drinking more, I just kind of went into a
11 bad place with it at that time, and just kind of everything kind of built up to January 6th.

12 Q Yeah. That's helpful. So some of what the President was saying about the
13 election, in your mind, was syncing up with the personal turmoil in your life?

14 A Yeah. Yeah, that's fair to say.

15 Q So you said to ██████████ that you didn't really care about election integrity,
16 voter fraud issues as a salient part of American life before President Trump brought these
17 to the fore in 2020.

18 We obviously just had another election, and there were claims that things had
19 gone fraudulently there too. Were you still concerned about fraud this time around?

20 A No. I'm not even really aware of what happened with this election. I'm --

21 Q Okay.

22 A -- distancing myself from politics altogether.

23 Q So what do you make of President Trump's continuing claims that the
24 election was stolen? He is still obviously saying it.

25 A I mean, I feel like he's wrong, but his -- I feel like his ego won't allow him to

1 admit it.

2 Q And we talked a lot today about the violence that you saw and, sort of, the
3 conflict with law enforcement that you were quite near.

4 Are you concerned about future potential for violence in American politics, similar
5 to what we saw on January 6th?

6 A Yeah. Yes. Like, yeah, I fear it could happen again.

7 Q Do you think that it could happen again for any particular reason?

8 A I mean, no, not particularly. Just, I feel like, you know, once there's kind of
9 a precedent for something like that, that it's more likely to happen again.

10 Q Are you concerned that President Trump's current latest run for the White
11 House could stoke that sort of violence?

12 A Yeah. Yeah, I am.

13 Q And, just last month, there was an attack on Speaker Pelosi's husband. And
14 the man who attacked him was crying out, "Where is Nancy? I'm looking for Nancy,"
15 when he entered their house. And he has admitted that he was trying to find her and
16 "make her answer for her lies."

17 Does that, to you, seem like part of the same pattern of what you saw on
18 January 6th?

19 A Yeah. I feel like there's, you know, like, psychological manipulation that's
20 leading to violence, basically, like, and it's more prevalent now because of January 6th.

21 Q Who do you blame for that?

22 A I think Trump.

23 Q And so, just to underscore, you went to January 6th because the President
24 told you it was going to be a wild time, correct?

25 A Yeah. Correct.

1 Q And you had no plans to march to the Capitol until the President directed
2 you to, correct?

3 A Correct.

4 Q And you did not think that there was a chance that the election results could
5 be delayed in their certification until the President suggested that was the case?

6 A Correct.

7 Q And you saw entering the Capitol as part of the President's order to you and
8 the crowd?

9 A Correct. Yeah.

10 Q And you even saw some of the violence between rioters and law
11 enforcement as other individuals following the President's orders, correct?

12 A Yes.

13 Q And after you'd seen the violence and you had seen the vandalism at the
14 Capitol, when you learned that the certification had indeed been delayed, you celebrated,
15 right?

16 A Right.

17 Q And that was because you saw it as successfully carrying out the President's
18 orders?

19 A Yes. Yep.

20 Q And now you remain worried that former President Trump could call up
21 people to violence again?

22 A Yes.

23 Q So, given that, that's a pretty concerning picture. What do you think that
24 we could be doing differently as a country to prevent such violence from recurring?

25 A I mean, I think it probably starts with education, you know, like, making

1 people aware of, you know, psychological manipulation and, like -- it's like, I call it, like,
2 self-fulfilling algorithms. Like, on the internet, when you search for something and it
3 sees you -- like, the algorithm sees you "like" it or interact with it, then it gives you more
4 of that. And so it kind of -- like, positive reinforcement, self-fulfilling, you know, rabbit
5 hole, you know, people can go down. And just educating people on, you know, the
6 triggers to look out for, I guess -- conspiracy theories, you know.

7 Q Do you still interact with QAnon conspiracy theories at all?

8 A No. No.

9 Q I also wanted to ask quickly, you currently have a case pending with the
10 Department of Justice, correct?

11 A Correct.

12 Q And could you just walk us through the status of that case?

13 A I have a sentencing on Friday.

14 Q Okay.

15 Well, I want to give [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] a chance to ask any other
16 questions, but I really do appreciate the thoughts that you've just shared.

17 But, before I hand it over to them, we covered a lot today. Is there anything that
18 we missed that you think it's important for us to know?

19 A I mean, just the main message would be, like, you know, people who
20 promote conspiracy theories can lead to events like January 6th, and no one wants that.

21 Q Thank you.

22 All right. I'll hand it over to [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]

23 [REDACTED] Thanks.

24 BY [REDACTED]:

25 Q I just wanted to follow up on one thing that [REDACTED] mentioned, which is

1 that, I don't know if you saw, but yesterday Mr. Trump announced that he was gonna be
2 running for President again. And you mentioned that you would be concerned about
3 the potential for violence.

4 I'm curious, because a couple of months ago Mr. Trump mentioned that he would
5 give full pardons and a full apology to people who stormed the Capitol on January 6th if
6 he were reelected President, and I was wondering if you had a reaction to that.

7 A I'm not holding my breath. Like, I don't -- I don't think it'll happen.

8 Q Why is that?

9 A I don't think he's gonna be reelected. And I'm not even sure that he would
10 do that if he was.

11 Q Why do you think that he wouldn't follow up on that?

12 A It's hard to explain. I guess I just don't think that he really cares.

13 Q Can I ask what led you to think that?

14 A Just looking back on how he treats people and, you know, like, how he kind
15 of just uses people, I don't feel like he cares.

16 Q Are there examples in how you've felt since January 6th that point to that?

17 A I mean, just, like, the fact that he's still carrying on about the lie and, you
18 know, not telling the truth in general. It just doesn't make me think that he's gonna
19 keep his word on anything.

20 Q Got it.

21 And you mentioned that you don't think he'll get reelected. Can I ask why?

22 A I feel like everyone's just too divided, and it's not good for anybody, and I
23 just don't see him being able to unite people, support them.

24 Q Got it.

25 And [REDACTED] asked you about the potential for violence. You know, looking at it

1 more broadly, are there other responses that you have to the fact that President Trump
2 announced another run yesterday?

3 A No. Honestly, I didn't know about it. But, I mean, I feel like it's probably
4 pretty easy for him to call for violence after what's happened in the past, so --

5 Q Got it. That's really helpful. Thank you.

6 [REDACTED] I don't have any further questions. I just wanted to thank you, Mr.
7 Thompson, for taking the time to speak with us. It helps get all the perspectives. You
8 know, even though we're wrapping up our investigation, it really helps our work, so thank
9 you.

10 Mr. Thompson. Yep.

11 [REDACTED] Thank you both.

12 BY [REDACTED]

13 Q And I have one followup to the question that [REDACTED] was asking. Do
14 you believe that individuals who stormed the Capitol and who had conflict with police
15 officers should be pardoned?

16 A No, I do not.

17 Q All right.

18 And, looking back, what concerns you most about the potential for violence going
19 forward, as you were talking about with [REDACTED]?

20 A Like, what I think --

21 Q Well, given what you've been through, what you experienced, what
22 concerns you most about the potential for violence in this country moving forward?

23 A That people can be misled like I was, that -- and that, you know, it's
24 happened before and then, you know, that no one was held accountable except for the
25 people, like, lower people, but the people who, like, kind of orchestrate the violence

1 aren't held accountable.

2 Q Do you think President Trump should be held accountable?

3 A I believe so, yes.

4 [REDACTED] Well, thank you. I don't have any other further questions at this
5 point. And thank you for your time today.

6 And this interview can stand in --

7 [REDACTED] Actually, [REDACTED], just one second.

8 BY [REDACTED]

9 Q Just very quickly, Mr. Thompson, what would that accountability for the
10 former President look like?

11 A For him to, you know, admit it and, you know, probably have to serve some
12 kind of time like everybody else does, you know?

13 Q Thank you.

14 A Uh-huh.

15 [REDACTED] Thank you [REDACTED]

16 All right. Seeing no further questions, this interview can stand in recess, subject
17 to the call of the chair, and we can go off the record at 11:34 a.m.

18 [Whereupon, at 11:34 a.m., the interview was recessed, subject to the call of the
19 chair.]

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Certificate of Deponent/Interviewee

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

Witness Name

Date