

EXECUTIVE SESSION
PERMANENT SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE,
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
WASHINGTON, D.C.

INTERVIEW OF: MICHAEL CAPUTO

Friday, July 14, 2017

Washington, D.C.

The interview in the above matter was held in Room HVC-304, the Capitol, commencing at 2:16 p.m.

Present: Representatives Rooney, Schiff, Sewell, and Heck.

Appearances:

For the PERMANENT SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE:

[REDACTED]

For MICHAEL CAPUTO:

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MR. ROONEY: Mr. Caputo, welcome to the House Intelligence Committee.

My name is Tom Rooney, as I said, from Florida. We are asking some witnesses and people to come in and help us with our investigation with regard to Russia and allowing us to write a report at the end of the day when it comes to the Intelligence Community and how we can do a better job hopefully moving forward in the future with regard to our election process, what role a foreign entity like Russia might be playing in that, and how we can do a better job.

What we don't do is we are not a criminal investigation body. Anything that would be of a criminal nature obviously would be handled by the Justice Department, and that, you know, is not what we're here for. We are here to try to make the Intelligence Community better, and if you can help us in any way with the answers that you give to our questions, we would appreciate that.

Now, the way that we have this set up is that my side, which is me, will ask questions for up to, if I need, 45 minutes, and then the minority will go for 45 minutes, and then, if we want to redirect, we can do that.

Now, obviously, we're not as stringent as that. I mean, you know, Adam and I have talked. If it needs to be -- you know, obviously, if there's a line of questioning going where there's a conversation and there's meaningful dialogue, it's not that strict.

Also, the staff, if they have questions, might follow up some of the things that we aren't as clear on. So, with that, I just wanted to say welcome. And if there's anything that you need during -- you know, hopefully it won't go as long as that either. People will be --

MR. CAPUTO: I've got until Sunday.

allotted time period.

Some of the questions may seem basic, but that's because we need to clearly establish facts and understand the situation.

Please do not assume we know any facts that you have previously disclosed as part of any other investigation or review or public interview. And as Mr. Rooney mentioned, we can take any breaks you desire.

As you can see, there's a reporter who's making a recording of these proceedings so that we can easily consult a written transcript of your answer. The reporter may ask you to spell certain terms or unusual phrases you might use and may ask you to slow down or repeat your answers.

We also ask that everyone use the microphones whenever asking questions or giving answers. That's not so we can hear each other necessarily but so that the reporter can hear us better.

We ask that you give complete and fulsome replies to questions based on your best recollections. If a question is unclear or you are uncertain in your response, please let us know. And if you do not know the answer to a question or cannot remember, simply say so.

You are entitled to have a lawyer present for this interview, and I see that you've brought two. Therefore, I'll ask your counsel to make an appearance for the record.

MR. VACCO: Good afternoon, and thank you. Dennis C. Vacco, V-a-c-c-o, law firm of Lippes Mathias, M-a-t-h-i-a-s, Wexler Friedman, Buffalo, New York.

MR. SOEHNLEIN: Eric Soehnlein, S, as in Sam, o-e-h-n-l-e-i-n, of the same law firm, Buffalo, New York.

 Thank you. Almost done, sir.

Consistent with the committee's rules of procedure, you and your counsel, if you wish, will have a reasonable opportunity to inspect the transcript of this interview in order to determine whether your answers were correctly transcribed. The transcript will remain in the committee's custody.

The committee also reserves the right to request a return for additional questions should the need arise.

This interview will be unclassified in its entirety but is committee sensitive. To ensure confidentiality, we ask that you not discuss the interview with anyone other than your attorney.

Our record today will reflect that you have not been compelled to appear. You are reminded that it's unlawful to deliberately provide false information to Members of Congress or staff.

Lastly, the record will reflect you are voluntarily participating in this interview under oath. Do you understand these circumstances?

MR. CAPUTO: Yes, sir.

██████████ Thank you. If you could just raise your right hand and we will --

MR. CAPUTO: Stand?

██████████ No, sitting is fine -- administer the oath.

Mr. Caputo, do you swear or affirm to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth?

MR. CAPUTO: I do.

██████████ Thank you. And I understand from your attorneys that, before we begin questions, you wish to make a brief opening statement.

MR. ROONEY: Before you do, we have other people that want to introduce

themselves for the record. Go ahead.

██████████ ██████████ staff member for the majority.

MR. ROONEY: Adam, did you want to say anything opening remarks wise or your staff?

MR. SCHIFF: Yes. Mr. Caputo, I just wanted to welcome you to the committee. We appreciate your willingness to come sit down with us today. I would only say -- and Mr. Swalwell is going to begin the questioning on our side. But I don't know if you've ever been in a deposition before. This will be probably a bit more disjointed than the depositions that you may be familiar with.

We may start out a with a few particular questions of interest and then go through a little more methodical examination after that. But appreciate your willingness to come and sit down with us today.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MR. ROONEY: Okay. Are we ready?

MR. CAPUTO: I'm a captain of technology.

So thank you very much for your introductions.

MR. ROONEY: Thank you.

MR. CAPUTO: I want to thank the committee for consenting to my requests for a meeting. I hope my testimony will provide clarity on relevant issues of interest to the committee and set the record straight with respect to certain comments made about me and my family in the recent past.

Contrary to Representative Jackie Speier's comments in your March 20 public hearing, I was never, ever Vladimir Putin's image consultant. To the contrary, a simple Google search would have revealed a great deal, including my July 2004 op-ed in The Washington Post written after my colleague was murdered

in Moscow.

Criticizing the Kremlin, I concluded, and this is a quotation from The Post: There is no valid reason why a nation so tolerant, even complicit, in organized crime should stand on par with world leaders and groups such as the World Trade Organization. Putin must stand as the guarantor of media freedom, and the Bush administration must demand results in this murder investigation.

These are not the words of a Russian President's publicist.

In the last decade, I have leveled similar public criticisms, and they too are easily found on the web. I've leveled similar criticism on Twitter, particularly since July 2016, comments like: Sure, we're having fun with the WikiLeaks DNC leak, but this is a provocation by the Kremlin and must be dealt with STAT.

Other statements made during the March 20 public hearing about me were also inaccurate. For instance, Representative Speier mentioned that my business failed in Russia without noting a simple historical fact. Tens of thousands of businesses failed there in the wake of the 1998 ruble devaluation and the subsequent economic meltdown.

For some reason, the Congresswoman also got personal, unnecessarily mentioning my wife. Of course, my wife is Ukrainian, and you don't need Google to understand why our marriage does not support the Congresswoman's hypothesis that I'm some kind of Putinist.

Just as not every Italian American is associated with organized crime, not every Ukrainian woman is connected to President Putin. In fact, few are; maybe none. For a number of reasons, my wife is certainly not.

As I am sure you are aware, the work of the committee and the statements made by the members of the committee have consequences. Within minutes of

Representative Speier's statements, my wife and I were buried in threats. That day and those that followed were both terrifying and ultimately ironic.

My wife, a hardworking wife and mother, proudly became an American citizen in February. A month later, she was unfairly scrutinized, demonized, and threatened as a result of comments made by a member of this committee that lacked investigation and context.

I understand why the committee may be interested in me and my work, but I want to take the present opportunity to make the salient facts clear.

I worked for the Trump campaign from late November 2015 to June 20, 2016, as director of the New York State primary of the campaign initially, based in Buffalo. I worked with autonomy because we had frustratingly rare and momentary contact with the national campaign.

After the New York primary, I moved to the New York City headquarters. There, I functioned in a silo where my role was limited and directed by others. I had no autonomy. I was not a decisionmaker.

On or about June 1, 2016, I was appointed director of communications for caucus operations at the Republican National Convention. I recall no substantive contact with the Trump campaign during this period, as I was directed by Ryan Price, head of caucus operations, and followed that chain of command.

From the day President Trump announced his candidacy until Inauguration Day, to my knowledge, I never spoke about his campaign with anybody remotely associated with the Russian Government. At no time did I ever talk about Russian contacts with any member of the campaign.

I certainly did not hear talk of collusion with Russia or any foreign nation. It's important to note that I was brought on the campaign because of my specialization

in New York State Republican politics, not because I had anything at all to do with Russia.

The only time I spoke about Russia with Donald Trump was in passing, during a dinner conversation in 2013, long before he decided to run for President. He simply asked me in the context of a dinner conversation what was it like to live in Russia. Our exchange may have lasted all of 30 seconds.

I served in the United States Army infantry in the 1980s. In the 1990s, the United States Government sent me to serve my country in Russia. In between, I proudly served here in Congress, where I worked as an assistant director of the United States House of Representatives radio and television gallery. There, I coordinated broadcast media coverage of more than 100 committee hearings, including at least one held by the House Intelligence Committee. The offices here are much nicer now.

I know this House. I know your work. I'm a believer in regular order and the vital nature of the committee process in lawmaking and investigation. I respect this institution deeply, and I'm here to offer my assistance in your inquiry. I'm especially interested in helping you seek the truth and, if possible, to dial down the partisan rhetoric that can and does have real and serious consequences to ordinary people like my family and me.

Thank you very much.

MR. ROONEY: Thank you, sir.

And so some of these questions that I'm going to ask you might be a little bit repetitive. You kind of went over them there, and I got, I think, a lot of it down, but if I repeat something you already said, I apologize. But if you could just re-answer, I'd appreciate that, especially for the reporter.

MR. CAPUTO: Yes, sir.

MR. ROONEY: You said that, in the 1990s -- first of all, thank you for your service. You were in the Army in the eighties?

MR. CAPUTO: Yes, sir, 1980s.

MR. ROONEY: And then you said you went to Russia in the nineties for the government. In what capacity was that?

MR. CAPUTO: I went as an adviser to the Russian Government on the election process. My job was to get involved in their campaigns. The irony of that is not lost on me at this point. I was the Russia director of the United States Agency for International Development-funded International Foundation for Election Systems. I worked for the USAID-funded company for 1 year and then stayed additional time.

MR. ROONEY: So, when you say you stayed additional time, is it after you left working for the government USAID, is that -- did you stay in Russia privately, or did you come back first? Because you lived in Russia and had a business there, correct?

MR. CAPUTO: Yes, sir.

MR. ROONEY: You said that it went south when a lot of other things did. Was that right after this --

MR. CAPUTO: Yes.

MR. ROONEY: -- or did you come home first?

MR. CAPUTO: Indulge me for a moment and I'll get through that. I did not come home first.

MR. ROONEY: Okay.

MR. CAPUTO: In the IFES position, International Foundation for Election

Systems, I interacted regularly with the highest levels of the Russian Government, including the Deputy Prime Minister, who chaired the Central Election Commission, who was my primary contact, and his aides; leaders of the Russian Duma and Federation Council; and regional leaders in oblasts across the nation.

I met Russian President Boris Yeltsin and then deputy mayor of Saint Petersburg, Vladimir Putin, at large events. I reported regularly to the officials in the United States embassy.

During my U.S. Government tenure and for many months thereafter, Choose Or Lose, Russia's young voter organization that I founded, was the most significant political project I worked on. Establishing the local version of Rock the Vote required me to travel across the federation working with top musicians and other celebrities to increase young voter turnout in the 1996 Presidential election. During this time, I met regularly with a broad spectrum of national and regional politicians and business leaders.

From November 1995, when I left the International Foundation for Election Systems, until I moved back to the United States in 2000, I founded and managed my own public relations agency called the Florence Group.

The small firm employed up to 15 Russian nationals at some periods and represented international companies like Amway, GTech, and more in their attempt to establish operations in the Russian market.

In addition, I worked on a variety of Federal legislative races and advised national politicians on the international issues that pertained to the United States/Russia relations, including the late General Alexander Levid, Federation Council Vice Chairman Vladimir Platonov, and then Duma Committee Chairman Dr. Artur Chilangarov.

In 2000 -- I'll stop for a moment. In 2000, my company -- I moved back to the United States. But in 2007, I lived briefly in Ukraine, in Kiev, and worked on a parliamentary election campaign for Bloc Lytvyn, who's founder of Volodimir Lytvyn, had left the political party of President Victor Yanokovitch to form his own party. We ran against the President's party, managed by Paul Manafort. We won. Lytvyn was elected and later elected speaker of the Verkhovna.

And that was a pretty good outline, I think, of my business in the region.

MR. ROONEY: When you were there originally and you were sort of doing this Rock the Vote, Get Out the Vote for young voters, and you said that you had met Vladimir Putin, I'm just curious as to sort of what he thought of what you were trying to do.

I mean, you hear all this stuff now about how a lot of what the Russians were trying to do in this past election was sort of payback for almost seems like exactly what you were there to try to do.

Did you get the sense from him, if you talked to him at length at all, that he didn't like what you were trying to do there or that he was supportive at that time, or can you not really gauge based on --

MR. CAPUTO: We had -- we exchanged pleasantries at a public event where we shared a dais in Saint Petersburg on election law development. I believe it was 1995.

MR. ROONEY: Do you think he was supportive of what you were trying to do?

MR. CAPUTO: I don't think he was the least bit interested in what I was trying to do. He didn't want -- he didn't speak English at the time. He didn't really want to spend time with me. I got a distinct impression that not just Putin, but

others in the Russian Government did not like the fact that I was there.

I caught a lot of flak from leaders of parties that were opposed to President Yeltsin as someone who was meddling in the elections and as someone paid by the U.S. Government and reporting to the Embassy should not be around any electoral processes.

MR. ROONEY: Okay. Let's fast forward a little bit. I'm sure that we'll go back in time to your time in Russia maybe a little bit later. But I want to get through, you know, my prepared questions first just -- and, again, some of these are repetitive.

You said that you had worked on the campaign from 2015 to 2016. What were the months again of that?

MR. CAPUTO: If you'll indulge me, I want to make sure --

MR. ROONEY: Yeah, that's fine.

MR. CAPUTO: From about November 20, 2015, to June 20, 2016. I initially served as New York State primary director for the Donald J. Trump for President campaign. In this capacity, I directed the work of New York campaign volunteers to organize support among State Republican leaders and designed and implemented a strategy for a significant victory April 19 of the New York State Republican primary.

During this period, I had no substantive contact with the campaign headquarters until just before the primary. After the primary victory, I was invited to join the national campaign by the candidate and by Paul Manafort, who joined a brief time before the New York primary, and then began working in the New York City Trump Tower headquarters on approximately April 25.

There, I was asked to serve as a senior adviser for communications. I

drafted talking points. I wrote press releases. I managed media liaison and conducted other duties as assigned. I reported to Paul Manafort.

On or about June 1, 2016, I was appointed director of communications for caucus operations of the Republican National Convention, where I formed a team of public relations specialists. Together, we devised strategies to publicize the coming convention.

I resigned this position on June 20, 2016. Beyond contacting senior campaign officials in an attempt to collect salary and expense payments, I do not recall any substantive contact with the Donald J. Trump for President campaign after my resignation.

As director of the New York State primary campaign, I worked with autonomy because we had frustratingly rare and only momentary contact with the national campaign until just before the primary day. In the campaign headquarters, I functioned in a silo where my role was limited and directed by others. I had no autonomy and I was not a decisionmaker.

MR. ROONEY: Why did you resign?

MR. CAPUTO: I resigned because I tweeted out a celebratory tweet. I was very excited that they had finally fired Corey Lewandowski. It was a picture of a witch's feet under the Wizard of Oz house after it had fallen and crushed her. I want to stipulate here that the irony of me being fired for a tweet from the Trump campaign is not lost on me.

MR. ROONEY: What was your problem with Lewandowski?

MR. CAPUTO: He was the worst campaign manager I ever encountered in 30 years in politics. When Paul Manafort took over the campaign, he should have been fired. He wasn't. From the day Paul Manafort came aboard and then, a little

bit later, me, he spent the majority of his time, in my estimation, undermining Paul Manafort, which was, then again, of course, undermining the campaign.

MR. ROONEY: Okay. Let's back up a little bit.

Will you make sure that I know how much time I have left so I don't --

MR. CAPUTO: I can speak faster.

MR. ROONEY: No, it's not you. It's me. I lose track of time.

██████████ You started your questions at 2:30, so we've got until about 3:15, if you like, so plenty of time.

MR. ROONEY: So, just when you started in Buffalo, Buffalo, during the primary season for Trump, and you didn't have much contact or any contact with the national campaign -- I don't know what kind of campaign they had during the primary or not, but what motivated you to -- I don't really care why you supported Trump, but I guess I'm saying, when you decided to support Trump and be a volunteer coordinator and that kind of thing, how did you organize and coordinate, or did you just completely do that on your own? And how did you pay for things?

MR. CAPUTO: In 2013, I first met Donald Trump in 1988. We intersected in social settings during that time. I never worked for him. In 2013, I asked him, among other leaders of the Republican Party in New York, to run for Governor of New York against Andrew Cuomo. He's very difficult to beat. We needed a wealthy, self-funder who had high name ID, and that in New York was one person.

I met with him across the space of about 6, 7 months and organized a campaign for him to assume control of with chairman in every single one of the 63 counties of New York State. I organized with help from --

MR. ROONEY: This is for Governor?

MR. CAPUTO: Yes, sir.

MR. ROONEY: Okay. All right.

MR. CAPUTO: I organized 85 percent of the weighted vote of the Republican Party chairmen to support him as the candidate, and that took a lot of time and a lot of effort. And he ultimately decided not to. But it was very, I would say, compared to, let's say, Indiana, Iowa, New Hampshire, it was a no-brainer for him to appoint me as New York State primary director because all I did was reconstitute the campaign that I had disbanded in 2014.

So, while there may have been expenses associated with that, like phone calls, every single person who supported him for Governor signed up immediately. My job was to block Ted Cruz from gaining even one delegate, and we succeeded.

MR. ROONEY: How much communication did you have directly with Trump in the gubernatorial effort?

MR. CAPUTO: I talked to him almost daily.

MR. ROONEY: So when you say that -- like, when you were running for -- or became kind of like the State primary director, you used the terms "rare contact." Why would that be if you had pretty good access to him during the gubernatorial effort?

MR. CAPUTO: I'm a veteran of the United States Army. I'm a veteran of dozens and dozens of campaigns. What makes both of them work well is the chain of command. In the times that I've run campaigns and the times when I ran units in the United States Army, anyone who bucked the chain of command -- the words --

MR. ROONEY: Do you think you could have talked directly to --

MR. CAPUTO: Definitely.

MR. ROONEY: And at that point, was it Lewandowski that was in your chain of command?

MR. CAPUTO: Yes. I had a difficult relationship with Lewandowski from the beginning because he was very much opposed to Roger Stone. Roger Stone, I was his driver in the 1980s. I know Roger. He's like my big brother. We're very different, but I love him very much.

He perceived me as Roger Stone's guy. He had just succeeded in getting Roger fired. So, from the day that Donald Trump decided on me as a New York State primary director until the actual New York State primary, Corey Lewandowski completely ignored our efforts.

I would call on a regular basis. I would rarely get ahold of anyone. I think, if I had four conversations -- it might have been one more -- with anyone from the campaign from November until March, I would say, that would be a high number. And that wasn't a function of anything smart or efficient. It was just the way that campaign was run.

MR. ROONEY: You say you didn't have any autonomy. Are we talking about as far as your role in the convention or with regard to your role as the New York sort of organizer?

MR. CAPUTO: I would say I had autonomy in New York because nobody was following us along.

MR. ROONEY: Yeah.

MR. CAPUTO: I had zero autonomy in Trump Tower and then in the -- in the convention, I would probably say I had autonomy because I had to form the communications division, and I was able to hire who I wanted and such. But I still considered myself under the direction -- of course, I was very much under the direction of Ryan Price, who was the head of caucus operations there and on top of me in the chain of command, also an Army veteran, happened to be an officer; that

usually intimidated me. So I never called the campaign after I was sent to New York -- I mean, sent to Cleveland.

MR. ROONEY: So, I guess, it would be safe to assume that, when you were in New York, you probably had few people officially reporting to you, correct?

MR. CAPUTO: I had no people.

MR. ROONEY: Okay. But when you got to the convention coordinate -- caucus -- yeah, caucus operations person, how many people did you have reporting to you?

MR. CAPUTO: I started with zero. I think I got it up to about 12 before I resigned, and --

MR. ROONEY: Who took your place when you resigned?

MR. CAPUTO: My deputy. His name is John Elliott. He became the director of communications for caucus operations.

MR. ROONEY: Did he stay through the convention?

MR. CAPUTO: Yes, sir.

MR. ROONEY: Okay. Were you paid?

MR. CAPUTO: For which periods?

MR. ROONEY: Any of it.

MR. CAPUTO: I was paid in full for my time at the convention, salary and expenses. I started as the head of the New York State primary team as a volunteer. In March, I was offered a salary. I accepted it, which necessarily forced me to quit my job as a radio talk show host.

And then I moved to Trump Tower, got a raise, and incurred expenses. I billed those the day that I took the job as head of communications for the convention team. I was never paid.

MR. ROONEY: Did you do anything about that?

MR. CAPUTO: I called. Like I mentioned earlier, the only conversations I had with the campaign after I resigned were conversations with several different people trying to collect. I didn't collect --

MR. ROONEY: Was Manafort still there when you left?

MR. CAPUTO: Yes, sir. But I didn't ask Paul for the money because that was kind of below his grade of leadership. I talked to his deputy and others that were serving under him.

MR. ROONEY: So you never got any kind of response?

MR. CAPUTO: Oh, I got a lot of responses. None of them had dollar signs attached to them.

MR. ROONEY: How often did you -- or how many times did you meet during the Presidential campaign, not the gubernatorial, meet with the President?

MR. CAPUTO: Less than 10, but more than 5. I would estimate eight.

MR. ROONEY: And would all of this be when you were at Trump Tower, or was some of it in New York when you were --

MR. CAPUTO: One of them was an event in New York, and the rest were in Trump Tower.

MR. ROONEY: Okay. Now, some of these --

MR. CAPUTO: I'm sorry, sir. Two of those were in New York, and the rest of them were in Trump Tower.

MR. ROONEY: Did you have any contact with any Russian Government officials on behalf of the Trump campaign?

MR. CAPUTO: No, I did not, not on behalf of the campaign, and while I did have limited contact with some Russians, none of them were Russian Government

officials.

MR. ROONEY: Who were they and why?

MR. CAPUTO: From June 16, 2015, to January 20, 2017, I maintained ongoing contact with one Russian national during the timeframe outlined. Sergey Petrushin is his name, a long-time friend and business colleague who I first met when I first arrived in Russia in 1994. Later, I hired him as an event coordinator on the 1995 young voter project. I hired him again in 1996 as my first employee of my Moscow-based public relations agency. After I left Russia in 2000, Petrushin found a successful public relations of his own, Zeppelin Productions, widely respected for their events production services.

Petrushin and I planned for many years to return to business together. In June 2015, we initiated a merger of our agencies to allow us to work together to significantly expand our public relations business in the United States market.

MR. SWALWELL: Could you spell his last name?

MR. CAPUTO: Yes, sir. Sergei sometimes is spelled differently, so I'll tell you what's on his passport. It's S-e-r-g-e-i, and Petrushin, P-e-t-r-u-s, like Sam, h-i-n, like Nancy.

Okay. I interacted briefly with a former Zeppelin Productions web designer in Moscow during that time to set up our company website. I exchanged a few emails with Dennis Garisimov, is his name. He later assisted our company with a few technical issues we had with the website and our email services when they went down. I do not believe I've ever met Dennis Garisimov, and I have people in my office that coordinated most of those conversations.

Beyond Petrushin and Garisimov, I do not recall any communications with Russian Government officials, businessmen, or their representatives between the

time I started with the campaign and the time I resigned.

MR. ROONEY: Did you discuss Russia with President Trump or any of his campaign representatives, employees, donors, and volunteers, your history, expertise in the voting in Russia or whatever or just, I guess, you know, your general background with Russian -- your Russian experience, did you give any kind of consultation to Trump or any of his campaign?

MR. CAPUTO: As I mentioned before, I had one discussion with Donald Trump about Russia. That was in 2013 over a dinner conversation, where he simply asked me what it was like to live there. I believe within 30 seconds our conversation switched to the thing that we both love the most, and that's the Buffalo Bills.

At no time did anyone in the campaign, whether it be Paul Manafort, who I've known for 30 years, Rick Gates, who I've known for 30 years, external types like Roger Stone, who I've known for 30 years, did I ever discuss Russia. Not once.

There is a good reason for that. We were running and gunning with our hair on fire. Russia was not a topic of concern. And I can tell you this as well: I don't believe Donald Trump cared anymore about Russia than he did any other nation. He was curious, but he wasn't curious enough to ask me.

MR. ROONEY: How did he know that you lived in Russia to ask you what it was like to live there?

MR. CAPUTO: I think I mentioned it, because I think at that time -- I don't remember, but I believe that at that time when I first talked to him, he was about to have or was planning to have or had just had his beauty pageant in Moscow, and so I brought it up as small talk to, you know, open up a more intimate form of communication at dinner.

MR. ROONEY: Did you ever have any contact with individuals acting on behalf of the Russian Government during your time with the Trump campaign?

MR. CAPUTO: Never.

MR. ROONEY: Did you collude, coordinate, or conspire with Russia on behalf of the Trump campaign?

MR. CAPUTO: Never.

MR. ROONEY: Are you aware of anyone who colluded, coordinated, or conspired with Russia on behalf of the Trump campaign?

MR. CAPUTO: No one.

MR. ROONEY: Do you have or ever have possessed any documents that reasonably could lead to the discovery of any facts within the investigation's publicly announced parameters?

MR. CAPUTO: I do not, and I never did.

MR. ROONEY: Can you tell me a little bit about -- a little bit more about the Florence Group?

MR. CAPUTO: Uh-huh. In the Florence Group, my mission that I put together to establish the business was one of the first Western-standard public relations agencies in Russia.

My business model was to provide election advice and campaign strategy to Russian candidates who would be elected to the Duma or the Federation Council and expand on those contacts to help American companies entering the Russian market. It was a model that worked well. It was a model in the eighties that was working pretty well here -- or in the nineties. It was working pretty well here.

Companies like Amway would come to the -- I had a very specific specialty. Amway, when they decided they wanted to come into the market, there was no law

on multilevel marketing. So, because I had that experience writing the Russian election law and law being at the passage, I kind of leveraged that experience to help Amway draft a multilevel marketing law and then a lobby that to passage.

GTech, at the time, the world's largest online lottery company, wanted to get the Russian online lottery contract. There was no law on online lottery. I did a very similar job for them.

So most of my American clients were involved in businesses that had no footing in Russia. So it was my job to not just help them find office space but for them to get head space in the Duma, in the Federation Council, in the Kremlin.

Because you would try and explain Amway to a Russian in 1994, they'll look at you like you're, you know, like you're crazy. And that was my model. I worked on -- I don't know how many elections I worked on there, frankly. I tried to count them before I came here, but it was a couple of dozen.

I traveled around the country to do it. I worked in the North Pole. I worked in the farthest parts of Siberia. And, you know, I was in my 30s. It was a very exciting time. In the 1990s, Russia was like Paris in the 1920s but with Kalishnikovs. And I enjoyed it very much.

Unfortunately, in 1998, when they devalued the ruble, every single one of my international clients left the market. So I tried to change my model to serving Russian candidates and the Russian Government.

It wasn't -- 1998 until 2000, I struggled. I couldn't get up with anything at all. I ended up trying to help the Russian Government raise money for their world's fair presentation in Lisbon. That's how far afield of politics I got because there was just no work.

And in 2000, I came home for a New Year's Eve celebration and then caught

on television that Vladimir Putin was suddenly going to be the head of Russia at a New Year's speech by Boris Yeltsin. It was at that time I decided to move home. I went back to Russia for a short time to try and wind down my business, and it's early in 2000 I returned permanently.

MR. ROONEY: Did the Florence Group ever do any work with the Trump business world?

MR. CAPUTO: As I said, I met him in '88 at the Republican Convention. And when he came to Russia, I think twice in my time there, I didn't seek a meeting with him. He didn't seek a meeting with me. And his trips there were so short that I didn't intersect with him socially either.

MR. ROONEY: Okay. Let's talk a little bit about Roger Stone. You said that you had worked for him as a driver and that he was like a big brother to you. A lot of, you know, things have been reported in the media with regard to whether or not he knew what documents that WikiLeaks had before they were released.

And this goes to, you know, a potential charge of -- not saying that we've proven anything or we've uncovered anything. We haven't met with him yet. But in newspaper accounts that, you know, it's possible that Roger Stone was aware of WikiLeaks, what they had before we all did. Do you know anything about that, or can you shed some light on that for us?

MR. CAPUTO: I have had no interactions with WikiLeaks, Julian Assange, Edward Snowden, or Guccifer 2.0. Political consultant Roger Stone has allegedly been in touch with Guccifer 2.0 via Twitter. He's one of my best friends, yet I never spoke to him about this contact nor did I know about it until it was reported in the media in March.

When I live as in Russia, the only time I heard from or saw Roger Stone was

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at my wedding in 1996. Roger Stone refused to come to Russia to visit. I had an opportunity for him to help me on some campaigns. He expressed zero interest. He told me I was an idiot for living there. And he said that he would never, ever come to visit.

I find it difficult to believe, under any circumstances, that that same person would be working with Russians today.

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[3:00 p.m.]

MR. ROONEY: Mr. Caputo, that is all the questions I have right now.

I will turn it over to [REDACTED] if you have anything that you want to follow up on before we turn it over to the minority.

BY [REDACTED]

Q Thank you, sir. And just to follow up on the last question, you talked about Stone's attitude toward Russia in the nineties, and you said that you didn't have any awareness of his purported or alleged contact with Guccifer 2.0 prior to it being reported in the media. What interactions, if any, did you have with -- or discussions with Stone regarding the WikiLeaks hacking and dumping? Did you talk to him while it was occurring, during, or after?

A I did at one point. Because when I sent that tweet that I mentioned earlier, blaming it on the Kremlin, Brian Fallon of Hillary Clinton's campaign took my tweet, retweeted it, and said: You know, representatives of the President and the President are denying that this is Russia, and yet one of his top communications advisers is saying that it is.

That opened up a line of criticism from Roger to me. But beyond the discussion of how I wasn't on message and I am not on the campaign, so why don't you just, you know, let us do our work, we had no discussions about any of those mishaps with the emails and such.

Q So the --

A I am sorry; that I recall.

Q The tweet that you referred to was on July 25th, 2016. Is that correct?

A Yes, sir.

Q And that was after the Crowdstrike had publicly attributed the DNC hack to the Russians, but -- or if it was after, it was fairly soon after, and there was a lot of discussion through the summer about attributing the DNC hacking and subsequent leaking all the way up until -- I mean, the debate continues in some quarters to this day. But it was an issue of substantial interest and discussion, certainly through October, when the Director of National Intelligence and Director -- Secretary of Homeland Security released a statement on it. At that early date, what caused you to attribute that leak to the Russians with such confidence?

A First, I believe my familiarity with the way that the Russians work. Second, because I have a lot of friends in law enforcement and the Intelligence Community, and nobody of any substance or consequence would have disagreed with that postulate. Today, however, I am not as certain of it because it was -- when I learned that the DNC never turned over their servers, I realized that there was no proof. I also know how the Russians and how these people who hack act with leaving signatures and things behind. But even though I see no proof, I still believe it is a strong likelihood, if not a metaphysical certainty, that it was Russia.

Q What conversations, if any, did you have with -- describe the nature of your interactions with Paul Manafort while you were working on the campaign.

A I will tell you, in that campaign, from the fifth floor to the 26th floor of Trump Tower, it was all Lewandowski-land. Everybody there was loyal to Corey, and the war was afoot. It was the worst campaign I have ever -- it is the worst job I ever had. Paul Manafort and Rick Gates were the only two people in the headquarters in New York City who were not aligned with Corey. All of the hires that Paul and Rick were making were landing in the Virginia office. Paul and Rick

would travel often. I never traveled with them. So, when Paul and Rick traveled, I was in the jackpot with Corey Lewandowski. I would come in; my desk would be in the hall. It was on and on and on and on.

My interactions with Manafort were few and far between. Even though I saw him three, four times a week and we spoke momentarily, he was -- at one time, I understand from his deputy, Rick Gates, that Paul was getting upwards of 500 emails a day. He was drinking from a fire hose. So, in respect to the chain of command, I reported and worked with Rick Gates. I had dinner with Paul a couple times, had cigars with him at the Havana Club in New York City once. But my real contact in that chain of command was Rick Gates.

Q What conversation, if any, did you have with Paul Manafort about the hacking and dumping of DNC emails and WikiLeaks?

A If you recall, I resigned on June 20th. I don't recall, but I believe none of this was really a topic at the time. I never had one conversation with Rick Gates or Paul Manafort about any of the WikiLeaks email leaks. Had I been working there at the time, I don't believe I would have either, because it really wasn't in my silo.

Q You stated earlier, if I recall correctly, that you and Paul Manafort worked on opposite sides of the campaign in Ukraine. Is that correct?

A Yes, sir.

Q How did that political difference impact your relationship overall?

A Some of my best friends are people I have run against and beat. It is not a big deal. But, also, in Ukraine, I never once saw him. And nobody that I knew there knew where he was. I mean he worked in an office space that was unknown to us. And in this kind of political campaign world, getting angry with people who defeat you, soon you will have no friends.

██████████ Mr. Rooney?

MR. ROONEY: Were you done for now?

██████████ Go ahead.

MR. ROONEY: I just have sort of like a question. Since you were so ingrained in that world for a while, I can't imagine what that must have been like. Your tweet here that Scott referred to previously is: Trump is pretending the Russians aren't behind the DNC hack, but his former adviser just says they are. And that was you.

MR. CAPUTO: No, no, sir, that was Brian Fallon who did that. My tweet is underneath that. That is called retweeting.

MR. ROONEY: I don't tweet, so --

MR. CAPUTO: And I don't advise it.

MR. ROONEY: My staff does, but I don't. And your tweet: So we're having fun with WikiLeaks DNC, but this is a provocation by the Kremlin and must be dealt with.

MR. CAPUTO: Just as an aside, that "at" sign Kremlin is the personal Twitter account for Vladimir Putin.

MR. ROONEY: So this is after you had left?

MR. CAPUTO: Yes, approximately.

MR. ROONEY: Okay. I have a question, honestly, just I am curious about. Neither of these two tweets, as we sit here, really doesn't have any effect, I don't think, one way or another on whether or not there has been any crimes committed or whatever. We all believe, I think on this committee on both sides, that Vladimir Putin and Russia tried to meddle with our election. And they will continue to do so. And maybe it is payback for what in part I think you were probably trying to do,

which was get rid of the way that the USSR used to work with a different kind of system.

So why do you think, being a person that was on the inside, why do you think that there has been a lot of effort it seems by -- and you said it yourself, that the Trump campaign said, "You don't work here, keep your mouth shut, go away" -- there has been an effort by the Trump world, until it seems like just recently, that the Russians weren't, aren't, or have never tried to have any kind of effect on our elections? Like what difference is it to them that the RT would try to subliminally say something bad about America or that they would try to upset our election process? Like why do you think they care so much that it might be true that Russians are trying to meddle with our elections? If it is true, what's it matter to them?

MR. CAPUTO: Russia meddles with all elections, all major democratic countries. America meddles in all elections of major nations. It is what we do as world leaders. I believe, because Russia was part of -- and I am speculating -- but I believe because Russia was part of the Hillary Clinton campaign's attack on then-candidate Trump, that he just planted his feet and said, "No, no." I believe that if Hillary Clinton had said the sky is blue, he would have said no. And the culture of politics in general is that you follow the lead of your candidate.

I don't think that was advisable. I think now we know that it was -- it made all of this worse. But when the then-candidate, when the President of the United States takes a position in that office, you follow or you leave.

BY [REDACTED]

Q So we talked about Russia, also mentioned briefly Ukraine. When you were working at the convention, did you have any role in setting the Republican

platform?

A No, I did not, but I was -- I sat in on meetings on general caucus operations where some of that was discussed in a silo that I did not -- I didn't interact on.

Q Did you have any awareness of the platform with specific respect to Ukraine?

A I did not have any direct knowledge.

Q Can you describe the knowledge, indirect or otherwise, that you did have?

A Yes. I attended the Republican Convention as a commentator for CNN mostly. I also attended because I go to all of them. I was, as you know, an ex-staffer. And so when I was there, I talked to a lot of people who were working with me, working for me in caucus operations, and I understand what happened that day. I also spent a great deal of time on Twitter and in emails with Josh Rogin of The Washington Post, trying to straighten out his story that broke this allegation that Trump's people had changed the Republican platform. In fact, the Republican platform has never had the word "Ukraine" in it in modern times. The Republican platform has never had the words "lethal aid" in it that I know of. I don't believe the Democratic platform has ever had the words "lethal aid" in it. To lock your candidate down on that kind of a strident statement is just not done in these rather general documents.

What happened was the Ted Cruz campaign was sowing poison pills during committee week, in the committee hearings -- I mean, in the platform committee hearings, dropping in, you know, working, trying to do whatever they could to do things during convention week that they could bring up and say Trump should be

pulled from the ticket. At that time, they still thought they could get -- could beat him on the delegate count. What they did in Ukraine -- there was no Ukraine in the platform. They proposed an amendment to the platform that contained Ukraine and lethal aid. In an effort to keep those very dangerous words out of the platform, they changed those words to "appropriate aid," where in the diplomatic world that is code for lethal aid whenever we think it is right. And that is all they did. They passed the amendment. They changed two words, "lethal aid" to "appropriate aid," which could include lethal aid.

Q When you say "they," who do you mean?

A I am sorry if I get this name wrong. I am especially sorry to him because I have known him for 25 years, and I am very terrible with names, but J.P. Gordon was one of the people involved in the caucus operations team working on foreign policy issues for that week in the platform committee. He is the only name I know that was in the room at the time. And these are all -- what is the word for it? This is all secondhand information. I don't know what that is.

MR. VACCO: Hearsay.

MR. CAPUTO: It is all hearsay.

██████████ Did you have anything else?

MR. ROONEY: No. Adam.

MR. SCHIFF: Mr. Swalwell.

MR. SWALWELL: Thank you, Mr. Caputo. And I think you distinguished it in some your remarks. When I say "Russians," I am not talking about Russian Government or Russian businesspersons, I just mean Russian foreign nationals. And maybe I will clarify with whether it is a Russian Government official. But if I just -- so we are clear, if I say Russians, I just mean to you someone that you know

as a Russian.

MR. CAPUTO: Yes, sir.

MR. SWALWELL: When was the last time you spoke with President Trump?

MR. CAPUTO: I spoke to him in passing on Inauguration Day at a handshake event.

MR. SWALWELL: And before that?

MR. CAPUTO: I did not speak to him at all -- I am sorry. I spoke to him at the convention in a passing fashion as well. I have been in this business for a long time. When you leave a campaign, you get out of their hair. And I criticized Corey Lewandowski for 3 months because he didn't do that, and I wasn't about to do it and be Corey Lewandowski.

MR. SWALWELL: Have you been interviewed by the FBI with respect to this investigation?

MR. CAPUTO: No, I have not.

MR. SWALWELL: How about the Senate Intelligence Committee?

MR. CAPUTO: No, I have not. I am sorry. One moment. I received correspondence from the Senate committee, with parameters and boundaries for document production, but we are still in discussions with them. And we got an extension on the deadline because of my work to prepare for our meeting today. But I have not spoken to them.

MR. SWALWELL: In your work to prepare for your meeting today, have you spoken to anybody at the White House?

MR. CAPUTO: No. In fact, while I was in limited contact with the White House friends of mine who work there, never on any policy thing; it was more like:

How the heck are you doing?

As soon as my -- it was clear that you were going to invite me to speak today, I stopped all contact with the White House because I didn't want to be in their phone logs, their access logs. I didn't want to cause them agita for social telephone conversations.

Q Have you been to the White House since the President was inaugurated?

MR. CAPUTO: No, I have not.

MR. SWALWELL: In your preparation for this meeting today, have you spoken with any former campaign officials about this investigation?

MR. CAPUTO: Yes, Roger Stone.

MR. SWALWELL: Okay. When did you speak to Roger Stone?

MR. CAPUTO: Every single day since I was 25 years old.

MR. SWALWELL: Did you speak to him today?

MR. CAPUTO: No.

MR. SWALWELL: How about last night or yesterday?

MR. CAPUTO: I interviewed him on the radio yesterday for 25 minutes on WBEN in Buffalo.

MR. SWALWELL: Have you spoken with anyone on this committee as far as members or staff, other than just the logistics of setting up this meeting, about this interview?

MR. CAPUTO: No, sir.

MR. SWALWELL: How about anyone in the Trump family about this interview?

MR. CAPUTO: No, sir.

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MR. SWALWELL: And that includes Jared Kushner.

MR. CAPUTO: No, sir.

MR. SWALWELL: Have you spoken with Chairman Nunes about this investigation?

MR. CAPUTO: I wrote to the chairman when I first -- and the minority leader when I first requested this meeting. That was before the leadership changed on this investigation, I believe, and never spoken to him, but communicated via letter. I did not receive a response. May 19th.

MR. SWALWELL: Over your career, how much money -- if you could approximate -- have you made from Russian-derived sources, meaning whether your work in Russia or your work over here from Russians, if you could approximate?

MR. CAPUTO: Including my time in Russia?

MR. SWALWELL: Yes. Are we talking about more than a million, less than a million?

MR. CAPUTO: No. God no. I am a really good communicator, but I am a lousy businessman. I earned about \$70,000, \$100,000 a year in Russia when I was there. I was constantly trying to expand my business. I was constantly hiring people. My payroll was larger than my own salary. A terrible way to run a business. And then, when I moved back to the United States -- I would like to be precise. From 2000 to 2001, while working with Ruder Finn Public Relations in Washington, I directed international public relations for Renaissance Capital, a global investment bank based in Moscow. You will recognize this bank as the one that paid former President Bill Clinton a half a million dollars to speak before a conference in Moscow many years later.

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In February 2001, while serving as public relations division president of Rainmaker Interactive, a marketing agency in Reston, Virginia, that is now defunct, one that I cofounded, I worked for Gazprom Media as they invested in and took control of NTV, N, like Nancy, TV, a Russian national television station that was owned by an oligarch who was using it to try to attack the government. My direction was to set meetings in Washington with the media and in New York City for corporate CEO -- for Gazprom Media CEO Alfred Koch, who is now living in exile in Europe. He wanted to speak with reporters and journalist societies to discuss the takeover and the future of NTV. New NTV director Boris Jordan, an American executive living in Moscow, recommended me for that contract, which lasted about 45 -- between 45 and 60 days.

MR. SWALWELL: I am sorry, Mr. Caputo. What I meant was just if you had an approximate amount --

MR. CAPUTO: I can tell you right after these sentences, if you don't mind. Indulge me for just a moment, if you don't mind. For a 10-day period in approximately 2004, I worked with Paul Manafort's company to organize U.S. media coverage of the Russian CEO Oleg Deripaska's denied application for a U.S. visa. I never met Deripaska. After this, I never again worked for a Russian client, private or government, until the summer of 2016 in Miami Beach, where I directed an art show for a Russian painter named Innokenti Baranov.

MR. SWALWELL: Can you spell that?

MR. CAPUTO: Innokenti, I-n-n-o-k-e-n-t-i. Baranov, B-a-r-a-n-o-v. He actually does not live in Russia. He is in exile himself, living in Berlin, Germany. We did not charge for Baranov's work. During the time all of this -- this is the full extent of my work for Russian-oriented clients from 2000 until present. I believe

the sum total of all this work, because, for example, Ruder Finn took a fee from Renaissance Capital. I had a salary. I didn't make, you know, what do you call it, commissions on that. I would say through all this work probably about \$40,000.

MR. SWALWELL: What was the most recent Russian contract that you have had? Other than the painting.

MR. CAPUTO: It would have to be 2004. It wasn't a contract -- it was an assignment -- 2004 working on that visa application, PR work.

MR. SWALWELL: Have you ever owed taxes to the Federal Government, back taxes?

MR. CAPUTO: Oh, yes. Yes, I have.

MR. SWALWELL: How recently?

MR. CAPUTO: Off and on from, gosh, I want to say 2005 until 2016. No, no, my last, what do you call it, arrears were -- I don't know my last arrears. Maybe 2012.

MR. SWALWELL: Was that status ever known to any Russian?

MR. CAPUTO: No. If some Russian that I am not familiar with went to the clerk's office in Erie County and found, you know, the liens that were placed against me, they might have, but I didn't discuss it with any Russians.

MR. SWALWELL: Has any Russian ever discussed it with you?

MR. CAPUTO: No. No.

MR. SWALWELL: Going back to Mr. Stone, did he ever facilitate your obtaining any clients, contracts, positions, either in Russia or the United States?

MR. CAPUTO: Oh, often. Never with Russia, but often in the United States.

MR. SWALWELL: Tell me about those.

MR. CAPUTO: Typically, Roger does -- he doesn't do candidates; he does referenda, statewide referenda. So maybe perhaps five statewide referenda from 2003 until 2007 -- no, until 2009. Typically gaming contracts. Twice in Ohio, trying to get casinos at horse tracks. Two different referenda in Florida that were environmentally oriented, working on the business side. And one candidate for the United States Senate in 2003 who I would like to forget.

MR. SWALWELL: And how about forming Michael Caputo Public Relations? Did he play a role in that?

MR. CAPUTO: No, beyond encouraging me to do it.

MR. SWALWELL: How about encouraging you to move to Miami.

MR. CAPUTO: It was more his wife than him. I was going through a divorce. I was senior vice president of a major telecom that went bankrupt. I lost all my savings and my retirement. And some other personal issues came up. And I was, you know, adrift, and he and his wife asked me to come down. You might not know this, but Roger Stone's a pretty nice guy.

MR. SWALWELL: And he worked with you on a campaign in 2015?

MR. CAPUTO: No, he was gone, had resigned or fired before I came on as New York State director, but I believe, at least he certainly told me, that he advocated for me to get that position as New York State director with the President.

MR. SWALWELL: And because you talk to him almost every day, what was your understanding of beyond -- once he left in August 2015, what was his direct contact with candidate Trump?

MR. CAPUTO: That is always hard to figure out, because he is never clear with it. He is never clear with it in the media. He is never clear with it with his friends. It seemed to be frequent contact, but there never -- it seemed to be kind of

random.

MR. SWALWELL: And would Candidate Trump or President Trump ever talk to you about his contact with Roger? Like did he connect the dots that you guys were so close?

MR. CAPUTO: The reason I got the meeting with the President in 2013 to try and convince him to run for Governor was because Roger Stone asked him to meet with me. He knew we were connected. And Corey Lewandowski made sure that was italicized for the entire time I was involved in the campaign.

MR. SWALWELL: You were aware that Roger Stone had started Restore America's Greatness PAC?

MR. CAPUTO: Yes, I am aware of that.

MR. SWALWELL: What did you know of the PAC?

MR. CAPUTO: Nothing except for it seemed like it wasn't going to go anywhere.

MR. SWALWELL: Did you do anything for the PAC?

MR. CAPUTO: For them? No, I did not. When I left the campaign, I know that they were struggling to raise money. I did not raise any money for them.

MR. SWALWELL: Why did you do you think Mr. Lewandowski publicly characterized the PAC as: These guys are scam artists doing it for their own personal benefit and seeking to profiteer off Trump's name; people should not give to this or any super PAC claiming to support Donald Trump for President.

MR. CAPUTO: That sounded like projection to me.

MR. SWALWELL: What do you mean?

MR. CAPUTO: I think that characterizes Corey Lewandowski more than Roger Stone.

MR. SWALWELL: Now going back to Roger Stone, you said you only talked to him once about the WikiLeaks tweets that he was putting out or that WikiLeaks --

MR. CAPUTO: No, I actually never talked to him about it. And I didn't know about it until it came out in the media. I want to stipulate here that Roger, during this timeframe, had been very difficult to get a hold of.

MR. SWALWELL: But you still talked to him every day?

MR. CAPUTO: During that timeframe, he was running and gunning; I didn't talk to him every day. But that was only the period of let's say when I -- let me tell you, working at that campaign was the highest wire I have ever walked in my life. And I worked in Russia. When I fell from that height, Roger Stone did not celebrate me. He sees failure like that as a failure to him, because he believes that I was one of his guys on the campaign. So, after I left in June 20th, until, until after the election, our contact was far less than it used to be.

MR. SWALWELL: So can you describe for me I guess the time period where you did talk to him every day?

MR. CAPUTO: Leading up to my time being appointed as New York State director, after I was appointed New York State director, he told me that I should not speak with him because Corey Lewandowski would get upset about it. Something to that effect. So we tried not to connect for that reason. And then, when I went to work in Trump Tower, there were times when he was in New York City staying in his apartment there, and we might have a dinner or a lunch. But it was never about what the candidate was doing or what the campaign was doing in specific because he had Paul Manafort's ear. He didn't need me.

MR. SWALWELL: So, during the time period from August to election day, you were familiar with the Guccifer 2.0.

MR. CAPUTO: If that is when the stories came out in the press, then I was familiar with it. I had learned of it only through the press. And, frankly, let me readjust that. I learned of it when I heard that he was going to release these direct messages.

MR. SWALWELL: Who is "he"?

MR. CAPUTO: Roger Stone was going to release the direct messages. And that's when I first heard about it. I don't think that means it was the first time it was in the press. But that's the first time I was paying attention.

MR. SWALWELL: And had Roger Stone ever, just in the history of your relationship, talked to you about John Podesta?

MR. CAPUTO: John Podesta?

MR. SWALWELL: Like if you guys talked so often, did John Podesta's name ever come up?

MR. CAPUTO: Oh, sure. Sure. All the time.

MR. SWALWELL: What would he say?

MR. CAPUTO: He's a scumbag. He's a liar. You know, he is not fond of John Podesta.

MR. SWALWELL: What did you think when you saw Roger Stone tweet, back in August 2016, that John Podesta was going to spend his time in the barrel?

MR. CAPUTO: I thought there he goes again.

MR. SWALWELL: What do you mean?

MR. CAPUTO: Roger loves to attack people, and I thought it was just another typical Stonesque attack?

MR. SWALWELL: Did Roger ever talk to you about any information he had learned about John Podesta prior to that tweet?

MR. CAPUTO: No, but after that tweet, we had a telephone conversation about uranium one and the Podesta role in the allegation that Hillary Clinton had helped make that purchase of the American uranium assets possible. And we talked about Tony Podesta's firm representing Sberbank and making tens of millions of dollars on that. And so, after those conversations, I always thought that the attacks on John Podesta were going to be about his business interests in Russia.

MR. SWALWELL: Were you surprised when you found out they weren't?

MR. CAPUTO: No, I still think it was.

MR. SWALWELL: When people think of John Podesta, they don't think of uranium one, they think of the hacked emails that Roger --

MR. CAPUTO: They should think more about uranium one. Roger wasn't talking about that.

MR. SWALWELL: So what day was this telephone conversation?

MR. CAPUTO: I don't know. I don't know. It was probably August. I don't know. And it was -- I think Roger saw me on television, did not like my performance or did not like my tie, and called me up to give me hell about it, and that's when we had that conversation. It wasn't the purpose of his call. His purpose was sartorial.

MR. SWALWELL: Did he ever talk to you about his own tweeting, Roger Stone, from August 2016 to November 7?

MR. CAPUTO: No, he did not. I smile because, you know, I think it is funny that Roger Stone is even tweeting, because he can't find his backside with both hands on computers.

MR. SWALWELL: How would you communicate with Roger Stone?

MR. CAPUTO: Cell phone.

MR. SWALWELL: Ever text message with him?

MR. CAPUTO: On occasions. But I am not a big texter, and neither is he. It was always telephone. My texts to Roger were: Why are you screening my calls? Please call me back.

MR. SWALWELL: Do you have any messaging apps on your phone?

MR. CAPUTO: I do. I have about eight or nine of them. I have tried all of them. I don't like any of them.

MR. SWALWELL: Which ones do you have?

MR. CAPUTO: Kik.

MR. SWALWELL: K-i-k?

MR. CAPUTO: K-i-k. Skype. And there are others, but none that I have used. What'sApp. What'sApp.

MR. SWALWELL: How about Telegram?

MR. CAPUTO: Telegram? I might have looked at that. I might have even downloaded it. But I have never used it.

MR. SWALWELL: Do you if anyone on the campaign used Telegram.

MR. CAPUTO: No, I don't.

MR. SWALWELL: When did you first meet Donald Trump?

MR. CAPUTO: I believe the third day of the Republican Convention in New Orleans in 1988. Roger Stone -- I was there on behalf of Jack Kemp, who was my real mentor. That's how Roger and I met, through via Jack Kemp. Kemp was up for Vice President, got passed over. All my work that was planned for the week of the convention was off. I didn't want to go home. I liked the bars. Roger asked me to help him on an event for a businessman. I came over and set up chairs and

waited for it to start. And I shook hands with Donald Trump as he walked in and, you know, pleasantries, and that was it.

MR. SWALWELL: And is it accurate that, from November 2015 until June 2016, once you left the campaign, you said 8 to 10 times you had face-to-face contact with Donald Trump?

MR. CAPUTO: Yes, sir.

MR. SWALWELL: How about telephone contact?

MR. CAPUTO: Oh, I don't believe ever. It was a point of contention for me. I kind of felt like our relationship had changed because he was constantly on the phone calling during the -- may I back up for a moment?

MR. SWALWELL: Yeah.

MR. CAPUTO: After my work with Donald Trump to try and convince him to run for Governor, he decided he wanted to buy the Buffalo Bills, which really interests me because I grew up next to the stadium. So I was responsible for public affairs. A mutual friend of ours was in charge of the lobbying, and another mutual friend of ours was in charge of the legal work. He talked to me -- he was very excited about buying the Buffalo Bills. And his goal was to buy them and keep them in Buffalo, which was really important to all of us. One other buyers group who was really favored to win was going to move them to Toronto. That was John Bon Jovi's group. So, during that time, I was actually on the phone with him a lot. And then one day he called me and said he just signed some kind of NDA with the Buffalo Bills or the NFL, and he could no longer speak to me, and that all of my work in public relations I am on my own, you know: You can do it. Please do. But I can't talk to you about it.

And I probably spoke to him one more time on the phone, and I never spoke

to him on the phone again. And that was 2014?

MR. SWALWELL: So, from, again, November 2015 to June 2016, you said 8 to 10 face-to-face contacts. How about fax? Did you ever communicate with him by fax?

MR. CAPUTO: No.

MR. SWALWELL: How about by email?

MR. CAPUTO: No. I don't believe he has email. I don't believe he does.

MR. SWALWELL: Who was his assistant at Trump Tower at the time?

MR. CAPUTO: He has several, but the one I spoke to the most was Rona Barrett? I can't remember her last name. I just knew her as Rona.

MR. SWALWELL: Would you ever communicate with her to pass a message along to Donald Trump?

MR. CAPUTO: Yes, I would, mostly to say that I needed to talk to him.

MR. SWALWELL: How would you communicate with her?

MR. CAPUTO: Email.

MR. SWALWELL: Okay. If you emailed her, what was your understanding of how that message got passed to Donald Trump?

MR. CAPUTO: My understanding was not based on my emails, but other emails I saw printed out and handed to him.

MR. SWALWELL: And would he ever read those printouts and then transcribe over them and give them back to Rona?

MR. CAPUTO: He would write in his own handwriting on documents and give them back to Rona, including emails.

MR. SWALWELL: And how do you know that?

MR. CAPUTO: Because I saw him do it. I was sitting there in a meeting,

and he would be talking and writing.

MR. SWALWELL: Okay. And once it was given back to Rona, do you know what she would do with it? Would she like send the email back to you or someone else and say Mr. Trump says X, Y, Z?

MR. CAPUTO: Sometimes you would get that document via email as a scan. And I actually got one via U.S. mail once, which I thought was quaint.

MR. SWALWELL: So you had emailed Rona. He had written over the printed email. And then you were mailed his response?

MR. CAPUTO: Right. But the response was because something had been written in the press, he liked it, she wanted me to have the original, so she mailed it to me.

MR. SWALWELL: And we are talking about in the course of the of the campaign?

MR. CAPUTO: No, that was during the Buffalo Bills thing, that U.S. mail thing.

MR. SWALWELL: During the course of the campaign, how many emails did you send to Rona that were passed on to Mr. Trump?

MR. CAPUTO: None. As I said, I worked in the chain of command.

MR. SWALWELL: But when you mentioned that you had seen Rona actually hand him printed emails and he wrote over them, does that time period include when you were there during the campaign?

MR. CAPUTO: Sure. A couple of those meetings on the 26th floor. Donald Trump has an open door policy. Guys would come in with carpet samples in the middle of a meeting. And Rona would come in and hand him documents. He would stop for a minute and that certain signature of his.

MR. SWALWELL: Where was your office in Trump Tower?

MR. CAPUTO: I saw at least one that was in the campaign. But I must tell you I don't think -- I have no reason to believe that all of those were emails.

MR. SWALWELL: Where was your office for the brief time that you were at Trump Tower?

MR. CAPUTO: When it wasn't in the hallway, I was on the fifth floor in the former studio for "The Apprentice."

MR. SWALWELL: And the President's office, candidate Trump's office, was the 26th floor?

MR. CAPUTO: Yes.

MR. SWALWELL: How many other floors did they occupy?

MR. CAPUTO: When I was there, they were retrofitting an office on a higher floor, like seven, for campaign expansion. I left before they opened that up. I believe they moved in there afterward. And I know that the President was on 26 and his children were often I believe on 25. But nobody on 25 or 26 was a campaign employee. Paul Manafort was on five.

MR. SWALWELL: So, if someone went to Trump Tower during the time of the campaign, where would they check in? Or would there be a visitors sign-in?

MR. CAPUTO: I never signed in. You would go to 26. The elevators opens. There is a security desk there. There is kind of a nondescript security person, a shift worker. But his right-hand guy would come out, Keith Schiller?

MR. SWALWELL: Mr. Schiller?

MR. CAPUTO: And would greet me at the door, and he would bring me to the President's office.

MR. SWALWELL: So, if you were going to five, how would you get to five?

Would you have to sign in at the front desk?

MR. CAPUTO: No, I had an electronic key.

MR. SWALWELL: So, if you had someone who wanted to meet with you or if anyone at the campaign wanted to meet on five or the other floors that you talked about, would they have to check in at the lobby area of Trump Tower?

MR. CAPUTO: They would have to be cleared to go -- no, no, I am sorry, that's not true. Five was accessible by the public. And I never had meetings in five because it was too small and really gross.

MR. SWALWELL: So seven was the other --

MR. CAPUTO: No, I never went there because they were retrofitting it when I was there. My meetings would all be in Starbucks downstairs.

MR. SWALWELL: But if someone did go to one of the campaign floors of Trump Tower, you are telling me that they wouldn't necessarily have signed in in the lobby?

MR. CAPUTO: Correct.

MR. SWALWELL: What were the primary methods of communication while working for the Trump campaign?

MR. CAPUTO: Prayer. Excuse me. I would say email.

MR. SWALWELL: Did you have like a DonaldTrump.com?

MR. CAPUTO: I did, but I never used it. I think I might have used it two or three times to email a reporter I didn't know. But everybody had DonaldTrump emails.

MR. SWALWELL: You were using your private email?

MR. CAPUTO: Yeah.

MR. SWALWELL: What was that address?

MR. CAPUTO: [REDACTED].

MR. SWALWELL: If you wanted to email Paul or Jared or Corey, were they using private email, or were they using Trump campaign emails?

MR. CAPUTO: I never emailed Jared or any of the kids. Paul and Rick were using their DonaldTrump emails as far as I remember.

MR. SWALWELL: If you wanted to email Rona, was she using a campaign email or a Trump organization?

MR. CAPUTO: No, I can't be certain, but I believe it was the same email I used in 2013, 2014, so it would be a Trump organization email.

MR. SWALWELL: Do you remember that email?

MR. CAPUTO: I do not.

MR. SWALWELL: Did you have a Trump campaign cell phone?

MR. CAPUTO: No.

MR. SWALWELL: So you were using your personal cell phone?

MR. CAPUTO: Yes.

MR. SWALWELL: Did you know anyone who had a campaign cell phone and also a personal cell phone?

MR. CAPUTO: No. That doesn't mean it doesn't exist. I didn't know.

MR. SWALWELL: Were you also communicating with individuals on the campaign by text message?

MR. CAPUTO: Only if a phone call didn't work. That is kind of my habit. And if it was something emergent. As I said, my communications with Paul were as frequent as my communications with his deputy.

MR. SWALWELL: Did you have any personal knowledge of individuals on the campaign using some of those other apps that we talked about, whether they

were Signal, What'sApp, Telegram, Kik?

MR. CAPUTO: I knew nothing about the use of alternative messaging platforms.

MR. SWALWELL: Was it ever talked about or discussed?

MR. CAPUTO: Never talked about or discussed. Might I say, Congressman, never once did Rick Gates or Paul Manafort express concern that our communications needed to be more confidential than typical messaging. Never once.

MR. SWALWELL: During the time Donald Trump announced his Presidency, which I believe was June 2015, until --

MR. CAPUTO: I am sorry, can you repeat that?

MR. SWALWELL: From the time that he announced his candidacy for the Presidency, which I believe was June 2015, until election day, did you ever travel outside the United States?

MR. CAPUTO: The reason I pause is because I live on the border of Canada.

MR. SWALWELL: Other than going to Canada.

MR. CAPUTO: No, sir.

MR. SWALWELL: Okay. Did you have personal knowledge of anyone on the Trump campaign, from the time Donald Trump announced his candidacy for the Presidency until election day, that they traveled outside the United States?

MR. CAPUTO: The only person I knew that traveled outside the campaign that had any campaign relationship at all I learned about on television. His name is Carter Page.

MR. SWALWELL: Had you ever met Mr. Page?

MR. CAPUTO: No, I did not.

MR. SWALWELL: Did you ever see him at Trump Tower?

MR. CAPUTO: No, I did not. I was surprised to find out he was associated with the campaign.

MR. SWALWELL: Had you ever met Donald Junior?

MR. CAPUTO: Sure.

MR. SWALWELL: Just for the sake of clarification, I am just going to call him Donald Junior.

MR. CAPUTO: Yes, sir.

MR. SWALWELL: So we can distinguish between the two. On July 9th of this year, just a couple days ago, The New York Times reported a June 9, 2016, meeting between a Russian attorney and Donald Junior, Jared Kushner, and Paul Manafort. You were working for the campaign at that time. Is that right?

MR. CAPUTO: I was working for the convention at that time as a campaign representative.

MR. SWALWELL: Were you working at Trump Tower that day?

MR. CAPUTO: No, sir. I was in Cleveland, as of the day after Memorial Day, whatever day that was. I think it was the 1st of June.

MR. SWALWELL: You were dispatched to Cleveland?

MR. CAPUTO: Dispatched to Cleveland, and never once returned to Trump Tower.

MR. SWALWELL: When did you first learn of this meeting?

MR. CAPUTO: In the media. I believe that story that you are particularly mentioning.

MR. SWALWELL: Sure. Do you know, or are you familiar with -- and I may

butcher the name -- Natalia Veselnitskaya?

MR. CAPUTO: You are close. Veselnitskiya. I have never heard of her. I have never seen her. I have never spoken to her, messaged her. I don't know anybody who knows her. I don't believe she is who people say she is. I think she is, you know, kind of a marginal player in Russia.

MR. SWALWELL: What about Rinat Akhmetshin?

MR. CAPUTO: I don't know him.

MR. SWALWELL: Have you heard that name before?

MR. CAPUTO: I have not. I am sorry; in the media in the last 24 hours.

MR. SWALWELL: How about Emin Agalarov?

MR. CAPUTO: I know him because he's a Russian pop star. I know him because of the profiles of Trump and his relationships in Russia talked about him and his father being involved in the pageant. I know a bit about him just from, you know, the pop star magazines.

MR. SWALWELL: Have you ever met him?

MR. CAPUTO: I have not. I am more of a Grateful Dead fan.

MR. SWALWELL: How about Emin's father, Aras?

MR. CAPUTO: No. No. Aras, my understanding was, he was a middling developer in Moscow.

MR. SWALWELL: How about Rob Goldstone? Have you met him before?

MR. CAPUTO: No. I would like to.

MR. SWALWELL: Did you ever see him at Trump Tower?

MR. CAPUTO: Never.

MR. SWALWELL: Did you ever see Emin at Trump Tower?

MR. CAPUTO: No.

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MR. SWALWELL: How about his father, Aras?

MR. CAPUTO: No.

MR. SWALWELL: March 2016 you are working for the campaign?

MR. CAPUTO: Yes, sir. That is one month prior to the New York primary.

MR. SWALWELL: And were you familiar with a Trump campaign foreign policy meeting at the Trump hotel in Washington, D.C.?

MR. CAPUTO: I did not attend that. I was working in the New York primary.

MR. SWALWELL: How were you familiar with it? Like how did you know about the meeting?

MR. CAPUTO: What I read in the press.

MR. SWALWELL: Did you have knowledge outside of the press about who attended that meeting?

MR. CAPUTO: No, I did not.

MR. SWALWELL: Had you ever met Jeff Sessions in the course of the campaign?

MR. CAPUTO: I met him on an aside at an evening event after a primary victory. But it was hello, how you doing? Nice to meet you. See you later.

MR. SWALWELL: Where was that?

MR. CAPUTO: In Trump Tower. In the lobby of Trump Tower.

MR. SWALWELL: Was this before you left the campaign?

MR. CAPUTO: Yes.

MR. SWALWELL: How about J.D. Gordon?

MR. CAPUTO: I know J.D. Gordon from the eighties, the nineties, because of our intersection over -- you know, but I don't think I have spoken to him, seen

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him, talked to him in any fashion since I left for Russia in 1994. I am sorry. Let me -- I direct messaged him on Twitter after he was brought up in a negative article and said, you know, good luck, or something like that. He said, thank you.

MR. SWALWELL: April 26, 2016, you were working for the campaign. That's right after the New York primary?

MR. CAPUTO: Yes. I believe I landed in New York City in Trump Tower headquarters on the 25th. I am going to have to check that.

MR. SWALWELL: You are familiar that, on the 26th, there was a speech that Donald Trump gave, hosted by the Center for the National Interest at the Mayflower Hotel?

MR. CAPUTO: Yes.

MR. SWALWELL: How were you familiar with that?

MR. CAPUTO: I attended it.

MR. SWALWELL: Okay. So you were in Washington, D.C., that day?

MR. CAPUTO: Yes, I was.

MR. SWALWELL: So you landed in New York on April 25th. How did you get down out of New York for the 26th?

MR. CAPUTO: I want to make sure you understand that I am kind of loose on the dates, but I went down to Washington on my own.

MR. SWALWELL: What do you mean?

MR. CAPUTO: On my own power, on my own transportation. I didn't go down on the plane.

MR. SWALWELL: Okay.

MR. CAPUTO: I remember because I tried very hard to get on the plane, and I didn't.

MR. SWALWELL: Did you drive?

MR. CAPUTO: I believe I flew. I don't drive much like that. And I don't know if I flew from New York or if I flew from Buffalo, because I would go home on the weekends. If it was a Monday, I might have gone straight. I remember, I don't know why, but I had to give something to Rick Gates, and so I was calling him for access to the Mayflower to get on the list to try to get ahold of him to try and meet him so I could give him what I had. I think it was talking points or some work product. I went in and watched the event.

MR. SWALWELL: So did you overnight in D.C. the night before that, or did you arrive the day of the event?

MR. CAPUTO: I believe -- and I don't recall completely, but I believe I arrived that morning and overnighted that night.

MR. SWALWELL: Where did you stay?

MR. CAPUTO: I don't know.

MR. SWALWELL: Did you stay at the Mayflower?

MR. CAPUTO: No, sir. I am more of a Holiday Inn kind of guy.

MR. SWALWELL: Were you involved in planning or promoting that event?

MR. CAPUTO: No, sir. I was not.

MR. SWALWELL: Do you know who drafted Donald Trump's speech for that day?

MR. CAPUTO: My understanding is that it was a group of people, including external people. But most speech writing was done by -- I am so terrible with names -- the guy, chief policy adviser.

MR. SWALWELL: Steven Miller?

MR. CAPUTO: Steve Miller. So I just in my own calculation called it a

Miller speech.

MR. SWALWELL: Did you see Ambassador Kislyak at this function?

MR. CAPUTO: I wouldn't have recognized him if I saw him, but I saw that they had reserved the first two rows for VIPs, including the ambassadorial corps. And if I remember correctly -- I want to give you everything in my -- I just want to say I don't remember completely, but I think they were seated there and got up upon the arrival of the entourage and went back behind the stage for an event.

MR. SWALWELL: Did you see Jeff Sessions that day?

MR. CAPUTO: I did see Jeff Sessions. I am sorry. No, I did not see Jeff Sessions. I was thinking of something else. Sorry.

MR. SWALWELL: Did you see Jared Kushner at that event?

MR. CAPUTO: No, I don't recall seeing him?

MR. SWALWELL: Do you know Jared Kushner?

MR. CAPUTO: I have met him once, and I sat in meetings where he was on speakerphone at other times, but beyond that, no.

MR. SWALWELL: When did you meet him?

MR. CAPUTO: As an aside I believe on New York primary night, April 19th, in the lobby of Trump Tower.

MR. SWALWELL: Going back to Mayflower, who did you see speak with Ambassador Kislyak that was affiliated with the Trump family, the campaign, or the business?

MR. CAPUTO: I didn't see any conversations.

MR. SWALWELL: Can you explain the sequence of events at Mayflower, meaning, was it just everyone arrived and they went into a ballroom and there was a speech, or were there other rooms for distinguished guests or were there

post-speech or pre-speech rooms?

MR. CAPUTO: All I saw was what I saw in the entrance line, the check-in table, and in the general event. I wasn't invited in the back room. Whatever I needed to do with Rick Gates, I did very quickly in the main room. I think I handed him a paper.

MR. SWALWELL: When you say "back room," what do you mean?

MR. CAPUTO: If I remember correctly, the speech was kind of pipe and draped behind, and there was a riser, and a place for a podium. And when the entourage arrived, everybody in the front -- I would say 20 people in the front two rows went around to stage left and behind the stage to what appeared to be a space behind there for a meet and greet with the candidate.

MR. SWALWELL: And that would include that ambassadorial row?

MR. CAPUTO: The first two rows. Like I said, a couple dozen people.

MR. SWALWELL: Were there any other rooms that you had heard of were being used for other types of events?

MR. CAPUTO: No. In fact, the campaign arrived a little late and left very quickly. So, if they were using rooms for other things, I don't see how they had time.

MR. SWALWELL: Thank you. I am going to yield to Mr. Schiff.

██████████ I think we have got about 7 minutes before a scheduled break, sir.

MR. SCHIFF: Why don't we take a break now then, and I will get started after the break, or we can alternate however you wish. All right? Is that okay?

[Recess.]

MR. SCHIFF: Thank you very much again for being here, Mr. Caputo. I

am going to just follow up on some of Mr. Swalwell's questions, and then I am going to allow my colleague Shannon to go more methodically through your background, your work in Russia, post-Russia, on the campaign, post-campaign.

Just a threshold question, the only documents that you provided in terms of document production were letters to and from the committee and a photocopy of a couple tweets and an op-ed. Are there no other documents that you have, no other emails that are in your possession or that are in your email account that were created before, during, or after the campaign that are pertinent to our investigation?

MR. CAPUTO: Looking at the four pillars of your investigation, I don't have them in front of me, but only one seems to be relevant to me. And since I never spoke to anyone about Russia in the campaign, never spoke to any Russian about the campaign, and never heard of the idea of Russian collusion until much later after I stopped communicating with the campaign, I didn't have any documents.

MR. SCHIFF: Let me ask you this way. With reference to the questions you have been asked during the hearing thus far, do you have any documents that are pertinent to any of the questions that you have been asked?

MR. CAPUTO: We are in the midst of doing a search for the Senate. If the parameters of the search for this committee would change and you would request more from me, I would be willing to do so.

MR. SCHIFF: We would be interested in any documents that you have that are pertinent to the questions you have been asked today or pertinent to the Senate request. And if you need any further guidance from us on it, in case you feel that's overbroad, then please come back to us and you can tell us, are you really interested in X, Y, or Z?

MR. VACCO: If I could speak to that, so, right now, I am in discussions with

the Senate counsel, the committee counsel because you just mentioned the breadth of their request. We think it's overly burdensome. So we are working right now with them on trying to narrow the scope of their inquiry. And we are going to provide to them whatever we end up agreeing from a search term perspective, a timeframe perspective. And we be would happy to provide the same documents to this committee.

MR. SCHIFF: I appreciate that. I don't know the parameters of what they have asked. If there are any documents that are not within the scope of what the Senate is asking for but nonetheless are pertinent to the questions we have asked --

MR. VACCO: Frankly, with all due respect, to the written request that we received back in May, the Senate's request is far more extensive.

MR. SCHIFF: Yeah.

MR. VACCO: And more explicit.

MR. SCHIFF: What I would request is we would certainly be interested in whatever production is made to the Senate. But beyond that, if there are questions that we are asking today that are outside the parameters of the Senate request, we would also be interested in that. And if you have any question about whether a category of documents is within that or whether it is really necessary, please do follow up with our counsel. We would be happy to give any further guidance.

MR. VACCO: I will make this commitment to you: that we view our production as a continuing commitment. So we will go back now in the context of what we are reviewing for the Senate production to make sure that you have everything they have and that you have everything that was previously requested by this committee. But we do think that what we have previously provided did

correspond with the committee's request.

MR. SCHIFF: I just want to be sure, though, because -- that we are on the same page about what we are interested in, and that is not subject to too broad or narrow an interpretation. And let me give you an example. We have asked you about the interactions at the Republican Party Convention over the Ukraine language. You may or may not consider that within the parameters that you have been given by us. We do consider that within the parameters. So I want to make sure that there is no disagreement about what we are interested in.

MR. CAPUTO: No disagreement, Congressman. I considered that to be relevant to your request. I searched. I have no documents relative to the committee week negotiations over platform planks. My information on that, as an outsider at the time, was purely through conversations on the convention floor, things of that sort.

MR. SCHIFF: That's fine. But if any of that was embodied in written form or people emailed you or you emailed them, that would be something --

MR. CAPUTO: I stand ready to help.

MR. SCHIFF: Thank you. So we will follow up with you on the documents.

Let me, if I can, go back over some of the people that you had contact with during the campaign and thereafter. You mentioned that you have known Mr. Manafort, Mr. Gates, and Mr. Stone for about 30 years?

MR. CAPUTO: Each one is different, but yeah, approximately 30 years.

MR. SCHIFF: And of the three, whom have you known the longest? Who have you stayed in closest contact with?

MR. CAPUTO: Roger.

MR. SCHIFF: And is Mr. Stone one of your closest friends, to speak with

him on a nearly daily basis?

MR. CAPUTO: Well, I apologize for exaggerating the nearly daily contact, but he is most certainly the one out of that group that I know the best.

MR. SCHIFF: And he is also one of your closest friends?

MR. CAPUTO: Yes, sir.

MR. SCHIFF: How would you describe Mr. Stone in terms of his propensity for truthfulness?

MR. CAPUTO: He is a promoter. He is selling a book. And, therefore, sometimes Roger's facts match his goals. I don't consider that any different than any other political communicator.

MR. SCHIFF: Well, can I take it from that answer that you do not consider him someone who would be telling the truth all the time?

MR. CAPUTO: No, no, not at all. That's not what I said. Not even close. I believe --

MR. SCHIFF: So let me ask you, do you feel Roger Stone to be a truthful person?

MR. CAPUTO: Yes, sir.

MR. SCHIFF: Who tells the truth all the time?

MR. CAPUTO: I don't know anyone who tells the truth all the time. I rely upon Roger's truthfulness.

MR. SCHIFF: Would you describe him as a naive person?

MR. CAPUTO: No, I would not.

MR. SCHIFF: And if he was -- well, did he share with you any information about his contacts with Julian Assange?

MR. CAPUTO: No, sir.

MR. SCHIFF: Never spoke with you about talking with Julian Assange or having contact with Julian Assange?

MR. CAPUTO: No, sir. Not that I recall.

MR. SCHIFF: So he talked with you frequently about Podesta business dealings, but never mentioned to you that he had established a channel of communications to Julian Assange?

MR. CAPUTO: He talked to me once or twice about John Podesta's business dealings. I considered that to be him riffing on it to try to put together something for his book, which came out much later. He never spoke with me about Julian Assange.

MR. SCHIFF: But given what you have said about his being a truthful person generally, Mr. Stone told the Broward County Republicans he had a direct link to Julian Assange. So that would have been a truthful statement in your view?

MR. CAPUTO: I am not familiar with that statement. I have heard about it secondhand. But I rely upon Roger's truthfulness. And I believe he has clarified that. And with clarification, I see no reason not to believe him.

MR. SCHIFF: So, then, you believe that he was in communication with Julian Assange if he said that he was?

MR. CAPUTO: I believe when Roger tells me something. But I don't know anything about his relations or any other relation with Julian Assange.

MR. SCHIFF: Well, I am not asking you about whether you can believe what he tells you. I am interested in whether the public can believe what he says publicly. If Roger Stone said publicly that he was in contact with Julian Assange, can we rely on that as being the truth or --

MR. CAPUTO: I think I made my point. I think I have answered your

question.

MR. SCHIFF: Well, let me ask you the question then.

MR. CAPUTO: I can repeat it if you would like.

MR. SCHIFF: Roger Stone said that he -- said publicly that he was in contact with Julian Assange. Can we rely on the truthfulness of that statement?

MR. CAPUTO: I believe you can rely upon the truthfulness of Roger Stone's statements when you include the clarification that he made later.

[4:08 p.m.]

MR. SCHIFF: And what clarification is that?

MR. CAPUTO: That he spoke to Julian Assange through a third party, which I read about in the media.

MR. SCHIFF: And did Mr. Stone talk to you about his communications with Guccifer 2?

MR. CAPUTO: No, sir. I never heard about it until I saw it in the media, and it might have been in the media before I knew about it. I knew about it when he was going to release some direct messages. I've heard tell that there was some discussion of it earlier than that, but that's the first time I have heard about it.

MR. SCHIFF: So the first time you heard that he was in direct contact with Guccifer 2 was when you read about it in the newspaper?

MR. CAPUTO: Yes, sir.

MR. SCHIFF: And subsequent to that, did you talk with him about it?

MR. CAPUTO: No, sir, not that I recall.

MR. SCHIFF: So you talked on a continual basis, and he never mentioned his conversation with Guccifer 2?

MR. CAPUTO: Yes. Our discussions are not always about politics.

MR. SCHIFF: And to this day, you have never had a conversation with him about his contact with Guccifer 2?

MR. CAPUTO: I don't recall any substantive conversation. I know that, in conversations with Roger, I said: How are you doing?

He says: Well, besides this attack on me with Guccifer, I'm doing great.

And that would be the only thing that he would have said to me about it.

Roger and I disagree about the role of Russia in the 2016 elections. He

says that he doesn't believe Guccifer 2 is a Russian. I don't know what to believe. But Roger, knowing that I disagree with him on Russia's active measures, we tend not to speak about things that we disagree about.

MR. SCHIFF: You mentioned that you were chastised by Mr. Stone when you sent out that tweet --

MR. CAPUTO: Yes, sir.

MR. SCHIFF: -- the tweet acknowledging Russian complicity in the hacking, because, you said earlier, Mr. Stone thought you were off message. Is that right?

MR. CAPUTO: Uh-huh.

MR. SCHIFF: You have to answer with a yes or no.

MR. CAPUTO: Oh, yes, sir.

MR. SCHIFF: So Mr. Stone didn't want you talking in a way that was off the campaign message even though it was consistent with the facts?

MR. CAPUTO: Well, Roger was concerned that after the election of the President that I would be in Siberia because I wasn't helpful in the media. I think that's a legitimate concern. But, also, our disagreement over Russia's active measures made him -- you know, when Roger disagrees with someone, he tends to raise his voice a little bit. It's not the first thing we disagreed about.

MR. SCHIFF: But that tweet you sent was in what month?

MR. CAPUTO: July.

MR. SCHIFF: So, in July of 2016, you tweeted essentially that Russia was behind this hacking, and Mr. Stone criticized you for speaking out of school?

MR. CAPUTO: He criticized me for claiming that Russia was behind the DNC leaks.

MR. SCHIFF: Even though, as you've said, anyone who has any measure

of intelligence knows that that's the fact?

MR. CAPUTO: Anyone who is involved in Russia and is involved in the Intelligence Community would make that assumption, yes.

MR. SCHIFF: You mentioned also that when the head of the campaign or the head of the country takes a certain position and you work for them or you're aligned with them, you fall in line with their position?

MR. CAPUTO: Right. I don't think that's unique to the President.

MR. SCHIFF: And in the case of Mr. Stone, that would mean, if the President was saying Russia wasn't involved, Mr. Stone was going to say Russia wasn't involved?

MR. CAPUTO: No, because there were times when Roger disagreed with the President and was quite public about it.

MR. SCHIFF: But not on this subject?

MR. CAPUTO: Not on this. Roger and I disagreed about the role of Russia's active measures.

MR. SCHIFF: Now, Mr. Stone prides himself on being a political dirty trickster. I think he self-described himself that way. What is he referring to? What, in your long knowledge of Roger Stone, what kind of dirty tricks is he talking about?

MR. CAPUTO: Trying to defeat an opponent by discrediting them.

MR. SCHIFF: And can you give some examples of how he has done this in past campaigns?

MR. CAPUTO: He did it either -- it's long stories about him doing it during the Nixon era, talking -- you know, writing a fake check from a socialist group and depositing it in the opponent's account.

Roger, during the 1988 Presidential campaign, parked a Rolls Royce in front of Pete du Pont's headquarters in New Hampshire and flattened the tires so it couldn't be moved. And he put the -- the license plate was Pete. No, Pierre. So they were all mostly fun but really damaging stuff.

MR. SCHIFF: So he was not above using deceitful tactics to damage an opponent?

MR. CAPUTO: Within the law, yes.

MR. SCHIFF: And that would include writing a fake check?

MR. CAPUTO: I don't know that he wrote a fake check, but a fake check was written back in the Nixon era. And I remember when Roger was questioned on whether he had created the Army National Guard documents that got Dan Rather fired, he told people in the public and also told me that there's a lot of things he would do, but forgery is not one of them.

MR. SCHIFF: But what did he do in connection with that forged check?

MR. CAPUTO: I don't know. I was quite young at the time.

MR. SCHIFF: But this is something he told you that he took credit for?

MR. CAPUTO: Oh, it's in his books. It's been on television. He dines out on that regularly.

MR. SCHIFF: And has he been involved in opposition research as well?

MR. CAPUTO: Roger tends to hire opposition researchers. He doesn't do it himself. It's his specialty.

MR. SCHIFF: And would Mr. Stone make use of any derogatory information he would get from his opposition research?

MR. CAPUTO: Yes, within the law.

MR. SCHIFF: Would he make use of opposition research no matter what

the source of that opposition research was?

MR. CAPUTO: No, I don't believe so, but I can't tell you because I don't know all circumstances.

MR. SCHIFF: Now, you mentioned that you thought he was not particularly technological, and you were surprised that he was even tweeting. Can you tell us more about that?

MR. CAPUTO: Roger types with two fingers. He has difficulty turning on his computer. When I'd -- I'd recommended that he do a website, he didn't know what I was talking about. I created this StoneZone.com for him. The simplest of tasks he had to pay somebody to do. Roger dictates his books. Roger is a captive of technology.

MR. SCHIFF: So, if he engaged in not public tweets, as most people are familiar with, but in a private text with Guccifer 2, is that something he is technologically capable of doing on his own, or would he need help with that?

MR. CAPUTO: I don't know. I'm not sure, wasn't there. Congressman, Twitter is not a very complicated platform, and if you can type, you can use it. The problem I see is that Roger has trouble typing, but not being there, I can't answer the question.

MR. SCHIFF: Has he ever discussed with you why he chose to use a private communication channel with Guccifer 2 rather than a public forum for his communications?

MR. CAPUTO: Not that I recall.

MR. SCHIFF: Do you have any reason to dispute the Intelligence Community conclusion that Guccifer 2 was a cutout for Russian intelligence?

MR. CAPUTO: I don't have any knowledge of it.

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MR. SCHIFF: Have you ever discussed that fact with Mr. Stone?

MR. CAPUTO: Not that I recall.

MR. SCHIFF: Did you ever ask him why he'd be communicating with someone known to be a Russian intelligence cutout?

MR. CAPUTO: No, I have not. Congressman, not that I recall.

MR. SCHIFF: When did you first come to know Mr. Manafort?

MR. CAPUTO: In 1986, I took a job with Congressman Jack Kemp's Presidential campaign. I arrived in Washington to take that job. It wasn't ready yet. I went to work for a very brief period, if I recall, as a driver for Black, Manafort, Stone, because I didn't have the money to be in Washington without a job.

But I was there for like a few days, and I got taken into the Campaign for Prosperity, which was Jack's PAC. During that time, I met Paul Manafort for the first time.

MR. SCHIFF: And at that time, was he a partner of Mr. Stone's?

MR. CAPUTO: It was -- the name on the company was Black, Manafort, Stone. I don't know about the corporate construction, but to me, that sounded -- it struck me as a partnership.

MR. SCHIFF: And did you do any work for Mr. Manafort over the years?

MR. CAPUTO: I did. As I mentioned before, I worked on the Deripaska visa press relations. My client GTech and Russia was a Davis, Manafort & Freedman client. I worked for Matthew Freedman, not Paul, but it was his company. Amway was a Davis, Manafort, & Freedman client, but it was a Freedman client, not a Manafort client.

At no time during any of that work in Russia did I ever speak to Paul Manafort or see or contact him.

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MR. SCHIFF: And how did you come to work on the Deripaska visa account?

MR. CAPUTO: I was contacted by -- I want to stress that I'm -- my memory isn't the greatest on this, but it was not Paul Manafort who contacted me. It was his associate, Laurie Gay, Laurence Gay. And during the time I worked on the Deripaska stuff, I never once spoke to Paul.

MR. SCHIFF: And did you speak with Mr. Deripaska?

MR. CAPUTO: No, never.

MR. SCHIFF: So tell us again how you were engaged to work on this and what was the nature of the work you did for Mr. Deripaska?

MR. CAPUTO: Laurie called me and asked me, I think, if I could help with some media placements. I said I'd be happy to, and it lasted about 10 days.

MR. SCHIFF: And what type of media placements were they looking for? What kind of help did he need with respect to his visa?

MR. CAPUTO: I think that they were looking for anything, if I recall. I was having real difficulty placing a visa denial story in the media because it's not much news. But I think I got like a Reuters wire or something like that, but I really worked it for, you know, a week, 10 days, and it wasn't a very successful operation.

MR. SCHIFF: And why were they interested in publicity about a visa denial?

MR. CAPUTO: I believe -- I don't know why, but I would speculate that it was part of his deliverables.

MR. SCHIFF: Part of whose deliverables?

MR. CAPUTO: Of the company's deliverables to the client. They wouldn't have asked me to do something that they weren't paid to do.

MR. SCHIFF: Right. But why would Mr. Deripaska want a story about his

visa being denied?

MR. CAPUTO: I think Mr. Deripaska was -- I can only speculate, but it seems to me that media coverage would be helpful in that respect.

MR. SCHIFF: And what year was it that you were working on this?

MR. CAPUTO: For a 10-day period in approximately 2004.

MR. SCHIFF: Do you know how long Mr. Deripaska had been a client of Mr. Manafort?

MR. CAPUTO: I do not.

MR. SCHIFF: Do you know why Mr. Derapaska's visa had been denied?

MR. CAPUTO: If I remember correctly, from that 10-day period, there was a determination by the United States Government that he was involved in unsavory activities as a businessman in Russia.

MR. SCHIFF: Do you know what kind of unsavory business activity?

MR. CAPUTO: I don't recall.

MR. SCHIFF: Who else did Mr. Manafort represent in Russia during the course of the time that you have known him.

MR. CAPUTO: I know of no others.

MR. SCHIFF: So Mr. Deripaska is the only Russian client that you're aware of that Mr. Manafort had?

MR. CAPUTO: To the best of my knowledge, yes.

MR. SCHIFF: Are you familiar with the work that he did in Ukraine?

MR. CAPUTO: Secondhand, thirdhand, and then for the time, in 2007, when I was working there, I watched it in the media every day, watching. I know that, during the Presidential elections, he would bring in dozens of people from the United States to help on the elections -- on the Presidential and Rada elections.

I also know that many of those people were associated with Hillary Clinton's campaign, two of them in particular were senior members of Bernie Sanders' campaign. More people worked for Paul Manafort out of the Hillary orbit than any other orbit.

MR. SCHIFF: And when was Mr. Manafort working in Ukraine?

MR. CAPUTO: I don't know all the dates, but I believe a couple of years before 2007 when I was there is and for a couple of years after.

MR. SCHIFF: And who was he representing there?

MR. CAPUTO: I believe he was representing the political party, but I have never seen the contract.

MR. SCHIFF: And what party was that?

MR. CAPUTO: The party for the President Yanokovitch. I don't recall the name of the party.

MR. SCHIFF: The Party of Regions?

MR. CAPUTO: I believe that is right.

MR. SCHIFF: Was that the party considered the pro-Russian party?

MR. CAPUTO: No. I think in Ukraine it was considered -- people -- it was mysterious to them because they were leaning toward European Union, but there was talk about how there were connections to Russia. I think the opinion that it was a pro-Russia party was a uniquely Western and American opinion.

MR. SCHIFF: In what sense? The Ukrainians didn't view it that way?

MR. CAPUTO: I don't think the Ukrainians saw it that way as much as the Americans, but that's speculation.

MR. SCHIFF: Were you representing a different party?

MR. CAPUTO: Yes, the Bloc Lytvyn.

MR. SCHIFF: And the party you were representing, was that considered a pro-Russian party?

MR. CAPUTO: It wasn't considered anything. This was brandnew. Volodimir Lytvyn, who was the founder of the party, was from the political structures of the early days of the new Ukraine. And he left the President's party because of disagreements that I was unfamiliar with. When I was working with him, I don't recall whether he was considered pro-Russia or otherwise.

MR. SCHIFF: Was one of the issues between the parties the alignment with Russia versus the alignment with the West?

MR. CAPUTO: I don't know.

MR. SCHIFF: You don't know?

MR. CAPUTO: No, sir. My understanding was that Volodimir Lytvyn left the President's party for multiple reasons.

MR. Schiff: But you represented him or his party, right?

MR. CAPUTO: His -- well, the Rada is elected by proportional representation. So, for the Rada elections, I worked for the party, the party list, not for the candidate. But because it was a personality-driven party, you were also considered to be answering to the founder.

MR. SCHIFF: And in those parliamentary elections proximity to Russia was not an issue?

MR. CAPUTO: Not that I recall, but now that I'm married to a Ukrainian, I would say that Ukrainians -- I now know that Ukrainians have been thinking about the relationship between people in their country and Russia for generations.

MR. SCHIFF: And you mentioned that, during the time that you were there working with one of the political parties and Mr. Manafort was working another, you

never saw Mr. Manafort there?

MR. CAPUTO: No, sir.

MR. SCHIFF: Do you know whether Mr. Manafort was doing work out of Russia at that time?

MR. CAPUTO: I don't know.

MR. SCHIFF: You're familiar, I'm sure, with the allegations of Ukraine about under-the-table payments to Mr. Manafort. Have you ever discussed that issue with him?

MR. CAPUTO: That came out when I was in Cleveland, I believe. And I would have to check that. I don't want to, you know, swear to that. I didn't have conversations with him about it, I believe, because of the distance between the two of us. When I moved to Cleveland, I never spoke to Manafort again while on the campaign.

MR. SCHIFF: So, since that story broke, you haven't had any conversations with Mr. Manafort about the allegations that he'd been paid millions of dollars off the books out of Ukraine.

MR. CAPUTO: No, sir.

MR. SCHIFF: There have been other allegations vis-à-vis Mr. Manafort concerning offshore transactions and what could broadly be considered money laundering. Have you ever had any conversations with him about that?

MR. CAPUTO: No, sir.

MR. SCHIFF: Do you have any information on either of those subjects?

MR. CAPUTO: No, sir.

MR. SCHIFF: You mentioned Mr. Gates. How long has he been a partner of Mr. Manafort's?

MR. CAPUTO: I don't know the answer to that, but I know Rick Gates' first job was a driver for Black, Manafort, Stone. He moved into the research division. Once I moved to -- shortly after he went to the research division I kind of broke -- I started working away from Black, Manafort, Stone doing my own thing, working for Congress and such.

I lost track of Rick Gates' career. And when I understood that he had joined the Trump campaign, it was the first time I understood that he was -- no. I understood that he was working in the Ukraine as well. I didn't see him there. So I knew that he was still involved with Paul, but I didn't know he was kind of a business partner and his right-hand man until the Trump campaign.

MR. SCHIFF: And what was Mr. Gates' role in the Trump campaign?

MR. CAPUTO: He was an adviser to Paul Manafort, and I don't know his title, but he was acting as campaign manager.

MR. SCHIFF: And you reported through Mr. Gates during the time that Mr. Manafort was there?

MR. CAPUTO: Yes, sir.

MR. SCHIFF: Was Mr. Gates then essentially his chief of staff?

MR. CAPUTO: I would call him more the campaign manager. He was in charge of making sure the trains ran on time.

MR. SCHIFF: So Manafort was the chair, and he was more the campaign manager?

MR. CAPUTO: Yes, sir, in my opinion. Although, I don't believe that was his title.

MR. SCHIFF: And what issues did you report to Mr. Gates on?

MR. CAPUTO: Assignments and delivering the results of those

assignments, typically written communications products.

MR. SCHIFF: And concerning what kind of subjects?

MR. CAPUTO: Oh, everything, from, you know, whatever was the topic of the day. Those talking points did not go to the candidate. They weren't very useful in that regard. The talking points went to surrogates.

MR. SCHIFF: And did you ever create any talking points on the Russia issue?

MR. CAPUTO: No.

MR. SCHIFF: Did anyone else have that responsibility prior to your leaving the campaign?

MR. CAPUTO: No, sir. I have never heard talk of Russia in the campaign headquarters.

MR. SCHIFF: Who else was within the -- your orbit in terms of the campaign? What other people did you work with on the campaign?

MR. CAPUTO: On a daily basis, I would interact with Hope Hicks, the communications director, but not in a productive fashion. She was an ally of Corey Lewandowski. Jo Anne Policowvow, who was an administrator on the campaign. There were two or three other administrators that were helpful to senior people like myself. I don't remember their names. I remember Jo Anne because I would have lunch with her once in a while.

I would interact once in a while with Michael Cohen, but he wasn't a campaign person. He would call me to his office to ask me what is going on. But that's really about it.

MR. SCHIFF: And when he would ask you about what was going on, in what sense would he want to know?

MR. CAPUTO: The topic of every single conversation between us was about the rivalry between Paul Manafort and Corey Lewandowski.

MR. SCHIFF: Who had the most -- in your experience during the campaign, while you were there, who had the most contact with the then-candidate Trump?

MR. CAPUTO: Paul Manafort, Corey Lewandowski, Hope Hicks.

MR. SCHIFF: Would Mr. Manafort keep, as best you could tell, the President informed of everything he was doing?

MR. CAPUTO: I have no information on that.

MR. SCHIFF: Do you know how often they would meet and discuss the campaign?

MR. CAPUTO: Daily and sometimes more, as far as I know.

MR. SCHIFF: And who handled Mr. Manafort's schedule?

MR. CAPUTO: Rick Gates.

MR. SCHIFF: So, if Mr. Manafort was going to take a meeting, Mr. Gates would know about it?

MR. CAPUTO: No, not necessarily. When I was answering the question on schedule, I'm thinking more about travel and meetings that he is going to go to out of town. I believe there were times when I asked Rick where I could get a hold of Paul, and he didn't know? So he wasn't -- to me, that indicates he wasn't completely apprised of his schedule.

MR. SCHIFF: If there was anybody who would be aware of his schedule, would that be Mr. Gates?

MR. CAPUTO: Beyond Mr. Manafort, yes.

MR. SCHIFF: Well, I'm sorry. If there was anybody who was going to be aware of Mr. Manafort's schedule, would that be Mr. Gates?

MR. CAPUTO: Beyond Mr. Manafort, yes.

MR. SCHIFF: Yes, okay. I thought you might be referring to the President.

MR. CAPUTO: No, sir.

MR. SCHIFF: And what interaction did you see Mr. Manafort have with Jared Kushner?

MR. CAPUTO: I have never saw him with Jared Kushner.

MR. SCHIFF: And what about Donald, Jr.?

MR. CAPUTO: I know that the children had meetings a lot regarding campaign issues. And every Monday, for example, at 9:30, there was a meeting with the kids and Rick and Paul. So beyond that -- you know, those were all 26th floor meetings. I didn't attend those meetings.

But Paul's interaction was family-oriented, candidate-oriented, and also with people he was trying to bring aboard. Paul spent a lot of time trying to tell people that it wouldn't ruin their career if they came to work for us.

MR. SCHIFF: But every morning, there was a meeting of Eric and Donald, Jr., and Paul and the President?

MR. CAPUTO: No, sir. There was a 9:30 on Mondays that I don't believe included the President.

MR. SCHIFF: So, every Monday, there was a meeting. And who would be in the Monday meeting?

MR. CAPUTO: I never attended that meeting, but it was always called the meeting with the kids.

MR. SCHIFF: And that was with Mr. Manafort. Would Mr. Gates have been at that meeting as well?

MR. CAPUTO: Yes, sir.

MR. SCHIFF: So Manafort and Gates and --

MR. CAPUTO: The four of them.

MR. SCHIFF: By "the kids," who are you referring to?

MR. CAPUTO: Don, Eric, Ivanka, and Jared.

MR. SCHIFF: And that happened once a week, or did it happen each morning?

MR. CAPUTO: It was scheduled once a week. It might have happened more often impromptu, but it was Monday mornings at 9:30.

MR. SCHIFF: You mentioned at the convention that the Republican Party platform did not include language regarding lethal aid.

MR. CAPUTO: Or Ukraine.

MR. SCHIFF: Or Ukraine. But that had been proposed by the Cruz campaign?

MR. CAPUTO: A representative of the Cruz campaign.

MR. SCHIFF: Do you know which representative that was?

MR. CAPUTO: I don't remember her name, but it was a delegate, a female delegate.

MR. SCHIFF: When did you learn that this had been proposed to be added to the platform?

MR. CAPUTO: Convention week, the next week. The week prior, I was on vacation, committee week.

MR. SCHIFF: Do you know when people within the campaign learned that the Cruz campaign intended to offer the amendment?

MR. CAPUTO: As it happened, I think.

MR. SCHIFF: And to your knowledge, was J.D. -- J.P. Gordon --

MR. CAPUTO: Sir, I think it's J.D. I'm sorry.

MR. SCHIFF: J.D. I can't read my own writing. J.D. Gordon, to your knowledge, was he involved in trying to fend off the addition of that amendment?

MR. CAPUTO: I don't know about his individual actions, but I know he was a person responsible for trying to catch poison pills in the foreign affairs platform hearing.

MR. SCHIFF: And was this considered a poison pill?

MR. CAPUTO: That's my term, but yes. Their strategy was to accomplish things during committee week that they could use to displace Donald Trump during convention week.

MR. SCHIFF: And why would an amendment providing that we should give lethal assistance to Ukraine be considered a poison pill to the Trump campaign?

MR. CAPUTO: Because there had been a steady drum beat of stories about Paul Manafort being connected to Ukraine and via Ukraine and Russia.

MR. SCHIFF: And do you know what J.D. Gordon's involvement was in trying to fend off that amendment?

MR. CAPUTO: I only heard secondhand, but what I did hear is that there were discussions in the committee hearing room between the offer of the amendment and the Trump team, which included J.D. Beyond that generality, I know nothing else.

MR. SCHIFF: Do you know anyone else who was part of those discussions? Was Walid Phares involved in that as well?

MR. CAPUTO: I don't know that.

MR. SCHIFF: And was the Trump campaign successful in fending off that amendment?

MR. CAPUTO: Well, the amendment passed. It wasn't fended off. They changed the language into something that wouldn't cause an international incident. So I'd say they were successful.

MR. SCHIFF: Initially, Trump campaign personnel publicly stated they played no role in opposing that amendment. Do you know who is responsible for that public line that turned out not to be accurate?

MR. CAPUTO: I do not know.

MR. SCHIFF: Now, were you the head of caucus affairs?

MR. CAPUTO: I was the head of the communications division of caucus affairs, pretty focused on the press.

MR. SCHIFF: So were you asked then to help with the press to mitigate the issue that had been raised over the fight over the Ukraine plank in the platform?

MR. CAPUTO: No, sir, I was long gone from the campaign by then. This was during the campaign -- I'm sorry -- during the convention. I resigned my position on June 20, a month before the convention -- 3 weeks before the convention.

Congressman, I want to add an addendum to what I just said. I did speak to media and did interviews, especially with Josh Rogin of The Washington Post, to try to correct that record. I did that on my own accord because I thought Rogin's reporting was damaging, irresponsible. I had disabused him on Twitter. It's easily discovered. But that was all of my own accord because I despise inaccuracy in the media.

MR. SCHIFF: So this was after you had left the campaign?

MR. CAPUTO: Yes sir.

MR. SCHIFF: You weighed in to correct the record on --

MR. CAPUTO: Yes, sir.

MR. SCHIFF: -- his reporting on the fight in the convention?

MR. CAPUTO: Yes, sir, on the platform committee for foreign affairs.

MR. SCHIFF: And was this before or after Mr. Stone had admonished you for speaking out of school?

MR. CAPUTO: That would be before, because, if you recall, the DNC problem with the leaks was right before the DNC, and the problem with the committee week in the Republican Convention was prior.

MR. SCHIFF: So how long had you been out of the campaign when you were attempting to correct the record with the press about the convention?

MR. CAPUTO: Approximately a month.

MR. SCHIFF: And what was, in your view, inaccurate about the reporting?

MR. CAPUTO: There was never language in the platform about lethal aid to Ukraine. It was characterized as the Trump people changing the platform. In fact, it was the Cruz people changing the platform, and I thought that was an important distinction.

Also, in the same report, Josh Rogin had written that Donald Trump, in the fall of 2015, had gone to Ukraine to give a speech. Donald Trump didn't go to Ukraine at that time. I had proof of it, and I thought it was a good opportunity to show that The Washington Post was inaccurate in their reporting on the matter. And Rogin, via my discussions with him on Twitter, had the story corrected online.

MR. SCHIFF: Now, you were no longer with the campaign. Wasn't someone else from the campaign interacting with the press on this?

MR. CAPUTO: You would hope, but I knew that it probably wasn't happening.

MR. SCHIFF: You also were not present at the time of the convention fight, so how were you in a position to comment on the events there?

MR. CAPUTO: As I said, it was hearsay. But I also know what the platform said. I knew what Rogin was saying was wrong and was couched in a way to damage the President. So I weighed in on my own because I support the President.

MR. SCHIFF: Now, you viewed this change in the language or the necessity of fighting off this language as a poison pill because of Mr. Manafort's work in Ukraine and the issue that had created?

MR. CAPUTO: I assume that's why they did it, because why else would Ukraine be brought up in the context of the Trump campaign? At the time, we were already enduring -- the supporters of Donald Trump were already enduring a lot of stories about Paul Manafort in Ukraine and Russia. So that was an assumption that I think was safe.

MR. SCHIFF: And was Mr. Manafort, to your knowledge, involved in the efforts to prevent that language from being adopted at the convention?

MR. CAPUTO: I don't know that. I don't know.

MR. SCHIFF: So you don't know whether Mr. Gordon ever discussed this with Mr. Manafort?

MR. CAPUTO: I don't know.

MR. SCHIFF: You mentioned, at the Mayflower Hotel, when the President gave his foreign policy speech, that there were a couple rows of chairs roped off for dignitaries.

MR. CAPUTO: Yes, sir.

MR. SCHIFF: And that when the President and his entourage arrived, they

went essentially backstage for a private meeting?

MR. CAPUTO: I would characterize it as backstage, but it might -- I didn't go on that side. I didn't know what was behind there. There might have been another room behind a door, or it might have been an open area where they just had a -- but it was a reception area behind the stage.

MR. SCHIFF: And the first two rows of people, about 20 people got up and were escorted to that same area backstage where the President would be?

MR. CAPUTO: Yes, sir.

MR. SCHIFF: But you're not aware of what the physical arrangement or setup was behind stage, whether there was yet another private area or it was merely one area for that group?

MR. CAPUTO: No, sir.

MR. SCHIFF: And you -- you're not aware of whether Mr. Sessions was within that row of dignitaries or would have gone backstage with the group?

MR. CAPUTO: I did not see Mr. Sessions.

MR. SCHIFF: Given his position in the campaign, had he been present, would he have been in that distinguished area?

MR. CAPUTO: Most certainly. Senior leaders of the campaign were in that.

MR. SCHIFF: Do you know who else was in that area?

MR. CAPUTO: I saw Paul and Rick, because I needed to deliver some documents to them or something. I don't remember what it was. I -- because -- I'm sorry. Let me back up a minute.

When they arrived, a small group of the entourage from the Trump plane came around stage left and were standing there. That was Paul and Rick and

Steven Miller, as I remember, okay. That's when I got up and I spoke to Rick real quickly.

I didn't see the candidate because he was being held in the back, and those people were standing there for a minute or so. And then that two-row group stood up in unison and went back there. I don't know, because I wasn't watching my watch, but it was -- the speech was running late. The room was full. The media was rolling. I don't think that event lasted more than 7 or 8 minutes.

MR. SCHIFF: And were the kids, as you describe them, were they also present?

MR. CAPUTO: I don't mean to be derisive by calling them kids. They are adults. But I did not see them there.

MR. SCHIFF: So you don't recall any of them being there, or you --

MR. CAPUTO: No, sir. I was focused on trying to find the people that I was looking for.

MR. SCHIFF: And who were you looking for?

MR. CAPUTO: Rick Gates to deliver him a document, or I don't remember why, but I needed to speak to him.

MR. SCHIFF: Do you remember what document you had for him?

MR. CAPUTO: It must have been talking points or a press release because that's what I was doing.

MR. SCHIFF: Talking points for --

MR. CAPUTO: Surrogates.

MR. SCHIFF: For surrogates. And what were the talking points for surrogates about that particular speech?

MR. CAPUTO: On that day? It wasn't -- I did not see the speech before it

was given, so the document I delivered could not have been about the speech. It was something unrelated to that day.

MR. SCHIFF: Mr. Caputo, do you know Walid Phares?

MR. CAPUTO: No, I do not.

MR. SCHIFF: Do you know George Papadopoulos?

MR. CAPUTO: The advance man? No, I don't know. There's a George on the campaign who had a Greek last name who was in charge of the advance. If that's not the George you're talking about, then I don't know the George you're talking about.

MR. SCHIFF: And the George that -- assuming it's the same person, what do you know of his role with the campaign?

MR. CAPUTO: Advance. Lead advance.

MR. SCHIFF: And what does that mean, lead advance?

MR. CAPUTO: Organizing events, all logistics supporting them.

MR. SCHIFF: And would that be true wherever the President was going?

MR. CAPUTO: Yes, sir. George had people in the field advancing the events. They worked for him, and he traveled with the President. When he arrived, he became in charge of the room.

MR. SCHIFF: And would he travel with the President wherever the President was going?

MR. CAPUTO: I can't make that statement definitively, but George was often on the plane.

[4:46 p.m.]

MR. SCHIFF: And was he a Manafort person or Lewandowski person?

MR. CAPUTO: Lewandowski person. But George has experience in Presidential advance from previous Presidents. So he wasn't your typical Lewandowski hire. He was a guy that actually knew what he was doing.

MR. SCHIFF: And did he stay on after Lewandowski left?

MR. CAPUTO: Yes, George was -- the new campaign manager, Paul, and others and myself trusted him because of his competency. So he stayed on. I think he is still with the President. I don't know.

MR. SCHIFF: And Mike Flynn, did you ever have any interaction with Mr. Flynn?

MR. CAPUTO: I had a brief greeting with him in Trump Tower lobby after a primary victory, but I never had a subsequent or substantial conversation.

MR. SCHIFF: And how about Mr. Sessions?

MR. CAPUTO: Never had a conversation with him once. Never met him. Now, Congressman, he was in the Trump Tower in a group of people that I didn't approach, you know, at an event.

MR. SCHIFF: Do you speak Russian?

MR. CAPUTO: In Russia, they say that I speak Russian like a dog. I understand everything, but I can say nothing.

MR. SCHIFF: I am sure it is a compliment.

MR. CAPUTO: It is a compliment in Russia. I was fluent in Russian by the time I left, but I have difficulty with languages, and I lost that capacity. I can still have a 5-year-old's conversation, but I still understand most things.

MR. SCHIFF: You mentioned earlier that one of your assignments, one of

your contracts was to do media or public relations around the acquisition of a television station.

MR. CAPUTO: U.S. media relations and media relations for reporters and for media organizations.

MR. SCHIFF: And what was the issue that you were contracted to try to help communicate?

MR. CAPUTO: Boris Jordan, the American who took over NTV, was concerned that NTV's acquisition by Gazprom Media would be considered the consolidation of independent media by the Kremlin. And the trip was designed to ease those concerns.

MR. SCHIFF: And who was in charge at the Kremlin at the time?

MR. CAPUTO: Who was the President? It was Vladimir Putin.

MR. SCHIFF: And was this an effort by Putin to consolidate media and make it more friendly to the state?

MR. CAPUTO: I don't think so. My knowledge of the Kremlin and the way that President Putin works is it would be below his pay grade. I reported to Alfred Koch. He was the person who came to do the interviews. I had no reason to believe this was done at the behest of Vladimir Putin. But Gazprom is the largest company in Russia. It is very loyal to the Kremlin. So what goes on between the two of them, I don't know.

MR. SCHIFF: But even though a company of Gazprom's significance and an issue as significant as the media's consolidation and treatment of Putin, you don't think that rose to the level of Putin's concern?

MR. CAPUTO: I wouldn't have known. But the problem that NTV, as I recall, was that it was controlled by an oligarch, a billionaire named Gusinsky, I

believe, Vladimir Gusinsky, who was using -- first of all, taking money out of it and, second of all, using his airtime to -- against the government. Gusinsky was a notorious character, one that I had no interaction with, but my understanding of him was that he was a pretty bad guy. And so when Boris Jordan, someone I knew, knew well, who I had worked with in the past, he was the original founder of Renaissance Capital, when Boris took it over, I considered it a takeover by an American executive.

MR. SCHIFF: Now Gazprom Media was favorable to the Kremlin, wasn't it?

MR. CAPUTO: I believe Gazprom is an important company in Russia that is loyal to the Kremlin, so a subsidiary would probably fall in line with that.

MR. SCHIFF: And the station they were acquiring was an independent TV station, wasn't it?

MR. CAPUTO: Technically, yes.

MR. SCHIFF: And post-acquisition, did the coverage change to be much more consistently pro-Kremlin?

MR. CAPUTO: I think for a time it did. NTV now is like -- it's a gossip station. It's not a news station. It's not much of a TV station at all. It's not very serious. Back then, it was considered more of a news operation. So it debilitated into silliness.

MR. SCHIFF: Did you ever perform any public relations services to help improve Mr. Putin's image in the United States?

MR. CAPUTO: Never. Congressman, I was never asked to, so I never did.

MR. SCHIFF: Did you ever make a statement to the media, quote, "I'm not proud of the work today, but at the time, Putin wasn't such a bad guy"?

MR. CAPUTO: I did, yes. The Buffalo News.

MR. SCHIFF: If you didn't do that kind of work for Putin then why did you make that statement?

MR. CAPUTO: I am sorry? Say that again.

MR. SCHIFF: If you didn't do that kind of work for Putin, then why did you make that statement?

MR. CAPUTO: Because Gazprom was considered loyal to the Kremlin. And at the time, America was still trying to work with him, still trying to work with him when Barack Obama was elected. And between 2000 and 2004, President George W. Bush was trying very hard to work with Putin. So I considered him to be, you know, a viable, you know, leader of Russia. Not many people thought of him then like they do now.

MR. SCHIFF: What work were you describing that you weren't very proud of?

MR. CAPUTO: I don't recall. It was a statement taken out of context that Representative Jackie Speier has then twisted into me being Gazprom -- Vladimir Putin's image consultant.

MR. SCHIFF: Were you referring, when you said you weren't proud of the work, were you referring to the work that you did to help sell the consolidation of the media, or was it some other work?

MR. CAPUTO: I don't recall, but it could be, because I thought at the time that the takeover of NTV was a good idea, and after a couple of years I thought that it was not such a good idea. And Congressman, as someone who works with the media every day, here in Congress as well when I was working here, finding out that the -- that a government was consolidating control over the media was not something that I was proud of.

MR. SCHIFF: When you were doing that work, did you have to register as an agent of a foreign power?

MR. CAPUTO: No, I was working only with the media and only with media organizations and only for a very short period. And I was not being paid by the government -- by a foreign government.

MR. SCHIFF: Who were you being paid by?

MR. CAPUTO: I have been asked that before, and I haven't been able to figure out where I got my payment from, but I believe it was an intermediary, and I don't recall who it was. Boris Jordan, as I said, was an American, and had American interests.

MR. SCHIFF: But you were not paid by him or by Gazprom?

MR. CAPUTO: I don't recall. I don't recall. I don't believe I was paid by Gazprom. I think I would have remembered that.

MR. SCHIFF: And what would trigger your requirements to register as an agent of a foreign power?

MR. CAPUTO: I don't know. I am not familiar with that. And the question is what would have triggered my need to register 13 years ago as well. I don't know.

MR. SCHIFF: Did your PR firm do any lobbying of the government?

MR. CAPUTO: No, sir.

MR. SCHIFF: When you were with the campaign, what was your primary method of communication?

MR. CAPUTO: Email and one-on-one conversations.

MR. SCHIFF: Did you have a campaign email address?

MR. CAPUTO: I did, but I didn't use it much.

MR. SCHIFF: So, if you primarily communicated by email but not through the campaign email, did you use a personal email?

MR. CAPUTO: I used my personal Gmail account, which is [REDACTED], for a couple of reasons. Number one, that is the email that most reporters knew because I was working with the same reporters for many years. And, secondly, I suspected that Corey Lewandowski was monitoring all of Donald J. Trump for President emails.

MR. SCHIFF: Would that include emails to and from the kids?

MR. CAPUTO: Whose emails?

MR. SCHIFF: You said Lewandowski would review the emails through the --

MR. CAPUTO: I suspected so. I couldn't prove that. I never sent an email to one of the kids.

MR. SCHIFF: And do you have your personal emails from your time at the campaign?

MR. CAPUTO: Yes, sir. I have preserved them. I decided to preserve them months and months ago. And then my counsel directed me to do so. And just last week you directed me to do so. The Senate directed me to do so. And just last week the campaign directed me to do so. So they are all there. And Congressman, if the committee would like to review my emails, under the guidance of my counsel, I would be happy to provide them.

MR. SCHIFF: Thank you. We will work with your counsel on that.

MR. CAPUTO: Thank you.

MR. SCHIFF: Did you work at all with Brad Parscale?

MR. CAPUTO: I intersected with Brad Parscale twice when he visited the

Trump headquarters in New York. I never worked with him, never sat in a meeting with him. I had friendly conversations with him about Texas. We never spoke about campaign issues.

MR. SCHIFF: Do you know what his work was for the campaign?

MR. CAPUTO: All things digital, as I recall. If it was about digital marketing, it was Brad Parscale.

MR. SCHIFF: And he did that work primarily out of Texas?

MR. CAPUTO: I did not see him in the headquarters but twice. I have to make the assumption that he did that work elsewhere. My understanding is that his operation was in San Antonio, Texas.

MR. SCHIFF: Do you know what Jared Kushner's relationship was to that work?

MR. CAPUTO: I do not know.

MR. SCHIFF: Did you ever have any interaction with Cambridge Analytica?

MR. CAPUTO: No, I did not. After the campaign, I considered hiring them for an unrelated project, but I did not -- I was on a conference call with a group of people unrelated to the campaign after the election where there was someone from the Cambridge Analytica on there. I don't remember who it was, and I never ended up hiring them.

MR. SCHIFF: Did you have any interaction with Michael Flynn, Jr.?

MR. CAPUTO: No, sir. No.

MR. SCHIFF: And how about Felix Sater?

MR. CAPUTO: No, sir.

MR. SCHIFF: Are you familiar with the Center for National Interest?

MR. CAPUTO: Is that the group that did the foreign affairs speech

sponsorship at the Mayflower?

MR. SCHIFF: Yes.

MR. CAPUTO: Just from that event. I never heard of them before and haven't heard much about them since.

MR. SCHIFF: Do you know of any of the folks there that arranged that?

MR. CAPUTO: No, sir.

BY [REDACTED]

Q Can I just ask one question? You mentioned that you attended the Mayflower event to deliver talking points to Mr. Gates?

A I don't recall what the product was, but there was something that I had to get to him. It was unrelated to the event. I went to the event to hear the speech.

Q So you could have emailed the talking points or --

A I could have, I believe. But I made a point of making it necessary so that I could see the speech. It was an important speech.

Q You had mentioned there was a group of external individuals who were involved in drafting the speech?

A That is what I understand. I have no -- I had no visibility on the drafting process.

Q How do you know there were external folks involved?

A Of what I learned in the media. And, frankly, ma'am, I don't remember who those people were mentioned as being involved.

MR. SCHIFF: Have you had any interaction with Carter Page?

MR. CAPUTO: No.

MR. SCHIFF: Never met him?

MR. CAPUTO: Never did.

MR. SCHIFF: And how about Joseph Schmitz?

MR. CAPUTO: No, sir.

MR. SCHIFF: I take it you had no role in the Trump transition team?

MR. CAPUTO: No, sir.

MR. SCHIFF: I am going to turn it over to my colleague, who will be much more methodical than --

MR. ROONEY: Adam, we said we were going to do this for 2 hours. We went for 42 minutes, took a break. Mr. Swalwell went for 38 minutes, and you have gone for an hour. I am just curious as to how much longer. I know that we told the attorneys here that we were going to request this witness for 2 hours, and our original agreement was 45 minutes, 15 minutes, and 15 minutes. And we have gone -- and your side has gone way over that. So I am just -- I don't mean to, you know, try to hindrance your line of questioning here, but you know, we were supposed to be done in 2 hours, and that was starting a half an hour late at 2:30, so we should have been done at 4:30. And then you, when we came back from break, requested another hour, which would have been in our 15-minute and 15-minute time. And so we have just gone for another hour. So I am just curious as to how much longer you think that you are going to need.

MR. SCHIFF: You know, Tom, and this is something we have worked out, Mr. Conaway and myself, we continue questioning until we are done. And if the majority is representing to witnesses how long an interview is likely to take, I can't speak for what the majority represents, but I can say that our agreement is that we continue the questioning until we are done.

MR. ROONEY: I think that that is fine. I am just -- and I don't know what

the agreement was with Mr. Conaway. I probably should know that. But I do know that we did represent to these attorneys that this interview would be 2 hours long. I know that traditionally, even though it's only been a few witnesses that we have been interviewing, that we have gone for 2 hours -- 45 minutes, 45, 15 and 15. And I think that we have been more than flexible with Eric going for 38 minutes and you just asked for 60 minutes. And we went for 38 minutes -- or 42 minutes. And that was our prerogative. That is how long we needed. But, you know, we did represent to these attorneys that this wouldn't be any longer than 2 hours.

So I don't know if that was part of the agreement that you had with Mr. Conaway or not. But I don't know that it was until forever.

MR. SCHIFF: Tom --

MR. ROONEY: Correct me if I am wrong.

MR. SCHIFF: I am happy to allow you to continue questions on your side. If you don't have any --

MR. ROONEY: I don't.

MR. SCHIFF: That is fine. Our agreement, though, is we question the witness until we are done. And no one is interested in staying any longer.

MR. ROONEY: Adam, I don't know that any witness would agree to be questioned indefinitely, especially if we represented to them that this would be 2 hours. If it was to be questioned indefinitely, then we should have told them that. And I think that Mr. Caputo has been kind enough to say that he would stay here for as long as it takes. So I don't think that you are going to have a problem questioning him for longer, but I don't think that that is the way that we can continue on with these interviews.

MR. SCHIFF: We should continue this conversation without Mr. Caputo for

this.

MR. ROONEY: We should. I apologize.

MR. SCHIFF: I will just say this. From our point of view, your staff shouldn't be representing things to the witnesses that are not part of the agreement.

MR. ROONEY: Was it not the part of the agreement?

MR. SCHIFF: No.

MR. ROONEY: The timelines that I just said were not part of the agreement?

MR. SCHIFF: The agreement is that we would go 45 minutes, 45 minutes, 15, 15, 15, 15, until we are done. My suggestion was, since you didn't have more questions, we would, instead of keeping interrupting every 15 minutes, we --

MR. ROONEY: Right. And I agree with that. I didn't know that they were 15, 15, 15 until forever. I don't know how -- if I was an attorney for a witness, there is no way that I would agree to that.

MR. SCHIFF: Then they get subpoenaed. I would rather not have you have to come back. And I am sure you would rather not come back.

MR. VACCO: Congressman, pardon me, and I don't mean to get in the middle of this exchange, but the Congressman is correct that staff did inform me that it would be 2 hours or less, quite frankly. And if this was a Tuesday or a Wednesday or a Thursday, it would be unimportant to me if we went until 8 or 9 o'clock at night. But when staff tells me a couple of hours or less on a Friday, I mean a practical consideration is that we have flights back to Buffalo at 8:30 out of BWI. So I am now --

MR. SCHIFF: I apologize if you were misled by staff. That should not have happened. That is on our committee, not on you. I would suggest, instead of our

arguing about it, let's continue to the questions and try to get them done as expeditiously as possible. We don't want to have to bring you back. So that would be my recommendation. None of us want to be here any later than we have to be.

MR. ROONEY: It doesn't say it in here in your agreement that it would be 2 hours. So it was an email from our staff to you that it would be 2 hours.

MR. VACCO: Yes.

MR. ROONEY: And that was not agreed to by Mr. Schiff and Mr. Conaway in this agreement that I am looking at. So I was wrong. I apologize. And you are free to continue asking questions as long as you want. And I apologize to the attorneys that that email was sent out saying that it wouldn't be any longer than that. But I think that, for the future, we should talk about trying to limit it or else -- I mean it's just going to be a little overly cumbersome I think. But I apologize to you.

MR. SCHIFF: No worries.

MR. ROONEY: I thought it was part of your agreement. I am reading it right now, and it's not in here.

MR. SCHIFF: Let's continue. And I am sure that it may very well have been the expectation on your staff's part that it may not take that long. But anyway --

MR. VACCO: I would only ask that we try to eliminate the repetitiveness.

MR. SCHIFF: We have no interest in asking repetitive questions for the sake of their being repetitive. But the longer we discuss this, the longer you are going to be here. So I would suggest --

MR. CAPUTO: I am ready to go.

MR. SCHIFF: [REDACTED] go ahead.

BY [REDACTED]

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Q Mr. Caputo, I apologize about the snag. If we had been involved in the scheduling, we probably would have scheduled it a bit earlier.

A I am here to help.

Q I have a couple questions. You had mentioned a meeting that you were aware of that takes place every Monday at 9:30 with the Trump kids and Mr. Manafort and Mr. Gates. How were you aware of that meeting?

A I would come in at 7:30 typically. Paul and Rick would come in shortly thereafter. And they would always leave the office Monday at 9 o'clock because they had -- or 9:15 so they could make it to the meeting upstairs.

Q On the 26th floor?

A Might have been the 25th. It wasn't the fifth.

Q You mentioned earlier the 26th.

A Twenty-sixth is where the President is, or was, and the kids had offices on 25. There were two different conference rooms, perhaps more. It could have been 25 or 26.

Q And which floors were designated for the campaign?

A Five, and then they rebuilt seven, but that happened after I left.

Q And you worked directly for Manafort and Mr. Gates. Is that right?

A Yes, ma'am.

Q But you had no idea why they met with the kids?

A Oh, every campaign I ever worked on, we had meetings with the kids, the wife, the spouse, to coordinate their activity on the campaign and to help make sure that all their questions were answered. As long as you keep the family happy, the candidate's happy.

Q That makes sense. Who was the Trump campaign diplomatic

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outreach coordinator?

A I do not know. I believe that person was in Washington.

Q Did you ever email Mr. Stone from your Gmail account about the Trump campaign?

A I am sorry. You will have to repeat.

Q Did you ever email Mr. Stone from your Gmail account regarding the Trump campaign?

A I believe so, yes.

Q Are those part of the documents that you have preserved?

A Yes, ma'am.

Q Great.

A I have deleted no emails.

MR. SCHIFF: Can I ask you, do those emails include any discussion of any interaction that he had with either Guccifer 2 or WikiLeaks?

MR. CAPUTO: I do not believe so, because I don't believe that we discussed it.

BY [REDACTED]

Q Did anyone report to you when you worked for the Trump campaign?

A In the convention, I had a staff. In the primary campaign, in the volunteer structure, there was a reporting structure where people reported to me, volunteers. In the campaign, I was an individual contributor.

Q How large was your staff?

A At which area? In which phase? In the primary, we had a weekly conference call that included five people, all volunteers, including the chairman of the State. In the campaign, I had no staff. And in the convention, I started with

zero and grew it to between 12 and 15.

Q Did your work with the Trump campaign only include you in your personal capacity? Did your Michael Caputo Public Relations, were they hired?

A When I went to the -- during the primary and the campaign phases, no. During the time when I was at the convention, I brought one of my staffers to Cleveland with me because she was a cable TV booker, and I wouldn't have to train someone. She went to work in Cleveland through the time I was there.

Q Did you hire or bring anyone else onto the campaign with you?

A I hired no one on the primary. I hired no one on the campaign. And at the convention, I hired between 12 and 15 people.

Q Were those people who worked for you previously?

A Some were complete strangers whose resumes made the cut. Others were people I trusted who had experience in this.

Q Who were those people?

A Oh, Shannon Polvino from my office, Kirk Bell, who I have worked with off and on, Michelle McCullough worked with us for 2 weeks and then had to go home because of a family problem. She is from Buffalo. Stephanie, last name escapes me for the moment, was -- Stephanie. Another name I have forgotten. Stephanie, a young lady from Buffalo I brought in to work in the convention as well. And I believe that was it, the people I knew previously.

Q Great. And then you -- who was the social media strategy during your time with the campaign?

A It was always Dan Scavino.

Q Were you involved in developing the social media strategy?

A No, ma'am.

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Q Who were your primary media contacts?

A Everyone embedded with Trump. It was a couple dozen people.

Q How often did you interact with anyone from RT?

A Never.

Q Sputnik?

A Never.

Q Any other Russian media?

A No.

Q Were you aware of candidate Trump's priorities during the time you were with the campaign?

A What kind of priorities?

Q What were his priorities?

A I mean generally?

Q Yes.

A To become President of the United States.

Q What were his foreign policy priorities?

A I don't believe he had any. I am sorry. Let me rephrase that. He wanted better relationships with other nations. Beyond that general priority, I don't know any specificity.

Q Have you ever met Michael Flynn?

A General Flynn? Briefly. And I believe in Trump Tower, "hi," and that was it. I never attended a meeting with him or anything like that.

Q Did you work with Joseph Schmitz?

A I don't know that name.

Q George Papadopoulos?

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A George, as we spoke before, I believe was the leader of advance.

MR. VACCO: I asked questions not be repetitive. You asked all these questions.

MR. SCHIFF: I know. Okay? That question was asked before.

MR. VACCO: The Mr. Flynn question was asked before too. Twice before.

MR. SCHIFF: I understand that. And the witness can say I did have an opportunity to answer that. Okay?

So, [REDACTED] go ahead.

[REDACTED] Mike McSherry.

MR. CAPUTO: I know Mike was hired. I believe he was in the Washington office. I know Mike McSherry, but I never interacted with him nor saw him during the Trump campaign.

[REDACTED] And Tim Conus (ph)?

MR. CAPUTO: I don't know him.

MR. SWALWELL: Mr. Caputo, I just want to be clear, did you ever observe, when you were working for the campaign, any Russians -- and, again, whether they were working for the government, whether they were working for business, or just people you knew as Russians -- at Trump Tower?

MR. CAPUTO: No, sir.

MR. SWALWELL: Did you ever observe any Russians interact with people with the campaign outside of Trump Tower?

MR. CAPUTO: No, sir.

MR. SWALWELL: Did you ever have personal knowledge or just hearing other individuals in the campaign talk about meeting with Russians?

MR. CAPUTO: No. As I said before, Russia was never brought up in my

presence.

MR. SWALWELL: Did you ever see any other foreign nationals at Trump Tower other than Russian?

MR. CAPUTO: Not that I recall.

MR. SWALWELL: Did you have personal knowledge of people in the campaign meeting with other foreign nationals other than Russian?

MR. CAPUTO: No, sir. Except for the speech at the Mayflower, where there were ambassadorial corps there, I never heard tell of any interaction with any international person.

MR. SWALWELL: I just want to be clear, the day you were at the Mayflower, did you recognize Ambassador Kislyak?

MR. CAPUTO: No, sir. I was seated in a place where I saw only the backs of people's heads.

MR. SWALWELL: I want to understand, you went down to the Mayflower specifically to deliver a document. Is that right?

MR. CAPUTO: I made the excuse that I needed to deliver the document so that I could see the speech.

MR. SWALWELL: Because you could have sent it via email.

MR. CAPUTO: Probably. But I wanted to see the speech.

MR. SWALWELL: When did you leave Washington on that trip?

MR. CAPUTO: I don't recall. I might have stayed overnight.

MR. SWALWELL: After the Mayflower, did you take any other campaign-related meetings after the Mayflower speech?

MR. CAPUTO: I do not recall. I do not believe so. The campaign left -- I am sorry, the plane left almost immediately, so there would have been no more

people to meet with.

MR. SWALWELL: Did anyone wonder, why is the guy down here for something that he could have just sent electronically?

MR. CAPUTO: It was a very full room. Nobody questioned me.

BY [REDACTED]

Q I have just a couple of questions about your time in Russia in the late nineties. Were you a Foreign Service officer?

A No, ma'am.

Q You were working with USAID?

A As a contractor through International Foundation for Electoral Systems.

Q Did you hold a security clearance?

A No, ma'am. I held one when I was in the military, but not since 1983.

Q And could you just describe very briefly the incident that caused you to leave that position?

A Sure. I was sent there by the Clinton administration. The Clintons had staffed the Embassy policy group there, because there was a lot of money being spent there. I am sorry. Can you repeat your question? I am getting a little tired.

Q What is the incident surrounding your leaving?

A I did a lot of media, interviews with media because of my proximity to the campaign and to the electoral system which was being designed and developed at the time. I was responsible for a lot of that, so I did a lot of talking to the media. I was -- during a meeting at the Embassy, I was told that I was to blame the Central Election Commission for rejecting a candidate for a party that was running on the

party list Duma election because they broke the election law. I was told I should blame that on the Election Commission, not the candidate. It was my knowledge from everything I saw that it was the candidate's fault. I told the Embassy I was not going to lie. The Embassy insisted that I lie. I did an interview with the Wall Street Journal where I did not lie. And my disagreement with the Embassy became intractable at that point.

Q Would you have been permitted to remain in the position?

A I would have, I believe, if I had handled the aftermath of the Wall Street Journal article better. But I was already planning to open my own business, so I was ready to go. And my contract was up.

Q Moving to 2007 when you were in the Ukraine --

A Yes, ma'am.

Q Understanding you were working for a parliamentary election, did you during that time engage in any business activities?

A No, ma'am.

Q Did you advise any Ukrainians on business activities?

A No, ma'am. Beyond advising the candidate and his campaign, I had no interaction with any other Ukrainians for business or government. I had social things going on.

MR. SCHIFF: Just one last question. You had mentioned you were aware of two trips Mr. Trump took to Russia. There was the Miss Universe trip. What was the other trip?

MR. CAPUTO: No. There were two trips in the nineties where he came to look at the properties. It was in the newspapers a lot over there in Russia at the time. The trip about the pageant took place I think 2013 or 2014.

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MR. SCHIFF: That is all I have. So I will hand it back over to you, Tom.

MR. ROONEY: Thank you, sir, for your time. And I appreciate you being forthright and flexible on your time. And that is all we have for you.

MR. CAPUTO: Can I make a closing statement here?

MR. ROONEY: Sure.

MR. SCHIFF: If I could, I just want to thank you for your willingness to appear before the committee and for your patience. I know this went longer than you were expecting and appreciate your coming here today.

MR. CAPUTO: I respect this committee and the work that you are doing.

MR. ROONEY: You are recognized.

MR. CAPUTO: I want to thank the committee for agreeing to my request to meet so I could set the record straight on what Representative Jackie Speier said to the world on live television on March 20th. I hope the time we spent together helps you understand my role in this investigation. Specifically, I feel I have no role. For the record, after your March 20 hearing, I sought to appear in a subsequent public hearing of this committee to answer Representative Jackie Speier's inaccurate statements with complete transparency. You decided instead to interview me in a closed session. Today, I have respectfully honored your request.

In an attempt to still achieve transparency, I plan to release my opening and closing statements to the public. I concede that I have led an interesting life as an international public relations consultant. I lived in Russia more than two decades ago. Today, my Russia experience is part of my business, but today I have no Russian clients, I have no Russian revenues, and I have not since 2004. It's really quite simple: I am just a small business owner from Buffalo with a family who is just trying to earn a living and raise his kids safely, like everybody else. In fact, it

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was my love of the Buffalo Bills that drew me closer to President Trump as he endeavored to buy our team and keep other owners from moving them to Canada. I am a Bills fan. I am not a Gucci-loafered lobbyist. I am not selling a book. I am not a celebrity seeking publicity. I won't be profiting in any manner from my appearance today or future appearances. In fact, your investigations and others into the allegations of Trump campaign collusion with Russia are costing my family a great deal of money. I am paying for this in the only way an average guy can. I have liquidated my children's college fund.

I have been really clear. I know your work is important, and I am very proud to have helped in any way I can. And I will continue to help if I can. But I am convinced that this Russian collusion narrative is designed primarily to disrupt the Presidency of Donald J. Trump. There is no ripple in this still water. There was never a pebble tossed. This is just politicians throwing stones at each other.

It was the late great Buffalo Bills quarterback Jack Kemp who brought me into politics. Yesterday was Jack Kemp's birthday. And his son Jimmy wrote a wonderful tribute. I want to leave you with his words, which reminded me of how much we need Jack Kemp today. This is from Jimmy Kemp: The reason my dad was so passionate about fighting poverty and championing the rights of all Americans regardless of race or status is that he saw our Nation as one team, a team for liberty and inalienable rights under God, a team to test the proposition that we can govern ourselves and live in peace with prosperity. Just as the good shepherd left the 99 to save the stray lamb, the key is teamwork, moving forward together and leaving nobody behind.

When you reach the end of your work, I hope you will move swiftly to assure America that there was no collusion. Help dial back the rhetoric that has led to

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threats and to violence and to allow our free and fairly elected President of the United States to meet the objectives he was elected to achieve. Thank you very much.

[Whereupon, at 5:26 p.m., the interview was concluded.]