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

INTERVIEW OF:  ANTHONY ORNATO

Tuesday, November 29, 2022

Washington, D.C.

The interview in the above matter was held via Webex, commencing at 10:01 a.m.

Present:  Representatives Aguilar, Schiff, Lofgren, Murphy, and Cheney.
Appearances:

For the SELECT COMMITTEE TO INVESTIGATE

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

[Redacted], SENIOR INVESTIGATIVE COUNSEL

[Redacted], PROFESSIONAL STAFF MEMBER

[Redacted], SENIOR INVESTIGATIVE COUNSEL

[Redacted], SENIOR INVESTIGATIVE COUNSEL

[Redacted], CHIEF INVESTIGATIVE COUNSEL

[Redacted], INDEPENDENT CONTRACTOR

[Redacted], CHIEF CLERK

[Redacted], PROFESSIONAL STAFF MEMBER

[Redacted], INVESTIGATIVE COUNSEL

[Redacted], OF COUNSEL TO THE VICE CHAIR

For the COMMITTEE ON HOUSE ADMINISTRATION:

[Redacted], COUNSEL
For the U.S. SECRET SERVICE:

ANN ROWLAND, OFFICE OF THE CHIEF COUNSEL

For the U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY, OFFICE OF THE GENERAL COUNSEL:

JACKSON EATON
JONATHAN PARNES
VICTORIA RAPOPORT

For THE WITNESS:

KATE DRISCOLL
JAMES KOUKIOS
JOSEPH FOLIO
KATHERINE KUBAK

Morrison & Foerster LLP
2100 L Street NW, Suite 900
Washington, D.C. 20037
Good morning. This is a transcribed interview of Anthony Ornato, conducted by the House Select Committee to Investigate the January 6th Attack on the U.S. Capitol pursuant to House Resolution 503.

Mr. Ornato, could you please state your full name and spell your last name for the record?


Mr. Ornato, I understand that you are represented by counsel, Ms. Kate Driscoll.

Counsel, could you please identify yourself and any other lawyers or others who are with you, and can you spell your names for us?

Ms. Driscoll. Sure. It's Kate Driscoll, D-r-i-s-c-o-l-l, and I'm an attorney at Morrison & Foerster.

Also with me here today is James Koukios, K-o-u-k-i-o-s, Joseph Folio, F-o-l-i-o, and Katherine Kubak, K-u-b-a-k, again, all colleagues at Morrison & Foerster.

And before we go, may I take the opportunity, I just want to note for the record that we had agreed with the committee that any potential exhibits used today would've been sent by November 28th in the morning, and we received approximately 17 exhibits around noon yesterday, on November 28th. And then, at approximately 12:30 a.m. this morning, we received 40 additional exhibits.

And so we're willing to proceed, but we just wanted to note that for the record.

Yeah, Ms. Driscoll, I understand that. We are going to show many of those exhibits during the interview, and if you and Mr. Ornato need a minute to review the exhibit itself on the screen, just let us know, and you obviously can take the time you need to read it before answering any questions about it.
Ms. Driscoll. Thank you.

Okay.

All right. My name is [Redacted]. It's [Redacted]. I'm the chief investigative counsel for the select committee. In the room with me today are [Redacted] -- she's a senior investigative counsel to the committee -- and [Redacted], who is a professional staff member; and [Redacted] and [Redacted], also lawyers for the select committee.

I believe we also have some other staff attending virtually. I see [Redacted], [Redacted], [Redacted], [Redacted], all staff members to the select committee.

I think we have two members of the committee with us -- the vice chair, Liz Cheney, and Pete Aguilar, Congressman Aguilar, from California is with us as well.

Good morning, Congressman Aguilar and Ms. Cheney.

Ms. Cheney. Good morning.

Mr. Aguilar. Good morning.

[Redacted]. I also understand that agency counsel from Secret Service is present today.

Ms. Rowland, let me start with you and ask you to introduce yourself. I know you have a statement to read, but maybe you could also introduce the other counsel from Secret Service or DHS who are present.

Ms. Rowland. Thank you, [Redacted].

This is Ann Rowland from the Secret Service's Office of Chief Counsel. I'm joined today by Jackson Eaton from the Department of Homeland Security Office of General Counsel; Jonathan Parnes, also from the Office of General Counsel; and Victoria Rapoport.

Today, the Secret Service and the Department of Homeland Security have made
available to the committee, consistent with requests from the chairman, information and
records that would not be publicly released. These disclosures include information and
records covered under the Privacy Act, personnel and other personal privacy information,
for-official-use-only information, intelligence and law enforcement sensitive records, and
raw intelligence information.

While the Secret Service and the Department have made this information and
records available, we continue to assert that such information and records and any
discussion of such information and records during the course of this transcribed interview
is not intended for public release.

The Secret Service and the Department are not waiving any protections and, for
the purposes of administrative efficiency and to promote a constructive dialogue during
this transcribed interview, are making this assertion at the outset of the interview to
preserve all assertions of protection from public release or disclosure for information or
records used or discussed.

The transcript and any attachments are protected from further dissemination to
the same extent as the documents and information they are based on. We would ask
that you please consult with the Secret Service and the Department prior to any public
release or disclosure.

Thank you, [REDACTED].

[REDACTED] Thank you, Ms. Rowland.

All right. Did I miss anyone in terms -- I'm just getting a bit of an echo. If
everybody could mute your computers, then hopefully that gets eliminated.

All right. Great. Thank you.

All right. Did I miss anyone in terms of introductions, anyone who's on who
hasn't been recognized at this point? I don't believe so.
Okay.

So, Mr. Ornato, this will be a staff-led interview, but members of the committee, some of whom are already in attendance, may choose to also ask questions. Because it's a virtual interview, if members join, they will likely do so via Webex and will turn on their camera if they have any questions. I'll try to announce their presence when they join so you know who is participating.

While this is a voluntary interview and you've not received a subpoena, the interview will be conducted under oath. There's an official reporter transcribing the record of the deposition, and she will now administer the oath to you.

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

The Witness: I do.

Thank you, Mr. Ornato.

Please wait until each question is complete before you begin your response. We will try to wait until your response is complete before we ask the next question.

The court reporter can't record nonverbal responses, such as shaking your head, so it's important that you answer each question with an audible, verbal response.

We ask that you provide complete answers based on your best recollection. If the question is not clear, please ask for clarification. If you don't know the answer, then please simply say so.

If you need at any time a moment to confer with counsel, let us know, and we will accommodate that. If you need a comfort or other break at any time, just let us know, and we can adjust to accommodate that as well.

I want to remind you, as we do all witnesses, this it is unlawful to deliberately
provide false information to Congress. Doing so could be a violation of 18 U.S.C. section 1001 and other statutes.

Do you have any questions about what I’ve just gone over?

The Witness. I don’t.

Okay. Thank you.

All right. I believe Ms. Cheney wanted to make an introductory statement.

Ms. Cheney, please go ahead.

Ms. Cheney. Thank you.

Mr. Ornato, we are going to spend a significant amount of time today discussing a range of issues, including, perhaps most importantly, the nearly 150 law enforcement officers who were seriously injured on January 6th during the violent riot by Trump supporters at the Capitol. That will be among a number of topics we discuss.

But I just wanted you to be aware of and recognize the gravity of the evidence that the committee has gathered since the last time we spoke, and we will, in fact, be discussing some issues that we talked with you about previously involving the President’s determination not to tell his supporters at the Capitol who were engaged in the violent riot to depart the Capitol.

Thank you.

Thank you, Ms. Cheney.

BY

Q So, Mr. Ornato, we have had two prior interviews of you, one on January 28th of this year and one on March the 29th of this year. Those interviews were based on information that the committee had obtained to that point.

As Ms. Cheney just mentioned, we have since then obtained significant new information from other witnesses and from the Secret Service, hundreds of thousands of
pages of documents and recordings and information received from the Secret Service.

So what we intend to do today, we'll go over some of the same topics that we discussed without access to that information and focus you on a lot of that newly obtained information.

Again, you have been placed under oath. This is sworn testimony. Your prior testimony also was covered by section 1001, which I said before, but now, under oath, additional statutes, perjury included, apply. I want to make sure you understand that.

A  I do.

Q  Okay.

I want to start with the White House letter. I understand that you have been provided, either through Ms. Driscoll or the Secret Service counsel, a letter that's dated just yesterday, November the 28th, 2022.

[Redacted], if you could call up -- we've marked it as exhibit 11.

And as we go, Mr. Ornato, through the interview, we will show on the screen documents that we want to ask you about. I'm hopeful that you have the capacity to see them when they emerge on the screen.

A  I do.

Q  Okay.  Great.

So this is exhibit 11. It's the letter that's addressed to Jackson Eaton at the Office of the General Counsel of the Department of Homeland Security. It's from Richard Sauber, Special Counsel to the President.

Have you received and reviewed this letter?

A  We received it last night. I haven't reviewed the whole letter, no.

Q  It essentially -- and I'm quoting from the letter in the second paragraph:

"As you are aware, in light of the unique and extraordinary nature of the matters under
investigation, President Biden has determined that an assertion of executive privilege is not in the national interest, and is therefore not justified, with respect to particular subjects within the purview of the select committee."

Do you understand that the current White House has determined that it would be inappropriate to assert any sort of executive privilege in response to the questions within the inquiry of the select committee?

A  I understand.

Q  Okay. And, again, if you have any questions about that or anything else, at any point you can talk to Ms. Driscoll. Just let us know.

A  Yes.

Q  Let me start, Mr. Ornato, substantively with your role as deputy chief of operations at the White House. We did ask you about this before, but let me actually quote from Bobby Engel’s recent testimony describing your role and get you to elaborate a little bit upon what specifically you did as deputy chief of staff for operations.

Mr. Engel was asked to "explain why it’s important, Mr. Engel, for you in your role as the head of the detail, to inform Tony Ornato about what you’re hearing about events at the Ellipse or at the Capitol. What’s the purpose of that?"

Mr. Engel said, "Well, the purpose is a couple of things. One, I want to make sure that they have awareness of different events that are happening and could impact either the White House, the area around the White House. Part of Mr. Ornato’s role or function was making sure that the entire folks that were over the Executive Office of the President received the information if we had to shut down specific areas or shut down, you know, specific access points or that we changed what we call elevation conditions at the White House. So providing information, to me, was important to Mr. Ornato and/or Bo Harrison to make sure that the information got filtered up so that they can filter it to
their -- for their communication purposes.

"At one point, when I first got to the President’s detail during the Obama administration, the communication to and from Secret Service to the administration was not as fluid, and we ran into a lot of problems with staff members getting stopped or couldn’t get into the White House complex because we had a specific event happening. And so a lesson learned is to make sure there’s a constant flow of communication that would potentially impact what was going on."

He was asked again, "Ornato was the portal through which that information traveled, from your perspective? He’s the point of contact to further potentially disseminate information?"

The answer from Mr. Engel was, "Yes, sir."

So, with Mr. Engel’s testimony as a backdrop, Mr. Ornato, describe for us your understanding of your specific responsibility as deputy chief of staff for operations during your time in that job at the White House.

A Yes, sir.

So, as the deputy chief of staff of operations, my responsibilities were to make sure that all the agencies and offices that supported the Executive Office of the President and the White House were communicating.

Those agencies that I dealt with on a daily basis were the White House Military Office, the White House Medical Unit, White House Information Technology, the Presidential Airlift Group, HMX, and the Secret Service.

I made sure that everybody was on the same page and was tracking areas of responsibility that they would need to act upon and know that everybody had the same information, which is why we held morning meetings, or a couple times a week, with all those entities, so we were all on the same page.
I was not, in that role, in charge of the protection of the President. That was the Secret Service and the Presidential Protective Division.

Q  And when you say "ensuring that all those entities had information," what kind of information are you talking about?  What was the sort of category of stuff that you wanted to make sure the Military Office and all those other agencies were aware of?

A  Mostly it was our travel information of events and places we would be traveling to. We would need everybody to know so they can do their coordinations on where we were going and when we were going.

I was also --

Q  Did that --

A  Oh, sorry.

Q  Sorry, Mr. Ornato. Go ahead. I didn't mean to cut you off. Go ahead.

A  And in that role with the White House Military Office, I was also in support of all the classified programs.

Q  I see. Did that information about travel or other operations include security-related issues?

A  I'm sorry, can you rephrase the question?

Q  The information that you were disseminating, did it include information about security, about issues affecting the President's or the security of the White House complex?

A  I would not be pushing information of security down to the -- or to that group. That group, meaning the Secret Service, would push security-related information to us.

Q  All right. Fair to say, Mr. Ornato, that you were the conduit of information, security-related information, from the Secret Service to others inside the White House?
You were sort of that portal of communication?

A I was one of them. I was one of the portals, correct.

Q Well, who else was a portal of communication, beyond you?

A The chief of staff would've been a portal of communication. The M&A director, Monica Block, worked closely with the Secret Service. She would've been a portal of communication. The staff advance office, Bobby Peede and Max Miller, they would work closely with the Secret Service. They would’ve been a portal of information as well.

Q You testified to us before that one of your responsibilities was briefing the chief of staff and, through the chief of staff at times, the President on security-related issues. Is that accurate?

A That's accurate.

Q Were you also involved, Mr. Ornato, in that role, in the preparation and planning for specific events?

A I didn’t do the actual planning. I would oversee it with the staff advance, the White House Military Office, the Secret Service, and just make sure they were on task in their planning.

Q Okay. And if there was a security issue that affected an event or had the potential to impact an event, would that be something within your area of responsibility?

A That would be brought to my area of responsibility by the Secret Service.

Q --

A -- wouldn't be bringing that to the group.

Q No, I understand. We’re talking about you receiving information from the service and then further disseminating it to others, the chief of staff or others within the
White House.

A  Correct. However, the Secret Service could go to the chief of staff direct as well.

Q  I understand. But, again, my question is, for purposes of planning and preparation for events, would you be a portal of communication about security-related issues that might impact that event?

A  I was one of the portals, correct.

Q  Okay.

In that role, Mr. Ornato, was it part of your responsibility to monitor outside intelligence or possible threats, again, receiving that kind of information from the Secret Service or other sources?

A  In that role, I wouldn't say I was monitoring outside threats. If I was made aware of them, I would then -- if I was made aware of them and they wanted the chief of staff to know, then I would push it up to the chief of staff. But I'm not monitoring security or threat analysis.

Q  Was it important for you, in that role, to be aware of intelligence regarding threats, security issues, that might impact particular events, security of the President or the White House complex?

A  I left that up to the Secret Service, and if they deemed that I needed to be aware of something, then yes. But I relied upon them.

Q  Only the Secret Service, or were there other sources of that information?

A  There would be other sources that would come to the table, but mostly, at events, it would be the Secret Service.

When I say "other sources," the White House Military Office had a security group, but that was mainly just for the White House Military Office, not necessarily for the
Q    Uh-huh.
A    The Secret Service was responsible in that duty.
Q    What about other law enforcement agencies, Federal or otherwise? Did you have direct communication with the FBI or with Park Police or other agencies about specific intelligence or threats?
A    I don't recall having direct communication lines to them for direct, specific threats. That would be -- the Secret Service was partnered up with those agencies, and that would funnel through them.
Q    So the Secret Service would receive such information, and it was through their channels that information would reach you?
A    Correct. Or the chief of staff can receive it from his FBI briefings, or the other Secretary Cabinets, DHS or DOI.
Q    Yeah. Tell me more about that last statement. The chief of staff had direct briefings with the FBI?
A    From my recollection, the chief of staff had a daily briefing -- I believe that was the PDB, the Presidential daily briefing -- that he would've received from intelligence and stuff from the FBI.
Q    Right. The President himself gets a daily briefing from the Bureau and the Agency, right? And then would Mr. Meadows be a part of that, that meeting?
A    I believe Mr. Meadows, from my recollection, would have that information at hand or be briefed upon it. I wasn't part of that.
Q    All right. That's my question. So, as deputy chief of operations, were you a part of those meetings or that information from the President's daily briefing?
A    I was not.
Okay.

I see that Mr. Schiff and Ms. Murphy, two other members of the committee, have now joined us.

All right. Let's talk specifically, Mr. Ornato, about preparation for January 6th, for the events at the Ellipse and otherwise on January 6th.

Were you involved in monitoring intelligence and information in advance of January 6th about that event?

I recall being given [inaudible] briefings and also a few emails on the Secret Service, open source, of what they were tracking for that event.

Okay. We're going to go through some of that here in just a minute.

Was the Secret Service your exclusive source of information in advance of the event, or were there others?

From what I recall, it was the Secret Service was the source of the information.

All right.

And did you have any role at all in planning the President's move to the Ellipse or the events that were taking place on the White House complex?

My extent for planning for the event that was on the Ellipse was, I recall Bobby Peede, who was our staff advance, and Max Miller -- they were the staff for that event -- coming to me and needing an answer on the stage being built and that, if the President was going to be on the stage -- because they were still unsure if he was going or not going -- that they wanted it to be centered on the White House.

And so the organization that was holding the event put in a waiver for the line of sight between the -- I forget the exact name, but from the White House to the Jefferson. And it's supposed to be 30 feet off; nothing blocks the line of sight. But they put in a
waiver to have it centered in case the President was coming.

And I remember talking with the chief of staff on that and submitting an email to
the Secretary of the DOI to make sure that he saw the waiver that they had asked for, the
permit that they had asked for, because they were building the stage that day, I believe.

Q    Yeah.

Ms. Cheney, I see you've turned your camera on. If you want to jump in, please
go ahead.

Ms. Cheney. Thanks.

Mr. Ornato, you mentioned earlier that you worked with the White House Military
Office. Did you do that on a regular basis?

The Witness. Yes, ma'am.

Ms. Cheney. And did you meet with them daily?

The Witness. I don't believe daily, ma'am.

Ms. Cheney. Were you familiar with each of the individuals in the office?

The Witness. I'm sorry, ma'am. In the White House Military Office?

Ms. Cheney. Yes.

The Witness. There were a lot of individuals. I wasn't familiar with all of them.

I mainly worked with the director of the White House Military Office and the deputy
director.

Ms. Cheney. And did you work with the military assistants to the President?

The Witness. I saw the mil aides around, yes, ma'am.

Ms. Cheney. And did you work with them?

The Witness. I didn't have a job function directly working with them. I worked
with the director of the White House Military Office. If I was on a trip with them, I
would be working with them, I guess, if I was in that role; however, not on a daily basis.
MS. CHENEY. So the meetings that you had with the office of the military advisor, the White House Military Office, would've been to plan different aspects of the activities that were underway each day?

THE WITNESS. Yes, ma'am, that would be correct.

MS. CHENEY. And those would've included the director of the White House Military Office as well as the mil aide assigned that day?

THE WITNESS. I don't recall the mil aide assigned that day being in the meetings on a regular basis. Maybe every now and then. But the deputy or the director were in the meetings.

MS. CHENEY. Thank you.

THE WITNESS. Yes, ma'am.

BY [REDACTED]:

Q. Just following up on that, Mr. Ornato, you've mentioned these meetings a couple of times. Who would normally be present for the meetings that you convened, either on a regular basis or to prepare for specific events?

A. Sure. It would be approximately -- I believe we held them on Monday, Wednesday, and Fridays. It was a coordination meeting.

So it would be myself; my assistant, Bo Harrison. It would be the scheduler, Mike Haidet. It would be the Secret Service, which would be represented either by Robert Engel, David Cho, or Ted Arruda. And then it would be the White House Military Office director and deputy director, which at the time was General John Howerton, and the deputy director went by "Rain Man," Colonel Hoffman, Garrett Hoffman.

And then our White House information and technology director, which -- his name is Roger Stone. And then the head of Office of Administration, which was Monica Block. And then our staff advance, which would either be the director, Bobby Peede, or Max
Miller.

Q. And those were standard meetings? Every Monday, Wednesday, Friday, that group would get together to talk about the schedule and what was coming up?

A. Generally, we would be discussing what was -- about 2 weeks out we would have to prepare for, because of all the advance teams that would be traveling a week out. So that was generally what our meetings would be on.

Q. Okay. At those meetings, Mr. Ornato, would the Secret Service or others share information that they had learned about possible security issues or threats that were posed to that particular event that you were discussing?

A. Yes.

Q. Okay. That would be the forum, or a forum, in which that information would be shared?

A. Correct.

Q. And then was there takeaways out of those meetings? Like, mil aide is going to do this, or the Secret Service is going to do that, or you're going to do something in response to what you learned at those meetings?

A. On intelligence you're asking?

Q. On anything. Just sort of, you come out of those meetings with a list of takeaways.

A. We would. Based upon the travel, if the scheduler gave us new travel information, we would have new advance teams to send. Yeah, there would be some takeaways. Not always.

Q. Yeah.

Q. On security issues, would you then -- if you learned anything about a possible threat or security issue, would you then pass that along to the chief of staff or others...
inside of the White House?

A The Secret Service would bring -- they've brought forth protests that would be happening in Lafayette Park or some area where they bring this -- because Monica Block, the head of O&A, is in charge of the staff, so they would bring that so she could let the staff know maybe not to go out the north grounds that day, to go out the south grounds.

So we shared information, so we had -- we had the information flowing to all the people that were on the complex.

As far as anything that was deemed necessary to go to the chief of staff, I don't recall anything that I would just take. I would normally take the Secret Service with me, if it was that detailing. Or if there was something that I needed to get with the chief of staff on, I would tell them that, and they would brief me thoroughly then on that information.

Q Yeah.

We're going to get into preparation for January 6th and go through some documents in a minute, but do you recall the issue of the Ellipse and possible threats or security issues with that event coming up during these regularly scheduled meetings with the folks you just described attending?

A So I recall the Secret Service briefing everybody on all of the groups that were coming to D.C., the dozens of groups that they were tracking on open source.

And then I -- I do recall them briefing that and also making it for everybody's awareness, of all the groups that were going to be in, so we could properly brief our personnel that day of what to do, whether stay home or what gates to use and those things.

Q All right. And did you then, Mr. Ornato, bring that information about the
various groups and the intel that Secret Service was gathering to your direct report,
Mr. Meadows, the chief of staff?

A So I don't remember specifically the day I did it, but, however, I do know my
general day -- my general work is to brief him on those. And I would've had a
conversation with him about all the dozens of groups that were coming in and what the
Secret Service's take on it was from an oral briefing that I would've gotten from them in
one of those meetings.

Q Understood. Okay. And, again, this will be more helpful when we go
through some of the specifics.

Last question on this is back to what you said about the sight line. Did you
say -- I want to make sure I understand -- that you reached out directly to the Secretary of
the Interior about this request for a waiver of the unobstructed sight line?

A So I wasn't the one doing the requesting. I had reached out on email. I
believe my last interview, I was shown the email. My first interview, I made it aware
that I -- I couldn't recall if I emailed or if somebody else did, but it was me. And then just
to make the Secretary of the Interior aware that there was a waiver put in by the
organization that was hosting so that he can make a decision on it prior to them building
the stage that day so it wouldn't have to be moved or then that the staff would lose and
not have it centered.

Q Yeah. So you essentially flagged the request that came from another group
for the Secretary.

A Correct. I had run that through Mark Meadows to do that as well.

Q Understood. Okay.

All right. Let me turn now, Mr. Ornato, to some of the documents. As I said,
since our last interview, we've received hundreds of thousands of documents, recordings,
other records from the Secret Service about the events leading up to and on January 6th.

You received, personally, were copied on and received many of those documents, which gives us some sense of your involvement in the White House preparation for and response to those events.

We want to take you through some of those documents and ask you about specific intelligence received by the Secret Service in the days before and actually on January 6th. Our hope is that this information helps refresh your recollection of the security issues that were apparent prior to January 6th and various communications with the Secret Service and White House personnel about those issues.

So my colleague is going to take you through some of these documents one by one. Again, we’re going to put them on the screen. If you need a minute to look at the document before you answer the question, just let us know.

A Okay.

Q Go ahead.

BY:

Q Good morning, Mr. Ornato. Nice to see you again.

A Good morning.

Q I just wanted to go back, before we start going through some of these emails, to those Monday and Wednesday meetings. We talked about that before in our prior interviews, and you mentioned Robert Engel would be there, as well as David Cho and Ted Arruda.

Can you just tell me the titles of David Cho and Ted Arruda?

A They were the deputy special agent in charge of the Presidential Protective Division.

Q They both had the same title?
A Correct. One was over operations, and one was over the complex. Ted Arruda was over the complex.

Q And David Cho was over operations?

A Correct.

Q And am I right that Mr. Engel would be their boss, their direct supervisor?

A Correct. He was the special agent in charge.

Q And who would be Mr. Engel’s direct supervisor?

A That would be the Office of Protective Operations. At the time, I believe the assistant director was the new director now, Kimberly Cheatle.

And the DADs there -- I don't remember all the deputy assistant directors that were in Office of Protective Operations at the time, but they would’ve been -- I believe Ron Rowe was the DAD over the detail at the time. I could be mistaken on that, but I believe so.

Q It's just helpful as we go through some of these emails -- and I'll tell you that you're not on all of the emails, but from the people that you have these meetings with, some of them are on the emails that we'll go through shortly.

A Okay.

Q So you mentioned Ron Rowe. How about Richard Macauley? Do you remember what his position was?

A Oh. Yes. He was -- I don't remember at the time. I'm assuming he was the deputy chief over the White House complex at the time for the Uniformed Division.

Q Okay. But it sounds like Mr. Engel, Mr. Arruda, and Mr. Cho are your primary contacts within the service in terms of receiving information. Is that fair?

A Yeah, that is. Correct.
Q  And what types of information would they push up to you? If we could
categorize them in some buckets before we march through it.

A  Sure. It was a lot of awareness information. Would be just for the staff's
awareness on things happening around the complex, things happening outside the
complex gates but close to the White House, events.

It may be that the service was happening for media-related -- media reports.

They would push all that to make sure that the White House press office was
tracking -- and which we actually had a good line of communication we made, between
the White House press office and the Secret Service media team -- to assist with that as
well.

Q  It sounds like there's the operational awareness about the White House
complex and then, as you said, the media, if there's potential media inquiries. Why
would the media inquiries be raised with you?

A  Well, just to make sure that the press office from the staff were tracking,
like, if there was, let's say, an arrest. The Uniformed Division, you know, the men and
women there, do a tremendous job, and they find and arrest people with weapons
outside the complex.

And so those things kind of make media attention with the Secret Service, so they
would always want to make sure that the staff press office and the staff are tracking in
case they get asked any questions, that they can push it over to the Secret Service's
media relations team.

Q  So, when you say "staff," are you talking about the White House staff, or are
you talking about the --

A  Yes.

Q  -- Secret Service staff? Okay.
A: I'm sorry. The White House staff.

Q: So you're receiving it from the service to make the White House staff aware about any potential news story that might be out there.

A: Correct. And there was a conduit between the Secret Service media relations and the White House staff press as well.

Q: So, then, that kind of second bucket of the operational awareness information that was sent to you, is it just about the White House complex, or is it about general threats to protectees as well? Understanding that's not your -- wasn't your job anymore, but general information like that, is that sent up to you?

A: Not in general. If there was something at a venue or a site that was outside the White House complex, on a trip or something of that nature, that could have been relayed up. But that's another bucket, is, like, during the travel, things that happened on the travel, for awareness.

But, again, I'm not the sole conduit there. The chief of staff could be on trips, and they would be briefing him on the trip and not necessarily me back in D.C.

Q: Okay.

I want to start with -- this would be exhibit 12 -- a December 12th email that was sent to you.

Ms. Cheney. [Redacted]? I'm sorry.

[Redacted]. Sure.

Ms. Cheney. Right before you get to that email, I just want to make sure, because we're sort of going through buckets of information about -- or types of information, Mr. Ornato, that you would've relayed.

And in your first interview -- or, sorry, your second interview with the committee, we were discussing with you intelligence reports that there could potentially be violence
on the 6th. And Mr. Meadows said to you, "Okay, let's talk about it." We asked you if you recalled that, and you said, "I don't remember that. But that is something I would have done. I would've made sure he was aware of this, of the demos and the clashes."

And then the question was, "And what intel reports would you have been flagging for him?" And your answer was, "It would have been the one that -- depending on what day it was, it would've been something that either Mr. Engel or Mr. Arruda had told us about or emailed me."

So I just want to make sure you're still standing by that testimony, that those kinds of intel reports you told us about previously are ones that you would have relayed to Mr. Meadows.

The Witness. Yes, ma'am, that is correct.

Ms. Cheney. Thank you.

Q And just to follow up on Ms. Cheney's point, that falls outside of the White House complex, right, that type of information that you did relay? It was about the Ellipse rally.

A Correct, in that the Ellipse is part of the White House zone or the White House Park, as they call it, President's Park, not necessarily in the gates of the White House. So we could say that it's outside the White House. That's absolutely fine.

Q Exhibit 12, this is a December 12th email that was sent -- we'll start sometimes at the bottom of these emails, just so you can keep track of how it was sent to you.

But it looks like it was sent from a Protective Intelligence Division agent, Then --
Ms. Driscoll. Can we zoom in a little bit? It's very hard to see.

Sure.

Put it up on the screen. Like, flag it. Thanks.

Yeah. Thank you.

Is that better, Kate? We'll zoom.

Ms. Driscoll. It's a little better. That's better.

The Witness. That's good.

Great.

Q So we go from December 12th, looks like a Protective Intelligence Division agent; then it's sent to [redacted] who I believe is a Secret Service agent at the Washington Field Office.

Then it goes from the JOCATDESK. Can you tell us what that means,

Mr. Engel -- Mr. Ornato? Sorry.

A From my past experience, that had meant the Joint Operations Center assistant to the special agent in charge desk. That's the supervisor in the Joint Operations Center.

Q So then that supervisor then sends it to Mr. Engel, Mr. Cho, and Mr. Arruda, as well as another member of the PPD. But then Mr. Engel sends it to you about a few minutes, 9 minutes, after he receives it. And the subject line here is "Enrique Tarrio post."

Were you familiar with who Enrique Tarrio was?

A I was not.

Q Do you know who he is now?

A I do now.
Q | Okay. And do you remember discussing this with Mr. Engel?
A | I don't recall this specific email and discussing it with him.
Q | Do you remember having -- well, just so the record is clear, the second email there says, "For your awareness, the JOC was notified that the below individual was part of a White House tour this morning. The individual is the leader of the Proud Boys. There is no known media coverage at this point."
When this was forwarded to you, I understand if you don't remember it specifically, but do you remember having a general discussion with Mr. Engel or anyone at Secret Service leadership about the leader of the Proud Boys at the White House in mid-December?
A | I don't remember having a discussion about it. This was forwarded to me for awareness. I don't know what action he was looking for from me, but it was for my awareness. So I don't know if we would've talked or he just had forwarded this. I'm not sure.
Q | So that's my next question. What would be a reason this would be necessary as part of your awareness?
A | Again, I don't know. I could -- I could stipulate here and --
Ms. Driscoll. I think you mean "speculate."
The Witness. -- or, I'm sorry, speculate. I can speculate why, if you're looking for me to do that.

BY: [Redacted]:
Q | I mean, we'll go through a number of them, but, sure, just as a table-setting as to reasons why things are forwarded to you, that would be helpful.
A | Okay. If you can just scroll down a little bit so I can see that para- -- right there.
Oh, no, no, I'm sorry. Go back to where the JOC sent it to Robert Engel with that paragraph.

So, as I read it today, "there is no known media coverage," meaning that there could be possible media coverage of this gentleman having a tour at the White House. And, at the time, I probably -- I didn't -- I wasn't aware of all the groups and everything back then, as I am more familiar with them now. However, if it was relayed to me that that's who that particular person was, I would've made the chief of staff aware that this had taken place that day.

Q Mr. Ornato, but in mid-December you had to be aware of who the Proud Boys were, no?

A I don't recall. There was so many groups. I mean, I could've known at the time. I just don't recall this specific group of knowing -- you know, I knew Code Pink, I knew -- there's different -- when I was actually working as a special agent in charge, there were different groups that I was always briefed on and had in my head. During this time, not being in that environment, I don't recall all the groups that I knew or didn't know.

Q But the Proud Boys was certainly a group that the former President had actually called out specifically. Understanding there's many right-wing extremist groups, but this one in particular had received media attention from the President himself.

A I'm sorry, I just don't recall if I knew it at the time. I -- I just don't.

Q There's another email -- and, Kate, I apologize, it didn't come over in the packet.

You are not on this email, Mr. Ornato, but it's a 12:01 email, about 20 minutes later, from Ron Rowe, asking Robert Engel -- I'll wait for -- it's the one I emailed you.

We'll wait for it, but generally it says that Ron Rowe is asking Mr. Engel why it
wasn't brought to Secret Service's attention that the leader of the Proud Boys had a
White House tour.

Does that trigger any memory in terms of having any discussion with Mr. Engel
about this?

A No, it doesn’t.

Q And does this trigger any memory about having a conversation with Chief of
Staff Meadows about this?

Ms. Driscoll We can’t see this document.

Sorry.

Ms. Driscoll And, again, we haven’t received this document, so we’ll need a
minute to review it.

Sure. So it’s the same email as the one that was shown
before.

And then if you go up, --

Ms. Driscoll It’s still really hard to see.

BY:

Q Is that better?

A That’s better.

Q Here we go. From Ron Rowe to Bob, Mr. Engel: "Can we get some
specifics on who submitted him for the tour? Why didn't we pick up on his
role/membership in the Proud Boys?"

Again, and I think that you mentioned that, as you speculated, it might’ve been
about the media coverage. So would it have been an issue if the media had covered
that Enrique Tarrio had taken a White House tour at the time?

A I’m sorry, I was reading the email here. I’m sorry, can you repeat your
question?

Q So the email says, "Why didn’t we pick up on his role/membership in the
Proud Boys?" And your answer before about speculating as to why Mr. Engel raised this
with you was potentially about the media coverage.

Is it fair to say that there would’ve potentially been negative media coverage if
Enrique Tarrio had taken a White House tour and it was covered? Is that --

A Yeah. That’s why I would assume that he would’ve been forwarding it, that
there would’ve been negative media coverage. But, again, that’s -- I’m assuming.

Ms. Driscoll. Can I just ask a question? Is he on this email? Because we can’t
see. It’s very hard to read --

He’s not on this one.

Ms. Driscoll. Okay. So just -- you haven’t received it.

The Witness. Yeah.

So I don’t know what Mr. Rowe was asking Mr. Engel for. However, the previous
one that you had suggested, I would’ve assumed he was sending it because there
would’ve been a negative coverage on that.

Q But you don’t remember having a conversation with Chief of Staff Meadows
about this?

A I don’t specifically. There was so much in my role there that I would have
to make him aware of. This was probably one of the many things that I did bring to his
attention, because that was my normal course of business.

Q Okay. So is it fair to say, if Mr. Engel brought something to your attention,
that you would’ve raised it with Mr. Meadows?

A I wouldn’t say everything that he brought, but things that he would’ve
brought to my attention that may impact the White House or having media coverage, good or bad, anything like that, I would push to Mr. Meadows.

Q  So you don't have a specific memory, but generally this is something that you would've addressed with Mr. Meadows?

A  Yes.

Q  Okay.

I want to show you exhibit --

BY:

Q  Before you leave that, I just want to be clear, Mr. Ornato. So I understand the media concern, but this is the national leader of an organization or loose affiliation of people that had been in the Charlottesville events, had just a month before this been involved in street violence in Washington, D.C., and their leader is at the White House. And is it --

A  Right.

Q  -- your testimony that you just weren't aware of that and don't know whether you passed that along to Mr. Meadows?

A  No, sir. Let me explain. We were just talking about that one sentence in there. I completely grasp what you're saying on who he was and what he was doing. I would've passed that to Mr. Meadows based upon who he was.

I would not have known who submitted him to come into the White House. I would not have known any of that, as that all gets disseminated through the service to run background checks. So they would've brought that to us, or to me, on that. I wouldn't have known that information.

But I would've addressed this with Chief of Staff Meadows based upon not just the media attention but due to the gravity of who the person was, absolutely.
Q: Okay. All right. I appreciate that. Thank you.

BY [Redacted]:

Q: Okay. Similarly, this is exhibit 13, and Mr. Ornato, you are not on this email. I just want to show it to you for your general awareness, similar to how we just talked about the Proud Boys.

This is an email from December 17th flagging --

[Redacted]. Zoom as much as you can.

BY [Redacted]:

Q: Yeah. And we'll start at the bottom.

We've learned that this is, essentially, a former subject of the Secret Service reached out to an agent expressing concern regarding, quote, "impending civil unrest" and also flagging commentary from the leader of the Oath Keepers, Stewart Rhodes.

And if you go up, we can read that out loud.

Sorry. Sorry, [Redacted].

"I'm quite sure you're familiar with Stewart Rhodes, founder of the paramilitary right-wing group the Oath Keepers. This morning I read some" --

A: I don't -- yeah, I'm sorry, I don't recall at the time if I was.

Q: Right. No, that's not my question. I don't expect you to --

A: Oh, okay.

Q: -- have seen this specific email.

A: Okay.

Q: But if you go up, it looks like it went to [Redacted] who's in the Seattle office. And then it gets sent to, again, the PIOC on duty at the top email we see.

This is a December 17th forward from the agent in Seattle, forwarding information to, essentially, the Secret Service, the hub.
Was anything about the Oath Keepers, putting aside the specifics of this email, brought to your attention?

A I don’t remember this specific group being mentioned outside of all the dozens of other groups that was brought to our attention later in December, from my recollection.

Q So Oath Keepers isn’t one of the stand-out groups? Is that fair?

A That’s fair to say.

Jump in anytime.

Yeah.

, if you could just scroll down.

BY:

Q I mean, this person in -- is forwarding a link, Mr. Ornato. And, again, I understand you weren't directly copied on this. But it essentially is a story indicating "Right-wing militant leader pledges violent support for Trump dictatorship." And that gets forwarded up to the PIOC for awareness.

So I think our question generally is: Setting aside the email, were you aware that the Oath Keepers and their leader, Stewart Rhodes, were the subject of pretty substantial reporting that they were pledging violent support for a Trump dictatorship in the days before January 6th? Did that general subject, not this email, come to your attention?

A I don’t remember that general subject coming to my attention. I just remember from reviewing the documents of the ones that -- dozens of groups on there, I believe the Oath Keepers is on there. But I don’t remember it being pulled out as a specific topic of conversation.

Q And that goes all the way up until January 6th? You had no specific information about the Oath Keepers and their possession of weapons, pledging support
for violent Trump dictatorship, in advance of that day?

A I don’t recall that, sitting here today, sir.

Q A lot of these messages that [redacted] is showing you are from Secret Service listservs, like the PIOC and the JOC. Are you on any of those internal Secret Service email listservs, or are you relying on Mr. Engel or Mr. Arruda or Mr. Cho or others to forward that information to you?

A Sir, as far as I recall, I am not on any Secret Service routers. Once I was detailed over to the position of deputy chief of staff of operations, I was not on any of the Secret Service routers that any of this information would’ve been disseminated on. And I would’ve been just being told from the Secret Service Presidential Protective Division of anything informative that would needed to have been passed.

Q Understood.

Ms. Cheney, go ahead.

Ms. Cheney. Thanks, [redacted].

Mr. Ornato, did you still have your Secret Service phone when you were serving as the deputy chief of staff?

The Witness. I did still have my phone, yes, ma’am.

Ms. Cheney. And did you have access to your Secret Service email on that phone?

The Witness. I did have Secret Service email, yes.

Ms. Cheney. Thank you.

[redacted]. I want to welcome Congresswoman Lofgren, who I think has joined us.

Q Mr. Ornato, just to go back to the PIOC list, just so we’re clear who’s on
these listservs, the PIOC is the -- correct me if I'm wrong -- the Protective Intelligence Operations Center. Is that right?

A That's what I recall.

Q Okay.

And we're going to show another email here. This is exhibit 14, a December 24th email. And this is from the OSU on duty.

And my understanding is that's the Open Source Unit. Is that right?

A I'm not sure who -- you're educating me on that. I never worked in the Protective Intelligence Division. So "OSU" I know to stand for Open Source Unit, so I'm assuming that.

Q Okay.

This email was sent from the OSU on duty to the PIOC and to the Protective Intelligence Division, right? We see there. And if you scroll down -- can you all see that? Is it zoomed properly?

Ms. Driscoll It's a little difficult to read.

[Redacted] Can you zoom in a little bit more?

Thanks.

Ms. Driscoll That's better. Thanks.

BY [Redacted]:

Q Great.

So it says "ALCON." What's ALCON, Mr. Ornato?

A I'm not sure. I saw it a lot, but I couldn't tell you right now what it is.

Q Okay.

In any event, the paragraph is, "While conducting OSINT research, the message board www.thedonald.win was discovered. The message board appears to match the
below reported information," which then takes you to information that was forwarded
from the SITE Intelligence Group, with the subject line being "'Armed and ready,
Mr. President': Demonstrators urged to bring guns, prepare for violence at January 6th
'Stop the Steal' protest in D.C." And, again, this is from December 24th.

And if you -- it's a long -- it's a few pages of the report, but if you scroll down,
there are some kind of alarming posts that are part of this compilation of media posts.

One of them, on page 4, it says, "Openly denouncing and disregarding the strict
gun laws of Washington, D.C., several users declared their intention to bring firearms and
other weapons to the march. 'Armed and ready, Mr. President,' wrote one user, with
another declaring they will be open carrying and 'so will my friends.'"

So this is, again, something that was prepared by the SITE Intelligence Group that
was then sent and made its way up to the PIOC, to the Protective Intelligence Division,
and then sent out.

My first question is: Was any of this brought to your attention, about the
donald.win thread?

A I believe in my last interview you had brought up an email like this, if I'm not
mistaken, and that was --

Q That's right.

A -- one of the first times I saw that -- I believe the first time I saw
theldonald.win that I can recall.

And I wasn't made aware of anything with weapons prior to the event as far
as -- what I recall in all of the reporting from the Secret Service was that there was no civil
service disobedience expected from the groups. So I don't recall that being brought to
my attention.
Q. So, you're right. You were anticipating my next questions about our last interview, our March 3rd interview. We did talk about the thedonald.win, and you mentioned you had not heard of it prior to me asking about it March of this year.

A. I see Ms. Cheney has come on. I'll pause there.

Ms. Cheney. Thanks.

Mr. Ornato, did you have any discussions with Mr. Scavino about the thedonald.win?

The Witness. Not that I recall, ma'am. I don't recall this website name at all. For even in my last interview from what I remember, I wasn't knowledgeable on that.

Ms. Cheney. And did you have any discussions with Mr. Scavino about the extensive posts about the potential for violence prior to January 6th?

The Witness. I don't recall a conversation with Mr. Scavino about potential for violence coming from Mr. Scavino.

Ms. Cheney. Well, what about discussions with Mr. Scavino -- since they were monitoring social media -- discussions with Mr. Scavino about posts on social media about potential for violence on January 6th?

The Witness. No, ma'am. I don't recall any conversation with Mr. Scavino on that. But Mr. Scavino would have most likely have gone direct to the Secret Service, as he had in the past done that on other things that he saw on social media and forwarded them to the Secret Service, not necessarily through me, ma'am.

Ms. Cheney. Can you give me an example of instances where Mr. Scavino went directly to the Secret Service about material like this?
The Witness. I don’t have a specific one. I can just recall a general threat being made against -- to the President that he would have forwarded to the Secret Service, that there was a threat on social media, and to make sure that they had already seen it or were tracking it.

Ms. Cheney. What about others in the White House?

Did you speak to other people in the White House about posts on social media about the possibility of violence on January 6th?

The Witness. I don’t recall receiving any information from other members of the White House staff on that potential for violence. I just recall it being brought, obviously, in the Secret Service intelligence assessment or briefing with all the -- I just recall the dozens of groups that were possibly coming with the no civil disobedience expected, is what I recall mostly from the briefings.

Ms. Cheney. Mr. Scavino -- maybe can pull this up. We have a January 3rd document that in the Department of Justice, Mr. Donoghue, told us about this. It talks about the extent to which there’s likely going to be violence on January 6th, and some level of specificity specific threats on that day.

Are you familiar with that document at all?

The Witness. I don’t believe so, but I’d have to see the document, ma’am.

Ms. Cheney. All right. We’ll pull that up for you and come back to that.

So in terms of -- your testimony is that you had -- did you have any discussions with anyone in the White House about the potential for violence on January 6th before January 6th?

The Witness. So with that question there, I would have had a discussion with the Chief of Staff on what the Secret Service had raised as far as all the groups coming and the potential for the groups to clash, the pro and the anti groups, on the Washington
Monument was what I believe was being briefed as a potential. I would have talked to
Chief of Staff Meadows on that.

Ms. Cheney. So I believe we asked you about this last time, your discussion with
Mr. Meadows about the potential for violence that day. I think last time you told us you
couldn’t recall, but it’s something you would have done.

The Witness. Right.

Ms. Cheney. Maybe we could pull up -- so do you recall it?

The Witness. No. That’s something as my general course. I went to Mr.
Meadows with multiple things on a daily basis, ma’am. I don’t specifically
remember -- because that was my job to make sure he was aware of things that were
taking place, especially things like this. So I would have made him aware of that. I
specifically don’t remember the exact time that I did do it, though.

Ms. Cheney. But do you recall doing it?

The Witness. I don’t recall standing there having the conversation with him. I
just know in my normal course, I would have brought this -- these types of things forward
to him.

Ms. Cheney. And are you familiar, Mr. Ornato, there’s a Teams message that,
again, I’m sure [redacted] is going to pull up and show you, from January 5th, where
members of the protective intelligence division indicates that, in fact, the counterprotest
groups were sending messages on social media for their followers to stay home, that, in
fact, this notion that there was going to be a violent clash with antifa, this particular agent
who was tracking social media noted for everybody, that, in fact, the guidance was that
they should stay home, that that was not the threat that day.

The Witness. I wasn’t aware of that, ma’am.

Ms. Cheney. Thank you.
Ms. Driscoll. Before we proceed, could we take a five-minute break, please?

[Silence]

Yeah, we can.

Ms. Driscoll. Thank you.

[Recess.]

Q I'm just going to close out another email about the thedonald.win, Mr. Ornato, and then we'll move onto another set of documents. But this is exhibit 15. The last one we just saw was 14, and that was a December 24th email flagging the thedonald.win to the service.

This is exhibit 15, December 26th, at 9:21. We're going to see this is from a WFO agent, [Redacted], who was sending it to the PIOC on duty.

Now, if you could scroll down, [Redacted] -- well, let's start from beginning. "Good evening, PIOC, please see the attached guardian regarding the group possibly planning disruptions in DC on January 6th, 2021. Please let me know if you have any questions."

A guardian, so we're all on the same page, is essentially an FBI system to track threats. Are you aware of the guardian system just generally, Mr. Ornato?

A I am not.

Q So this was sent -- if we go to the second paragraph here, this is referencing -- the first paragraph, again, references the thedonald.win as part of the guardian. And then the second paragraph says, "They plan to meet at a bridge in Virginia. They will be armed. They think they will have a large enough group to march into DC armed, and it will outnumber the police so they can't be stopped. They believe that since the election was stolen, that it's their constitutional right to overtake the government and during this, coup no U.S. laws apply. Another group of Proud Boys will be in DC already and are planning on blocking the roads with their cars in order to stop
traffic."

Then, if you go further down -- and this is kind of standard from guardians that the Bureau keeps, violation questions. And one of the questions there is, "What makes you believe the attack will occur? How do you know the attack will occur?"

And then the response, again, from an FBI analyst or agent entered into the system, "The Proud Boys have detailed their plans on multiple websites, such as thedonald.win, and they are planning to overtake the White House."

Understanding that you weren't on, again, this -- the email’s distribution list, was any of this brought to your attention as early as December 26th, concerning the detailed plans as this email references from the thedonald.win of the Proud Boys?

A No, ma'am. I don't recall this.

Q How about generally?

I don't want to belabor the point. We did spend some time before the break about the Proud Boys, but generally about groups planning on being armed and coming to DC as one big picture. Was that ever discussed?

A In the general basis, I was not -- from what I can recall -- aware of any potential groups being armed. I don't recall that being a topic that came up.

Q Were you aware the steps that the Metropolitan Police Department took, including increased messaging about the DC gun laws and not being armed in the District January 5th and 6th? Did that reach you at all?

A I don't recall that specific topic of weapons -- of being armed and MPD and all that. I don't believe it did reach me.

Q How about broadly?

Again, we're still marching through documents. This is still December 26th, but generally, apart from what's being provided to you from the service, just as a regular
person who's living in -- around the District at the time in anticipation of January 6th, what was your general awareness about the potential for violence?

A  Ma'am, during this time here, from what I recall, the President was traveling, I believe. So we weren't necessarily there. I was on vacation myself I believe during that time. So it would have been email traffic or phone traffic of anything being passed. And I don't recall any of that coming to me.

Q  Separate from coming to you, just as a person who's aware reading the news, were you aware of any type of potential for violence?

A  I don't recall, ma'am. I don't recall.

[Redacted]: Go ahead.

BY [Redacted]:

Q  Mr. Ornato, just to clarify, again, these listservs, I think you testified that you weren't on them, but you still had access to your Secret Service phone. Would your Social Security device have included emails that were being distributed among the protective intelligence division, the PIOC, the JOC, those group emails went to various people within the Secret Service?

A  Sir, I believe from what I recall when I was detailed over to the White House, prior to that, I was the Deputy Assistant Director on Investigations. And even when I was in that position, I wasn't on those specific routers from what I recall.

So I remember being on like a headquarters/DC router when I was in that position. But once I was detailed over, I was taken off of that as well. So I did not have any insight that I recall of these emails or any routers like that.

Q  All right. Well, Mr. Engel, then, who at the time that you're Deputy Chief of Staff, the head of the President's detail, he certainly would've been copied on all of the PIOC and JOC emails. Is that right? He would have been a member of that listserv that
received that intel?

A  Sir, I don’t know that. I’d have to refer to the Secret Service on that. I don’t know.

Q  All right. We’re showing you emails that indicate there was explicit discussion online about armed attacks on the White House. Within the Secret Service, within the protective intelligence, that it’s going around to these listservs.

In your testimony, to be clear, is you didn’t personally receive these emails and you didn’t hear anything about this from Mr. Engel or any other source. Is that right?

A  That’s right. I don’t recall hearing anything about this, sir.

Q  And do you know whether or not Mr. Engel, as the head of the President’s detail, would have been in the position to receive information from the PIOC, from the JOC, from those listservs in which this information was disseminated?

A  Sir, I don’t know if -- what Mr. Engel was receiving from who. I’m not able to comment on that.

Q  When you had that job, Mr. Ornato, did you get stuff from the PIOC? Did you get stuff from the JOC? Were you copied on that stuff routinely?

A  When I had that job, there is a protective intelligence person that sits in the EOB or is the liaison with the detail, and they would give the special agent in charge a briefing. But I’m not necessarily sure I was on all those routers either when I had that position.

Q  The head of President’s detail, direct communications with somebody assigned from the protective intelligence detail to make sure that he or she is aware of these kinds of threats, right?

A  That’s how -- when I was there, that’s how it was. I don’t know if it was changed or anything of that nature, sir. I wouldn’t be able to comment on that.
Q  Yeah. So again, when we've got the FBI saying what type of attack are you reporting, attempted coup, terrorist attack on January 6th, and that's gets distributed to the PIOC, that should have been, and likely was, available to the head of President's detail, correct?

A  Sir, again, I don't know. I wasn't in the Secret Service at the time. I was detailed over. I wouldn't know that.

Q  Okay.

Go ahead, [name].

[Name]. I want to bring up exhibit 16.

BY [Name].

Q  This is an email to you, Mr. Ornato. We talked about this in your prior interview, and I believe you mentioned it today as well. This is a listing of the demonstrations in Washington D.C. from December 28th. I'll wait until you -- can you see that?

A  If you go a couple more zoom in. One more. I'm sorry.

Q  Certainly.

A  That's good.

Q  So this was something that was sent from someone in the protective intelligence division to Bobby Engel, David Cho, Ted Arruda. And then Mr. Arruda, it looks like, sent it -- forwarded it along to you, David Cho and Robert Sciarrone. What was his position at the time?

A  I believe Robert Sciarrone was an assistant special agent in charge over on the President's detail at that time.

Q  Okay. So this is something that then was brought to your attention. And if, as you mentioned, it goes through a number of different groups and demonstrations,
but for each paragraph it says, "There is no indication of civil disobedience," and it goes on for a number of pages.

So the emails that we showed you prior to this were new emails that we had not shown you before. Obviously, we had shown you this before in the prior interview, and it led to the question about your awareness and lack thereof about the thedonald.win. Is there any explanation or can you reconcile for us how this is pushed up to you, but the other, frankly, more specific and detailed information about the potential for violence was not pushed up to you?

A  I don't know, ma'am.

Q  And it's from your testimony that not only was it not -- you don't remember the specific emails, but there was never any discussion about the details that were known about the potential for violence by the very people that you speak to about potential security threats, meaning Mr. Engel, Mr. Cho, and Mr. Arruda?

A  I don't recall hearing any of those specific details discussed.

Q  Okay. Well, was there a discussion about know indication of civil disobedience? Was that a discussion amongst the leadership of Secret Service and yourself?

A  I recall that document being briefed in a morning meeting by the Secret Service to our group, and them saying that there were dozens of groups coming, but there was no expectations of civil disobedience, that being briefed inside our morning meeting to everybody.

Q  Do you remember anyone raising any concern about any of these groups in that morning meeting, again, based upon what we've seen as far as new information that the service has provided?

A  The only thing I recall is the service, again, highlighting the potential for the
groups to clash, if there were anti and pro groups there, that they could clash, but -- and
the amount of people that were coming based upon those dozens of groups coming.
But that's all I recall from our meetings.

Q But you'd agree that in the emails shown prior to this, meaning exhibit 13
and 14, where there is specific reference to the Proud Boys and essentially planning
attack, there was never any detail, or have we seen any detail about counter-protesters,
correct?

A I'm sorry. There were about two questions in there. Could you repeat
the question?

Q Sure. Let me rephrase it.

So in the emails that we've shown you up until this one about the details from the
Proud Boys and thedonald.win thread, you'd agree there was no information about the
potential for violence of counter-protesters, correct?

A I didn't read through every single one of those emails that you had up on the
board. But what I was being briefed on was that there was a potential between the
clash. So I can't comment on anything else that they were seeing.

Q That's my question. When you're being briefed on the potential clashing
between counter-protesters and protesters, who's briefing you on that, question one,
and where is that information sourced?

A I wouldn't know where the information's sourced. I just recall them
briefing on that. And a lot of times, our briefings are oral briefings. I don't get sourced
information.

Q And who's the "they" in providing the briefing?

A The Secret Service I recall briefing that in the morning meeting, that there
was no civil disobedience expected, large number of people coming. So obviously, I
think it was a general that there's always a potential for clashing between anti and pro

Q    So would that have been from Mr. Engel who provided that briefing, or Mr.

A    Well, from what I recall, Mr. Cho was with President-elect Biden at the time.
So I believe it would have either have been Mr. Arruda or Mr. Engel, whoever attended
the meeting that day, or both of them.  I can't recall each day who was there.

Q    So my question is, the -- is it an assumption that because there is a crowd,
there will be potential clashing between counter-protesters or protesters, or was there
anything specific as far as threats, warnings, or actual intelligence that pointed to that?

A    I don't know, ma'am.  That's just what I was briefed on.  I don't know
where it came from.

Q    Moving to exhibit 17, this is from December 30th.  This is an email sent
from the U.S. Marshals Service Threat Information Sharing and Analysis Center to an
agent in the protective intelligence division, flagging threats from Parler.com.

Are you familiar with that website?

A    I've heard of that website, today.  Yes, ma'am.

Q    Prior to today?

A    I don't recall when.  I've heard of it as a social media platform with the
others, but I'm not on many social media platforms, so I'm not really familiar with it in
depth.

Q    Just so the record's clear, so you had heard of Parler.com, but you had not
heard of the thedonald.win.com

A    No, ma'am.  I'm sorry.  Back -- during this time, I don't know if I was
familiar with Parler.com.  I think it was only after reviewing this document that I've
heard it recently, but I don't know when I was familiar with it. But I don't believe back
during this time.

Q Okay. The email reads, "U.S. Marshals Service is seeing a lot of violent
rhetoric on Parler directed at government people, entities in addition to our protected
persons. It is supposed to be against the TOS for the site, but they don't seem to be
working to tone it down. In the privacy statement, Parler writes they cooperate with
legal requests. I don't know. Is this information you can share, but has U.S. Secret
Service ever submitted legal process to Parler and gotten a response back?"

Again, I don't expect you to have seen this particular email, but broadly speaking,
was the violent rhetoric on Parler raised to you by anyone in the Secret Service?

A I don't recall that, ma'am.

Q And you, separate from receiving information from the Secret Service, was
not aware of Parler prior to January 6th; is that correct?

A Correct. I'm not -- I don't recall being aware of Parler at that time.

Q Okay. I want to move on to exhibit 18, and 18A.

In our prior interview, Mr. Ornato, I had shown you a December 11th protective
intelligence briefing. This -- these two briefings -- we'll start with this one -- is the
December 31st protective intelligence brief from December 31st of 2020, and the
following one is January 4th. But let's start with this one.

Now, this seems to be -- unlike the exhibits I've shown you before, this
is -- appears to be, essentially, an intelligence threat assessment, not just email forwards.
And in this particular December 31st protective intelligence brief -- we can scroll through
it a little bit, but I don't want to get too bogged down here.

But it talks about the November and December rallies. We had talked about that
before, correct, Mr. Ornato, the prior to MAGA rallies?
A You're referring to the ones that were on the Capitol Grounds and Freedom Plaza, I believe; is that right?

Q That's right.

A Okay. Yes, we did talk about that.

Q It talks about -- if you go down, [Redacted], right next to the march for Trump, January 6th, it talks about if you go down to the picture, the "be there, will be wild" tweet of President -- former President Trump on December 19th.

The next page talks about the organizers of the Stop the Steal event, and it also includes the Proud Boys as one of the organizers if you scroll down. And then there's also a link -- for more information, there's a particular specific Secret Service protective intelligence brief about the Proud Boys. And then it has some social media posts if you go to page 3, Operation: Occupy the Capitol. This is from, I believe, thedonald.win.

It's -- a screenshot is there.

And then, it looks like essentially a cut and paste from the prior December 28th email that we showed you about the no indication of civil disturbance, and that whole long attachment is there. And there's a paragraph also there about counter demonstrations.

My question is generally, do you remember seeing this December 31st protective intelligence brief?

A I don't recall seeing that brief, ma'am.

Q Okay. Then there's also a January 4th belief. And we can bring that up as well. This is titled, "Notable Trends and Tactics for Consideration Ahead of Potential Civil Unrest in the National Capital Region." And this talks specifically about January 6th and the anticipation of -- further down -- approximately 28,000 people in attendance for these events. And in the second paragraph here, the Proud Boys is flagged as one of the
groups who will be attending.

So it's arranged a little bit differently. This one has the Proud Boys up top, and
this is a two-page briefing about the trends and tactics, but flagging the Proud Boys.

Did you see this January 4th trends and tactics protective intelligence assessment
product?

A  I don't recall seeing that document either, ma'am.

Q   Would this have been something that would have been brought up in one of
     those Monday meetings planning for the event? January 4th, as we know, was a
     Monday. From our prior interview, I remember we talked about January 4th being your
     first day back from the holiday and you having a meeting.

     Looking at this now, was anything like this discussed at that meeting?

A  I don't recall anything like this being discussed, just what was on the past
     document at end with all the groups, as you had stated, that was attached to that other
     one from the one we had seen before. I remember that being discussed. I don't
     remember either the subject lines on these two documents being discussed.

Q   So while page 3 of the December 31st brief explicitly cites social media posts
     about occupying the Capitol, and the January 4th brief talks specifically about the Proud
     Boys, nobody in that January 4th meeting brought up to -- any of this information, is that
     your testimony?

A  That's correct. I don't recall this being brought up.

Q   Okay. Shouldn't these products be provided to you, Mr. Ornato?

     And my question is, I understand there's specific emails. It goes to some
     low-level protective intelligence division analyst or agent may not reach you, but an
     actual product about an event that the President is attending days before, why wouldn't
     this have been brought to your attention?
A    I don't know, ma'am.

Q    Okay.

Do you?

I don't.

BY

Q    Exhibit 19, this is January 3rd. We might have mentioned Mr. Paramore, Faron Paramore. Do you remember what his position was?

A    He's currently the deputy director, but I believe he was over the intelligence as the assistant director then, if I'm not mistaken. I see SII next to his name, so that's what I'm guessing.

Q    This is a screenshot that he sent the morning of January 3rd to Kimberly Cheatle, who would have been, as you mentioned, the supervisor of Mr. Engel at the time, essentially Donald Trump's Twitter account stating, "I will be there, historic day," and retweeting one of the organizers Kylie Kremer saying, be a part of history January 6th, arrive by 9 a.m." And sorry, that's just how it was sent to us. We don't mean to have it sideways.

Again, this is brought to the attention of Kimberly Cheatle on January 3rd. Did you have any discussion about this?

Now, obviously this is the President, himself, saying I will be there, would certainly have an impact on the number of attendees for January 6th.

Were you aware of this tweet, or was there any discussion about the increased crowds as a result of President Trump's personal promotion of it?

A    I'm sorry. What date was that?

Q    This is January 3rd.

A    I recall -- and I believe we spoke about this in our last interviews of -- that
they didn't know the numbers at the time. And they were trying to -- the President, I remember hearing, I think it was Peter Navarro wanting everybody to tweet out things to get people there, but they didn't know the numbers. Because the service and my office obviously wanted to know an estimated number so they had the right number of magnetometers that would be at the venue. But I remember the numbers were very fluid at the time, and the organizers didn't have an exact -- not exact, but even an estimate of whether it was going to be 5- or 30,000 at the time as we got closer.

Q Right. We did talk about the numbers, kind of, fluctuating in the days ahead. It went from the permit for 5,000 up to 30,000 the night before.

But my question is, the fact that the President is saying I will be there, was that something that you considered as part of your security posture?

A Ma'am -- so again, as my role as Deputy Chief of Staff of Operations, I'm not in charge of the President's security. So I didn't -- that wouldn't have affected my thinking. That would have been for the Secret Service.

Q So the fact that the President said I will be there, which logically increased the number of people who would attend, that, by extension, wouldn't be something that you would consider as part of your assessment of the threat landscape?

A Again, I'm not assessing the threat landscape. That wasn't my role. I'm taking the threat landscape from the Secret Service. I'm not the one doing the analyzing of the threat. And I believe by January 3rd, it was already announced from the scheduler, from the office, that the President was attending, if I'm not mistaken. So I think it was -- so the Secret Service had known. Everybody had known at that point, I believe, that he was going.

Q I'm going to show you a January 4th email. This was an email that Ms. Cheney referenced earlier, 20A.
Ms. Cheney asked if this is something that you might have been aware of. This was an email -- not the email, of course, but generally the information that was received by Richard Donoghue, who was the number two at the Department of Justice. Also on that email is Michael Sherwin, who was the U.S. Attorney at the time. This is from the counterintelligence unit. If we scroll down --

Ms. Driscoll. Can you please zoom in a little bit more? It's hard to see.

Sure.

Ms. Driscoll. Thank you. We can see that. Thank you.

Q This also tracks -- stop there -- I had mentioned earlier about the site intelligence group. That was part of a forward that the Secret Service received. This is also about calls to occupy Federal buildings and use of online forums discussing intimidating Congress and invading the Capitol building.

So I think the general point there, this was something that was known, at least, within the Department of Justice. Was this ever discussed within the Secret Service or known to you, Mr. Ornato?

A I don't recall this information or this email being brought to my attention.

Q How about generally, any discussion about the potential occupying of Federal buildings on January 6th?

A I don't recall that being a topic of discussion.

Q Okay. I'm going to show you now what you have received. January 4th, this is exhibit 20, it's an email similar to the December 28th email, where Mr. Engel forwards you for awareness the update on expected activity for January 6th. And again, kind of, the mantra of this long document, it lists 59 potential demonstrations is, for each of the 59, there is no indication of civil disobedience.
And it sounds like Mr. Ornato that was your takeaway of the expectation for January 6th. Is that fair?

A. That’s what I recalled being briefed on, is this, correct.

Ms. Cheney. I just want to make sure I understand.

So, Mr. Ornato, you told us you were responsible for briefing Chief of Staff and the President of United States about security issues. And is it your testimony that you had no indication that there was going to be any violence on January 6th, that you received no information and had no indication of that?

The Witness. I’m sorry, ma’am. One thing you just had said in the beginning, I was responsible to brief Chief of Staff on things, not necessarily the President of the United States. I would go -- my chain of command was the Chief of Staff at all times. The Chief of Staff, though, did receive briefings, I’m assuming here, from the National Security Council and the NSA as well. I did not have those -- or insight into those. The National Security Council, as we all know, is made up of members from all different Federal agencies. I don’t know if they had gotten any of these or if the Chief had gotten it through the NSA or the National Security Council. I was not made aware of -- from what I recall -- I was not made aware of any potential for violence, except for knowing that these groups were coming and there was no civil disobedience expected.

Ms. Cheney. So you did not -- so your testimony is, that you were not aware of any potential for violence on January 6th?

The Witness. I’m sorry, ma’am. Like I said previously, the violence that was portrayed to us, or to me, and portrayed in meetings was that there was potential for groups to clash on the Washington Monument, and I knew National Park Service was tracking those types of things. However, I don’t recall receiving anything that was there was a potential of violence as we have seen in emails that I did not receive.
Ms. Cheney. Well, a potential for groups to clash is violence, is it not?

The Witness. It is, ma’am. And I’ve said that in the past. That’s the violence that I had been made aware of, not specifically the other things.

Ms. Cheney. So as somebody who was in a position, Deputy Chief of Staff for operations, with knowledge that the President was going to be at the Ellipse -- and we’ll talk about the Capitol in a little bit here -- your testimony is that you had no knowledge that there were any plans for violence that day? All of the social media posts, all of the intel that was widely available and widely shared and spread throughout the government, including the Department of Justice, the FBI, Department of Homeland Security, Secret Service, your testimony is that none of that reached you?

The Witness. Ma’am, I don’t recall the specific calls for violence in those emails and social media posts. I recall, like I said, being briefed upon for clashes of groups for violence on that day, and that’s what I would have briefed to Mr. Meadows.

Ms. Cheney. Thank you.

BY: [Redacted]:

Q I’m going to bring up a January 5th, 21A, [Redacted], this is the 11/22 email. And obviously, this is the day before January 6th, and there’s preparations within the service happening. I don’t expect you to know the level of detail about the assignments or the people on a spreadsheet, but I’m -- this is an email.

If you scroll down, [Redacted], it starts with January 5th, 11:10 a.m., Chris Hendersen who appears to be the Deputy Assistant Director, Office of Investigations.

Were you familiar with him, Mr. Ornato?

A I did know Chris, yes.

Q And it's to, I believe, Matt Miller. I believe he's at Washington field office.

"Matt, in case of extreme civil disturbance, question mark, do we have appropriate
protective equipment at WFO to outfit any of these external posts?"

   Questioning, "Where is the equipment stored?"

   If you go down, just to give some further context of this email, it appears to, again, go through a level of detail about the number of posts and where folks would be on the 6th. And then, if you scroll up, [redacted], it’s a response from Mr. Miller indicating what type of shields the service has.

   Just to follow up on Ms. Cheney’s point, it appears Mr. Hendersen is essentially anticipating some sort of, as he says, extreme civil disturbance and planning for that essentially to make sure that the agents of the service are fully protected.

   Is that anything that reached you, or as a concern was raised to you by anyone within Secret Service?

   A     I don’t recall knowing of any planning that was taking place by the service for this email here that you’ve just shown me.

   Q     But separate from the planning that took place -- again, there appears to be some general expectation that there would be some level of violence on the 6th in terms of planning for protective equipment.

   Is that fair based upon, kind of, your experience with the service, is this what this email indicates?

   A     Again, the potential for violence, as I’ve indicated, was that I was briefed on the two groups clashing. So that was the expectation that I was informed of of violence. So I don’t know anything further that I can recall from that.

   Q     Okay. Exhibit 22 --

   Ms. Cheney. [redacted], I just wanted to follow up.

   [redacted]. Oh, sorry.

   Ms. Cheney. So I just -- you keep saying, Mr. Ornato, the only thing that you
recall is being briefed on no possibility of civil disobedience.

Did you see any intelligence after January 2nd that indicated that?

The Witness. I'm sorry, ma'am. Did I see any intelligence after January 2nd that indicated what? What was the question?

Ms. Cheney. That there was no concern about civil disobedience?

The Witness. From what I recall, I believe there is a January 4th that we just saw -- document, I thought it was January 4th, that had all the groups listed saying there was no civil disobedience expected.

Ms. Cheney. And after that, did you receive any updated intelligence after January 4th?

The Witness. I don't recall the documents. I don't recall receiving anything more than that document there, which was naming the groups, the dozens of groups and the no civil disobedience expected. That's what I can recall being briefed upon in our meetings.

Ms. Cheney. So your role was to make sure that the decision makers in the White House had information that they needed about the security situation, and you determined to rely on intelligence from January 4th.

You got no update after that about any potential for violence on the 6th?

The Witness. I believe there was another update from the service, but it was still the same. But the White House doesn't solely run upon -- I'm not there to analyze intelligence. I'm just bringing anything that's brought to me that was intelligence from the service at the time. There are other conduits to the Chief of Staff that would bring in the intelligence from the Justice and from all different -- the NSA and all that. It just doesn't flow through me, ma'am.

Ms. Cheney. So your role was sort of just a passive one, whatever happened to
show up on your desk, you'd pass on?

The Witness. I wouldn't say it was passive. It was whatever was brought to my attention in our meetings from our day-to-day experiences with the White House military office and the entities that I dealt with on a daily basis that would be passed up to the Chief of Staff.

Ms. Cheney. So the email [REDACTED] just showed you, if, in fact, there was concern about extreme civil disobedience, is it your testimony that you never were aware of that?

The Witness. I don't recall seeing or hearing anything of extreme civil disobedience.

Ms. Cheney. And if you had been aware of all of the intelligence we've been showing you, what would you have done?

The Witness. The intelligence that you are showing me today would have been brought to the Chief of Staff, his attention.

Ms. Cheney. You would have brought it to his attention?

The Witness. Yes, ma'am.

Ms. Cheney. If you'd been aware that there were armed individuals planning to invade the Capitol, armed individuals planning to gather in Washington, D.C. on that day, what would you have done with that information?

The Witness. I would have -- if I was made aware of that by the service you're saying?

Ms. Cheney. By anyone.

The Witness. If I was made aware of it, it would have been through the Secret Service, I would have asked them were all the other law enforcement agencies tracking, and then I would have also passed it to the Chief of Staff and whatever answer the service
would have given me, I would have let him know that Capitol Police, Park Police, all the
other agencies are tracking per the Secret Service. That would have been my role.

Ms. Cheney. And your testimony is that you did not do that in the lead up to the
6th?

The Witness. My testimony is I don’t recall receiving any of this information.

Ms. Cheney. Or any other information about the potential for violence on that
day?

The Witness. Just for the groups clashing on the Washington Monument is what
was brought to my attention.

Ms. Cheney. Thank you.

BY [Redacted]:

Q Mr. Ornato, I want to bring up an email, exhibit 21, to follow up on Ms.
Cheney’s point about what you would push up. This looks like an email that’s sent -- we
start at the bottom from someone at the White House office of governmental affairs.
And in the email is a link to a news story essentially describing Mayor Bowser’s decision to
request the National Guard.

And this is January 4th at 1 o’clock is when the email first occurs, and then it is
sent from Julia Neshciwat, I believe NSC, and then sent to a particular group at the White
House itself, that includes yourself, Judd Deere, Brian Mergenstern, Ben Williamson, Beau
Harrison, Robert O’Brien and Matthew Pottinger.

And in the email it says, "Thanks, Doug. Briefed on this morning with Matt.
The NG," National Guard, "will not be sent out, but stand ready should a crisis occur."

Were you at that briefing, Mr. Ornato?

A I don’t recall being at that briefing. That’s the NSC is what I see there, Julia
Neshciwat and Matt Pottinger.
Q   Okay. Then it looks like you forwarded this to Mr. Engel, at the top,
10 minutes after you received it.

So just -- scroll up.

So just zooming out a bit, Mr. Ornato, the Mayor requested the National Guard
broadly in light of the intelligence the DC government was seeing that called for,
essentially, assistance to the Metropolitan Police Department, which is one of the reasons
she requested the Guard.

She also, at that time, urged people to stay out of the District. And that's all
broadly in the news story, and it looks like it was discussed at a briefing, whether you
remember it or not, but at that point on January 4th, it appears -- we'll use the words of
the email -- should a crisis occur, that there was at least a discussion about the potential
for violence, broadly speaking, within the White House.

Is that accurate?

A   I wouldn't say that's accurate as far as my knowledge of this. I think we
talked last time about the National Guard and what I recall on that. And that was, the
Chief of Staff had a phone call with the D.C. Mayor, and was talking to her about this.
And I believe from what I recall is that the D.C. Mayor had asked for approximately 300 or
so National Guard to help with traffic posts in D.C., and I was relaying that information to
Robert Engel there. That was my recollection on the D.C. National Guard.

Obviously, I would have sent this, or briefed Mr. Meadows if Robert O'Brien was
on it, who was the NSA at the time, to make sure he was aware of this. But I remember
Mr. Meadows having the conversation with the D.C. Mayor because I happened to walk
into his office, and he waved me in. And he was on the phone with the D.C. Mayor in
offering assistance with the National Guard. And I remember that for -- to bring
National Guard, or have them on standby. From what I recall, it was because of the
large amounts of numbers that they thought that they were going to bringing in, or that was coming into D.C., and that was the concern.

Q  Right.  We did discussion the conversation you overheard between Mr. Meadows and Mayor Bowser.

My question is broadly speaking, though, and part of the article talks about that the intelligence calls for the crowds, but also talks about Chief Contee, quote, saying, "people are intent coming into the city armed."

So was the broader discussion there about the reasons behind the requests for the National Guard, not the specifics of 340 National Guard, but more so, why the Mayor of the city needed the National Guard in anticipating potential violence, was that discussion had?

A  I don't recall having that discussion or that discussion being had.

Q  What was the reason you forwarded it along to Mr. Engel?

A  Just for his awareness that the D.C. National Guard and the Mayor, just making sure they were tracking that information.

Q  And was he?  Do you remember having a discussion with him?

A  I don't recall.  I don't recall opening up that link.  I don't recall that link or that email specifically, but I would have forwarded it to him for his awareness.

Q  With the expectation that it would impact his awareness?

A  I don't recall at the time of what it was.

Ms. Cheney.

Ms. Cheney.  Thanks.

So Mr. Ornato, the FBI, the Department of Justice, the U.S. Secret Service, Department of Homeland Security, all provided intel about the potential for violence, and you were unaware of it.  And you've now forwarded an article to Mr. Engel that talks
specifically about the potential for violence, and I believe that was on January 4th, and
you were aware of that also?

The Witness. Ma'am, I received hundreds of emails, and I tried to do my best as
the deputy chief of staff to go through them with my assistant as well. I don't open up
everything in email count. If I saw that -- this is just what I'm recalling today as far as
looking at this email -- I don't recall seeing or hearing of violence from that email or
knowing that. So I just -- it's been almost 2 years now. I don't recall having that
knowledge.

Ms. Cheney. So you didn't read the intel, and you didn't read the article, that's
your testimony?

The Witness. I don't know if I did, ma'am. I'm sorry. I just don't recall.

Ms. Cheney. Thank you.

BY QUESTION:

Q Mr. Ornato, just on that point of you receiving so many emails, I believe Ms.
Cheney started out by saying we received thousands of documents from the service.
This appears to be -- and I could be wrong here -- one of the only emails that you
forwarded to Mr. Engel. Typically, Mr. Engel's forwarding you information.

So is it fair something about what you saw, whether you didn't open the link or
not, made you -- made it important for you to send along to Mr. Engel?

A I don't know. As I sit here today, being that it's D.C. National Guard, is
because maybe law enforcement I sent it to him, but I don't recall at the time.

Q Okay. Exhibit 22, this is January 5th, an 11:56 email. Again, you're not on
this, but it is another PIOC notification from someone within the protective intelligence
research specialist sending an email, "Good afternoon, PIOC, please see attached Parler
users threatening to execute D.C. cops and burn down D.C. precincts due to the Proud
Boys leader, Enrique Tarrio, being arrested by MPD on January 4th, 2021. Flagging there is not a Secret Service next to this, but just passing along for situational awareness."

Did any of that raise to you, particularly about the Proud Boys leader being arrested by the MPD on January 4th?

A I believe it was passed to me about the Proud Boys leader being arrested, if I'm not mistaken, in an email, that the document that you have, if I remember reading correctly. I don't know at the time -- I don't recall at the time on January 4th if that was my -- like I said, that was my first day back was January 4th from travel. There was -- I was dealing with the Biden -- I was transitioning the Biden administration in. I had a lot going on that day with that, with the vaccinations for COVID, for distributions on those on January 4th. 

So there was a lot going on on that. I don't recall specifically this topic coming up, but I believe there may have been an email that was forwarded to me on him being arrested. But I don't remember this specific email being brought up.
[12:10 p.m.]

BY

Q  Okay.

BY

Q  Also on January 5th, Mr. Ornato, there is some discussion of whether or not there are sufficient magnetometers.

Do you remember -- I'm going to show you a document, but do you recall a discussion with Bobby Peede, Bobby Engel, about the number of mags that were contemplated for use the next day?

A  I do recall that.

Q  What do you recall?

A  I recall Bobby Peede, who was the director of advance, having discussion with the Secret Service over the numbers, on how many mags to have. He was concerned there wasn't enough mags. The Secret Service were going off of what was permitted for the Ellipse, and that's the magging that they were going to do. I believe, if I remember correct, it was over a 5-hour magging time, I believe. I could be mistaken on that.

And then there was just some talk between the two of them on how many mags for the event the next day.

Q  Did you get involved, Mr. Ornato, in that substantive discussion of whether there were or were not sufficient mags based on the expected crowd size?

A  I remember Bobby Peede making us aware of it. But, in the end, it's the Secret Service's decision based upon they know their mag flow rate and how many mags per people, and it's up to the Secret Service, because they have the personnel to do it and
the mags. So they're the deciding factors on that. So Bobby Peede was just making us aware.

Q I understand who decides. My question is, were you involved in any way in weighing in or participating in the substantive discussion about whether there were sufficient magnetometers for the next day?

A I believe I recall Bobby Peede raising it to me, and I, I think, asked -- if I'm not mistaken, I think I remember asking Bobby Engel if he was confident that was enough, and once he said yes, then that's the end of the discussion.

Q Did you talk with anybody else about it within the White House, whether or not there were sufficient magnetometers?

A No, I don't recall that. I don't recall talking to anybody else about it.

Q Do you know whether or not the discussion resulted in adding mags sort of on the 5th, at some point before the morning, increasing the number?

A I don't recall that. Obviously, once the service says they have it, they have it. They're the ones that are going to run it and decide.

There's always -- they can always increase or decrease by adding handhelds or -- so they see how it's going and they adjust. That's their job.

Q Yep.

Let me show you just exhibit -- it will make this clear.

It's exhibit 2, [redacted].

We'll put it on the screen.

And this is one, Ms. Driscoll, we provided yesterday.

If you can blow it up, [redacted], here.

So, Mr. Ornato, this is one that went directly to you. If you go all the way to the bottom, it starts with Bobby Peede.
And, if I recall correctly, he was the sort of advance person who was in charge of
the Ellipse event? Is that right? It was kind of his event in the advance office?
A    Correct. He was the director of advance, yes.
Q    Okay.

So he's emailing you directly and Bo Harrison, copying Will Russell and Max Miller:
"So we're down to 12 mags for tomorrow. Permit was approved last night for 30,000
from the 20,000 number yesterday. We've been using the 30K estimate all week, and

"I feel pretty strongly that that's not enough mags. I realize there's a long-term
mag formula, but people are coming dressed for a march and standing outside for hours,
both at our site and the Capitol, in the cold. Mags will be slow."

He then is essentially saying: It's a pretty significant concern. Should we add
more mags?

Scrolling up, the response is -- Bo Harrison sends that to Engel, to Ted Arruda at
Secret Service, copying you, saying, "Looks like the permit was bumped up again."

And then, if you keep scrolling up, it just goes again to Richard Macauley, who I
think you said was the deputy in charge of the Uniformed Division.

So, again, does that help you remember whether or not mags were added or what
the discussion generally was about the sufficiency of the number of mags planned for the
next day?
A    I don't -- I don't recall. This here, I was just monitoring at this point. Once
I'd asked Engel, I remember, "Are you confident with your mags?" once they tell me,
"Yeah, we're good," I don't question it again. It's up to them to work it out at that point
and to see how it goes the next day.
Q    Okay.
So, the next day, it didn't become a problem, right? It was not something that mags needed to be added at the last minute? Is that your recollection?

A. I don't recall. I believe there was an email here that everybody -- the mags were free flowing by a certain time, like 11:00 a.m. or something, if I'm mistaken, which was -- which was fine. I don't think there was any issue.

Q. We're going to get to there in a minute.

I see, Ms. Cheney, you've come on camera. Go ahead.

Ms. Cheney. Yeah. I think -- it's 12:15. I think this would be a good time to take either a short break or to do a lunch break. So whatever you all would like to do, but we need to take at least a short break here.

Sure.

Ms. Driscoll, you tell us. Do you want to keep going and take a short break, or would you prefer a little bit longer for a lunch break? We probably -- you know, we have several hours left to go. I want to be respectful of your time, but we have a lot of information to cover.

The Witness. Short break?

Ms. Driscoll. Well take, like, a 15-, 20-minute break?

Let's do that. It's 12:15. We'll come back at 12:35. We'll take 20 minutes, okay?

Ms. Driscoll. Great. Thank you.

All right. Thank you.

[Recess.]

Let's go back on the record.

BY: So, Mr. Ornato, I think when we broke off I was asking you a little bit about
the issue of magnetometers.

Did you ever discuss that issue directly with the President, the issue of whether or not there were sufficient magnetometers or people coming through the magnetometers?

A No. I don’t recall having a conversation with the President about magnetometers.

Q Did you ever hear him say anything about magnetometers on or before January 6th?

A I don’t recall hearing him say anything.

Q Did anybody relay anything to you about what he said about taking mags away? "Remove the mags," "don’t need the mags," anything like that?

A I don’t recall that coming up or coming to me.

Q All right. So not either before or during or even after January 6th, anything from him, from any source, about magnetometers?

A I don’t recall hearing anything from the President about magnetometers, sir.

Q Yeah. Okay.

All right. Just moving forward on January 5th, let me show you exhibit 1. This is a little bit later that afternoon. It's at 2:50 p.m.

And I believe that [redacted] asked you before about Faron Paramore. And this is an email -- [redacted], if you could -- yeah -- from Mr. Paramore to a number of folks in the Protective Intelligence Division.

And he asks the question: "Good afternoon, [redacted] both Protective Intel Division. "Hope you're well. Hey, are we seeing anything/chatter about anti-Trump protestors trying to get into the PPD Ellipse site tomorrow morning? This is a non-ticket event. Anyone that shows up will be able to get in. Are we seeing or hearing anything about anti-Trump folks trying to get into the
event tomorrow?

This is the day before, January 5th. Do you remember any discussion that day about whether or not there was intelligence suggesting there would be anti-Trump protesters at the Ellipse event?

A      Sorry, sir. Can you repeat your question about --

Q      Yeah. My question is whether you remember on January 5th any discussion about whether there was intel, chatter specifically, about anti-Trump protesters’ desire to attend the event.

A      I don’t recall hearing that, sir.

Q      All right. Well, the fact that there is a question about it suggests that there was no such intel, or at least none that had come to the attention of Mr. Paramore, correct?

A      I don’t know exactly what he’s asking in there with -- or what they were tracking or what they were hearing, sir. So I can’t comment on that email that he wrote.

Q      Yeah. All right. Ms. Cheney asked you before, were you aware of any specific intel in a Secret Service report or any other source that suggested that there would be anti-Trump protesters trying to get into the Ellipse event?

A      I don’t recall hearing anything about anti-Trump protesters trying to get into the Ellipse event. I believe what I recall and what we talked about was pro- and anti- groups clashing on the Washington Monument across the street from the Ellipse, not in the event.

Q      Yeah. Okay.

All right. We’re going to keep marching forward. is going to keep going with another exhibit.
Q    Exhibit 27, Mr. Ornato, is a response to that email from Mr. Paramore.

We'll bring that up.

It says, "Sir, many of the counterprotest groups are requiring signing up via the app Signal for updates and information. We don't have access to that data. It's a closed platform similar to WhatsApp. Additionally, Proud Boys leader Enrique Tarrio is being released with a stay order from D.C. except for court appearances. If we find any additional information, we will pass it on."

So it sounds like there was -- the question was posed about whether there was information about counterprotesters, and the response was, from an agent within the Protective Intelligence Division, that we don't have any data about that.

Is that a fair reading of this email back and forth?

A    I'm sorry, ma'am. This is the first time I'm seeing this email, so --

Q    Yeah. No, take your time.

A    Again, I'm not able to comment. I don't know exactly what was being asked and what they were responding to Faron with this.

I see it saying anti-Trump protesters trying to get into the Ellipse site. I don't recall ever hearing anything about that.

Q    Okay. So, just taking the email, though, it says, are we seeing any chatter about anti-Trump protesters? And it looks like the response is, they're using Signal, we don't have any such information. Right? Which is essentially what the back-and-forth indicates. Whether it got to you or not is a separate question.

Is that fair?

A    I can't comment on this, ma'am. I wasn't on this email. I don't know what they were doing and looking at. I don't -- I've never seen this email.

Q    Okay.
I am going to show you another two messages, Teams messages, that are again
discussing this anti-Trump protest request for information. So this is exhibit 25.
This is from Mark Marbut, the agent who responded, to a group of PID agents,
saying, "Reference the email forwarded to OSU on duty. Are we seeing anything about
counterprotesters attempting to infiltrate the Ellipse site since it is a non-ticketed event?"
Then, one of the responses, exhibit 26, from [REDACTED], a Protective Intelligence
Division agent, in response to the question, are we seeing anything: "Also several
groups, including Refuse Fascism and They/Them Collective, have encouraged
participants to stay at home and protest via social media, even referencing the Refuse
Fascism demo we have on the sheet. It does not appear to be a real demonstration."
So this is in response to, essentially, are we expecting anti-Trump protesters?
And one of the responses --
Ms. Driscoll. Sorry to interrupt. We can't see the top part of the email. Is
Mr. Ornato on these exchanges?
[REDACTED]. He is not.
Ms. Driscoll. We just can't see it. Okay. Thank you.
[REDACTED]. He is not.

Q So, again, in response to Mr. Paramore's question, my first question to you
was: Was anything brought to your attention from Mr. Paramore about an expectation
about anti-Trump protesters?
A From Mr. Paramore?
Q Correct.
A I don't recall having conversation with Mr. Paramore or this being --
Q So was this brought --
A -- any of this being brought to my attention.

Q Okay.

But it looks like he sends out this question to the Protective Intelligence Division, and the response is: and it looks like, from what we are monitoring, they've been told to stay at home. And that's a very Cliff's Notes version of the three exhibits.

But my question to you is: Was any of this -- well, you still maintain that there was an expectation of violence from counterprotesters. Was this kind of dissenting narrative shown to you or raised to you, that, in fact, anti-Trump protesters have been encouraged to stay at home?

A No, ma'am, I don't recall having that -- that topic coming up.

Q And, again, the broad question is: The expectation of counterprotesters -- in our review of what the Secret Service had, we're trying to assess why that was an expectation, of counterprotesters, versus what we're showing you now, which indicates otherwise.

A I'm sorry. What we were just seeing now was Mr. Paramore asking about getting into the Ellipse site since it was non-ticketed.

Before, what I have said that I was briefed upon, that the anti- and pro- groups would clash outside on the Washington Monument. I never was made aware of anybody trying to get inside the -- anti- or pro- groups being inside the Ellipse event.

Q Okay. So that's a distinction of, it's not just anti-Trump protesters attending the rally, but you're sort of reading it about entering the Ellipse event. Is that what you're saying?

A Yeah. That's how I read this here, but --

Q All right.
A    -- I don't know what the Secret Service was trying to ask or portray.  I wasn't on these or don't know this information here.

Q    I'm going to turn to exhibit 28.  This is another -- this is now January 5th, evening, 6:41 p.m.  -- another PIOC on duty email regarding a threat to bring a sniper rifle to the rally.

If you look at the second paragraph there, posted a picture of a rifle and a handgun.  "Sunday Gun Day Providing Overwatch, January 6th Will Be Wild!"

And this is from a Protective Intelligence Division.

You were not -- was any of this brought to your attention?

A    I don't recall any of this information, ma'am.

Q    Exhibit -- let's see -- 29, this is a 6:24 p.m. email from the PIOC on duty, following up on the open source indicating a post from thedonald.win, again flagging from, looks like, the Bureau.  If you go down, ettips@FBI sends it to, quote -- if you go up a little bit, [redacted] -- "U.S. Secret Service colleagues."

"I'm a threat intake examiner at the FBI National Threat Center, where we received the following information."  And it gives some specific information about -- from an individual regarding a threat to bring a sniper rifle to the Trump rally on January 6th.

Was that brought to your attention?

A    I don't recall hearing any of this information, ma'am, that you are showing me in this email.

Q    Okay.

A    And just so I -- the header -- I was not on the header, correct?

Q    You were not.

Exhibit 30 --
I couldn't see the header.

-- this is now the evening, 10:36 p.m., January 5th. The Washington Field Office of the Secret Service gives a briefing, a readout, from -- summarizing topics they received. If you see the subject line there, it says, "FBI sit rep intel briefing."

So it looks like the FBI provided a briefing and the service attended, and this is the summary of the information. So this would be the day before January 6th.

And if you go down, it says, "Right-wing groups responding from across the nation and establishing quick-reaction forces in Virginia, standing by at the ready should POTUS request assistance. One known individual who has encouraged this in the past is Stewart Rhodes, founder and leader of the Oath Keepers."

And the second paragraph also mentions Enrique Tarrio. And then it goes through a bit from other agencies who attended that briefing.

Now, something like this, which is an FBI briefing before a major event, would this be something that would've been brought to your attention, about what the Bureau is briefing other Federal agencies on?

In my position as the deputy chief of staff of operations, I didn't normally brief or have interaction with the FBI. They were part of the National Security Council. And the National Security Council, which reported over to the NSA, Robert O'Brien, that, I'm sure, would've been in that group there. However, I don't know for sure.

But I don't recall any of this briefing, nor did I have any briefings from the FBI.

I think you mentioned that you didn't have a direct line to the Bureau, so any information you would've gotten is from the Service.

So I just want to be clear that the information from this briefing that occurred on January 5th that, obviously, the Service attended and pushed out to the PIOC, did any of this reach you, meaning --
A: I don't recall any --

Q: -- the Secret Service?

A: I don't recall receiving any of that information through the service.

Q: Okay.

We're going to turn now, Mr. Ornato, to January 6th and similarly march you through some of the real-time information that the Secret Service was gathering and similarly ask you if you remember any of those issues.

BY: [Redacted]

Q: Okay. Exhibit 33, this is starting at 7:16 in the morning.

And, Mr. Ornato, just as table-setting, I believe -- and if I mischaracterize this, please correct me. I think, when we talked last time, your intention for the day was to stay in your office, kind of continue to assist with transition to the Biden-Harris administration, and essentially pack up your office. Is that kind of a high-level intention for your day?

A: Again, that day there, I was at the White House that day. I was in my office. I did -- my intentions were packing up some of my things out to my vehicle, also just continuing on. I had a lot going on with the transition to the Biden administration.

And then, also, not only the COVID-19 vaccinations that were still being disseminated by the White House Medical Unit, and we were trying to get all the classified programs personnel vaccinated.

I was also dealing with the current administration's scale-down of their workforce. So each -- I forget what it was -- every third day or every fifth day, we were paring down about 400 to 500 personnel, I believe, and trying to scale down the footprint on the White House complex as the administration was coming to an end. So that was happening with the Office of Administration. I believe that -- I want to say January 5th
or so was around one of the big days that was the scaling down.

But, so, yeah, there was a lot going on that my attention was on, because -- and, plus, a lot of briefing of the new Biden administration coming in on the classified programs. So my attention was to -- my intentions that day were to be dealing with all of that stuff going on.

Q And we'll get into a little bit more detail of who specifically you spoke to and when you became aware of certain things.

But, starting with exhibit 33, it's an email from 7:16 a.m. from the Joint Operations Center, pushed out to a number of different individuals in the CSD unit of the service. The subject is "CSB has noticed upwards of 30 individuals with handheld radios within crowds for Ellipse."

And then the body of the email says, "Different groups, but appeared to turn them on at the same time."

Was this brought to your attention?

A No, ma'am. I don't recall that.

Q Exhibit 34 is the first update, Update 1, from the PIOC.

At some point, did you start receiving updates from the PIOC, Mr. Ornato?

A At some point -- I didn't receive updates from the PIOC direct. I believe they were forwarded to me as the normal chain of command, which was through either Robert Engel or Ted Arruda, if I'm not mistaken.

Q Okay. Well, we'll get to those.

This is the first update at 8:07 a.m., Update 1, which states, "Some members of the crowd are wearing ballistic helmets, body armor, and carrying radio equipment and military-grade backpacks. CSD teams will continue to monitor all crowds in the area of the White House zone. No civil disobedience at this time."
Do you remember learning about this update in real-time at around 8:07 in the morning of January 6th?
A No, ma'am. I don't recall having any of this updated information real-time.
Q Okay.

The next exhibit, exhibit 35. We'll start at the bottom here. And we talked a little bit about the magnetometers. 6:04 a.m., "Sweeps completed on time at 6:00 a.m. Staff advised that mags can open. Crowd lined up all the way to the Monument."

Then, an hour later, another update from Ted Arruda: "Staff still building out entry chute from mag tent to event area."

The next email, 7:15, if you scroll up: "Mags open. is operational."
At 8:17, from Ted Arruda to Mr. Engel: "5,500 in," meaning into the Ellipse area.
"Two surge mags are being set up now."

Was this information being provided to you or was it conveyed to you by Mr. Engel?
A I don't recall receiving updates like this, and nor would that be unusual.

This happens at rallies all throughout the campaign and all throughout the administration, where the Secret Service is tracking the mag flow but not necessarily passing it anywhere at that point. They're the ones that are running it.

Q Mr. Ornato, we've seen the email before about Bobby Peede flagging for you the magnetometer issue. And I believe your testimony with was that you did engage on that and it was something that you were involved in, in terms of checking with Mr. Engel were there enough magnetometers.

So the next day, on the event itself, wouldn't you be curious to know if there were enough magnetometers for the actual crowd that showed up?
A I believe we talked the previous interview, I had a conversation with Bobby
Peede that morning, who assured me that everything looked good to go and everything was in place. So I don’t recall having to question Mr. Engel or anybody.

Q So you didn’t receive any additional updates or any discussions -- putting aside the emails, again, any discussions at all with Mr. Engel about the crowd size, the individuals in the crowd, or the magnetometers?

A Not that I recall. In the morning, I believe there was an email I was sent of a final of once everybody was in, and that’s -- I remember the service wanting to show that the mags were free flowing. But that’s all I can remember. I don’t remember each and every -- I don’t recall getting an update on each and every time they were updating Mr. Engel.

Q Exhibit 36 is a 9:01 service update, and this is from Courtney Scadden, who’s an attorney advisor. It looks like it’s going to some of the legal counsel there in legislative affairs office.

"Heard from UD this morning," which is Uniformed Division. "There is approximately 10,000 people in line and lots of body armor."

Now, at this point, it looks like at 8:06 there’s the PIOC update, right, we’ve just shown you -- that was exhibit 34 -- about the ballistic helmets, the body armor, the radio equipment. And then there’s now an internal high-level with the service’s General Counsel’s Office, again, flagging, quote, "lots of body armor."

Was this brought to your attention at all?

A I don’t recall this being brought to my attention at this time.

BY [REDACTED]

Q Exhibit 37, a minute later -- sorry, 20 minutes later is a 9:25 a.m. email.

A Can you -- I can’t see who was it emailed to, if we can just --

Q Yeah, if we can start at the bottom?
A. Thank you.

Q. This is from the bottom. It’s from the Joint Operations Center. The first email, at 8:31 a.m. -- scroll all the way down -- it looks like it’s the -- a number of agents this is pushed out to.

The subject line is "UD held with one outside □□." I think that means Uniformed Division has one outside of a certain location. And it says, "Individual says POTUS told him to come here. Feels like that’s why most people are here. Stand by for further info."

The next information being pushed out: "Moving forward" -- if you pause there -- □□□□□□□□□

That's at 8:38 a.m.

And then if you go up to the top: "Group in black hoodies." The last sentence there: "Plate carriers, pepper spray, and CB walkie-talkies. Front row is carrying clear plexus glass riot shields."

So, again, this is an email that's sent out from the Joint Operations Center. Was any of this information passed on to you, about people carrying pepper spray and CB walkie-talkies?

A. I don’t recall any of this information being passed on.

Q. Okay. Do you remember calling --

Ms. Driscoll. Just for the record, I just want to confirm that Mr. Ornato is not on this email. There’s a lot of names here. It’s just hard to -- □□□□□□□□□. Correct. He's not.

Ms. Driscoll. -- to confirm one. Okay. Thank you.

BY □□□□□□□□

Q. Do you remember talking to Mr. Engel the morning of January 6th?
A I don't remember any specific conversation that I can recall the morning of January 6th.

Q And I'm going to talk to you specifically now before -- around this time period, around the 9:30 a.m. time period. You're in your office; is that correct?

A I believe that I'm in my office. I was in my office all morning there that I can remember.

Q I think, from the last interview, you said you got to your office pretty early that morning?

A I got to the complex pretty early and then into my -- usually I went over to the EOB and then into my office generally by 8 o'clock. So, yeah, I normally would've been in my office at this time.

Q Do you remember seeing Mr. Engel between that morning time, say, 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.?

A I can't recall specifically any specific conversation I had. If you have something that can refresh my memory, but I don't recall.

Q I know. We just have -- the service has provided us certain phone records, and there's a phone call where Mr. Engel reaches out to you at 9:34 a.m. and you have a 12-minute conversation.

Do you remember what you discussed with Mr. Engel during that time?

A I don't. I don't remember anything specific we discussed.

Q Well, at that point, presumably Mr. Engel had been aware about the crowd size, the magnetometer issue, the body armor, the ballistic helmets. Do you remember him raising any of these issues with you?

A I don't remember those issues being raised in the morning. And I believe, the last time we spoke, I had -- first time I had heard about the body armor and the, I
believe it was bike helmets, was from Bobby Peede when he came back to my office once
the President started speaking.

Q. Right. And, last time we spoke, we didn’t have these specific emails and we
didn’t have the phone records.

So, generally speaking, for a 12-minute call on the day of a major event, can you
just describe what would’ve been discussed during that time?

A. I can only speculate that we were -- we would’ve discussed maybe
the -- actually, I don’t -- if the magnetometer -- I don’t know if there were other issues
raised, with other things going on, that I had going on, that I brought up to him as well,
with the COVID vaccinations and the other things I was dealing with. So I can’t really
even speculate of what a 12-minute phone conversation would’ve had. I don’t know. I
don’t remember it.

Q. Would it make sense, though, Mr. Ornato, logically, given Mr. Engel's role
and your role and kind of the different data points that we’ve walked you through up until
this point, that the crowd size, the individuals in the crowd, and the magnetometers
could’ve been raised during that 12-minute call?

A. It's possible. I don’t remember what was -- what was raised, though.

Q. So you don’t have a specific memory or a general memory about that
12-minute call?

A. I don’t.

BY: [Redacted]:

Q. Yeah. Just to follow up, Mr. Ornato, it’s your longest call of the day. It’s
on your White House-issued cell phone. And, again, the service has given us those
records. And it's a call initiated by Bobby Engel, to you, just 10 minutes after he had
been copied on this message about plate carriers, pepper spray, CB walkie-talkies, front
row carrying clear Plexiglas riot shields.

Suggests that -- information suggesting that people were coming to this event, outside of the magnetometers, wearing things that suggest the possibility of violence -- that would've been the logical subject of your long, 12-minute phone call with him that morning.

That's the predicate for the question. It's just kind of hard to believe that you don't recall anything about a conversation when that was what was going on around the Ellipse and the White House that morning.

A Sir, I don't recall that conversation taking place.

Q And you don't recall, just to be clear, any conversation with Mr. Engel, not just in that conversation, about people coming to the event wearing ballistic armor, carrying shields, the military-grade backpacks -- all the stuff that [redacted] has just gone through with you that was evident to Mr. Engel?

A I didn't -- not to question you, sir, but the email that was shown, was Mr. Engel on those emails?

Q Well, these are from the PIOC and the CSU email listservs, which, again, we believe Mr. Engel was copied on. Yeah, it was part of.

A Okay. I'm not privy to that or to know that. However, I don't recall having a conversation with Mr. Engel about those things.

Q All right. We'll keep going.

BY [redacted]:

Q Exhibit 38, this is another update from the Countersurveillance Division, again, 9:49 a.m., giving an update that there are now close to 25,000 people between the Ellipse site and the UD post.

"Members of the crowd are wearing body armor, carrying radio equipment, and
possibly OC spray and plastic riot shields. CSD teams will continue to monitor all crowds in the area of the White House zone."

Was this something that was brought to your attention, considering now this is impacting, potentially, the White House itself?

A  Sorry, ma'am, I'm just reading. I didn't receive this email, from what I can see up top, correct?

Q  That's correct.

A  I don't recall this information being brought to my attention in the morning, ma'am.

Q  And have you seen this email before, Mr. Ornato, before we provided it?

A  Not before you provided it. I don't recall this email.

Q  "The CSD teams will continue to monitor all crowds in the area of the White House zone." That CSD is the Countersurveillance Division.

David Harrison, are you familiar with him?

A  I don't recall the name.

Q  Pardon?

A  I don't recall that name, ma'am.

Q  Should this have been brought to your attention, considering that there is a team within the Secret Service that's monitoring the crowd because essentially they're alarmed about folks wearing body armor and carrying riot shields?

A  Law enforcement personnel were obviously tracking that. That's the people to track that. I don't know what other information they had or what they were looking at at the time to bring it to -- or knowing or not knowing to bring it to my attention. I just can't answer that question. It's their assessment, on whether they should bring it to my attention.
Q    Well, if a crowd is getting closer to the White House, are you not the one
person the Secret Service should probably contact about that?
A    I’m sorry. Can you repeat the question?
Q    Are you not the first person the Secret Service should contact about crowds
approaching the White House?
A    The Secret Service -- if there’s a crowd approaching the White House, the
Secret Service will be doing their job, and that would then go into different (ph)
elevations and stuff of that nature for the Secret Service. But it’s not an automatic
phone call to me that I’ve had in the past as the deputy chief of staff of operations.
Q    And you weren’t aware of this on the 6th, about the potential crowd moving
towards the White House zone?
A    I don’t recall that.
Q    Okay.
Exhibit 39, this is a 9:49 email from the Joint Operations Center to [redacted] as well
as to Christina Bentham.
Do you remember her position on January 6th?
A    I believe she was an assistant special agent in charge on the President’s
detail if I’m not mistaken.
Q    Would she have been under Mr. Engel and report to Mr. Engel?
A    It says "PPD" after her, so I would assume so.
Q    And the body of this email, if you scroll down, is: "MPD is investigating a
rifle seen in plain view in a parked car near the Spy Museum. The vehicle will likely be
impounded for further investigation. Any other outcome will be sent as an update."
And this, again, was sent up the chain to PPD.
Q    Were you aware of this at all, about a potential rifle in a parked car and the MPD’s
I don't recall that, ma'am. It says the Spy Museum. Is that -- that's down near the Verizon Center? Is that correct?

I think so, yes.

Yeah, I'm not -- I'm not aware -- I don't recall this, nor I don't know if they would've raised it to me. But I don't recall this.

Okay.

Exhibit 40, 10:35 a.m., an email from [redacted] to Bobby Engel.

Were you familiar with [redacted] position on January 6th?

I am not.

He was the lead site agent on that day. And he's giving updates to Mr. Engel.

And then we can go up to the top, 11:29. Joseph Routh sends it to Mr. Engel, Ms. Bentham, and Ted Arruda is also on that email, giving an update of 30,000 processed, 400 in queuing area.

Was this anything that was brought to your attention through Mr. Engel or Mr. Arruda?

I remember hearing, once it was 11:00, 11:30, that there was 30,000 processed. I don't recall if it was an email or a phone call, but I remember hearing that the mags were free flowing.

Okay.

And it looks like the next email of exhibit 41, that goes to Mr. Engel and to Mr. Arruda.

Keep going.

Okay. If you stop there, "the flow rate."
Is that what you mean, Mr. Ornato, by free flowing?

A  No.  What I recall is knowing that there were 30,000 people processed and the mags were free flowing, meaning there's no lines at the mags.

Q  Do you remember who gave you that information?

A  I don't remember if it was on an email from Mr. Arruda or Mr. Engel or if it was by word of mouth.  I'm not sure.

Q  What would word of mouth be?  Who were you in contact with?

A  Meaning a phone call or seeing Mr. Engel or Mr. Arruda at the time.  I don't recall how it was passed.

Q  Did you see Mr. Arruda that morning before the President went to the Ellipse?

A  I can't say if I did or if I didn't.  He would've been walking around.  I'm not sure if I saw him that day or not.  I don't remember.

Q  And I might've asked this, but did you see Mr. Engel before the President went to the Ellipse?

A  Again, I don't -- you asked it.  I don't remember a specific conversation or a specific event that I saw him, but I -- I don't recall, sitting here today, if I saw him or not before they left.  I was in my office that morning, I remember, and I was dealing with a lot of things that morning.

Q  Okay.

I'm going to show you exhibit 41.

Ms. Driscoll.  Do you mind zooming in a bit?  It's a little hard for me to --

The Witness.  Yeah.
Ms. Driscoll. Thank you.

Q. So this is a 10:46 a.m. email where it says there's now updated info, "total of 17 mags."

And then, if you go further down, essentially, from piecing the emails together, it looks like they started out at about 10 magnetometers that day, which is lower -- okay, there we go. That -- "per hour for all mags, 12" -- 12 mags is at 10:19 a.m. And then at 10:46 they're now up to 17 mags.

In any event, I think we talked about the magnetometers, but is this something that you were made aware of, that essentially the day started with a lower amount of magnetometers and they had to increase it as the hours went on?

A. I don't recall being made aware of this. This is something Bobby Peede would've been dealing with down at the event himself. So I don't recall being made aware of any of this.

Q. Did Mr. Engel raise it to you as one of the concerns of the day, or no?

A. Not that I recall.

Q. Okay.

And exhibit 42 is an email at 10:59 a.m. from a Protective Intelligence Division agent, where it says: "FYI, again, CSD advises the general crowd is stating they will all march to the Capitol after the rally."

We talked a little bit about the fact that the protective intelligence brief was called "March for Trump." And, again, I don't want to mischaracterize your prior testimony, but did you have any indication that the crowd would be heading towards the Capitol before January 6th?

A. What I recall from my prior testimony and what I recall is that I was asked,
there around January 4th, from Bobby Peede and Max Miller if the President can head to
the Capitol after the event with a -- the organizers felt a few thousand people would
march to the Capitol and peacefully protest outside the Capitol, and they were thinking
that he could go along with them.

As I testified earlier, I thought that was a ridiculous idea, and referred them to
SAIC Engel, as it would be his call on that, because that is going to be a security call, if
they can do that, and that's his call.

And then I had called Bob Engel just to let him know that this request may be
coming his way and that it's obviously his call but I had managed expectations by telling
them that that was a ridiculous idea.

But that's the only time I believe that I heard about anybody marching to the
Capitol, was to peacefully protest. And I was told a small group, they were thinking,
would go to the Capitol. But that's the only time I heard it prior to January 6th.

Q. And I believe that prior testimony also said any -- this is not just anybody
going to the Capitol, but the request was made from the President himself to go to the
Capitol as well, correct?

A. I didn't receive that request from the President himself. From Max and
Bobby, they -- I -- they didn't -- I thought it was -- and I said this in my prior
testimony -- Justin Caporale, because they kept saying it was the organizations.

Because I asked, what would he do at the Capitol? And they said, well, the
organization would get a permit for him to -- they would build maybe a small stage, and
the service can glass him in, and he can peacefully protest with people near the Capitol
grounds.

And that's where I said it was a ridiculous idea, but if they wanted to ask Bobby
Engel, that is up to them. And Bob Engel, it's his call, as it's a security concern.
Q    I see Ms. Cheney has come on.

I just want to just make sure I have the record clear that the two ideas you
thought were, quote/unquote, "ridiculous" were, one, a crowd going to the Capitol and,
two, the President going to the Capitol.    Is that fair?

A    I didn't know -- have anything about the crowd going to the Capitol.    As far
as the President going to the Capitol with a crowd and having a stage boxed in with glass,
those two things, I thought was a ridiculous idea, and passed that off -- obviously, passed
that on to the Secret Service to weigh in on that, as it would be a security concern.

And I did ask if this was run by the chief of staff yet, and they said, no, it was just
kind of early stages of planning.    And that was it.

 ***MS. CHENey***.    Ms. Cheney?

I think you're on mute.

**Ms. Cheney.**    Sorry.

**Mr. Ornato, I just wanted to ask:**    When Mr. Miller asked you about having the
President go to the Capitol, did he say "peacefully protest"?

**The Witness.**    They did.    It was the morning, before our 10 o'clock meeting,
when Bobby Peede and Max Miller came into my office prior to the meeting and said, this
is what the organization that was hosting the event were asking.    That's what I recall.

**Ms. Cheney.**    And he used the word "peacefully"?

**The Witness.**    From what I recall, yes, ma'am.

**Ms. Cheney.**    And, in your experience, was that sort of Mr. Miller -- well, was this
Mr. Miller who said this or Mr. Peede who said this?

**The Witness.**    It was the two of them, ma'am.    Today, sitting here, I can't
distinguish between, because it was the both of them asking the question.    I don't know
which one exactly.
Ms. Cheney. So did one of them say "peacefully" and the other one said "protest"?

The Witness. Oh, I don’t know, ma’am. I don’t recall that.

Ms. Cheney. So I’m just wondering, in your experience, is it common parlance for people to insert the word "peacefully" before the word "protest"?

The Witness. No. What I -- well, no, ma’am. What I think they were getting at was, they were trying to downplay it so the President -- so, more likely, the service would allow him maybe to go on this or to do this type of event if everything was peaceful, is kind of the way I took it at the time.

Ms. Cheney. So why do you think they felt the need to say "peacefully"?

The Witness. I don’t know, ma’am. I don’t know why they said it. I just recall that.

Ms. Cheney. Yeah. And so, again, I’m just wondering -- because it’s not really common parlance that you would just insert the word "peacefully" in front of the word "protest."

The Witness. I -- I’m not sure, ma’am. I don’t know.

Ms. Cheney. Has anyone talked to you about your testimony today, Mr. Ornato?

The Witness. Anybody talk to me about my -- today, my testimony?

Ms. Cheney. Your testimony.

The Witness. No, ma’am.

Ms. Cheney. Any of your testimony in front of the committee?

The Witness. No, ma’am.

Ms. Cheney. Anybody tell you to say the phrase "peacefully protest"?

The Witness. No, ma’am.

Ms. Cheney. And so what did they describe the President wanting to do
peacefully at the Capitol?

The Witness. From what I recall, they were asking -- and, again, it wasn't -- from
what I took it, it wasn't from the President. They never said that. They mentioned the
organizers of the event.

And I believe I said this in my last testimony, was that they were kind of like, they
knew it was a ridiculous ask, and they were kind of, you know, like, "Hey, can we do this?
Can we maybe do -- you know, he can do this." And they were just kind of -- it was
ridiculous.

So I, you know, immediately said, "I don't think the White House Military Office
would be able to support that, and nor do I think the Secret Service. But you can ask the
Secret Service, because it's their call for security reasons."

Ms. Cheney. Were there other circumstances that you can recall where the
President's staff made an effort to describe activities he would undertake as "peaceful"?

The Witness. No, ma'am.

Ms. Cheney. This was the only occasion?

The Witness. I don't recall anything other than that -- that occasion.

Ms. Cheney. Thank you.

BY: 

Q Mr. Ornato, just to pick up on that, they did use the word "protest," right?

Mr. Miller and Mr. Peede indicated that they were asking whether the President could go
and protest at the Capitol?

A Correct, that's what I recall, that he can stand out there on a stage platform
with some of the supporters and peacefully protest at the Capitol.

Q Okay. So, again, the word "protest" was used by Mr. Miller or Mr. Peede.

It was not "speak" or "appear" or "visit." It was "protest." That was the verb that they
used, that that was the idea?

A    That's what I recall.

Q    Okay. And, to be fair, you said they indicated "peacefully protest." But, again, it was a protest, not simply a regular Presidential speech like any other, right?

A    That's what I recall.

Q    Okay.

And that came to you from Mr. Miller -- Miller or Peede? You're not sure which one?

A    The two of them came in together.

Q    Okay.

A    I don't recall which one was talking through it all, but the two of them came in together.

Q    All right.

Now, just after this -- let me call your attention to exhibit 3. This is now at 11:02. We're literally just marching minute by minute through that morning.

Exhibit 3 is an email that was distributed by, again, someone inside of the Protective Intelligence Division, to a number of other recipients. And attached to it -- if you scroll down, -- is a posting, an actual screenshot of a posting.

We've talked about thedonald.win before, but that actually was circulated at 11:02, this image, which talks about "Trump has given us marching orders" and, basically, "If you're east of the Mississippi, you can and should be there." He talks about a rally at Lincoln Park; talks about trauma kits, no phones.

And if you keep going down, .

Very specifically, the post indicates "advance on the Capitol."
Keep going.

So do you recall -- and I think you testified before you weren't familiar with thedonald.win. But do you remember seeing this? Did this come across your attention or your desk around 11:02 or thereafter on January 6th?

A No, sir. I don't recall seeing this.

Q Did you have any concern from any source about groups massing near the Capitol, in Lincoln Park or otherwise, preparing to advance?

A No, sir. I don't recall knowing any of that information, nor I don't know if I would, because obviously law enforcement is out there dealing with that. I don't know if that would be passed to me. But I don't recall this being passed.

Q Okay. Again, I don't want to --

Ms. Driscoll. For the record, is Mr. Ornato on this email?

[Redacted] He is not.

Ms. Driscoll. He is not at the top of this? Okay.

[Redacted] No, he is not, Ms. Driscoll.

Ms. Driscoll. Thank you.

BY [Redacted]:

Q And, to be clear, Mr. Ornato, I'm not asking you just about the email. I'm asking you about the underlying issue of masses of people gathering in the vicinity of the Capitol, preparing to advance.

Were you aware of any of that sort of information on the morning of January 6th?

A No, sir. I don't recall that information.

Q Okay.

Go ahead, [Redacted]. Forty-three.

BY [Redacted]:
Q    Forty-three. This is an 11:18 a.m. email. Subject line is "Crowd
demographic." And it’s going from the Countersurveillance Division agent -- sorry, I’ll
wait for it to come up -- to members of the Presidential Protective Division.

And it reads, "Additionally, there’s a lot of people in the crowd wearing ballistic
vests. However, no reports of weapons yet. No counterprotests in the area. Crowd
is calm at the time being."

Another email about 6 minutes later, exhibit 44, pushed out a report from Park
Police of "about 200 Proud Boys gathered on Capitol grounds. No disobedience at this
time," from a member of the counter-assault team.

Any of that information get to you, Mr. Ornato?

A    Not that I recall hearing any of this information, ma’am.
[1:32 p.m.]

Q    Now, at 11:32, there is an email sent directly to you, Mr. Ornato. It's 5A. And this goes back to what was just asking you about the mags. So at 11:32 a.m. on the 6th, you are forwarded directly a message from Bobby Engel about the status of the mags. If you scroll all the way down, I think we've seen these before. It's just got the updated running information about how many people are processed and in queue. At 11:28 30,000 had been processed, 400 in the queuing area.

    And then all the way at the top, Mr. Engel sends that to you at -- now, tricky here. If this is a White House email, it's actually 5 hours earlier because the White House emails are in Greenwich Standard Time, whatever it's called, the international -- yeah, this is actually 11:35 a.m. It says 4:35, but you have to go back 5 hours.

    So you respond to the report that you received from Mr. Engel, Thank you, great job. Tell me what you meant by that when you say, Thank you, great job.

A    Sure. If you can scroll down a little bit to what Mr. Engel sent me for awareness, the next one, right there, 30,000 processed and 400, which to me is nothing at that point, that they processed 30,000 people was a great job. Thank you for, you know, for doing that. That's hard, for those mag officers to go through 30,000 people and process them in in that amount of time was -- was tremendous. So I was giving them accolades for the job they just performed.

Q    I see. So the job being the expeditious processing of people through the mags into the permanent area of the event?

A    Correct. For them to do that, for that many people to reach out and touch and to make sure they're clean going through, obviously from my former position as the
special agent in charge, I know that's an undertaking in and of itself.

Q  Okay.

A  So I was giving them accolades.

Q  Appreciate that. So at 11 -- whatever time this was, 11:32 a.m., you were aware that the mags essentially were free flowing or there are only a handful of people in line, correct?

A  Correct.

Q  Were you also aware that there was a huge crowd of people amassed outside the magnetometers that had ballistic vests and backpacks and helmets? Were you aware of that at 11:32?

A  Not at that time, sir.

Q  Okay. So, again, I don't want to repeat all the things, but despite all the intel that Secret Service was aware of, citing specifically all of that activity outside the mags, you, Mr. Ornato, weren't aware that even though those folks were inside, 30,000, there are a large number of people outside the mags?

A  No. Sir, from what I recall, I became aware of that later on from Mr. Peede and Mr. Miller, but not at that time.

Q  At 11:49, let me show you another exhibit, exhibit 4, just about 17 minutes after you were informed that the mags were free flowing, there's another email, and this one, if you go to the bottom, has to do with a specific person who's a White male in a green-hooded sweatshirt who has -- alleged to have had a rifle in a tree. This is a series of messages that -- MPD -- if you go all the way to page 3, [redacted]. I'm sorry to keep -- farther down. There you go. MPD is investigating a rifle, plain view, in a parked car near the Spy Museum. We talked about that. The vehicle likely impounded.
If you go up to the next series, there's a second guy with a rifle. FPS has one identified in southwest near the Department of Education with two weapons. Weapons were detected as the subject was entering a garage. Any additional info will be shared with USSS.

And then keep going up. And then there's a third weapons issue, 14th and Constitution, very close to the Ellipse. Additional reports of a few people in trees. No further info regarding firearms, but they may have galvanized pipes.

Keep going up. Then there's subject with a pistol, 15th and Constitution, White male, green-hooded sweatshirt. MPD has made contact. Subject near a silver vehicle. Again, 15th and Constitution right at the corner of the Ellipse.

And then if you go up, [REDACTED]: Roger that. 15th and Conn. Can you include the JOC supervisor in the distribution? And she says, you bet.

All right. Again, a bunch of reports over the course of the morning about people with guns, at least three, and so many people with galvanized pipes in trees right in the vicinity of the Ellipse. Did you become aware at this time of any of that information?

I recall -- I recall being made aware of possible -- the person with a possible rifle in a tree at some point later on, not real-time info. And I was made aware of there were possible persons -- persons seen with -- with rifles or with guns on -- maybe this is on 15th -- or I can't remember the exact street.

However, from what I was briefed, it was already taken care of, because I was briefed that it was all unconfirmed, that there wasn't any interaction or weapons found when they interacted with those individuals. I had gotten a back brief on it. I don't remember hearing this stuff real time.

Q When you say you got a back brief on it, when do you recall getting that back brief? On January 6th?
A    I believe the rifle -- the person in the tree with the rifle, I believe, getting
back briefed on that, on January 6th, because that was near the Ellipse event. And from
what I recall, I believe the motorcade was leaving or had already left around that time, or
they were getting ready to and it delayed them a little bit. And I believe I was given that
was the reason why they were delayed, but they had already arrived at the site at that
point, so I was back-briefed after the situation was resolved.

Q    I see. So when you were back-briefed, did you then pass that information
along to Mr. Meadows or anybody else?

A    I didn't have anybody there to -- that I recall. Everybody was down at the
site. So just like at a trip, Mr. Meadows was the Chief of Staff rep, obviously, at the site.
He would've been briefed by Secret Service at the venue, because they wouldn't go
through me to go to Mr. Meadows when he's standing right there. So he would've been
briefed on all of these things taking place at the venue from my past experience.

Q    I understand.

A    I -- the --

Q    From your past experience, Mr. Meadows, the Chief of Staff, would've been
told in real time, Hey, we've got to hold for a minute because there's a report of a guy in
the tree with a rifle.

A    Correct, because he's the Chief of Staff rep for the visit.

Q    Right.

A    Like this could've been a rally in Idaho, the same thing, if he was there, they
would be talking to him not calling me back in D.C. to go through me.

Q    Yeah. No, I understand. Mr. Meadows was at the Ellipse, correct? He
was down there with the President?

A    Correct.
Q    And if there was a man in the tree with a rifle allegedly, and that caused a
delay, your testimony is that Mr. Meadows would've been briefed on that or informed of
that since he was at the venue?
A    That would be my understanding or my assumption based upon my past
experience in the role of the special agent in charge that the Chief of Staff rep would've
been briefed on site.
Q    Yeah. I understand that you weren't there, but I appreciate that.
All right. Let's keep going in time, to 45.
BY:
Q    I'm now going to show you an email from 12:59. Now, again, from your
prior testimony, it's my understanding you were not listening to the former President's
speech. Is that accurate?
A    That is correct. I was not listening to the speech.
Q    Okay. So this is an email, the President began speech -- began a speech a
little bit before noon and ended around 1:10. And if you look at the bottom here, this is
an email at 12:59 from the Joint Operations Center. It says, ALCON, Mogul announced
on live TV that he will head to the Capitol with the crowd.
Now, this is Mogul being the former President, and then there are some specifics
as to what the response team will be if Mogul heads to the Capitol and some details are
provided there.
And then if you go further up the email chain, this is -- obviously creates a ripple
effect as to what the counter surveillance division agents do as a result of hearing the
President announce his intent to go to the Capitol. Were you made aware -- when were
you first made aware of the President announcing his intent to go to the Capitol?
A    I don't recall when I was first made aware. I believe it was later on by my
assistant that he announced it later on in the day. I don't recall it real time, because I -- we didn't have the TV on in our office with his speech. So I don't recall when exactly, but it was later on that I heard that he announced that, but I wasn't aware of it at this time.

Q When -- and apart from the announcement, did you learn of the President wanting to go to the Capitol at all on January 6th?

A From my prior interview with you, I believe it was Cassidy Hutchinson and I had texted, and Cassidy had mentioned that before he got on stage he mentioned to the Chief of Staff that he wanted to go to the Capitol. And my response was -- there was no plan for it, so my response was it wasn’t happening, it's not safe to do so because there's no security assets in place, and that he would -- to go ahead and pass it to Bob Engel because it's -- I said I believe Bobby -- and she said, Engel or Peede? And I said Engel, because that's Bob Engel's call as the special agent in charge. And I'm not at the venue, as we've said, so it's between Robert Engel and it's between Chief of Staff Meadows, but it's his call on security.

Q And apart from that -- those text messages, and we had showed you those at the prior interview with Ms. Hutchinson, did you learn anything further about the President wanting to go to the Capitol apart from right before he goes on stage?

A I don't recall knowing anything further about the President wanting to go to the Capitol besides the January 4th conversation -- except that wasn't the President, that was between Max and Bobby going to the Capitol -- and then Cassidy Hutchinson saying the President on January 6th was the only time that I heard it coming through somebody that the President was asking.

Q Okay. And we'll get into a little bit more about any conversation with Mr. Engel, but let me show you exhibit 46. This is an email with Capitol -- with -- sorry,
Secret Service leadership. It looks like, if you start at the bottom, 12:20, Mr. Paramore is responding to what he just heard on TV. POTUS just said on TV he’s going to the Capitol, question mark. Good afternoon, Kim and Ron, Kim Cheatle and Ron Rowe watching the POTUS speech on TV. POTUS said he is going to the U.S. Capitol to watch the vote. Do we really think this is true or just talk? And the response from Ms. Cheatle at 1:34, almost an hour later, he said it, but not going, to our knowledge. And a response back -- and it looks like the response back also includes David Torres, who was the head of the intel division there at the service.

At any time, let’s take it from 12:20 to 1:34, did anyone from Secret Service leadership reach out to you about your knowledge about this request to go to the Capitol?

A Not that I can recall, ma’am.

Q Now, just after that, Mr. Ornato, at 1:35, I want to show you a document that is one we received from the Secret Service, which is essentially a timeline of the day. It’s exhibit 9, if you can pull it up.

And this is not something that is an email. It’s an actual document that was produced to us by the Secret Service. And on page 4 of that timeline, I want to call your attention to the entry at 13:25 hours.

So according to this document from the Secret Service, Mr. Ornato --

A Can you just --

Q Yep, we can blow it up.

A -- zoom in. Yep.

Q I want to make sure you can read it. The entry at 13:25 says, per JOC PPD is advising that Mogul is planning on holding at the White House
for the next approximate 2 hours, then moving to the Capitol.

So do you recall upon the President’s return to the West Wing after the Ellipse
speech any discussion of a possible subsequent move to the Capitol, the President
moving to the Capitol?

A  No, I don’t recall any talk about the President moving to the Capitol.

Q  Do you recall the motorcade being held as that discussion took place?

A  No, sir, I’m not aware of the motorcade being held.

Q  When was the last time that you heard anything on January 6th about the
possibility of the President going to the Capitol? Was it that text exchange with Cassidy
Hutchinson, or did there come a time later where you heard more about it?

A  That was the text exchange with Cassidy Hutchinson. I forgot even about
that exchange. I thought it was a done deal. There was no assets in place. There
was no reason for it. I never thought about it again.

Q  Again, we’re going to get into this a little bit more. We’ve received a lot of
information from the Secret Service that it -- there was a continued discussion back at the
White House about the President coming back for a little while, but then, potentially, still
going. Were you aware of any of that discussion?

A  I was not aware of that discussion, sir.

Q  All right. So you weren’t aware of what factors ultimately led for him not
to go or the motorcade being ultimately released, anything like that?

A  I was not, sir. I don’t recall any of that.

Q  Okay. All that happened separate from your knowledge. Is that right?

A  I don’t recall any of that, sir, so --

Q  Okay. So this entry on the timeline about Mogul planning on holding for
2 hours, then moving to the Capitol, you’re not familiar with any such discussion of a
holding period at the White House before he would subsequently go to the Capitol?

A    I am not, sir. I don't recall that at all.

Q    Okay. All right. Exhibit 8 is at 1:53, just about less than 20 minutes later. There's an email here. We'll blow it up for you so you can read it. The bottom email is from Bob Sciarrone to Ted Arruda, and he's notifying Arruda that Deputy -- that DAD Rowe is there, is in room 60. Room 60, is -- that Bob Engel's office in the Old Executive Office -- the Executive Office Building?

A    Yes, sir.

Q    Okay. And then if you go up, Mr. Engel responds -- I'm sorry, that comes in at 1:41. And then just about 13 minutes later at 1:54, Engel responds, I'm in with the WW. We are discussing options and setting expectations. And Mr. Engel, to share with you, testified that he was in your office in the West Wing when he was discussing expectation -- setting expectations and discussing options about a subsequent move to the Capitol. Do you recall Mr. Engel being in your office talking to Secret Service or White House personnel about a potential subsequent move to the Capitol?

A    Sir, I don't recall that conversation happening in my office.

Q    So, but Mr. Engel testified again that he was in your office, that as soon as he returned from the Ellipse he came to your office and that these discussions that he references in the email, discussing options and setting expectations, took place when you and he were in his -- your office. And you're saying you don't recall that?

A    Sir, I don't recall any conversation taking place about the possible movement to the President to the Capitol.

Q    What do you --

A    Mr. Engel I recall being in my office.

Q    What do you recall about the conversation that you had with Mr. Engel or
others upon his return from the Ellipse event?

A  I recall Mr. Engel letting me know that the crowd was dispersing because our concern was that many people still around the White House, and in the White House zone was a lot of people. And I remember asking if we were good here at the White House, meaning postured correctly with all the people that were out there at the Ellipse.

And he said that they were dispersing, and we are postured good here at the White House, because I believe at the time the -- I believe at the time, the Capitol -- Capitol Police were interacting or -- with the protesters. There -- it was getting physical at the Capitol outside during that time.

So I believe that was why my concern was at the White House are we going to see that here, and he was reassuring me that we -- we were postured correctly and they were holding the mag officers, I believe, to assist with possible bolstering up posts around the White House. That's the conversation I recall in my office, sir.

Q Okay. You don't remember anything else at this point?

A No, sir, not that I can recall.

Q All right. We're going to come back to this, but I want to finish going through the intel before we do. That was, I believe, it was 1:53. Why don't we pick up at 1:56, [redacted], with 47.

BY [redacted]:

Q Sure. Do you want to show that one, [redacted]? This is an email at 1:19. The bottom says, FYSA, this is to Mr. Engel, Capitol Police having serious challenges securing [redacted] I think that's what you were just referencing. Nine priority breach attempts at this time. OTR to anywhere near there is not advisable. Give me a call when free. Front office concerned about OTR to [redacted]
And this is to Bob Engel, who at this point has just arrived back to the White House and who states is in your office at this time. His response at 1:56, again, while he's still in your office is, understood. We are not doing an OTR

Was any of this discussed between you and Mr. Engel?

A    Again, ma'am, I have no -- I don't recall anything being discussed about a movement to the Capitol. That's not what our discussion was about that I recall. It was about the posturing at the White House. Because of things that were going on at the Capitol, my main concern was were our assets safe here at the White House.

Q    Okay. Exhibit 48 is from Ted Arruda to yourself. We talked a little bit about those PIOC updates, and now we're up to PIOC update number 10, at 2:33, with Mr. Arruda to you saying, for your situational awareness. Do you remember receiving the updates at this point, Mr. Ornato?

A    As I'm reading the first update, I don't recall receiving the update immediate -- or this update here specifically. But I recall having a conversation, I believe it was with Mr. Engel, once I -- you know, it came about that the Vice President was up at the Capitol. I reached out from what I recall and asked him, where is the Vice President right now with everything that was going on at the Capitol. And he said, let me get back to you.

And then he, I believe, called me back to let me know that the Vice -- what I understood was that the Vice President was en route his residence, the Vice President residence, which is called. And that's what I had passed on to the Chief of Staff.

Q    We talked about that before, and in the last update, update 10 there, it says, USSS/VPPD advises being evacuated from U.S. Capitol en route to. And we also discussed how that was inaccurate, but that was passed onto Chief of Staff
Meadows at that time, correct?

A    Correct.  I had passed that on, and it was later on that Mr. Meadows corrected me that he was -- that the Vice President was still holding up there.

Q    And this appears to be you receiving the PIOC updates though from Mr. Arruda, but in addition to these emails, you're also receiving updates verbally.  Is that right?

A    That one I remember receiving verbally, correct.

BY:

Q    So just a little bit after this, Mr. Ornato, at 3:05 p.m., Mr. Engel forwards you an email for your situational awareness, and it's 5B, if you could show that.  This is one that came directly to you from Mr. Engel.  And over the course of the day, I can represent to you he forwarded about 15 emails most of which came from John Gutsmiedl, who was in the PPD, and he was, I believe, the agent who was responsible in the I think, gathering and assessing and distributing information.

So if you go down to the bottom here, this initial update from Gutsmiedl is at 2:55 and, it says, DCFD reporting civilian shot in chest at door of House Chamber.  He sends that to Engel, Arruda, and Sciarrone.  And then that gets forwarded to you soon thereafter, right, at 3:05, so just about 10 minutes after Engel gets it, he sends it to you. And I believe you or Mr. Harrison, Will Harrison -- Beau Harrison responds by saying, thank you.

So do you remember being told or emailed, getting an email from Bobby Engel, about the fact that somebody had been shot inside the Capitol?

A    So what I recall is Beau Harrison letting me know that an email came across. I believe Beau Harrison was on most of the emails with me because Beau was trying to watch the emails at that point for any -- anything being passed as we gave updates.
And you -- please correct me if I'm mistaken here, I thought the two officers unconscious at the Capitol en route to the hospital was the first thing I had received, and that could've been verbally and that's maybe why I don't recall, and I had updated the Chief of Staff with that.

And then this here -- and, [REDACTED] if I'm not mistaken, there was a note card written up by Beau Harrison that you all had asked when I was with the Secret Service to go ahead and see what hand -- whose handwriting it was and who the note card was meant for. And that was the about the shots being fired, I believe, and that was for the Chief of Staff. So those -- that information was passed to the Chief of Staff.

Q Yeah. You're exactly -- you're anticipating my question. You wrote down, once you received this information about a shooting, something on a note card and passed it to the Chief of Staff. Is that right?

A And from what I recall, it was Beau Harrison had wrote it down, and then at some point, we passed it to the Chief of Staff when he was coming by.

Q All right. And that was the second thing that you had passed to the Chief of Staff about officers to -- I mean, excuse me, injuries to officers at the Capitol, right?

A The first -- the first thing I recall was passing the Chief of Staff a note saying that there was two officers unconscious and being brought to the hospital.

Q Okay. Why was it important to you, Mr. Ornato, to elevate this to the Chief of Staff? You haven't elevated any other things, like the mags, or like the presence of weapons or pipes, but this one you took to the Chief of Staff. Tell me what informed your decision to do that?

A Well, again, I don't recall the weapons and pipes. Like I don't recall if I had elevated or he was down at the venue and he was told firsthand. I'm -- I don't recall that. And the mags, that doesn't elevate to the Chief of Staff as far as mag numbers.
He wouldn't get involved in stuff like that.

So as this one here, two officers being injured when they know the Capitol was -- I had passed -- from what I recall, I had passed earlier -- and I think in my previous testimony, that the officers were having a physical battle outside. They were trying to protect the Capitol, and I had passed that to the Chief of Staff as well. This here with two officers being injured I felt was important as well to pass to the Chief of Staff as to the severity of what was taking place.

Q I understand. And I believe your testimony the last time was that you actually entered the dining room where the Chief of Staff was with the President and handed him this card. Is that right?

A For this card here, correct, with the officers being unconscious, I had walked down -- walked into the Oval. Nobody was there. And I saw the Chief in the private dining room. He waved me down the small hallway. I handed him the note and I walked out.

Q Yeah. I see Ms. Murphy is coming. Congresswoman Murphy is joining us. So just describe again, I know we've been through this, but now based -- now that we've got new information, this is important. Tell us what was going on when you got into the dining room with that note to deliver it to the Chief of Staff.

A I just recall the Chief of Staff was at one side of the table and the President was on the left side of the table. I was tunnel visioned at the Chief of Staff. He waved me in. I handed him the note, and I turned around and walked out.

Q Was the television on when you were in the dining room?

A This came up in my past one, but I don't recall, sir. I was looking at the Chief of Staff. I don't recall if it was on or not.

Q Was there any conversation between you and the Chief of Staff or you and
the President or the two of them that you heard when you went in to deliver the note?

A    As I was walking down the hallway, there wasn’t -- the conversation had stopped when the chief waved me down the hallway. I handed him the note. I didn’t say anything that I recall, and I walked out.

Q    All right. And so, you don’t remember anything that the Chief of Staff or the President said during that whole interaction?

A    Sir, I don’t believe anything was said. It was less than a couple of seconds.

Q    Okay. All right. Do you believe, Mr. Ornato, that the people that were responsible for attacks on law enforcement should be prosecuted?

A    Sir, anybody criminally acting against law enforcement -- against anybody in a criminal act should be prosecuted.

Q    And that includes anybody who had attacked Officer Fanone or Officer Sicknick or any of the officers that have testified in our hearings before about their own personal -- or testified about those officers in our hearings, they ought to be -- people that are [inaudible] ought to be prosecuted, correct?

A    Sir, as a former law enforcement officer for over 27 years, if anybody is assaulting me, I would want them prosecuted. That is the law, absolutely.

Q    I understand, Mr. Ornato. What would you say then to Mrs. Sicknick about her son Brian’s death, if you had an opportunity to talk to her?

A    Sorry, sir, I -- I don’t understand the question here.

Q    I’m just asking you, if you had an opportunity to speak to Officer Fanone or the mother of Officer Sicknick, if you have any personal message for them, or what you would say to them.

A    Sir, I haven’t spoken with them. I don’t know them. I’m very sorry for the loss, like I’m sure the country is, and I side with those that -- those who mourn the loss.
And I don’t believe there should be a loss of life ever, especially in an attack, especially on
law enforcement. So, you know, I would mourn with the country in that loss.

Q      All right. And did you convey any of that at the time, in real time, to
anybody else in the White House when you received information about the officers being
injured or the civilian being shot?

A      Sir, I didn’t know the severity of officers being injured. All we knew was I
think one was -- I think we knew one was unconscious, both -- two were going to the
hospital, if that was -- I can’t remember the exact, but we didn’t have severity. We
didn’t have the shot -- we just knew a shot was fired. I think it was hours before we
knew who was shot, and I don’t -- and I think it was hours before that of who fired the
shot or after that.

So I didn’t know that. We were just updating real time of what we were getting.
I shouldn’t say real time. It wasn’t exactly real time, but after the fact, we were
updating the chief with that information.

Ms. Cheney, I see you’ve come on camera. Please, go ahead.

Ms. Cheney. Thanks,

Mr. Ornato, in your previous testimony, you said that when you went into the
dining room you intentionally avoided making eye contact with the President. Can you
explain why that was?

The Witness. Yes, ma’am. I was asked last time of that. My notion as chain
of command, the Chief of Staff is in the dining room with the President of the United
States. I’m not to interject or intervene or be there except to hand the Chief an urgent
note, so I wasn’t looking to have any conversation or get inter -- or be interjected with
anything in there.

Ms. Cheney. I think you also described last time that you were emotional at that
The Witness. I was emotional that officers were hurt. I believe during my testimony, it was the first time last time I talked about it, and I got emotional during my testimony in going through all that again and reliving it, that I hadn't done that before. And it was -- it was an emotional part of knowing that officers were being injured, any law enforcement was being injured during this.

Ms. Cheney. And at that moment, we now know that as there was a violent riot, an attack underway, and I think over 150 law enforcement officers, as I mentioned earlier, sustained serious injuries, President Trump sat in the dining room off of the Oval Office and despite repeated pleas from his family and from senior staff at the White House refused to tell his supporters to leave. Did you advise the President not to tell his supporters to leave?

The Witness. Ma'am, I didn't advise the President of anything. It's not my role there to advise the President of anything of that nature. I -- my job is updating the Chief of Staff and went back to my office to monitor any other information coming in. As the deputy chief of staff of operations, there is other deputy chiefs of staff there. There's the chief of staff there of policy, of other things. That wasn't my role as the detailee from the Secret Service to be advising the President.

Ms. Cheney. As a detailee from the Secret Service? You considered yourself more a detailee from the Secret Service than a chief of staff, the deputy chief of staff for operations?

The Witness. Well, that's -- I was detailed from the Secret Service as the deputy chief of staff for operations. I held the role as deputy chief of staff of operations, and that's where -- the role I held was a lot of it was with the classified programs, and that's what I was in my office for as well was making sure we were good on our classified
programs. That was my role.

Ms. Cheney. Thank you.

BY:

Q Mr. Ornato, let me just pick up on something Ms. Cheney just asked you about, and that's whether or not the President issued, or was encouraged to or not to issue a statement. Let me just read you some testimony that we got from Pat Cipollone, you know, the White House counsel. I assume you were closely acquainted with Mr. Cipollone during your time as deputy chief of staff for operations and worked with him in that capacity? Is that right?

A Yes, I knew Pat. Yes.

Q All right. So let me just -- let me just read something to you and ask you if it refreshes your memory about encouraging the President to give a statement. It -- he was asked, you and Mr. Philbin indicated that the two of you went downstairs to Mark Meadows' office, either found him in his office, or then found him in the President's dining room with the President.

Mr. Cipollone said, Yes, that's correct. I think he was already in the dining room. I think we went to his office, he wasn't there. We both went into the dining room.

Question: What was your intention? I think you said something more needed to be done. What specifically do you think needed to be done?

Answer: I can't talk about conversations. I think I was pretty clear, there needed to be an immediate and forceful response, statement, public statement that three people -- that, excuse me, that people need to leave the Capitol now.

Okay. Do you remember any discussion with Mark Meadows with respect to his view that the President didn't want to do anything or was somehow resistant to wanting to say something along the lines that you suggested?
Answer: Just to be clear, many people suggested it, not just me. Many people felt the same way. I'm sure I had conversations with Mark about this during the course of the day and expressed my opinion very forcefully that this needs to be done. I remember at one point, I can't remember when, when I continued to express -- and this is not something -- I think this was outside of the -- I know this was outside of the dining room. I expressed to Mark Meadows this needs to be done now. And I expressed, if -- I'm trying to remember if there was a presidential communication, but I expressed very clearly to Mark Meadows and others, it wasn't just me, with this sentiment that something needed to be done, that this was not good, that this was a violation of -- I thought what happened on January 6th was a national tragedy. I did everything I could do during that time to express the things needed to be done, that statements needed to be made. I wasn't the only one. There were a lot of people who were doing it forcefully.

So my question, Mr. Ornato, is, were you part of that chorus of people who were encouraging a statement, a more forceful statement to be made to try to stop the violence?

A Sir, January 6th was a tragedy. I wish it never happened. I know we all do. I was not in the Oval Office. I was not outside the Oval Office. The only time I saw the President that day was for those brief amounts of seconds that I can remember handing Mark Meadows a note. I was in my office trying to manage the classified programs and also have the intelligence that was coming in to give the Chief of Staff the information he needed was my role at that time.

If I was given the opportunity, or asked about it as far as from others around, I don't recall if I had echoed that something needed to be done. But I believe -- and Ms. Cheney corrected me on my first interview -- I didn't know that people were watching
Twitter or knowing that up there at the Capitol. I had assumed from where I was sitting that it was a mob mentality and they were just trying to get in and going through law enforcement and attacking law enforcement to do it. I did not know that they were actively monitoring if the President were to tweet or not. I didn’t know that. If I had known that, then, yes, a statement should’ve been made, but I wasn’t in a position in the role I was in, as far as I report to the Chief of Staff, to go around the Chief of Staff on anything of that nature. So it would’ve been just my -- doing my role was giving the Chief of Staff the information he needed to be able to do his job.

Ms. Cheney, go ahead.

Ms. Cheney. Thanks.

Mr. Ornato, do you know of anyone in the White House who told the President not to instruct his supporters to leave the Capitol?

The Witness. I don’t know that, ma’am. I never heard -- I haven’t heard somebody say not to instruct. I haven’t heard -- I wasn’t in the Oval or around the outside of the Oval, like I said. I didn’t even know those that went in there to try to tell him to instruct him to stand them down, I didn’t know that as well, ma’am. But I didn’t know anybody that had said -- that I can recall, that said not to put a message out.

Ms. Cheney. Thank you.

Q. Did you hear anything, Mr. Ornato, over the course of that afternoon about the President’s reluctance to issue a forceful statement? Did you hear -- I understand you didn’t talk to the President, but did you hear any discussion among others inside the White House about that issue?

A. I did not, sir. I don’t recall hearing any of that discussion.

Q. Did you hear about anyone encouraging him to -- I’m sorry, go ahead?
Ms. Driscoll. No, I just wanted -- we were going to ask for a break, but you can finish.

Did you hear any talk about people who were encouraging him to say something or not say something at all in any direction, people that were involved in the discussion of messaging, the President saying something to the public?

A I don't recall. I remember the Chief running back and forth. He was on the phone a lot, and he was running back and forth from his office to the Oval Office. And I think -- I recall something of -- that -- I can't remember her name, the press office, Kayleigh, I believe it was, down in their office, and my assistant saying that the press office and -- was, you know, trying to get a statement together or something of that nature. But I -- as I think about it sitting here today, I don't recall exact, specific people or information.

It was -- it was very chaotic, sir. I'll be honest with you, it was a very chaotic time in trying to get the information, and it was usually late information or it wasn't accurate or it was the fog of war and it was misrepresented. And it was very -- a very chaotic day, so I don't recall those specific details.

Q Mr. Ornato, I completely appreciate that it was a chaotic day, and I'm not looking for specific details. I'm just wondering if you heard any discussion at all about the issue of the President needs to say this, the President shouldn't say that, any such general discussion about what he should say during the riot?

A No, sir, I did not -- I don't recall hearing anything about what he should or should not say, no.
Okay. All right. Why don't we take 5 minutes at this point. Is that enough, or, Ms. Driscoll, do you need more?

Ms. Driscoll. We can make 5 work.

Okay. That's great. Thank you. We'll take 5 minutes.

[Recess.]

Q All right. I think, Mr. Ornato, we left off -- I want to go back to the timeline and just finish the rest of this sort of intelligence about what was going on at the Capitol that came into the Secret Service over the course of the rest of the afternoon. I believe at 3:32, the next PIOC update is emailed to you.

If you could call up, exhibit 5C.

We've talked about this before, periodically, you -- Mr. Engel forwards you the, sort of, updated situational awareness briefings that are -- he's receiving from the protective intelligence division. At this time, 3:32 p.m., after this note had been passed that we just discussed to the Chief of Staff -- go up, if you can -- the latest update that's passed to you is about the National Guard. It's update 14, DHS/NOC is reporting that National Guard has been mobilized with personnel en route to the Capitol.

Do you recall getting information that the Guard had now been mobilized and that personnel were en route to the Capitol?

A Sir, I do remember getting that information that the service was passing that the National Guard was en route to the Capitol, and I -- I'm assuming it was from this. I don't remember specifically if it was from this, but I do remember that and passing that on.

Q Tell me, I was going to ask you, to whom did you pass it on?

A That would've been the Chief of Staff. Once I had saw him running back
and forth from his office to the Oval, I would've passed it to him during that time.

Q  Do you recall, Mr. Ornato, telling him specifically about, Hey, heads up, the
Guard is on its way or the Guard has been mobilized after you received that information?
A  So what I recall is letting him know that -- what I -- what I do recall is the
chief asking to get Secretary Miller on the phone, why aren't they there yet. And I
recall -- and I believe we went through this in my last testimony, I recall trying to get the
Chief of Staff to the Secretary Miller, which was Kash Patel, on the phone as
Mr. Meadows' staff was trying to get Secretary -- Acting Secretary Miller on the phone.
And as soon as I got Kash Patel, I asked him where the Secretary was. I saw that
his -- Mark Meadows' staff connected Acting Secretary Miller to Mark Meadows, at which
point I told Kash he's talking to him and we hung up.

Q  Okay. Did you have any other conversation with Mr. Meadows in the
dining room, or was the one you just described the only time that you talked to him back
in that private dining room?
A  I'm sorry, sir, this isn't back in the private dining room. This was down in
his office.

Q  Yeah.
A  That was the only time I can remember going into the private dining room
was to hand Mr. Meadows that initial note card, and then I don't recall going into the
private area again.

Q  I understand. So the discussion you just indicated about calling the DOD
Chief of Staff, did -- was that in response to receiving this update from Mr. Engel about
the Guard being deployed, or was that a separate occasion?
A  I don't recall if that was a response from this, but it was -- from my
remembering, what I recall is, it was around the same time, because I recall saying
something to him about the Guard mobilizing, and then he wanted to know why it wasn't there yet.

Q    I see.

A    So that was -- so I don't know if this was the document that drew that out, but that was -- I remember the discussion from Mr. Meadows of, you know, get the Guard -- get Acting Secretary Miller on the phone. I want to talk to him.

Q    Were you present when Mr. Meadows spoke to Acting SecDef Miller?

A    I wasn't -- I was more towards my office. He was in his, but with the doors open. I remember hearing him get -- saying, Get the Guard to the Capitol now. I remember that.

Q    Okay.

A    It was kind of what I had heard him yell.

Q    I understand. And about when did that occur? And I'm not looking for a pinpoint minute, but do you remember about when that happened?

A    I don't, sir.

Q    Okay.

A    I don't remember the timeframe.

Q    All right. I understand. The next message you get is at -- it's tab 5D, and it's at 3:36 p.m., just a little while later. And this is one -- not a PIOC report but one of those Gutsmiedl emails that gets forwarded to you.

Mr. Gutsmiedl, if you scroll down, at 3:34, talks about two unknown PD down at Constitution and Delaware, one unconscious, not breathing. I think you talked a little bit about that, Mr. Ornato, before. That was something that you briefed Mr. Meadows about, correct, the fact that we had law enforcement officers down?

A    Correct.
Q    All right. He also talks about the National Guard, 41 National Guard en
route to the Capitol. National Guard QRF being mobilized, Montgomery County PD CDU
is coming to the Capitol. And Hoosier, the Vice President, still on Capitol Complex
holding in tunnel. That comes to you at 3:36. Mr. Harrison says, received and passed
to COS.

    Do you recall personally -- you talked about the unconscious officers, but passing
any of that other information on to Mr. Meadows upon receipt of it from Mr. Engel?
A    I don't remember recalling exactly passing that on, but Mr. Harrison was also
passing information on. He would've done that, too, if he saw the Chief, and I did it.

Q    Yeah, I understand. Now, going back to your phone records, Mr. Ornato, at
this point, at 3:40 you called the White House Situation Room, which could've been to
connect you to someone. At 3:41 you called Bobby Engel, and then at 3:44 you called
Director Murray and had a 5-minute conversation with him. Do you remember those
series of calls, the Situation Room, Engel, and Director Murray?
A    Now that you say that today, I remember the call to the Situation Room, I
believe, was to connect me with Kash Patel --

Q    Okay. That was at 3:40, yep.
A    -- from what I can recall.

Q    Appreciate that. And then you called Mr. Engel just a minute later at 3:41?
A    So right around this time is when the Chief of Staff notified myself and Beau
that the Vice President was still around -- still up at the Capitol, is what I remember. We
didn't know for about an hour or so that the Vice President was still up there. So then, I
remember calling Mr. Engel to say, Hey, he's still up there. And he says, Yeah. I
remember him saying, I'll forward you the updates or I'll get you the updates on that.
And that's when I think a lot of the updates started coming in.
But I necessarily didn't see that one that said the Vice President at -- in the tunnel holding. I remember calling Mr. Engel back once the chief told me the Vice President was still at the Capitol, so that could've been that phone call, but I don't recall exactly.

Q. Okay. And I see Ms. Cheney has put her camera on, but I just want to really quickly, before going to her, do you remember the conversation with Director Murray?

A. It's just a 5-minute connected call just 3 minutes later.

Q. I don't recall the conversation with Director Murray.

A. What would've caused you to elevate something to the head of the service at that time? Just speculating, what could it have been?

Q. Sir, I don't recall. I --

A. Okay.

Q. I can't even -- I didn't -- I didn't know -- I don't recall placing a phone call to the Director.

Q. I see.

Ms. Cheney, go ahead. I'm sorry.

Ms. Cheney. Thank you very much.

Mr. Ornato, are you aware of the fact that the committee has put on evidence in our public hearings that the aide has testified that Mr. Cipollone and Mr. Herschmann were outside the Oval Office, they were trying to get the Guard mobilized, and Mr. Herschmann said the President doesn't want to do anything?

The Witness. I'm not -- I'm not familiar with that, ma'am. I don't recall that.

Ms. Cheney. Thank you.

BY: 

Q. All right. Mr. Ornato, just moving forward in time, 4:24 is the next thing I want to show you. It's 5E.
If you could call up 5E.

It's another message that's passed directly to you from Mr. Engel. And this has to do with pipe bombs at the DNC. So if you go down here to the -- this is, Mr. Gutsmiedl's email. This just sort of becomes a running chain. And he tells Bobby Engel at 4:21, ATF reports two devices at DNC office and believe they are viable and are being addressed at this time. That gets forwarded on to Engel, and then he forwards it on to you.

Do you remember any discussion that afternoon about live pipe bombs being found at the DNC?

A I do recall being briefed that there were pipe bombs found. What I recall was that they were determining if they were inert or alive at a later time. They didn't know at that point. And they had relocated, if I'm not mistaken, Vice President-elect Harris from the DNC, and I passed that information, I remember, to Mark Meadows outside my office.

Q I see. All right. So the information about the pipe bomb rose to the level of magnitude that, in your view, Chief of Staff needed to be aware of the latest information and you orally conveyed that to him?

A Correct. I remember that, sir, outside, because of the Vice President-elect Harris being relocated from that venue.

Q Where -- it sounds like you have a kind of specific recollection of that conversation with Meadows. Where did it take place?

A It was -- I believe it was right outside my office. I believe -- I want to -- what I recall, I remember Mr. -- Beau Harrison, his desk is right there at the door, and we were standing there when that came up as Mr. Meadows was walking by. And I stopped him from what I remember and said, Hey, just -- we just got this.
Q  So that would've been close in time, right after your receipt at about 4:24 of
this message from Bobby Engel?

A  That's what I recall, sir.

Q  Okay.  All right.  About a half an hour later, or a little more, 40 minutes,
5:08, this is tab 5F, it's the next one that -- and these are all now that come to you directly
from Mr. Engel.  Let me ask you about this one.  This is, again, it's the same email chain
from Gutsmiedl, but the latest updates.

[redacted]  if you go down to just above the -- we talked about -- keep going down.

All right.  We talked about this one -- I'm sorry, we didn't.  Go down one more.

We talked about this one --


[redacted]  Okay.  You can blow it up.

Ms. Driscoll.  Thank you.

BY [redacted]:

Q  Okay.  So we talked about the 4:22 ATF reports, the devices.  Let's just go
through the updates now that come to you.  So Gutsmiedl tells Engel, and all of this
comes to you, MPD reports DNC is now clear of both devices, so the devices have been
taken care of.  ATF still on the scene.  Devices disrupted and ATF doing exam now to
determine viability.  Device disrupted and disabled and being examined now for
viability.  So there are two separate devices, one at 300 1st Street and one at the DNC.

And then Gutsmiedl updates, found a WFO special agent, Washington Field Office
FBI special agent that is embedded with the Capitol Police terrorism task force agents.
He inquired with them.  They checked, but they couldn't provide any additional
info/details on the shooting from their agency.  They can't even confirm that it was a
police-involved shooting, or any additional details.  No new updates from any of the
partners on the details.

So he's updating now about status of the shooting that you had briefed Meadows on with the card.

And then keep going down. The final update from Gutmiedl is, congressional leadership is being evacuated to Fort McNair as soon as practical, and that comes from the Washington Field Office Capitol Police task force officer. And then all the way at the top it just comes to you for awareness.

So tell me what, if anything, you recall, Mr. Ornato, about -- about those issues, the disabling of the pipe bombs, the -- who was responsible for the shooting, and the evacuation of the congressional leadership?

A   Yes, sir. So I recall briefing Mr. Meadows on the evacuation of the congressional leadership to Fort McNair so he knew that's where they were heading, that -- and we'll try to get an update. But from what I recall, he was talking to people on the Hill, I don't know who, because he knew that. I remember him saying, I have that.

Q   Was --

A   And then I updated him that the -- I'm sorry?

Q   Was that -- is that a conversation that took place in person? Just tell me more about specifically where you were when you talked to Mr. Meadows.

A   Yeah. So it would've been -- it would've been -- I don't recall. It would've been in his office probably or my office. It would've been right around our offices, because that's where I stayed, because I was staying by my yellow phone, my classified phone in my office in case that rang. And I was staying close to that, and Meadows was going back and forth. He had to go by my office to go from the Oval to his office --

Q   Okay.

A   -- so we would catch him in between. And I had briefed him on that. I
briefed him, from what I recall, on the pipe bombs were taken care of at this point, and
that they were being investigated further, but they were, I believe, disrupted, is what it
said. And then there was still no information on the shooting.

That was a big question of people were trying to find out who was shot, who fired
a shot, like, you know, and nobody had the information on that. So I know that was
something a lot of people were asking. I know he was trying to get that information as
well from up there, but we couldn't. I remember that was something that he wanted
information on, and so I gave him what the service was able to relay.

Q: I see. So it sounds to me like you got this series of messages from Bobby
Engel and you literally just reported that same information orally to Mark Meadows soon
after you received it. Is that right?

A: Correct, sir.

Q: Pretty common practice over the course of the day. You'd get these
important updates --

A: Yes.

Q: -- and you would pass it along to your direct report, the Chief of Staff?
[2:43 p.m.]

The **Witness.** Yes, sir.

**Q** Do you know what he did with that information? Do you know whether or not, did he ever say anything like, I've got to go tell the President about this, or I've got to share with anyone in particular?

**A** He didn't, sir. I don't recall him saying anything about what he would do with it. He would just -- sometimes, what I remember, he would repeat it so he had it, and that was it, from what I recall. I don't recall him saying anything of where he'd go with the information.

**Q** Did you ever see him, upon receiving information from you, go immediately towards the Oval Office?

**A** Sir, from what I recall, that's where I would catch him; he'd be going back and forth. So he could've been going to the Oval or coming from the Oval when I passed that information. I don't recall exactly which way.

**Q** Okay. So no specific information about what he did with the information upon receipt from you?

**A** Correct.

**Q** Okay.

All right. About 8 minutes later, the next tab is 5G. It's 5:16, now, p.m., the latest update from Gutmiedl that coming to Engel and to you.

Just go down to the first -- go down a little bit more. Right.

So we talked about congressional leadership being evacuated. The next update, if you scroll down: "Confirmed with JOC that Hoosier is still at [redacted] so the Vice
President is still at the Capitol.

"SOD reports that they send additional six-man team to supplement the six-man team already there with Hoosier, now two six-man teams. SOD reports there is also an additional team in response mode to holding at [redacted]," the White House.

Do you recall receiving this information about the Vice President being still at the Capitol and these [redacted] and whether that was something that you briefed Mr. Meadows?

A  I don't recall at the time briefing Mr. Meadows on the [redacted]. And Hoosier, the Vice President, being at the Capitol, he knew more of that than I did. So I don't know if I continued to update him with that, as he had that information already.

If that were to change, I would've given him an update. But if he was still at the Capitol, then -- and he was still secure and he wasn't asking me about anything, I don't know if I would've given him that update. I don't recall.

Q  Okay.

Now, that's you, right? That's the White House? You're being told that there's a [redacted] that's ready to respond to the White House if needed.

Significant enough for you to pass along to other people, that the service is preparing to deploy the tactical team, if necessary, to the White House?

A  Not too significant, sir, as far as [redacted] so I'm sure they called people to their office. But, in seeing that, when I read that, there are multiple tac teams that are on the White House complex. So nothing
that would raise to the chief, of services just doing their job of being precautionary to
have assets available if needed.

If they were to deploy or they were to need that team, then that would raise to
the chief of staff to let them know that -- because, obviously, if they're coming to the
White House, something's happening, so he would have to know that. Or going to a
small detail's residence, he would have to know that.

Q    All right.

Do you know whether there was any discussion over the course of that afternoon
about whether to bring [REDACTED]?

A    Not that I was aware of, sir. Not that I can recall.

Q    Okay.

All right. Last in line, then, over the course of the day, in terms of emails that
were forwarded to you, is 5H. This is at 5:54 p.m. Once again, it is the latest in the
same email chain.

If you go down, [REDACTED].

You can see we left off with the [REDACTED]. But then the next one above is
at 5:53: "ATF reports they continue to examine the devices near DNC. ATF also
reports that they found 1 firearm and 11 potential incendiary devices in a vehicle parked
near the DNC."

And that's bumped up from Engel to you for awareness at -- again, this is the
messed-up timestamp. This is at 5:54, so just a little before 6 p.m.

Do you remember receiving this information about the fact that ATF's examining
the devices, they found a firearm and 11 potential other incendiary devices in a vehicle?
A: Yes, sir, as I see this email today, I do recall that now. And I did, from what I recall, update the chief of staff with that. Obviously, with the 11 incendiary devices, that was pertinent information that I thought he should be made aware of.

Q: Okay. Do you know what, if anything, he did with that information? Did he pass it along to others?

A: I don't know, sir.

Q: Okay.

All right. The joint session then resumes. Right? The Capitol is essentially cleared, and the joint session resumes at about 8 o'clock the night of the 6th. And then you have a couple of phone calls after the resumption of the joint session with Amy Swonger. Do you know who Ms. Swonger is?

A: I don't recall, sir, who that is.

Q: She was the head of the legislative office, the White House Office of Legislative Affairs. She was the person who ran that office. Do you remember talking to her, the leg. affairs staff person, twice on the night of January 6th?

A: I don't, sir. I don't recall.

Q: Okay.

A: And she was an Executive Office of the President -- she's an EOP employee?

Q: Yes, sir, she is.

A: Okay. I think I know who you're referring to. I don't recall conversations with Amy that night.

Q: Okay.

She called you at 8:12 p.m., spoke for 2 minutes. At 8:35, the White House Situation Room called your phone. And then you called Ms. Swonger again at -- or,
excuse me, you called Ms. Swonger at 9:22 p.m. and had a 2-minute conversation.

Those are the three calls in a row, separated by about an hour, on your White

House-issued cell phone.

Again, do you have any recollection about either the Situation Room call or the
two discussions with Ms. Swonger?

A  I don't, sir.  I don't recall those conversations.

Q  Did it have anything to do with the joint session, the fact that the joint

session had resumed?  Do you remember how, if at all, that affected what you were
doing on January 6th, when Congress was back in session?

A  No, sir.  I would have nothing to do with the joint session being in session

at that evening.  I don't recall.

Q  Okay.

All right.  Let me pause there and see, if you have anything else about

the intelligence or any of the documents?

No.

All right.

Does Ms. Cheney or anyone else on the line have any questions about this before

we move on to a new topic?

No?

All right.

Well, then, what I want to now turn to, Mr. Ornato, is, go back to Mr. Engel's

conversation with you when he returned to the White House after the Ellipse event.

And I think Ms. Cheney wants to start this line of questions.

Ms. Cheney, please go ahead.

Ms. Cheney.  Thank you,
And, Mr. Ornato, I want to focus on this period of time after the motorcade returned to the White House and Bobby Engel came by your office.

Previously, you testified to the committee that Mr. Engel stopped by your office and that it was essentially a momentary visit. You said he stuck his head back in. He said, we’re back. He said everybody’s dispersing. You asked if there was going to be any problem here. He says, no, we’re all good. And then that was the end. You described that kind of a momentary exchange twice in your prior testimony.

Mr. Ornato, we have now multiple people who have testified to the committee about your meeting who directly contradict the story that you told us.

This includes a uniformed member of the United States military, who testified to the committee that you described for him an irate exchange in the limo, that you described this for him in front of Mr. Engel, that you told him that the President was irate at not being able to go to the Capitol.

We also have Cassidy Hutchinson. You've seen her public testimony, which is similar to the testimony that I've just described for you.

And Mr. Engel himself describes a different series of events and describes this meeting very differently from the way that you do.

So I would like to understand, Mr. Ornato, why you told the committee previously that Bobby Engel just stuck his head into your office. We’re having trouble reconciling your version of that meeting with the other testimony that we have received. And I wonder, Mr. Ornato, if you think that your prior testimony could have been mistaken.

The Witness. Ma’am, my prior testimony and what I recall today is what I recall. I don’t recall being made aware of anything that took place with the President in his motorcade from the Ellipse back to the White House.

Ms. Cheney. And so, Mr. Ornato, it’s your testimony that the meeting itself was
not even really a meeting. The that way that you've described it, Mr. Engel stuck his
head in your office, you had a brief exchange, and, as you described it, that was the end
of it.

That's inconsistent with the testimony that we've received, as I said, from multiple
other witnesses.

The **Witness.** Ma'am, I recall Mr. Engel coming back to my office, the exchange
that we discussed, and the topics that we have already discussed. I do not recall
anything further that took place in my office.

**Ms. Cheney.** Thank you.

I don't have anything further.

Yeah. Thanks, Ms. Cheney.

 Tiền ///

Q. Let me just put a little finer point on this, Mr. Ornato. And I'll just read to
you some of the testimony that we've received from these other witnesses, as
Ms. Cheney mentioned.

First, the military aide. He described, as Ms. Cheney said, a conversation that
took place between you and Mr. Engel and him back around your office after the Ellipse
event. And I'll just read you the series of questions and ask you about it.

He said that "I entered the White House from West Exec and proceeded up to Mr.
Ornato's office. Mr. Ornato, as the deputy chief of staff for operations, would probably
be the best person to ask. Since we're back on campus, you know, he's my primary
point of contact in execution. So, at that point, he stated very adamantly that we were
not going to go. And, again, the violence was on the TV screen, and, you know, they had
expressed to me that the President was irate on the drive up."

"Yes, ma'am, the President was irate. He also stated that they’re, you know, 100
percent adamant that we were not going to go, you know, leave the campus again."

Question:  "And you said it was Mr. Ornato and Mr. Engel in the office?  Is that correct?"

Answer:  "Yes, with Mr. Harrison."

Question:  "With Bo Harrison?  Was anyone else present?"

Answer:  "At the time of my arrival, ma'am, I don't recall, you know, specific people who would be walking in the hallway, but it was those three individuals that I was -- you know, my primary task and focus was, I need to confirm what's going on so that I can delegate down to the rest of my teammates, you know, what their follow-on actions and preparation needed to be."

Question:  "So did you pose the question to Mr. Engel or to Mr. Ornato, as far as what is the plan?"

Answer:  "To Mr. Ornato."

Question:  "And who responded?"

Answer:  "Mr. Ornato did, to the best of my recollection.  I honestly think that both of them said we're definitely not going, but my primary discussion or my primary exchange was with Mr. Ornato."

"Do you remember who expressed that the President was irate on the drive?"

Answer:  "I believe it was Mr. Ornato."

"And who was the one who" --

"I'm fairly confident it was Mr. Ornato who stated that."

Question:  "And was Mr. Engel present when he said that?"

Answer:  "Yes, ma'am."

Question:  "Was there any reaction from Mr. Engel when Mr. Ornato said that the President was irate on the drive up?"
Answer: "I mean, you know, I don’t remember his specific body language, but, you know, there was no -- what’s it called -- he did not deny the fact that the President was irate. I do not recall his specific body language though."

Question: "Do you specifically remember what Mr. Ornato said? Did he describe a behavior that was irate or a manifestation of that emotion?"

Answer: "No, sir. Just that he was irate. He was really angry, you know, that we proceeded back to the White House. I mean, that’s the extent of my recollection."

That, Mr. Ornato, is the testimony that we received from the military aide. Does that in any way refresh your recollection as to the conversation you had with Mr. Engel back in your office after the Ellipse event?

A No, sir. I don’t recall that conversation taking place, nor do I recall being aware of any details that happened from the motorcade from the Ellipse to the White House.

Ms. Cheney, I see you’ve come off mute. Go ahead.

Ms. Cheney. Thanks, [ ]

Mr. Ornato, did President Trump try to contact you after Ms. Hutchinson’s testimony?

The Witness. No, ma’am. I haven’t received any contact from President Trump since the day he left office.

Ms. Cheney. And what about Mr. Meadows?

The Witness. Mr. Meadows left me a voice message after my retirement congratulating me on my retirement. That’s the extent of what I’ve heard from Mr. Meadows.

Ms. Cheney. Anyone else from the administration?

The Witness. I have talked to Bo Harrison, who has left the -- Trump’s -- at this
point, but nothing about any testimony or anything of that nature. It was more about
real estate and him moving to the area.

Ms. Cheney. Did you speak with the Secret Service spokesperson following Ms.
Hutchinson’s testimony?

The Witness. I recall, that day after Ms. Hutchinson’s testimony, going to the
Secret Service Counsel and being in his office and then the Secret Service spokesperson
asking me about what my recollection was of that story. And I relayed that that is not a
story I recollect and I don’t recall that story happening and the first time hearing it is
when she had said it.

Ms. Cheney. Thank you.

Q. On that last point, Mr. Ornato, your testimony is you don’t recall that
conversation happening, or that it did not occur? You don’t recall it happening, or
absolutely not?

A. I don’t -- that story -- the first time I heard that story told was by her and her
testimony. I did not have that conversation that I can remember, and I don’t believe I
had that conversation.

Q. When you say "that story," you mean what Ms. Hutchinson testified about a
struggle inside the vehicle that she indicated was relayed to her by you?

A. Correct.

Q. Right. You don’t recall having that conversation?

A. No, sir.

Q. Okay.

Ms. Cheney, go ahead.

Ms. Cheney. Thanks,
Have you had any discussions with Bobby Engel about your testimony?

The **Witness.** Not about my testimony, ma'am.

Ms. **Cheney.** Have you had any discussions with Bobby Engel about the meeting in your office?

The **Witness.** No, ma'am, not about the meeting in my office.

Ms. **Cheney.** And it's your testimony, also, that you -- again, just to be clear, your testimony is contradicted by a number of witnesses who've testified to the committee, including the military assistant. Does that refresh your recollection at all?

The **Witness.** Ma'am, I don't recall that conversation happening at all or it coming up that the President wished to go to the Capitol. Again, I don't remember having that conversation with the military aide or Bobby Engel.

Ms. **Cheney.** Are you aware that the committee has got significant evidence that the President continued to express a desire to go to the Capitol after he returned to the White House?

The **Witness.** I'm not aware of that, ma'am.

Ms. **Cheney.** So you had no discussions or conversations after the President returned to the White House about the possible movement to the Capitol?

The **Witness.** Not that I can recall that, ma'am, no.

Ms. **Cheney.** Thank you.

**BY [Redacted]:**

Q. The last person with whom it's directly contradictory, Mr. Ornato, is Mr. Engel. Mr. Engel testified that he came straight to your office, engaged in a series of conversations, some of which we've shown you emails about, evaluating whether or not there would be a subsequent move to the Capitol.

Again, I believe you testified previously that you don't recall any of those
conversations. Is that right?

A The conversation I recall I've expressed to you about at the White House.

But in regards to going to the Capitol, I am not aware of a request or Mr. Engel bringing
that to my attention.

Q And your testimony, to be clear, is that he didn't convey to you anything
about what had happened in the limo or what might yet happen once everyone had
returned to the White House, correct?

A Correct. I don't recall being aware of anything that happened in the limo
from the Ellipse to the White House. And then a subsequent movement to the Capitol I
was not aware of.

Ms. Cheney, go ahead.

Ms. Cheney. Thanks.

Mr. Ornato, would you have been concerned about the President attempting to
go to the Capitol in the middle of a violent riot?

The Witness. Would I have been concerned? Absolutely.

Ms. Cheney. Thank you.

Ms. Cheney. You had a followup?

I just had a question.

Q Mr. Ornato, are you familiar with the military aide that day, January 6th, was
the military aide that day.

A Now that you say it, I know who was, but I couldn't remember who
the military aide was that day.

Q But do you remember seeing him around the time after the President
arrived back to West Exec around 1:17?
A. I don't recall seeing him, ma'am.

Q. And, then, just before moving off of this, do you remember -- you said that the last you heard about the President wanting to go to the Capitol was January 4th, and then in the text messages on January 6th with Ms. Hutchinson about him expressing an intent to go before he took the stage.

And I just want to make sure that we're clear on the testimony that, apart from that text message communication, you had no discussion at all with anyone on January 6th about the President wanting to go to the Capitol.

A. Outside that text message, ma'am, I don't recall any conversation or of it being brought up to me or me bringing it up to anybody else, about him wanting to go to the Capitol.

BY: [Redacted]:

Q. Did you ever get any information from the driver of the vehicle? That was Special Agent [Redacted] Did you ever speak with him, either on the 6th or thereafter, about what occurred inside of the Suburban?

A. No, sir. I didn't even know who the driver was until you said his name, and I actually don't know who that is.

Q. All right.

And did you ever hear anything about the President making a comment about the size of the crowd at the Ellipse and the size of the crowd outside of the magnetometers during the transport to or from the Ellipse?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. What did you hear about that?

A. So that's when -- I believe last time, my last interview, we talked about Bobby Peede and Max Miller, after the President started speaking, came back to my
office. And that's where they said that, when the President arrived at the Ellipse and saw the crowd outside the mags and not inside, he wanted them to come inside -- more people to come inside, and he chewed out Bobby Peede and Max Miller. I was told he was angry and he chewed them two out for not having more crowd in.

They explained to him that the mags are wide open; the people outside don't want to come in. They can see and hear him from where they are, and they don't want to go through the mags, is what Bobby and Max explained to me.

And that's when Bobby had mentioned that people in the crowd had body armor and -- or soft body armor and bike helmets. They probably didn't want to give that up, is what Bobby had said to me.

But he said he reiterated to the President that they didn't want to come in because they can hear and see him from where they are.

So that was also in the text message to Cassidy that I relayed to make sure I can cover for Bobby and Max, that, hey, they did their job, but those people obviously don't want to come in, and to make sure that Meadows knows that or, if any questions are asked, she has that information.

I know Bobby and Max had already told the President that, but sometimes Meadows will come back my way and ask me something about them. So that's where I knew that he was upset with them.

Q Yeah. And we did go through this at length in a prior interview.

Let me just be clear, though. Did Mr. Miller or Mr. Peede tell you that they conveyed to the President that people were outside of the mags because they had prohibited items, the body armor or the helmets, that wouldn't allow them to pass through the mags?

A So that's what they conveyed to me. I believe, what I remember, I think it
was Bobby Peede, if I remember correctly, saying that those people -- was trying to
explain to them that they slept out. They have tents, they have chairs, they can't come
through the mags with that stuff. So they're not going to come in, they're going to stay
out there to not lose their belongings.

Q And when you say "belongings," do you know whether or not Miller or
Peede conveyed to the President that those belongings included things like helmets and
shields and ballistic vests, that sort of thing?

A I don't know, sir, if they relayed that to the President or not.

Q Okay.

Let me go back to the driver. I know you said you didn't talk to the driver at all,
but the driver indicated that the President suggested -- when he was told that he couldn't
go to the Capitol, he disputed that it was dangerous because, he said, these are my
people, that they're not here to hurt me.

Did you hear anything about the President saying he wasn't in any danger, that he
could go to the Capitol because, quote, "these are my people"?

A I don't recall that, sir, no.

Q From any source, not just from Agent [____?]

A No, sir.

Q Okay.

All right. And, again, did you hear anything about anything the President said,
either driving to or coming back from the Ellipse, inside the vehicle, from Engel, from
[____] or from any other source?

A No, sir, not that I can recall of anything inside the vehicle. Just Bobby and
Max passing that information, when he stepped out of the vehicle, they were waiting for
him.
Okay.

I take it you didn't have any conversation with Sergeant Robinson, the Metropolitan Police Department officer who testified in our hearing that he was told that there was a heated argument in the limo, that the President was irate. Did you ever talk to him or other law enforcement officers beyond the Secret Service?

No, sir.

How about Special Agent [redacted]? He was the transport agent who was with Sergeant Robinson. Confirmed that there was a heated argument, that the President was irate. Did you ever talk to him?

No, sir. I don't recall -- I don't recall that name or seeing that person --

Okay.

-- or talking to him.

Yep.

All right. And so it sounds like from no source, inside the White House, Secret Service, or otherwise, did you hear anything about what happened inside of the Presidential vehicle. Is that right?

That's correct, sir.

Okay.

[redacted]. Could I ask --

Yeah, please, [redacted]. Go ahead.

BY [redacted]:

Mr. Ornato, just going back to the military aide, would it be accurate that, in his testimony when he says that you were his point of contact to confirm whether there was a plan to go to the Capitol -- and it sounds like you've testified before that that was one of your jobs, was to remain in communication with the military aide.
So does that sound consistent with something he would do in response to hearing
that the President wanted to go to the Capitol, meaning check in with you?
A  If I was on the -- if I was down at the event at the Ellipse, then I would've
been the chief of staff rep and that would have been. But since I was not there, the
chief of staff would've been the chief of staff rep on that for any further things that were
to happen.
Now, for him to come by and check with me, not out of the realm of possibility.
It is possible. I don't recall that, at all, of him coming by. But, also, he would take his
orders from the deputy director and director of WHMO, the White House Military Office,
who he reports to and which are -- my liaison, too, is the director.
Q  Right. It sounds like from his testimony that, again, upon his arrival to
West Exec, you were the first person that he went to go see, similar to Mr. Engel's
testimony of, again, upon arrival to West Exec, he went straight to your office.
A  Yep. I --
Q  Is that --
A  -- don't recall that, ma'am.
Q  Well, would that be consistent with after coming back from an event, that
both of them would check in with you?
A  That wouldn't be consistent. The military aide normally doesn't check in
with me. Mr. Engel would -- or Mr. Cho or Mr. Arruda, if they were coming back with
the President, would stop by, because my office is on the way to their office, so they may
stop by, but not necessarily the military aide.
Q  And, then, when you said Mr. Engel stopped by after he arrived back to West
Exec, did he enter your office?
A  I believe he would've entered into at least the front office, where Bo
Harrison is. And I have another door at that point. So I don't recall exactly, but I'm sure he would've been in the general vicinity there.

Q  Do you remember him coming in right after he arrived, meaning coming into that front office with Mr. Harrison?

A  I don't recall, ma'am, because I wasn't tracking them arriving back. I wasn't -- I don't have the -- I didn't -- I don't have a radio. I didn't know when they were back, so I don't know if he came directly.

And I don't recall where we would've had that conversation, if I was standing in Bo's section of my office or back in my office.

Q  I'm just trying to understand, when you say he stopped by, do you mean he came into Bo Harrison's office? Did he have a seat? Did he sit around for a while? Or "stop by" --

A  I don't recall, ma'am. I'm sorry. I don't recall at this time how long he was there for.

Q  So it could be longer than just coming by and saying hello and then leaving. I mean, he obviously --

A  I remember discussing -- I'm sorry.

Q  No. Go ahead.

A  I remember discussing the White House complex. I remember discussing our posturing. I remember that. So, you know, if it was a minute or so, I don't know. I can't put a timeline on it.

BY:  

Q  On the subject of the military aide, Mr. Ornato, just to go back to that morning, actually held a briefing first thing that morning, correct? Do you recall attending the briefing that the military aide held on the morning of January 6th just
to make sure everyone was aware of what the plans were?

A  No, sir. That -- I wouldn't attend that. That would’ve been done with the military aide, with his military staff that were on the trip. That wouldn’t have been myself or anybody that I can recall would’ve been involved in that.

Q  All right. Well, the Secret Service was present, so it was not just the military aide staff. You were not present for the mil aide's briefing that morning?

A  I wasn't. It possibly was the ASAIC on duty, I'm not sure, or the shift leader that may have attended it. But, no, that's not something I would attend.

Q  Okay.

Right after his briefing, [redacted] from the Secret Service has a Secret Service briefing. Did you attend that briefing?

A  No, sir. Those are lower-level operations briefing for the people going to the venue, going to the site, and working. That wouldn’t be anything I would be involved in.

Q  All right. So you didn’t attend either the mil aide or Secret Service early morning briefings on the 6th?

A  No, sir.

Q  Okay.

Ms. Cheney, go ahead.

Ms. Cheney. Thanks, [redacted].

I just wanted to go back for a minute. Earlier, Mr. Ornato, you said that you were monitoring issues connected to what was happening that morning, issues connected to the flow of people in through the mags.

But I wonder, given all of the intelligence that we now have shown you and that we've put on publicly, is it the case that -- maybe you could describe for us exactly what
your responsibilities were in terms of what you were monitoring.

The Witness. Sure, ma’am.

As far as monitoring for the mags, that would be just the night before or day before when Bobby Peede had sent that email and we talked with the service about it. The next day, Bobby Peede had -- either he hit me up or I hit him up, just to make sure how are we looking. And everything was looked at as good, as far as the mags, that they were open and flowing; there were people in line. I don’t recall anything more than that as coming up.

But the other things I was doing that morning is exactly what I explained. I had duties for exiting staff with the office of the administration, making sure on the 5th -- and I forgot the other dates offhand -- but we had plans in place for people leaving the administration, to downsize on the complex, as we got closer to inauguration.

I was in contact with -- doing the Biden transition with -- I know, around that time, we were getting them COVID vaccinations early on, so when they started after inauguration, they can get their second shot and be up and running.

I was also talking with the NSC and some of WHMO on some classified programs with the COVID vaccinations to make sure that our continuance of government and our continuance of Oval operations were up and running with those. So that was a lot going on. We had the White House Medical Unit. They were testing everybody. They’re reporting in who to be tested when.

So I was monitoring a lot of those things that were going on that day in that morning. And that was a big part of my every day, was a lot of the pandemic as well.

Ms. Cheney. Thank you.

And on that day of the 6th, what communications did you receive, both from anybody on the Hill but also in general? Did you receive Signal messages from anyone
that day?

The Witness. I don’t recall having any -- I don’t recall having communications with people from the Hill, ma’am, on that day. And I don’t recall having Signal communications on that day as well.

Ms. Cheney. You don’t recall any messages you received via Signal on that day?

The Witness. No, ma’am. I remember being, with my White House phone, extremely busy there and, with the yellow phone, in my office in talking to people. I don’t recall anything with a personal phone that day of going -- I just don’t.

Ms. Cheney. Thank you.

Q Let me just follow up, Mr. Ornato, on that. Do you use Signal? Do you have a Signal account?

A I do, sir.

Q All right. And do you communicate -- have you communicated with people with whom you worked in the White House via Signal?

A I have in the past.

Q And just explain to us, what would inform your decision to use Signal versus your White House phone or your personal phone, both of which you were using during this period of time?

A Sure.

My White House phone, obviously, I’m using for most of my White House communications.

My personal phone is if I’m tied up on my White House phone, I know people know how to get a hold of me on my personal phone, as well, in time-sensitive issues.

And Signal was something used not regularly by me with other staff personnel for
anything business-wise. It would be personal that I can recall.

Q Did you ever use Signal for anything business-related, official communications related to your job as the deputy chief of staff of operations?

A With Signal, sir?

Q Yes.

A Not that I can recall.

Q All right. If you used Signal for an official communication, would it be important for you to maintain a record of that to comply with the Presidential Records Act?

A If it was compliant to that, it would be. I don’t recall using that, Signal, for anything for government-related.

Q All right. Is that account still active, your Signal account?

A I have -- if it rolls over to a new phone, sure. I have a Signal account on my phone. I don’t have the phone that I had back during that time --

Q Yeah. Signal’s not tied to a device.

A -- reopened it.

Q Sorry. I didn’t mean to interrupt you.

A Sorry. I’m not sure if I opened a new account or not. I don’t -- I don’t recall.

Q All right.

Do you know whether or not you had any Signal exchanges with Cassidy Hutchinson in the days since you left the administration, the two of you left in January of ’21?

A Oh, I believe we did. She was -- we were friendly. She hit me up multiple times that I recall.
Q  When you say "hit you up," what do you mean by that?
A  Just text me, whether on text, on personal phone, or on Signal, either/or.
Q  So you had Signal exchanges with Ms. Hutchinson since you left the administration?
A  Shortly after leaving the administration, only for a few months that I can remember.
Q  All right.

Let me show you exhibit 10 and see if this refreshes your recollection. We can blow that up to make sure you can read it.

[Text redacted], if you could zoom -- yeah. Appreciate that.
A  We saw this, right?
Q  Yeah.

This we gave, Ms. Driscoll, to you.
A  Yeah, I saw this.
Q  Okay.

So this is -- looks to be a Signal exchange that you had with Ms. Hutchinson on April the 16th, 2021.

First of all, do you recall this back-and-forth with her via Signal?
Ms. Driscoll, [redacted], can I just ask, where does it say that it's from Cassidy? I just want to --

[Text redacted]. She gave it to us.

Q  Do you recall this, Mr. Ornato, that this was with Ms. Hutchinson on April the 16th of 2021?
A I don’t recall this. As I read it, I don’t recall exactly what it was about in context or anything.

Q All right. If you scroll down to it, it reflects that there was, in addition to a Signal exchange, a telephone call --

A Uh-huh.

Q -- and then some links passed along.

Do you remember -- Signal has the capacity both for texting and to make telephone calls through the Signal platform. Is that right?

A Yes.

Q You can actually call someone through their Signal account versus on a cell phone, right?

A Correct.

Q All right. Do you remember whether you spoke to Ms. Hutchinson on April the 16th during this or around the time of this text exchange?

A Sir, I don’t recall the conversation, or -- I looked at this when you sent it over here. I don’t recall any of this information or even have pulled that information up prior.

Q All right. Do you recall whether or not you had about a 20-minute conversation with Ms. Hutchinson about the events of January 6th some months later, April of 2021?

A I don’t recall having the conversations.

I know, that evening, on January 6th, I’ve testified to, I remember Cassidy was upset, and I consoled her in calming her down on January 6th.

And I know, after we left the administration, she was upset that she didn’t get to go down to Florida because of somebody saying that she had leaked information or
whatever it was. I don't know.

And I recall us -- you know, I always felt bad for Cassidy that, you know, things like that had happened, so I was friendly with her. I don't recall this exact conversation or what this link here is as well.

Q Okay.

Let me separate from any particular conversation, but did she ever express to you the thought that she and you both might have worked harder to try to prevent the developments of January 6th? Did she ever express that sentiment to you, "We could've worked harder to prevent the events of January 6th"?

A I don't recall that, sir.

Q Do you recall ever reassuring her that you could not, the two of you could not have done anything more than what you had already done?

A I don't recall this conversation, sir. I'm sorry.

Q Do you remember ever telling her that she shouldn't blame herself for the mob mentality of the rioters that day or for President Trump's actions that brought the rioters to the Capitol?

A I don't. I don't recall that.

Q Did you ever say to her something to the effect of, "Hey, kid, it could be worse. At least the President didn't try to asphyxiate you on the 6th"? Ever say anything like that to her?

A No, sir, I don't recall that, those words or having that type of conversation.

Q Okay.

Do you remember any conversation with her sort of in the months, weeks or months, after January 6th about the events of that day?

A I don't, sir. I don't recall events of that day, conversations with her.
Ms. Cheney, go ahead.

Ms. Cheney. Mr. Ornato, do you recall a Secret Service agent ever saying, quote, "Mogul is a lunatic"?

The Witness. No, ma'am, I don't recall that.

Ms. Cheney. Thank you.

Q All right. Mr. Ornato, I have a -- let me pause. Any other members on? I don't think so.

All right. I just have a few catchall things that -- we're going to skip around in time a little bit, but a few last things I want to ask you about.

I want to go back in time to January 4th and ask you if recall ever talking to Robert O'Brien, the National Security Advisor, about the potential for violence on January 6th or any intelligence about possible threats.

A Sir, I don't recall talking to the NSA on those types of things at all. I don't recall talking to the NSA many times, not -- I would've recalled specifically on those topics, but I don't recall that.

Q All right. Well, we saw earlier that the National Security staff, including Mr. O'Brien himself at times, were copied on a number of those emails about intelligence, about the risk of violence on January 6th.

Did he ever raise that with you or did you ever raise that with him before January 6th?

A Not that I can recall, sir. Mr. O'Brien would go directly to the chief of staff. He necessarily -- he wouldn't come to me with that.

Q Well, you're the security guy, Mr. Ornato, right? You're the former Secret Service agent whose -- part of your responsibility is to work with the chief of staff on
issues regarding security of the White House complex, right? Isn't that your specific role?

A  Sir, I'm not in charge of the security of the White House complex. I wouldn't classify myself in that role as a security guy. That is the Secret Service's role.

Q  All right. So, bottom line, you don't remember any conversation with O'Brien about the potential for violence on January 6th?

A  I do not, sir.

Q  All right.

How about discussions with Mr. Meadows, in particular, on January 4th, for example? Do you remember bringing to him -- you've testified about bringing to him some things on January 6th, but do you recall bringing him anything in advance of January 6th about the potential for violence, any intelligence or threats about which he should be aware?

A  Sir, during my general duties there as deputy chief of staff of operations, I would make the chief of staff aware of those types of protests that would go on, whether they would be in Lafayette Park, whether they would be on Freedom Plaza, wherever they would be around the White House complex.

I don't specifically recall bringing that in, but, however, in my normal daily functions, in my general functions as my job, I would've had a conversation with him about all the groups coming in and what was expected from the Secret Service.

Q  I see. So let me make sure I'm clear. Generally you receive information about things like the groups that are coming, the stuff that we talked about earlier. You would bring that to Mr. Meadows and likely did here, although you don't have a specific recollection?

A  That is correct, sir.
Q   How about the morning of January 6th? Do you remember any conversations with him about issues like this with respect to security threats, intelligence about what was going on at the Ellipse or the Capitol?

A   I don't recall on the morning of January 6th having that specific conversation with him.

Q   Again --

A   If we would get any updated information, generally I may have, but I don't recall if I did.

Q   Okay.

Is it the same answer as the stuff in advance of January 6th? You received stuff, your general course was to bring it to him, although you don't have a specific recollection of doing so on January 6th?

A   That is correct.

Q   Okay. I just want to make sure I'm clear.

Yeah, I believe you testified before, Mr. Ornato, just looking back, when asked about conversations with Mr. Meadows about the potential for violence, answer: "I don't remember that, but that is something I would've done. I would've made sure he was aware of this, of the demos and the clashes."

Again, consistent that it's a category of information that you would have brought to him?

A   Yes, sir.

Q   All right.

Did you ever have any discussions with President Trump either before, on, or after January 6th about threats, about violence, about those events?

A   Not to my recollection, sir. I didn't have any conversation with President
Trump about that, because my chain of command is to the chief of staff. I would go to
Mark Meadows, not direct to the President with anything.
And I don't believe on the 6th I had any conversation with the President, as I
wasn't in front of him for very long.
Q How about in all the days since? Have you had interaction with former
President Trump since he left office?
A No, sir.
Q No conversation with him about any topic at any time?
A No, sir. I haven't spoken to the former President since he left office.
Q All right. And, at any time, have you ever talked with him after January 6th
about what happened at the Capitol or in the White House that day?
A I don't recall having any discussion with him about that.
Q Have you ever heard him talking to others about that, overheard?
A I wasn't around the President much, sir, in that role. So the chief of staff
would have been -- I always stayed back in my office area.
Q Yeah. I understand. So, again, you haven't overheard him saying
anything about those events?
A No, sir.
Q All right.
All right. On January the 7th, the day after January 6th -- let's show exhibit 49.
We'll blow this up again so you can see it.
Now, this is not an email on which you're copied, but it references you. If we go
down to the bottom, this is January 7th. It's coming from Catherine Ayres to Ted
Arruda.
"Hi. Director" -- Director Murray of the Secret Service -- "is heading over to the
White House now. He'll park on West Exec, and he's going to the White House SR,
which I think is Situation Room, "to review a document."

And then, if you scroll up, the response from Ted Arruda is, "Woohoo."

And then, scrolling up, she says back to Mr. Arruda, "Yeah. You don't need to do
anything. Tony O. is meeting him on West Exec. Peace out."

So do you recall Director Murray coming to the White House on January 7th for
some particular purpose?

And I see, before you answer, Mr. Aguilar, has joined us.

Do you remember, Mr. Ornato, Director Murray coming to the White House for
some purpose on January 7th?

A I don't remember that specifically. He's come to the White House multiple
times, and I would just meet him, usually buy him a cup of coffee, and he would go on to
do what he needed to do.

Q Do you remember any interaction with him on January 7th?

A I don't, sir.

Q Do you remember any discussion with him on the 7th about what had
occurred the next day -- I mean, the previous day? Excuse me.

A I don't recall any interaction with the director in what he was doing there
that day as well.

Q All right. Mr. Ornato, you're on the kind of relationship with Director
Murray that you would routinely have coffee with him, right? You're close or
professionally close to the director at this point? Is that right?

A Yup. If he was going to the Situation Room, I would -- he didn't have a
White House account, so the White House mess is right there; I'd buy him a cup of coffee
and poke fun at him that I had to buy him a cup of coffee, yes.
Q    Okay. And this is the day after an attack on the U.S. Capitol at which people were killed, law enforcement officers were beaten. Did you have any discussion with the director of your former and then subsequent agency about the events of that day on January 7th?

A    I don't recall having any discussion with him about that that I can specifically remember. And he was there to review a document. I don't know -- I don't recall if it was time-sensitive and he went in and went out quickly. I don't recall that, sir.

Q    So, just like any other day, talk about who's in the playoffs or what you had for dinner the night before? Not the events of January 6th?

A    Sir, again, I don't recall, sitting here today, what we discussed on January 7th back in 2021. I just don't recall it.

Q    You don't remember saying anything to him about January 6th or him saying anything to you?

A    I don't recall, sir.

Q    All right. Mr. Ornato, we believe that -- we have information that you possessed three different cell phones on January the 6th of 2021.

      There was a personal cell that ended in [redacted]. Do you remember having access or use of that cell device on January 6th, your personal cell?

A    Yes. That's my personal cell.

Q    All right.

      You also had a Secret Service-issued device that ended in [redacted]. Do you recall still having possession of and use of a service-issued cell phone on January 6th, even though you were detailed to the White House Executive Office?

A    Yes. I recall having a cell phone from the Secret Service.

Q    All right. And did that -- I think Ms. Cheney asked you earlier about
whether that device actually allowed you access to your Secret Service email account on
that phone. It did, correct?
A  Correct. I also had a Secret Service computer that had email on it.

Correct.

Q  So you had two computers? You had a Secret Service computer and a
White House computer?
A  Correct.

Q  All right. And were they both set up in your office in the White House?
A  My White House computer was. I necessarily wouldn't have had my -- I
don't recall if I had my Secret Service computer up at that time or if I just popped it up to
check things. But I rarely did anything on Secret Service email.

Q  Well, if there's ever a day to check your Secret Service computer, wouldn't it
be January 6th, when there's a lot of information about what's going on at the Capitol or
the Ellipse?
A  From what I recall, sir, no, because everything was being forwarded to my
White House account. I wasn't getting stuff on my Secret Service account.

Q  All right. So you don't recall looking at your Secret Service email directly on
January 6th, only getting things passed to you at your White House email?
A  Correct, because that would've been emails. There's nothing I can go on
and look, that I remember, on my Secret Service devices that would show me anything,
from what I recall. It would be emails that was being forwarded to me.

Q  Okay. Do you remember using your Secret Service cell phone or computer
at all on January 6th?
A  I don't recall using -- I don't know if I did or not. I don't recall.

Q  You also had a White House-issued cell phone that ended in XXXX. Is that
right?

A  Correct.  I remember that number.  Yes.

Q  And we've used the records from that cell phone in the questioning today.

Some of the calls that we asked you about over the course of today were from -- so you
obviously used that cell phone over the course of January 6th, correct?

A  Correct.

Q  All right.

Did you use all three -- personal cell, Secret Service cell, and White House cell -- at
times for official business, things related to your job as deputy chief of staff?

A  At the same time?  I don't recall if I used all three.  But I have used -- I
have been on my White House phone and have used my personal phone to -- or
somebody calling me on my personal phone.  I've had to take in a lot of calls or emails
on my White House phone and then disseminate through, because I obviously get hit up
from multiple entities and agencies about things.  So I have had to triage phone calls on
devices, yes.

Q  Yeah.

Have you received any instruction when you were in the White House about the
necessity of maintaining communications on personal accounts or devices for
preservation under the Presidential Records Act?

A  I don't recall at the White House receiving it.  I do recall of knowing of the
Presidential Records Act, but I don't know if I received anything specific on it.

Q  Did you ever take steps to preserve communications in a personal account or
on a personal device by screenshotting or forwarding them so that they would be
preserved pursuant to the Presidential Records Act?

A  Not that I recall of having steps to do that.  I don't recall having taken steps
to do anything or if the person on the other side was doing the same.

Q  All right. So, again, you never were given any instruction about, hey, if you have a White House-related communication on your personal phone, you've got to maintain it, you've got to screenshot it, or you've got to forward it so that it's protected?

A  I don't remember that -- those specific instructions. Like I said, I knew of the White House preservation act, but I don't recall the exact -- a briefing about it. I don't recall.

Q  All right.

And do you recall doing that, taking steps to convey things on your personal accounts or devices to a professional account or device so that they would be maintained?

A  I don't recall doing that on my personal device.

Q  Okay.

It looks like you used your Secret Service phone for text messages. Records reflect that there were nine text messages between October 24th of 2020 and January 23rd, 2021.

Do you have any specific recollection as to why you would use your Secret Service phone for text messages or what those texts conveyed?

A  I don't, sir. If I was hit up on the Secret Service phone, I probably responded back, but I don't recall that.

Q  Okay. Well, we haven't been able to get access to those text messages because they've been lost by the Secret Service. So do you have any recollection about anything at all germane to the select committee's investigation that might be in your text communications on your Secret Service phone?

A  No, sir. What I recall is that my White House phone was used for most of
my business at the White House, if not all, that I wouldn’t use my Secret Service texting.

It would've just been, I'm sure, to respond back to somebody that had texted me. But I

normally didn’t text on my Secret Service phone.

Q Okay. Your White House phone was your primary mode of
communication? If you were going to use a cell phone, if it involved official business,
it'd likely be your White House phone?

A Yes, sir.

Q Okay.

Same thing with email? You would primarily use your EOP email versus a Secret
Service email or a personal email?

A Correct.

Q Okay.

All right. Let me ask you now about your resignation, or your retirement, excuse
me, from the Secret Service.

So there were press reports that you left your job at the Secret Service on the eve
of the day that you were expected to appear before the inspector general. Is that
accurate, that you literally resigned right before you were due to interview with the IG?

A Sir, I had -- the Secret Service was aware of my retirement for about 3 weeks
or so. And I believe the OIG wanted to speak to me administratively, on an
administrative audit, of DHS preparedness on, I believe it would've been, say, a
Wednesday, and my retirement date was set for Monday.

Q So your retirement was not connected in any way to the interview, the
timing of the interview with the inspector general?

A No, sir. And I have cooperated with the inspector general and the OIG's
questions.
Q    I see. Okay.

So that was my next question, is, have you been interviewed by the inspector general about some of the events that we’ve discussed, the events leading up to and on January 6th?

A    Yes, sir. I answered questions in writing to the inspector general.
[3:41 p.m.]

Q    All right. So it was written answers as opposed to an oral interview like this?
A    Yes, sir.
Q    How many times were you given such questions and did you provide answers?
A    It was one time. I believe approximately 33 questions, if I can remember right.
Q    And was that after, Mr. Ornato, you resigned from the Service, or when you were still in?
A    That was after, sir. I still cooperated, not being part of DHS.
Q    I understand. Okay.
How about other agencies, like the Department of Justice? Have you spoken with personnel from the Department of Justice about some of these same issues that we've talked about today?
A    I had an interview with the Department of Justice about some of it one time, sir.
Q    Okay. How about the -- going in front of the grand jury? Have you done that?
A    No, sir.
Q    So just one interview with DOJ, no grand jury testimony?
A    That is correct, sir.
Q    All right. Any other entities about whom you've spoken about the events
leading up to or on January 6th besides the IG, the Department of Justice, and the select committee?

A    Not that I can recall, sir.

Q    Okay. Where do you work now, Mr. Ornato?

A    I work for a private-sector company [ BLANK ].

Q    The applied sciences -- tell me more specifically what you do. And I understand that this is personal information that we would redact from any transcript. Just curious about the nature of your work now.

You don't have to give the name of the company. Just tell me sort of what your general -- what you're doing now.

A    Yes, sir.

Q    Is that outside of the D.C. area?

A    Yes, sir.

Q    Okay. All right.

[ BLANK ]. Let me stop there and see, [ BLANK ], do you have any --

[ BLANK ]. I don't.

[ BLANK ]. All right. Ms. Cheney or anyone else? Mr. Aguilar?

Ms. Cheney. Thanks very much, [ BLANK ].

Mr. Ornato, we ask this of many of our witnesses because we are aware of efforts by former President Trump and his associates to fund attorneys' fees, and there has been some significant issues that have arisen because of that. And so I'd like to ask you who is paying for your private counsel?
The Witness. Myself and my wife, ma'am.

Ms. Cheney. And have you negotiated -- have you received funds from anyone else to pay for that -- to pay for those fees?

The Witness. No, ma'am. It's just my family.

Ms. Cheney. And have any groups funded by President Trump contacted you with offers to pay your legal fees?

The Witness. No, ma'am.

Ms. Cheney. Any individuals?

The Witness. No, ma'am.

Ms. Cheney. Have any of President Trump's entities or organizations or associates offered you jobs?

The Witness. No, ma'am.

Ms. Cheney. And have any America First entities offered you employment?

The Witness. No, ma'am.

Ms. Cheney. Have you had any discussions with the Republican National Committee about employment?

The Witness. I did, ma'am. They had a security spot opened, and I had applied for it.

Ms. Cheney. And when was that?

The Witness. I believe back in April -- April or so of 2022. Maybe before then.

Ms. Cheney. Okay. And the company that you currently work for, what's the name of the company?

Ms. Driscoll. Ms. Cheney, I think [redacted] had stated earlier that, to protect, you know, the employer's privacy and Mr. Ornato's personal privacy, that we would not need to disclose the name of the company.
Ms. Cheney. I think that -- we don't -- we will redact it, certainly, and would be happy to speak to you off the record, but I think it is important to know the name of the company for which Mr. Ornato works. If you want to handle that off the record, we can certainly do that.

Ms. Driscoll. That would be our preference. Thank you.

Ms. Cheney. Thank you. That's all.

Thanks, Ms. Cheney.

BY:

Q Following up, Mr. Ornato, Ms. Cheney asked you earlier about whether anyone has given you any direction, coaching, suggestion about what you should or shouldn't say today or at any other appearance before the select committee. Has anyone -- I don't want to hear about any discussions with Ms. Driscoll, but beyond your lawyers, has anybody given you any such guidance about what you should or shouldn't do?

A No, sir.

Q Have you discussed the substance of your testimony, the events that we asked you about, with anybody else in preparation for your testimony today?

A No, sir. Not in preparation for my testimony.

Q Did you go to Bobby Engel or anybody else and, you know, sort of commiserate or refresh each other's memories about what happened?

A No, sir. The only time I had reached out to Mr. Engel was when Cassidy Hutchinson was testifying during her -- as she was testifying, and I was -- I wasn't watching it. I was called to put it on, and I was shocked and surprised of her testimony and called Mr. Engel and asked him, What is she talking about?

And his response was, I don't know.
And then I then proceeded to say -- I said, Let me listen to the rest of this now. I have no idea.
And that was the only time I had -- I had reached out to Mr. Engel. I actually reached out to Mr. Harrison as well, because I knew Beau was in my office. And I said, Beau, what is she talking about?
And Beau said the same thing. He said, I don't know. I don't remember her being in your office.
So that was just shocked and surprised at -- of the testimony, and I did reach out during her testimony, I believe, to the both of them to ask that. But, at that point, after I -- my head settled down, I didn't discuss it any further.

Q  Those are the only conversations that you had about either Ms. Hutchinson's testimony or any other issue with respect to January 6th with Engel, Harrison, or anybody else?

A  Yes, sir. To -- with those individuals.

Q  Okay. Okay. All right.

Anybody else before we stop?
No? Okay. If not, then we can go off the record.

[Whereupon, at 3:48 p.m., the interview was concluded.]
Certificate of Dependent/Interviewee

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

__________________________
Witness Name

__________________________
Date