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

DEPOSITION OF: JAY THAXTON

Friday, March 11, 2022

Washington, D.C.

The deposition in the above matter was held via Webex, commencing at 10:02

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Appearances:

For the SELECT COMMITTEE TO INVESTIGATE
THE JANUARY 6TH ATTACK ON THE U.S. CAPITOL:

- [REDACTED] INVESTIGATIVE COUNSEL
- [REDACTED] STAFF ASSOCIATE
- [REDACTED] PROFESSIONAL STAFF MEMBER
- [REDACTED] INVESTIGATIVE COUNSEL
- [REDACTED] CHIEF CLERK
- [REDACTED] INVESTIGATIVE COUNSEL
- [REDACTED] PARLIAMENTARIAN
- [REDACTED] INVESTIGATIVE COUNSEL
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For the WITNESS:

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[REDACTED] Good morning.

This is the deposition of Jay Thaxton, conducted by the House Select Committee to Investigate the January 6th Attack on the United States Capitol pursuant to House Resolution 503.

This will be a staff-led deposition, though members may choose to join and ask questions.

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

The Witness. Jay Robert Thaxton, last name T-h-a-x-t-o-n.

[REDACTED] Great. And my name is [REDACTED] I'm an investigative counsel with the select committee.

With me from the select committee staff are [REDACTED], investigative counsel; [REDACTED], investigative counsel; [REDACTED], also investigative counsel; and [REDACTED], chief data scientist.

There are currently no members in the Webex room right now.

And then I'll ask counsel for Mr. Thaxton to please state his name for the record.

Mr. Hull. My name is Dan Hull, and I represent Mr. Thaxton today.

[REDACTED] Under House deposition rules, neither committee members nor staff may discuss the substance of the testimony today unless the committee approves release.

Know that under House rules you may have your attorney present, but counsel for other individuals or attorneys from other government agencies may not be and are therefore not present.

I'd like to note for the record that what has been previously marked as exhibit 1 is

1 the select committee's February 10, 2022, subpoena for Mr. Jay Thaxton, and the House
2 deposition rules are included in that exhibit.

3 There is an official reporter transcribing everything that we're saying today,
4 Mr. Thaxton. So, if you can, just wait until I finish my questions before you start your
5 answer, and then, in return, I'll try to wait until you finish your answer before I start my
6 next question. That just makes it easier for the court reporter, to not have to attempt to
7 transcribe two people at the same time.

8 Does that make sense?

9 The Witness. Understood.

10 [REDACTED] Okay. And then, similarly, if you -- it's preferable to use verbal cues
11 as opposed to, like, a head shake or a nod. So a "yes" or a "no" is what the
12 transcriptionist is going to be able to record.

13 Mr. Hull. And forgive me -- Dan Hull for Mr. Thaxton.

14 Jay, is there a way for you to amplify your voice a little bit?

15 I don't know about you, [REDACTED], but I'm having trouble hearing Jay's responses.

16 [REDACTED] I was able to hear him, but let's --

17 Mr. Hull. I was too, but not --

18 [REDACTED] Jay, try to --

19 Mr. Hull. -- as well as I hear you and myself.

20 [REDACTED] Yeah. Let's -- if you just want to -- well, I'll ask you a question in
21 one second, Mr. Thaxton. I'll let you know if we can't hear you.

22 Also, today, we just ask that you provide complete answers to the best of your
23 recollection. If a question is not clear, feel free to ask me to clarify it or restate the
24 question. And if you don't know the answer, just simply say so.

25 You may also -- or you may only refuse to answer a question to preserve a

1 privilege that's recognized by the select committee. If you refuse to answer a question
2 based on a privilege, staff may either proceed with the deposition or seek a ruling from
3 the chairman on the objection. If the chairman overrules such an objection, you're
4 going to be required to answer the question.

5 I'll also remind you that it's unlawful to deliberately provide false information to
6 Congress. And this is a warning that we provide everybody. But providing false
7 information could result in criminal penalties for perjury and/or false statements under
8 18 U.S.C. 1001, which makes it illegal to provide a false statement to a congressional
9 investigator like myself or the other people that I introduced on the call today.

10 Does that make sense to you?

11 The Witness. Yes, sir.

12 [REDACTED] Okay.

13 That being said, to be clear, this is a congressional investigation, not a criminal
14 investigation. These proceedings are separate and distinct from any criminal proceeding
15 by the United States Department of Justice. We're not a partner with the Department,
16 and we are not involved in each other's processes.

17 Do you understand that?

18 The Witness. Yes, sir.

19 [REDACTED]. Okay.

20 And then, just logistically, as we go through today, let me know if you need any
21 breaks at any point. I'll try to take a break about every hour or so for 5 minutes for
22 bathroom or water, but if you need one at a different time, just let me know.

23 The Witness. Yes, sir.

24 [REDACTED] We can also -- if you need a break to talk to Mr. Hull, we have that
25 option also. And we can put you in a breakout room with him so that you can speak to

1 him.

2 And then, last thing, I'll note that I'll be leading the conversation mostly and asking
3 most of the questions here today, but other staffers, the folks that I introduced earlier on,
4 might join in and ask a question here and there, and we'll allow them to do that.

5 And then, lastly, because this is a deposition under oath, could you please raise
6 your right hand to be sworn?

7 The Reporter. Mr. Thaxton, do you solemnly declare and affirm under the
8 penalty of perjury that the testimony you are about to give in this matter will be the
9 truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth?

10 The Witness. Yes, sir.

11 The Reporter. Thank you.

12 [REDACTED] Okay. Great.

13 EXAMINATION

14 BY [REDACTED]

15 Q With all that out of the way, I'd like to just start with a few background
16 questions about you, Mr. Thaxton.

17 Can you tell me where you grew up?

18 A In Charleston, West Virginia.

19 Q Okay. And then I understand now you're in North Carolina. Is that right?

20 A Yes, sir.

21 Q Okay. And how did you come to North Carolina?

22 A I moved to -- I moved here for work.

23 Q Okay. What sort of work?

24 A Initially, it was IT work.

25 Q Okay. And are you currently employed?

- 1 A Yes, sir.
- 2 Q What do you do?
- 3 A I work on printers.
- 4 Q Okay. And for how long have you been doing that?
- 5 A Four years.
- 6 Q And am I right that at some point you served in the Marines also?
- 7 A Yes, sir.
- 8 Q Okay. When was that?
- 9 A From 1993 to 1997.
- 10 Q And what was your job in the Marines?
- 11 A I was a radio communicator.
- 12 Q Have you continued that sort of work since the Marines at all, or was that
- 13 just while you were in the Marines?
- 14 A That was just while I was serving.
- 15 Q Okay.
- 16 And, then, if you could tell me your current address.
- 17 A That would be [REDACTED] Concord, North Carolina.
- 18 Q And do you live alone? Are you married?
- 19 A I'm married.
- 20 Q And then, just quickly -- so I know you said that you work on printers. Do
- 21 you have any other sources of income other than that job?
- 22 A No, sir.
- 23 Q Okay. Do you receive any income or any funds from your involvement with
- 24 the Proud Boys?
- 25 A No, sir.

1 Q And then, other than your time in the military, have you ever served in a
2 government, either local, State, or Federal?

3 A No, sir.

4 Q All right.

5 Then I'd like to talk about, sort of, how you came to -- Mr. Hull, I see you've muted
6 yourself. Okay. I was just going to ask you that.

7 I'd like to ask how you first were introduced to the Proud Boys. Can you just take
8 me through that?

9 A It was a rally out in California, online. And I saw guys that seemed to be
10 patriots protecting other patriots from being harmed by people from an opposite point of
11 view, and I just started looking online for information at that point.

12 Q Okay. And when was that?

13 A Back in 2018.

14 Q Do you recall specifically what that rally was?

15 A Not at this time I don't recall. I know it was some type of patriot rally.

16 Q So you mentioned that you saw individuals protecting people at the rally
17 from other people at the rally. Was that sort of your main interest in the Proud Boys,
18 providing that sort of protection at rallies?

19 A Given my 4 years of service in the Marine Corps, it did interest me.

20 Q Were there any other reasons or any other things that attracted you to the
21 Proud Boys at that time?

22 A No, sir.

23 Q How about, like, a political ideology or a political stance that you thought the
24 Proud Boys took? Were you attracted to that?

25 A I've never considered a political stance. I have my own, which is on the

1 conservative side, and it's just never been a topic of discussion.

2 Q So you wouldn't -- at the time you joined, you wouldn't consider the Proud
3 Boys a politically oriented organization?

4 A I wasn't searching for their political views. Just the aspect of protection of
5 people at rallies.

6 Q Okay. And then who was it that you saw the Proud Boys protecting people
7 from?

8 A I'm sorry. Can you restate that question?

9 Q Yeah. You said that you saw people, Proud Boys, at this rally protecting
10 some of the rally-goers, and I was wondering who they were protecting them from.

11 A I had seen a group identified as antifa -- various video clips,
12 articles -- dressed in what they refer to as black bloc. And they would throw items; they
13 would have their flags on two-by-fours and swing those around. So that's --

14 Q Okay.

15 Mr. Hull. I think you answered the question. Wait --

16 [REDACTED] Yes, he did.

17 Mr. Hull. -- for another one. You did well.

18 [REDACTED] Absolutely.

19 BY [REDACTED]

20 Q And, then, could you just tell me -- so you described them as patriots. And
21 just curious, if you could expand upon that, what makes somebody a patriot?

22 A Someone who believes in the Constitution. Someone who believes
23 wholeheartedly in the First Amendment, whether you agree with that point of view or
24 not, that they should still have the freedom and have the platform, on both sides of the
25 opinion. Someone who respects the veterans that have come before them who have

1 died, shed blood for this country to keep it free.

2 Q I'd like to ask some specific questions about your chapter of the Proud Boys.
3 Are you still a member of the Proud Boys?

4 A I am.

5 Q Okay. And does your chapter have a name?

6 A It's known as the Charlotte Proud Boys.

7 Q Do you have -- is there a president of your chapter?

8 A There is.

9 Q Okay. And who's that?

10 A We go by -- I don't know the man's real name. We go by handles, or
11 nicknames. I mean, it's not a requirement that you go by your first and last name.

12 Q Right. Yeah, I've understood that. So most Proud Boys have a nickname
13 or a handle that they go by. Do you know the president of your chapter's nickname?

14 A That would be Bill Dewall.

15 Q Can you spell that last name? Bill --

16 A D-e-w-a-l-l.

17 Q And was that true -- today we'll obviously be talking a lot about the, kind of,
18 November/December 2020 and January 2021 time period. Was Bill also the president at
19 that time?

20 A Yes, sir.

21 Q Okay.

22 And do you hold any positions or titles in your chapter?

23 A I was vice president and helped with vetting.

24 Mr. Hull. Do you hold them now, I think his question was. Forgive me.

25 The Witness. No, I don't --

1

BY [REDACTED]

2

Q Yes. I was going to ask both now and in the time period around

3

January 2021. Is the answer the same?

4

A I'm sorry. Can you repeat that question?

5

Q Sure. Let's focus on the January 2021 timeframe. Were you also vice

6

president at that time?

7

A I was.

8

Q Okay. And then you said you also helped with some of the vetting of

9

members?

10

A Correct.

11

Q And then, just to -- do you know how many people there are in your

12

chapter?

13

A We don't have a roster, so, on average, I would say 20 people.

14

Q Yeah. Just a ballpark number is fine. I don't need an exact number.

15

And throughout today, you know, I know I'll be asking about events that

16

happened over a year ago, so if you're ballparking a number or a date, just let me know,

17

and that's fine.

18

So you said about 20 individuals. Is that typical for a chapter of the Proud Boys?

19

A Other than within the State, I couldn't tell you. I never really venture much

20

out of the -- I mean, there are times I do venture out of the State in the past for rallies or

21

whatnot, but I don't know.

22

Mr. Hull. And, yeah, they're all if-you-know questions, Jay. Just listen to each

23

question. He's doing a good job at feeding you bite-sized questions. Just listen to the

24

timeframe, you know, and you'll do well.

25

Thank you. Sorry.

1 [REDACTED] Thanks, Dan. No, you're fine.

2

BY [REDACTED]

3 Q So you said you do know or you're a little more familiar with the chapters in
4 North Carolina. Is 20 typical for chapters in North Carolina?

5 A I would say so.

6 Q And how many other chapters are in North Carolina, if you know?

7 A I believe eight.

8 Q And, then, just to ask about a couple different individuals, do you know
9 Jeremy Bertino?

10 A I do.

11 Q Okay. Is he in your chapter?

12 A No, sir.

13 Q Okay. What chapter is Mr. Bertino in?

14 A I believe he's in a South Carolina chapter.

15 Q And do you by any chance know the name of that chapter?

16 A Not well enough to know the chapter name.

17 Q That's fine.

18 And how about Charles Donohoe? Do you know him?

19 A I do.

20 Q And what chapter is he in?

21 A I believe he's in one of the chapters north of me.

22 Q But I take it you don't know the name of that chapter?

23 A Chapters have changed names a few times, so I'm not comfortable
24 if -- knowing if that -- if what he was a part of is the current name of that chapter.

25 Q That's fine. It sounds like maybe you have an idea, and, understanding that

1 you're not sure that that's the current name, what's the name that you think it's called?

2 A Northwest, I believe.

3 Mr. Hull. Which is not your chapter, correct?

4 The Witness. Correct.

5

BY [REDACTED]

6 Q Do you interact with the other chapters in North Carolina frequently?

7 A I wouldn't say frequently, no.

8 Q Okay. When do you interact with other chapters in the State?

9 A If I had to put an average number on it, I would say once every few months,
10 1 or 2 months.

11 Q Are there certain types of events where you guys come together or interact?

12 A I believe they're few and far between. There have been a few events in the
13 past, yes.

14 Q And what sort of events are those? I just want to understand, kind of,
15 when --

16 A Normally it's a camping event and a bonfire. Relaxed. Just have fun
17 fellowshiping with your other brothers.

18 Q Understood.

19 So we've talked about, sort of, two different activities. It was originally some of
20 the rally activity and protecting folks at the rally that had you interested in the Proud
21 Boys. But it also sounds like you were interested in some of the social activities as well.
22 Is that right?

23 A From what I found out, what I saw or read about online was a different
24 culture after joining, and found out it was more about bonds and friendships and not so
25 much about a political stance or a rally or protest.

1 Q Recognizing that, you know, you've also got social activities going on, like the
2 camping events, how often would you say you attend, like, a rally-type event with other
3 Proud Boys?

4 A I would say --

5 Mr. Hull. As opposed to a social event.

6 The Witness. I would say six or so times.

7

BY [REDACTED]

8 Q In total?

9 A In total.

10 Q Okay.

11 Since that's a relatively small number, maybe we could try to go through those six
12 or seven times quickly. I'll come back a little bit later and ask you some more detail
13 about some of those, but, just to the best of your recollection, if you can tell me the
14 different sorts of rallies that you've been to.

15 A One that comes to mind would be a "stand against human trafficking" rally in
16 Fayetteville, North Carolina.

17 Q Okay. And about when was that?

18 A It's been at least -- maybe a year ago, maybe more.

19 Q Was it -- and just to try to help you place it in time, was it before or after the
20 pandemic started?

21 A Before.

22 Q Before.

23 And, then, am I right also that you were involved in a rally related to some
24 cheerleaders that had maybe ran into some trouble for wearing MAGA-related gear?

25 A I'm not sure if I had joined the Proud Boys at that time.

1 Q Okay.

2 A I know that I was politically active before the Proud Boys. I worked with a
3 conservative LGBTQ group and some local grassroots organizations in North Carolina.

4 Q Okay.

5 Mr. Hull. Excuse me. And not to interrupt, but, [REDACTED] on the cheerleaders, just
6 for me, can you give us a little context in terms of what you meant there in the question?

7 [REDACTED] Oh, sorry. I thought you were asking --

8 Mr. Hull. No, no, no, no. I just thought --

9 [REDACTED]. I'm just curious --

10 Mr. Hull. -- cheerleaders sort of came out of the blue, and can we have some
11 context?

12 [REDACTED] I'm just curious about the sorts of events, and I know that
13 Mr. Thaxton had either been involved in organizing -- well, actually, let me just ask
14 Mr. Thaxton, and maybe he can provide a little context.

15 Mr. Hull. Yeah.

16 BY [REDACTED]

17 Q Mr. Thaxton, what was your involvement with that event? Or do you know
18 what event I'm talking about?

19 A A friend of mine, Jeremy Bertino, had put it on my radar. And I'm just the
20 type, I don't really lead anything, I just am a helpful body, and was help -- helped getting
21 the story out about some young cheerleaders that had, during a homecoming game,
22 brought a pro-Trump flag and were, I believe, suspended by the athletic organization.

23 And it was just a peaceful rally for the whole cheerleading squad. And I've
24 just -- I guess that's what you're referencing.

25 Q Yep, that's exactly it. Thank you.

1 But you would put that -- I had asked you what events or rallies you had attended
2 with Proud Boys, and you said it was about six or seven. And it sounds like this one was
3 before that timeframe. Is that right?

4 A Well, the more I think about it, I believe I may have already -- it was around
5 the time, I believe, I had joined the organization, the more I think back on it.

6 Q Okay.

7 Mr. Hull. Let me ask a quick question.

8 Was the cheerleaders, in your mind, a Proud Boy event?

9 The Witness. It was never class- -- it was never geared as a Proud Boy event.
10 Any Proud Boy that I thought I knew was in plain clothes during the event, so --

11 BY [REDACTED]

12 Q And then you said that you had organized that event, or -- correct me if I'm
13 wrong -- around the time you organized that event, you were involved with a
14 conservative LGBT group. Is that right?

15 A Correct. And I didn't organize that event.

16 Q Sorry. Participated in the event. Thanks for the correction.
17 What's the -- what is that group?

18 A Deplorable Pride.

19 Q And how long have you been involved with that group?

20 A They were the first group I had reached out to to find information out about
21 various activities or support during the work-up to one of -- I believe, the first Trump
22 campaign.

23 Q Okay. And just to understand what that -- so, during the first Trump
24 campaign, you reached out to different organizations to get involved? Is that --

25 A Correct.

1 Q As part of the campaign?

2 A Not so much for the campaign. I saw various events, like flag-wavings near
3 overpasses, which piqued my interest. And that's what I saw some of this group doing.

4 Q And then I also wanted to ask a little bit more about Mr. Bertino. So it
5 sounded like you maybe had met Mr. Bertino before you joined the Proud Boys. Is that
6 right?

7 A Correct.

8 Q Okay. How did you first meet Mr. Bertino?

9 A I believe I was doing a flag-wave in Albemarle -- or, near Albemarle, North
10 Carolina.

11 Q And what was that flag-wave for, or was there a particular message?

12 A To show support for Trump.

13 Q And just tell me about how you met Mr. Bertino at that event.

14 A He had just stopped by because he had seen the flags. We struck up a
15 conversation. And that's -- you know, just struck up a friendly conversation.

16 Q And when was that?

17 A That was before, I believe, Trump took office the first time -- or before
18 Trump took office.

19 Q So around the 2015-2016 timeframe?

20 A I would feel comfortable saying that, yes.

21 Q And then it sounds like -- I think you joined the Proud Boys around 2018.

22 Did you know at the time you met Mr. Bertino that he was a member of the Proud Boys?

23 A Not at the time, no.

24 Q Okay. When did you learn that, or -- yeah. When did you learn that he
25 was a member of the Proud Boys?

1 A I believe it was a few weeks afterwards.

2 Q Had -- I'm just interested in the -- there was a couple-year lag there, right?
3 So you met Mr. Bertino around 2015 or 2016, and it wasn't until you joined -- or, you
4 didn't join until 2018. Did you talk with Mr. Bertino much about the Proud Boys in the
5 time between?

6 A I wouldn't say a lot, no.

7 Q Okay.

8 Other than the event with the cheerleaders that we've already referenced, did
9 you participate in any other events in that early time period, 2016 to 2018, with
10 Mr. Bertino?

11 A There was a Second Amendment rally in Virginia, I believe Richmond.

12 Q And do you have a ballpark timeframe for that?

13 A I don't recall the date. I just recall the event.

14 Q Okay. Any other events that you recall?

15 A There maybe was one rally -- I know there was one rally in Raleigh, North
16 Carolina. And I'm not really sure what the event or the theme of the event was.
17 And then a few times in D.C.

18 Q And do you remember -- can you give me a little bit more detail about the
19 few or couple times in D.C.?

20 A I believe there were -- I guess it was more or less being at the same past
21 three events in D.C. that come to mind. I'm not -- I guess I don't consider -- I considered
22 Jeremy my friend, but I don't -- I guess I'm not looking to stay by his side at an event just
23 because I'm just going to show support.

1

2

BY [REDACTED]

3

Q Understood.

4

So I just wanted to clarify, when you said a few events in D.C., did you mean the

5

ones at the end of 2020 and then up to the January 6th event?

6

A Correct.

7

Q Okay. Great.

8

We can move on from Mr. Bertino for now.

9

How about Mr. Tarrío, Enrique Tarrío? Do you know Mr. Tarrío?

10

A I wouldn't say I know him personally. I've met him two times in the past.

11

And it was just small talk when those two occasions happened.

12

Q And what were those two occasions, if you remember?

13

A One was the 2A rally in Virginia. And I would say the others were the -- I'd

14

see him in D.C. I know it wasn't the January event, because I didn't go to that one -- or

15

the July event. I'm sorry.

16

But, I mean, I know Enrique by appearance, but I wouldn't say that I know him

17

more than just casual conversations.

18

Q Is Mr. Tarrío the chairman of the Proud Boys currently?

19

A As far as I know, the chairman was just a title. It didn't really come with

20

any leadership or control.

21

Q Okay.

22

A So I don't know if I could say that, you know -- yes, he did have a chairman

23

title, but, as far as what I saw, there wasn't much power behind that.

24

Q Okay.

25

Mr. Hull. He asked you about now, so try to listen to the questions he's asking.

1 The Witness. Now?

2 Mr. Hull. Yeah.

3 The Witness. I don't know what Enrique's status is now.

4 BY [REDACTED]

5 Q Is there a chairman of the Proud Boys now that you know of?

6 A I would say no.

7 Q I just wanted to return quickly to the group, Deplorable Pride, that you
8 mentioned. What attracted you to that group when you joined?

9 A Just being active and wanting to help a group that I saw was doing good
10 things.

11 Q Okay. And what were the sorts of good things that you saw them doing?

12 A They would hold, I guess, toy drives and clothes drives for less-fortunate
13 groups, homeless. They would go out and do flag-waves. They would get involved in
14 pro-life issues. Showing -- you know, doing flag-waves during Veterans Days, that sort
15 of thing.

16 Q And just a couple more questions, kind of, about your chapter and how it fits
17 into the larger structure of the Proud Boys.

18 Are there particular regions or do you identify with a region of Proud Boys -- for
19 example, the south or the west?

20 A As far as I know --

21 Q Do you identify with any --

22 A As far as I know, our chapter is autonomous, along with, you know, all the
23 other chapters that are set up. So, no, no regions.

24 Q And we talked about, sort of, physical meetings, like, if you actually interact
25 with other chapters. But how about either online or through messaging systems or

1 chats? Do you frequently engage with other members from other chapters?

2 A The chatting app that we use is Telegram, but notifications on that get so
3 annoying, whether you turn the notifications down or not. I may jump in and review
4 what's kind of being said but then log off, that sort of thing, just to check and see if -- you
5 know, what's being said.

6 Q And is your chapter incorporated? Is it a nonprofit? Is there specific -- do
7 you know if there's a legal entity associated with your chapter?

8 A There's no money or anything financial that goes through our chapter, so we
9 wouldn't -- I wouldn't see the need. And even if so, I would probably discontinue my
10 relationship with them if there was.

11 Q Okay. And why do you say that?

12 A I've just seen money ruin things, just on a general scale. So this is -- I try to
13 treat it as volunteer.

14 Mr. Hull. And forgive me, it's not really an objection, but to clarify things:
15 You're talking about money. I assume that you're saying you don't know whether or not
16 it's a legal entity, like an LLC or an Inc. or partnership. You're not aware of that. Is that
17 right? I didn't understand your answer to that.

18 The Witness. I'm not aware of any of that.

19 Mr. Hull. Okay. Forgive me. Thank you.

20 BY [REDACTED]

21 Q Do you think you would be aware? Are you involved enough in the
22 organization that you would be aware if it was incorporated as a nonprofit or some sort
23 of other legal entity?

24 A No.

25 Q No. Okay. Understood.

1 And, then, are there -- within, kind of, the whole set of Proud Boys chapters, are
2 there particularly prominent chapters or well-known chapters?

3 A I don't really pay attention to other chapters. I guess I try to worry about
4 my own backyard and only involve myself in issues of my own chapter.

5 Q I'm sure sometimes that's enough, right?

6 A I would say so, yes.

7 Q And do you know -- then, based on that answer, I take it as "no," but do you
8 know how many Proud Boys there are, total?

9 A I have no idea.

10 Q Would anybody know that, or do you know if there's some accounting of
11 how many Proud Boys there are?

12 A I've never known of any accounting.

13 Mr. Hull. Nationally, worldwide, or what?

14 The Witness. All of the above. I've never known of any accounting anywhere
15 that's been kept.

16

17 Q Okay.

18 And, then, am I right that there are different levels of membership in the Proud
19 Boys?

20 A There are degrees.

21 Q Degrees? Okay. Could you describe the different degrees for me?

22 A First-degree, taping a video or at least a public profession that the West is
23 the best.

24 Second-degree would be after the chapter feels that you can be relied on and
25 depended on.

1 I believe there is -- there's a few more, but I really don't pay attention.

2 Q A couple followup questions to that.

3 Can you just expand on what you mean when you say "West is the best"?

4 A That Western civilization is the best civilization to live in, whether it be for
5 freedom or the family unit, the core family unit.

6 Q And, then, what -- just in your mind, what are the other civilizations, you
7 know, that West is better than?

8 A I would say any other civilization that follows communism, total- -- I'm sorry.
9 I can't say the word, but --

10 Q Totalitarian?

11 A Yes, correct.

12 Mr. Hull. Neither can I. Thanks.

13 The Witness. A dictator regime.

14 BY [REDACTED]:

15 Q And, then, what degree Proud Boy are you?

16 A I'm a third-degree Proud Boy.

17 Q And, then, what -- I don't think you described the third-degree Proud Boy
18 before. What's entailed there?

19 A From what I was told, getting a tattoo.

20 Q Okay. And so you got a tattoo to become a third-degree Proud Boy?

21 A I did it on my own choice, but, yes, that was the qualification.

22 Mr. Hull. I didn't understand the second-degree part. Could you go over that
23 again? I just didn't hear it.

24 The Witness. As far as what I know second-degree, or to be eligible for, is time
25 and service, and when the other members of the chapter feel that it's the right time, then

1 that is offered to that possible candidate. And then they're considered a brother for life.

2

BY [REDACTED]

3 Q And then I know for the first-degree you said you have to make a statement
4 or a video or a public statement. Third-degree was a tattoo. Is there something you
5 have to do for second-degree?

6 A Other -- it's depending -- it could be different from what I hear other
7 chapters do, but I know with ours it's as I explained.

8 Q Sorry. Could you just say that one more time? Maybe I missed you.

9 A As far as my chapter, it's as I explained, as far as when the chapter feels that
10 that candidate is trustworthy and wants to be -- you know, wants to join the chapter,
11 then that's when it's offered.

12 Q Understood. I should've been more clear. What I meant was, is there
13 some sort of initiating event or thing that happens to make you a second-degree?

14 A There are some nonsensical traditions, one being that -- not that the person
15 is roughed up in any way; it's almost symbolic. But as far as being tapped while they
16 name five breakfast cereals -- or five or six breakfast cereals, that is. And that would be,
17 I guess, one of the parts of a second-degree.

18 Q And then is there also a fourth-degree?

19 A I've heard about it, but I don't -- like I said, I don't pay attention to anything
20 past my degree. It's not -- I guess I look at it, it's not about a degree thing, so I don't
21 concern myself with that.

22 Q Is anybody in your chapter a fourth-degree?

23 A I don't believe so.

24 Q And do you know any fourth-degrees?

25 A I don't know. I don't -- if they are, I don't know. I don't -- I certainly don't

1 ask them if they are.

2 Q And, then, for each of the degrees -- well, actually, first I'll ask, do you pay
3 any sorts of dues or fees to be a member of your chapter?

4 A Not of my chapter, no.

5 Q Okay. Do you know if other chapters pay dues or fees?

6 A Our chapter is autonomous, so I don't know.

7 Q Have you ever talked to or heard from other Proud Boys that they pay dues
8 or fees in their chapters?

9 A I don't know. Not that I can recall, no.

10 Mr. Hull. Just one question I have. We've gone for 45 minutes.

11 Jay, I told you this is more draining than you'd think. Do you need a break?

12 That's the only -- I don't need to talk to you or anything like that, but do you need a break
13 to do anything, answer the call of nature or catch your breath or anything like that?

14 The Witness. Sure. That would be great.

15 Mr. Hull. For --

16 [REDACTED] Let's do 5 -- how about 5 minutes?

17 Mr. Hull. That's fine.

18 [REDACTED] Okay.

19 Mr. Hull. And do you want to talk to me? You don't need to. You're fine.

20 The Witness. I'm fine.

21 Mr. Hull. But I think it's kind of hard to do under the circumstances since you're
22 using your phone.

23 [REDACTED] We can --

24 Mr. Hull. Can we do the breakout room thing?

25 [REDACTED] Yeah, we can do the breakout room.

1 Why don't we go into recess now? So we'll go into recess at 10:45, and then
2 we'll return at 10:50.

3 [Recess.]

4 ██████████ So, then, I think we can go back on the record at 10:54.

5

BY ██████████

6 Q I know, Mr. Thaxton, that you had mentioned that you're involved in the
7 vetting for members for your chapter. Is that right?

8 A Correct.

9 Q Okay. And what does that process involve? How do you vet members?

10 A Normally a name is passed, and then we do a background check on a person
11 to see, you know, if they have a criminal history, if they have any bad past, like, anything
12 to do with kids or spousal abuse, that sort of thing.

13 Q And what -- so those are, sort of, things that are disqualifying. What sort of
14 characteristics are you looking for or do you hope to see in members?

15 A Members that believe in the family core unit, that believe in entrepreneurs
16 or entrepreneur spirit, believe in the First Amendment, the Second Amendment, from my
17 best recollection.

18 Q Back in the, kind of, disqualifying category, are there any groups that you
19 don't want any overlap with? Like, if somebody was associated with X group, then they
20 wouldn't be able to join the Proud Boys?

21 A The way I've always looked at it is, I'm not a fan of a dual membership of
22 anything. So it's kind of all -- you know, all in or all out. So that would be -- that
23 would've qualified for any group, that --

24 Q Okay.

25 A -- as far as members coming into our chapter.

1 Q Okay. What if you're, like, a member of the Elks Club? Would that be
2 disqualifying?

3 A That would be any dual membership with any other organization.

4 Q Okay. Interesting.

5 And then you also mentioned that you look for people that believe in the family
6 core unit. Can you just expand on that a little bit? What is that?

7 A From my experience, it's not really us going -- we're not going looking for
8 anybody. It's people that come to us or other guys that come to us that like what we
9 stand for and what we stand on.

10 But can you repeat the question again?

11 Q Yeah. I was just curious about what you meant -- you said that you look for
12 people that believe in the family core unit.

13 A Correct.

14 Q And I just wanted you to describe, what is a family core unit?

15 A That would be a mother-father household with children.

16 Q I'm a little bit interested in your -- and maybe I just misunderstood what the
17 group was, but the Deplorable Pride group, and then the belief in the mother-father
18 family unit. Can you just describe the relationship between those two concepts -- that
19 concept and that organization?

20 A That organization, I guess, aligns with their belief in Donald Trump, that they
21 believe in the First Amendment as well, and that, you know, it's not -- I guess it doesn't
22 depend on what race, color, creed you are; as long as you believe in freedom and
23 respecting your neighbor, you can -- what you do, you know, in your own time, in your
24 own household, so to speak, is your own business.

25 Q Okay.

1 Can you be in the Proud Boys and be gay?

2 A Yes.

3 Q Okay.

4 And, then, also, are you specifically interested in or looking for members that have
5 a background in law enforcement or are veterans?

6 A No.

7 Q Okay. When that sort of potential member comes along, is that an
8 attractive characteristic?

9 A I guess that's not the first thing we're looking for. As you get to know
10 someone's background, it -- I mean, me being someone who served, I guess when I was in
11 the Marine Corps, there was a sense of brotherhood and camaraderie that, when I got
12 out in 1997 -- and that's, I guess, another aspect of the organization that attracted me.

13 Q So I know you said that you don't want to be or don't like being involved in
14 organizations that have to deal with money, but do -- and I know you also said you don't
15 pay dues. But do you do fundraisers or do you raise money for particular events or
16 activities?

17 A Our chapter has, I guess, tried to help with toy drives or taking donations for
18 Toys for Tots every year since I've been with my chapter. And I've heard other chapters
19 throughout the Nation do the same thing. But as far as, you know, any monetary, I -- I
20 just don't know.

21 Q What about, like, if you attended a rally and you wanted to make a big sign
22 or something like that? Do you ever raise money to do those sorts of things?

23 A Our chapter doesn't.

24 Q And, then, how about selling merchandise? Have you ever been involved
25 in selling Proud Boys merchandise?

1 A I haven't.

2 Q Does your chapter sell merchandise?

3 A No.

4 Q Okay. Do you know --

5 Mr. Hull. I'm just going to object on foundation grounds. Is there such a thing
6 as Proud Boy merchandise?

7 [REDACTED] Thank you for the objection.

8 [REDACTED]

9 Q Mr. Thaxton, do you know anybody else who sells merchandise related to
10 the Proud Boys?

11 A I just know my -- no one in my chapter does. So it's -- I don't know.

12 Q Okay.

13 I want to start moving to talk about particular events or activities. The first one I
14 want to ask about is: Do you remember in 2021, during the Presidential debates in
15 September, there was a moment where Proud Boys were brought up at the Presidential
16 debate and President Trump told Proud Boys, or uttered the phrase at least, "Stand back
17 and stand by"? Do you remember that?

18 A I recall that, yes.

19 Q Can you just tell me what that meant for you or explain your experience of
20 that event?

21 A It doesn't mean anything to me. I know that it was said, but does it -- I
22 don't know. I guess it could -- anybody could have any meaning for it, but I just -- I don't
23 know the meaning.

24 Q Were you happy that the President had mentioned Proud Boys or told Proud
25 Boys to stand back and stand by?

1 A I was surprised that Biden mentioned the name in a debate.

2 Q And, then, what was your reaction to President Trump's statement?

3 A I guess it was no different than any other Trump statement. I mean, I was a
4 Trump -- I approve of Donald Trump. I guess I would say I'm a supporter. So it
5 was -- to me, it was the same as any other comment that the media covered.

6 Q Did it have an effect on your organization at all?

7 A We had a slight uptick, from what I've seen, in applicants.

8 Q And did you admit some of those members, or did you have an uptick in
9 membership also?

10 A I'm sorry. Can you repeat that question?

11 Q Yeah. You said specifically you had an uptick in applicants, and I was just
12 wondering if that translated to an uptick in members as well. Did you admit some of
13 those applicants?

14 A Yes, there were some that were -- but it was -- we, as a chapter, still take
15 vetting very slowly. So, even though there was an uptick, it would still take at least, I
16 would say, 3 months. And that can vary as well. It just depends on the person that the
17 vetting guys are either collecting information on or talking about.

18 Q I remember, earlier, you said you do background checks on applicants.
19 What sort of background check do you do?

20 A It was -- I don't know what the product was. It was a suggestion, and one
21 of the guys said that they could do a background check. I'm not sure which paid service
22 it was.

23 Q So I know you said your chapter is about 20 members. Can you guess for
24 me or ballpark for me about how many new members you got after or related to that
25 "stand back, stand by" comment?

1 A I know, since then, we've had some members leave. So there was -- you
2 know, maybe, if there was an uptick, it's kind of a -- to my best recollection, there may
3 have been a few guys. I just don't know how -- you know, which one of those were the
4 new ones. I do know there were some, though, yes.

5 Q How about just the timeframe between September 2020 and -- or, let's say,
6 the election, the 2020 election. Did you see an uptick in membership over the course of
7 the election?

8 A I have heard of some other chapters mentioning something about upticks
9 and -- or just upticks in interest. As far as what those materialized, I don't know.

10 Q Okay.

11 Mr. Hull. Clarification. What was -- just for me -- what was the date of the
12 debate where that "stand by" comment was made in the Biden-Trump discourse?
13 When was that?

14 ██████████ It was the September debate. I think it was September 28th.

15 Mr. Hull. Okay. So your question is: From then up until November 3rd, was
16 there an uptick? Am I right?

17 ██████████ Yeah, essentially. Just, I was being a little -- just, during the election
18 period in general, but we can take September 28th to November 3rd.

19 ██████████

20 Q And then, Mr. Thaxton, I just wanted to ask: Did you -- noting that there
21 was an uptick during that time period, did you have a belief about what caused that
22 uptick?

23 A I think I was more worried about if there was Federal agencies -- I mean, not
24 that the organization, from what I could see, is breaking any laws, doing anything
25 wrong -- but, as I've seen with other activist groups in the past, as far as a Federal

1 element infiltrating the group and causing division. And I think that's -- I guess that's
2 what I was most worried about, just because these guys I consider family, and --

3 Q I --

4 A I'm sorry? Go ahead.

5 Q I'll rephrase the question a little bit. What I was asking was -- so you said
6 there was sort of an uptick in membership. And I was wondering if you knew what -- or
7 if you had belief about what caused that uptick, what caused the increased interest.

8 A I would attribute it to more people wanting to get involved, not to any one
9 particular action. I mean, I guess it was a culmination of things.

10 Q Why do you think people wanted to get involved? Or did anybody tell you
11 why they wanted to get involved?

12 A My feel was people, you know, wanted to get out and be active and not so
13 much, you know, behind electronics, and more out and about, you know, whether that be
14 a flag-wave or a, you know, "stand up for no communism" rally or what have you. And
15 that's what I -- the way I was interpreting it.

16 Q I guess I want to dig a little bit deeper. So I understand people wanted to
17 be more active, get out from behind their computers. But my question is, what was
18 driving that additional interest? Was it a particular issue? I guess that's the question.
19 Was there a particular issue you thought people were interested in?

20 A I don't know. Not that -- not that I recall.

21 Q Fair enough.

22 You noted that you were a supporter of President Trump. Is that true, would
23 you say, for most of the members of your chapter?

24 A It's a popular -- yeah, I would say it's a -- he is popular amongst the
25 fraternity. I know there are other guys that aren't as behind Trump as other gentlemen,

1 but, I mean, we're all brothers. We know how to disagree and get along.

2 Q Are there other politicians that you think of as particularly popular among
3 the members of your chapters -- or, of your chapter?

4 A Not that I can recall.

5 Q Were you involved in any -- well, let me ask this question first: Did you go
6 to any Trump rallies during the election season?

7 A I attended two Trump rallies in Charlotte.

8 Q Okay. Did you attend any rallies for any other politicians, or do you
9 remember any particular politicians that you liked hearing at Trump rallies?

10 A There were a few other -- I'm trying to remember the candidates' names. I
11 think there was a candidate running for Governor in North Carolina that -- I mean, I
12 wasn't dressed -- I was just dressed in regular clothes, but handing out Republican
13 material at, I guess, one of the early-voting polls.

14 There was another Congressman that was in, I think, the district right beside
15 where I live that it ended up being a runoff, and just tried to get involved with him as
16 well.

17 Q Okay.

18 Well, let's -- actually, I want to focus for one second just on that. You said that
19 you were -- correct me if I'm wrong. Maybe I misheard you. Did you say you were
20 handing out materials or pamphlets at an early-voting location?

21 A That was -- it was, like, you couldn't be so -- you had to be so far away from
22 where, I guess, the voting poll was. These were, I guess, Republican voting guides that
23 the Republican Party hands out. I think the Democratic Party does the same thing.

24 And then this was just, like, candidate literature of who's running for city council,
25 who's running for the positions open at the time of the election.

1 Q And when you did that, did you do that with other Proud Boys, or was that
2 on your own?

3 A That was on my own.

4 Q Okay.

5 Let's talk a little bit about how you communicate with other Proud Boys. So I
6 know you mentioned Telegram as sort of the primary application that you used. Is that
7 right?

8 A Yes.

9 Q Okay. Any other ways that you commonly communicate with other Proud
10 Boys?

11 A Normally through telephone. And then -- normally, if I'm -- if I really need
12 to talk to another Proud Boy that's in my chapter, you know, it'll be in an in-person way.

13 Q Okay.

14 I'm going to name a couple either applications or platforms or modes of
15 communication, and just let me know if it's something that you use to talk to other Proud
16 Boys with.

17 A Sure.

18 Q So you mentioned phone. I assume just calls and texts. Is that right?

19 A I don't -- I'm not a big texter, so more or less it's just phone calls.

20 Q Okay.

21 Telegram you said.

22 And then how about, do you use Signal at all?

23 A A few years back, I think I've used it. But I think I deleted -- I uninstalled it
24 from my phone. But I have used it in the past. But it's such a rarity.

25 Q And, then, more of a platform than a communication app, but do you use

1 Parler? Or did you use Parler?

2 A I have an account, but I don't -- I rarely use it.

3 Q Okay. How about in the timeframe, like, November/December 2020,
4 January 2021? Were you active on Parler at all?

5 A Normally, if it's a platform like that, I use it to view. I just -- I know I've
6 maybe forwarded something. I can't -- it's been such a long time since I've even
7 accessed it that I'm not sure what was posted.

8 Q Do you remember accessing it during that timeframe identified -- we're just
9 going to call that, for the rest of the deposition, when I say late 2020 -- I'll just say late
10 2020, early 2021. I mean November/December, and January 2021.

11 During that timeframe, were you checking Parler much? Or were there people
12 that you followed and checked often?

13 A I would get notifications. But, like I said, it's like any other -- after I got
14 banned from Facebook, I just -- the appeal of social platforms just didn't do it for me
15 anymore.

1

2 [11:15 a.m.]

3

BY [REDACTED]

4

Q Do you, for Parler, do you remember any Proud Boys that you followed on

5

Parler?

6

A Jeremy Bertino. There may have been a few others. But like I said, I so

7

rarely used it that it just wasn't my main source to consume.

8

Q How about Mr. Tarrion, did you follow him on Parler?

9

A I may have. I'd have to check back to see if that's factual.

10

Q Okay. Did you use Zello at all?

11

A I've used Zello in the past for disaster support. I know I've went -- there

12

was a flood in North Carolina, well before joining the Proud Boys, and would do fire

13

rescue or see if -- not that I did any, but would offer assistance. So I have used it.

14

Zello, is that the two-way app?

15

Q It is. It's sort of like a voice to talk. Yeah.

16

A I'm referencing the same. Yeah. So that's -- I am familiar with that.

17

Q Okay. But you haven't used that to communicate with Proud Boys?

18

A No.

19

Q And then how about Twitter? Are you on Twitter?

20

A I am on Twitter, but, like I said, I view, I rarely post anything. And half the

21

time I see a bunch of Twitter alerts on my phone and I just -- I swipe. I get rid of the

22

notification and disregard it.

23

Q Do you recall back in the late 2020, early '21 timeframe following President

24

Trump on Twitter?

25

A I may have, but I can't say for certain without looking back.

1 Q So I want to ask a little bit about --

2 Mr. Hull. Forgive me. Can I hear that last question back from maybe you or the
3 court reporter? I was distracted and just want to know what it was. The last question
4 you asked, that he answered.

5 [REDACTED] Sure. I can just restate it for you.

6 Mr. Hull. Sure.

7 [REDACTED] I had just asked him if he just followed President Trump on Twitter.
8 And he said -- he responded that he couldn't remember and he'd have to check.

9 Mr. Hull. Fine. Thank you.

10 BY [REDACTED]

11 Q So I want to ask you, Mr. Thaxton, a little bit about -- I know when you first
12 joined the Proud Boys you said you were interested because you said you saw them
13 protecting rally-goers from -- I think you had identified the group as antifa. And I just
14 wanted to ask about some of the work that you do when you're providing that sort of
15 protection.

16 How do you prepare for going to a rally if you think you're going to do that sort of
17 thing?

18 A Just being vigilant. See, you know, looking to see if the other side is saying
19 anything about the event. And just being aware of your surroundings, you know. If
20 something looks strange, you know, you see something, say something.

21 And normally, just with me, I'm going to try to find, I guess, the event organizer
22 and say, "Hey, this doesn't look right," or, you know, "This is the chatter I'm seeing."

23 Q Okay. So it sounds like you do some research on the sort of opposition
24 groups before you go?

25 A Correct.

1 Q Okay. And where do you go for that sort of research?

2 A There are a few far left accounts that my Twitter account just follows. And
3 normally it'll just pop up and I'll be alerted to at least what they're talking about.

4 Q What are those accounts?

5 A Jordan Green, Lindsay Ayling, Megan Squire, Anthony Sitar (ph), or just, I
6 believe, a few that I remember.

7 Q So these are individuals that you know are associated. Are these
8 individuals associated with antifa?

9 A I would say they fall in the same political point of view.

10 Q As you understand it, is antifa of a particular group or what do you think
11 antifa is?

12 A I would say that they are organized from hundreds of videos that I've seen
13 where, you know, supplies are being pulled out of rented box trucks, down to even
14 looting and burning cities. You have to be organized to pull that off. That's just what I
15 believe.

16 Q Do you work with any other Proud Boys to do that sort of research?

17 A I don't. Like I said, I view, and if I get an alert then I just pass the
18 information along that, you know, this is being talked about, and just make sure my guys
19 are aware.

20 Mr. Hull. Excuse me. Just for the record, and it's one of the few things I know,
21 you mentioned four names, Jordan, Lindsay, and Megan and Anthony on your Twitter
22 account. And one of those, I'm pointing this out really for [REDACTED] is a reporter for a fairly
23 mainstream media outlet. So not necessarily antifa, Jordan Green.

24 So I just think that should be out there. For instance, Jordan Green is not
25 necessarily a member of antifa, but he does cover those kinds of things as a straight-up,

1 nuts-and-bolts journalist for a certain media outlet and has for some time.

2 [REDACTED]. Thanks, Mr. Hull, for that clarification.

3 The Witness. [REDACTED] I'd like to clarify just a little bit more. I guess the reason I
4 follow these people is shortly after I got back from January 6th, my house was graffitied
5 with death threats. So it's definitely something that puts me on edge.

6 [REDACTED] Are there other members of your chapter that do this sort of work as
7 well or would you say you're the most interested in that sort of work?

8 The Witness. It does interest me, but I don't know if there are any others that
9 are doing the same thing I am.

10 [REDACTED]. Okay.

11 Mr. Hull. Did you understand the question when he said, what kind of work?
12 Did you have an understanding of what he was saying, Jay?

13 The Witness. I guess I was making an assumption, so maybe if you want to
14 clarify.

15 [REDACTED] Sure.

16 BY [REDACTED]

17 Q By "that sort of work," I just meant the sort we had just been discussing,
18 which is doing research on antifa or opposition protesters for rallies.

19 A Okay.

20 Q So is your answer the same with that understanding?

21 A Yes.

22 Q Okay. So then, tell me if I'm mischaracterizing your answer, it sounds like
23 you haven't worked with other members of your chapter when you're doing that
24 opposition research at all?

25 A Correct.

1 Q Okay. Are there Proud Boys from other chapters that you have done that
2 sort of work with?

3 A I don't know. I don't -- like I said, I'm not sure who else. I guess if you
4 classify it as work, I just -- I think it's just being aware of what --

5 Mr. Hull. Do you understand the questions, because I didn't completely. It
6 might be just me.

7

BY [REDACTED]

8 Q I'm just asking, have you coordinated with any other Proud Boys when
9 you've done that sort of research?

10 So let me give you an example. Have you gone to rallies or researched
11 opposition protesters with Mr. Bertino?

12 A I know I've talked to him about individuals that I see talking about or posting,
13 and that's about as far as it goes, as far as with Jeremy.

14 Q Did you do this sort of opposition research and protection activity when you
15 were in the rallies in D.C. that you mentioned earlier, the November, December, and
16 January rallies?

17 A I may have been looking. But like I said, I don't -- I'm not part of a group
18 that does any type of security or anything. So I just -- you know, I'm a firm believer of
19 you see something, you say something.

20 Q Yeah. And, I mean, just informally. And when I use the word "work", I
21 mean it colloquially, just that sort of activity.

22 So you -- we've talked about sort of research that you do ahead. How about
23 either equipment or I asked about preparation for these rallies. And so, do you bring
24 any specific equipment or wear any particular types of clothes when you're going to
25 rallies for the purpose of opposing certain protesters?

1 A From my friend Jeremy getting stabbed in D.C., it's shown me that the
2 possibility of getting stabbed is very real. And I can say I have wore underbody armor as
3 far as stabproof. I guess it was -- I'm not sure of the material, it's not metal, but it's just
4 a simple thin plate that if somebody that you're not -- if you're not observant comes up,
5 which can happen, that there's some type of protection. It's not foolproof.

6 Also that just comes from military training that I've had in wearing flak jackets and
7 that sort of thing for protection.

8 Q Any other equipment? I've seen before people that wear goggles to
9 protest or will bring like some sort of defensive tool. Anything like that?

10 A I mean, I've seen helmet, guys wear headgear.

11 Q How about you?

12 A I have wore headgear in the past.

13 Q When you go to the rallies for this purpose -- and by "that purpose" I mean
14 opposing other protesters -- do you make it known that you're a member of the Proud
15 Boys?

16 A I don't. I mean, I just go for support.

17 Q Like, do you wear clothing that would identify you as a Proud Boy?

18 A I have in the past, yes.

19 Q And why do you do that?

20 A I guess it tactically or just being safe and knowing who's around you at all
21 times you can quickly, you know, know if there is, you know, friend or foe, so to speak.

22 Q Have you ever done -- well, let me ask you this. Would you -- how would
23 you characterize -- what word would you use to describe what you're doing when you go
24 to a rally for that purpose?

25 A For me, just showing up and being counted.

1 Q Okay. Have you ever done this sort of opposition or that protection
2 work -- let's call it protection. How about that? Does that work for you?

3 A Sure.

4 Q Okay. Have you ever done that sort of protection work at a Trump event?

5 A No.

6 Q All right. Do you -- did you consider the events in November and December
7 2020 and January 2021 to be Trump events?

8 A I know Trump was running, but I didn't consider them a Trump event.

9 Mr. Hull. And by that you mean November 14th and December 12th?

10 [REDACTED] Correct.

11 BY [REDACTED]:

12 Q Are there particular groups that you do that sort of protection work for?

13 A I don't consider doing protection work, so no.

14 Q But have you provided protection for any particular groups?

15 A I don't know. I always tell my guys that we're not security. So, you know,
16 we're not -- we're not in -- we don't have -- we're not bonded, we, you know, we're
17 not -- we're not law enforcement.

18 So, you know, always if law enforcement is normally at these events, let them
19 handle it and, you know, stand back. You know, just come to the event for what the
20 event's about.

21 Q Yeah. And I'm not trying to be thick here, but I know you first described
22 that you were interested in the Proud Boys because you saw them providing protection at
23 a California rally against antifa. And then we talked about some of the things you do to
24 prepare for a rally, when you're going to go, and that's doing some opposition research
25 on antifa, and then sometimes you wear particular protective gear.

1 So that's a little more, I think, than just somebody who shows up at the rally to say
2 something, right?

3 A I just have seen past experiences where anything can happen. And with
4 me being the breadwinner in my family, I don't want to -- I don't -- I guess I don't want to
5 be a victim. So -- and I know that can very well happen, not that I'm protecting anybody
6 else other than myself.

7 Q Okay. So then you've never gone to a rally with the intention of protecting
8 other rally attendees?

9 A No.

10 Q I want to ask a little about the 2020 election and some of your thoughts on
11 the election.

12 Do you know what I mean when I say election integrity?

13 A I do.

14 Q Okay. Did you have any concerns about election integrity for the 2020
15 election?

16 A My own opinion?

17 Q Yeah, your own opinion.

18 A I've seen enough to where I have major -- I have questions, yes.

19 Q Okay. And what are those questions or concerns?

20 A That a lot of the swing States or the States the night of the election there
21 was such a dramatic shift in the amount of votes, even shown on, I guess, data maps, as
22 far as a big uptick. And it just, to me, it doesn't pass the smell test.

23 Q Okay. So then what do you attribute that dramatic uptick to?

24 A I don't -- I'm just looking at it from a layman's point of view and I don't know.
25 I'm not in a party. I don't know how to run an election, that sort of thing. I just -- I see

1 the stats that come out and reports of, you know, dead people voting in Arizona.

2 And not that that hasn't happened in the past, I'm sure it has, but with the weight
3 of this last election and just seeing how one candidate can't fill a gymnasium and another
4 candidate fills stadiums. Just if it walks like a duck and talks like a duck, I'm going to say
5 it's a duck.

6 Q Sure. And I'm certainly not expecting you to have an expert opinion on
7 elections, just kind of interested in what your mindset was leading into that late 2020
8 time period.

9 You mentioned seeing reports of dead people voting and a couple other things
10 that seemed suspicious to you or didn't pass the smell test. What were the news
11 sources where you saw that sort of reporting?

12 A Normally it was from YouTube, various videos. Also videos of boxes being
13 pulled out -- in Pennsylvania -- being pulled out from under tables, windows to where
14 they are counting ballots being blocked.

15 Q Okay. Are there particular channels on YouTube or individuals on YouTube
16 that you follow?

17 A I follow a lot. But, I mean, I just -- I let the feed just kind of do -- I refresh
18 the application and then whatever, you know, it pops up, then that's kind of -- I don't
19 really go looking for a specific channel.

20 Q So you sort of let the algorithm, the YouTube algorithm, direct you a little
21 bit?

22 A Correct.

23 Q Okay. Do you follow Infowars or Alex Jones?

24 A I don't follow. I know his web address and probably can go there and view
25 content if I want.

1 Q Okay. And do you do that often?

2 A Yeah. I mean, I would say a few times a week. Yeah.

3 Q And is that the same answer for late 2020 and early '21, were you checking
4 Infowars a few times a week?

5 A No.

6 Q Okay. When did you start using Infowars as a news source?

7 A I think right along the time as the pandemic started up.

8 Q Okay. Then I just want to clarify quickly, I know timeframes get confusing
9 as I'm firing questions at you. But it sounds like you started listening to Alex Jones and
10 Infowars around the time the pandemic started. And then --

11 A I guess I became intrigued during the 2A rally in Virginia.

12 Q Okay.

13 A I think it was a rare chance. We were walking -- I was walking around
14 actually with Jeremy the night before and Alex Jones happened to be on one of the
15 streets. And he just -- he did a small interview.

16 Q Okay. I was just trying to get at the timeframe. I think when I asked you
17 if around late 2020 and early '21 -- 2021 -- so around the time of the November 14th rally,
18 December 12th rally, and January 6th rally, during that timeframe were you watching
19 Infowars?

20 A I was.

21 Q Okay. And then you mentioned a meeting or a time that you met Alex
22 Jones when you were with Mr. Bertino. Does Mr. Bertino know Alex Jones?

23 A I don't know.

24 Q When at that particular time, at the Second Amendment rally, was that the
25 first time they met or did they seem familiar?

1 A They didn't seem familiar. I think -- I don't know. I don't know.

2 Q Okay. What was the interview about?

3 Mr. Hull. A clarification. The 2A rally in Virginia was when? I didn't get a time
4 on that. Maybe you did, but I didn't hear it. I'd like to hear it just so I can follow.

5 The Witness. I think that that 2A rally was maybe 2 years ago?

6

BY [REDACTED]

7 Q Right around -- that would be right around the beginning of the pandemic?

8 A I'm just not sure.

9 Q That's okay.

10 Let's see. I'm having a fellow staff member tell me that they believe that 2A rally
11 might have been in January of 2020. Does that sound about right?

12 A That sounds familiar, yes.

13 Q And then sorry, maybe I missed your answer. When Alex Jones interviewed
14 Mr. Bertino, what was that interview about?

15 A Just people showing up for the Second Amendment rally or some of the bills.
16 I believe it was for Lobby Day, is why the call to action for, you know, people to come to
17 Richmond and lobby against bad gun legislation.

18 Q I was more asking what about -- what was the interview between Mr. Jones
19 and Mr. Bertino about, not the whole event.

20 A I just was -- I don't recall.

21 Q Did he just pick Mr. Bertino out of the crowd or why did that interview
22 happen?

23 A We were just walking around that evening, just kind of taking the city in, and
24 Alex happened to be on one of the side roads with his camera crew. We walked over
25 and he asked, you know, if he could interview us, so he said yes.

1 Q Have you ever been together with Mr. Bertino and Mr. Jones at the same
2 time ever again?

3 A No.

4 Mr. Hull. And when you say taking the city in, you were talking about Richmond,
5 Virginia, correct?

6 The Witness. Correct.

7 BY [REDACTED]

8 Q Do you know of, maybe times that you weren't there, but do you know of
9 times that Mr. Bertino and Mr. Alex Jones have met?

10 A I don't.

11 Q Other than that time at the Second Amendment rally?

12 A I don't.

13 Q You described your concerns about election integrity and I know those are
14 your personal beliefs. Were those widely shared among members of your chapter?

15 A I know there were a lot of unhappy people. But that's about as far as I
16 remember.

17 Q Did you go -- well, actually, let's -- let me -- we'll move to the specific event
18 of November 14th. So let's talk about Washington, D.C., November 14th. Did you go
19 to the rallies that were taking place that day?

20 A Which rallies were those?

21 Q These were -- it was a rally organized by Women for America First, it was on
22 Freedom Plaza, it involved a march to the Supreme Court. It goes by a couple different
23 name, sometimes Stop the Steal or MAGA 1.

24 A Yes, I was there.

25 Q Okay. And what was your interest in going to that event?

1 A I believe -- I don't know if that was the first time in D.C. I think it was. But
2 just the fact that it was in, you know, the city's capital, the history, that, you know, my
3 brothers that I like to party with were going to be at a particular place. More or less just
4 to have a good time.

5 Q And who were the brothers that you liked to party with?

6 A Jeremy, other brothers in my chapter, acquaintances that I'd made from
7 brief exchanges on Telegram.

8 Q How many other brothers from your chapter went to the November rally?

9 A Four maybe?

10 Q And do you recall which ones or what their names were?

11 A I mean, it was just so haphazard. We all didn't travel together, so there
12 may have been some people that said they were going and didn't go.

13 Mr. Hull. It's a fair enough question and people are allowed to go to rallies. If
14 you remember.

15 [REDACTED] Yeah, I think Mr. Hull is just saying -- I understand your memory
16 might be a little bit hazy. But just to the best of your recollection, what other individuals
17 from your chapter went to the November 14th rally?

18 The Witness. A gentleman I know as Fluffy.

19 [REDACTED] Do you know his real name?

20 The Witness. I know I've heard it, but I don't remember. I just -- I don't
21 remember it.

22 Mr. Hull. Come again? Fluffy?

23 The Witness. Yeah.

24 BY [REDACTED]

25 Q And then who else?

1 A A gentleman by the name of Red.

2 Q And how about his real name?

3 A I'm not sure what his real name is.

4 Q And then who else? I think you said maybe there were about four?

5 A I'm trying to -- those two kind of stick out, because I did see them while I was
6 there. I don't -- I'm not recalling anybody else.

7 Q Okay. And then how did you get to that event?

8 A I drove.

9 Q And did you drive alone?

10 A I did.

11 Q Just out of curiosity, if there were other members of your chapter going, why
12 didn't you go together?

13 A There was nothing ever set in stone. People said they might be interested.
14 Everybody has jobs. So there's nothing that tells people they need to go or they don't.
15 An idea is thrown out, and if you can make it, you can make it.

16 Q Can you just give me an idea of your travel itinerary, like, when did you go up
17 there, where did you stay, when did you come back?

18 A I'm not sure of the hotel name. I'd heard there was a free place to stay.
19 And I think I went up the night of the 5th.

20 Q I think we might be --

21 Mr. Hull. Forgive me. I thought we were talking about the 14th, [REDACTED]

22 [REDACTED] Yeah. I was just going to stop him. I think -- yeah, I think we
23 might be a little confused. We're talking about November 14th.

24 Mr. Hull. Is it time for a break or lunch yet? How's that?

25 The Witness. I didn't have a hotel, I just drove up, stayed for a little while, and

1 drove back.

2

BY [REDACTED]

3 Q Okay. So it was just a day trip?

4 A Well, most of it was night, was a night trip.

5 Q Gotcha. We've talked about sort of providing protection and doing
6 opposition research on antifa. Did you do any of that for the November 14th rally?

7 A No different than just keeping updated on anything being talked about
8 concerning an OTC.

9 Q Do you know if you or any of the other Proud Boys that you were with
10 coordinated with any of the organizers of November 14th or had conversations with
11 them?

12 A I don't recall.

13 Q Okay.

14 A Could be so, but I don't recall.

15 Q We've heard from some of the organizers that different groups might have
16 helped provide some security for the areas where the rallies were happening. But it
17 sounds like you weren't involved in that or don't recall that?

18 A I never -- if there was, I was never aware of it.

19 Q Okay. I'm going to ask you about a couple other individuals and groups.

20 And just let me know if you know who they are or if you've ever met them.

21 So I named the organization Women for America First, that's run by a mother and
22 daughter, Amy and Ali [sic] Kremer. Do you know them or that organization?

23 A I don't.

24 Q Okay. Do you know -- there's a man associated with that group that works
25 with them, his name is Charles Bowman. Do you know Charles Bowman?

1 A I don't.

2 Q Okay. How about Ali Alexander or the group Stop the Steal?

3 A I've heard Ali's name, but I don't know him.

4 Q Okay. How about Roger Stone?

5 A I've heard the name, but I don't know Roger Stone.

6 Q And then the organization the Oath Keepers?

7 A The same. I've heard the name. If I've met an Oath Keeper, I don't know.

8 I don't know of any.

9 Q Okay. I'm just going to name two Oath Keepers and let me know if you
10 know who they are, if you've met them.

11 Stewart Rhodes?

12 A I've heard the name from the media reports, but I don't know Stewart
13 Rhodes.

14 Q Okay. And Kelly Meggs?

15 A I've heard the name in the media, I don't know who she is.

16 Q Okay. All right. Then let's just -- I think I've got some of the details about
17 the event, but just give me your kind of recollection of how that event unfolded or what
18 your experience was there.

19 A Can you clarify the event?

20 Q The November 14th. We're still talking about November 14th.

21 A I got into town, found some brothers, and walked around D.C. Walked
22 around with the guys around the Supreme Court. And after 4 or 5 hours, I got in my car
23 and went back home.

24 Q Okay. Were you with Proud Boys for most of that time?

25 A Yes.

1 Q And do you recall about what time you left?

2 A It was around dinner time, so I would say 5 -- 4, 5, or 6 in the evening.

3 Q Okay. All right. Let's talk about -- so that's November 14th. I also want
4 to talk about the December 12th rallies -- a rally that was in D.C. Do you recall that
5 event?

6 A I do.

7 Q Okay. And tell me about your experience at the December 12th event?

8 A It seemed like there was a lot of support for the organization from ordinary
9 patriots that were there. Again, it was just a day outing. I just came up to show
10 support and came back the same day -- or same evening.

11 Q Who else -- we talked about individuals that you met at November 14th, I
12 want to ask kind of the same questions -- or Proud Boys at November 14th -- I want to ask
13 sort of the same set of questions for December 12th.

14 Who were you meeting there? What were the other Proud Boys that you knew
15 were there?

16 A I did recognize some North Carolina Proud Boys, not so much from my
17 chapter.

18 Q And who were those individuals?

19 A A gentleman by the name of Mark Allen.

20 Q Okay.

21 Mr. Hull. Can we take a 1-minute or 2-minute break? Somebody's at my door
22 and I've got to get rid of them so I can follow this. Is it okay?

23 [REDACTED] Sure. Let's -- it's 11:49. Let's go back -- let's just take a 5-minute
24 break. Let's go back at 11:55.

25 Mr. Hull. Thanks. Thanks, [REDACTED] Bye.

1 [REDACTED] We're in recess now.

2 [Recess.]

3 BY [REDACTED]

4 Q So, Mr. Thaxton, I think before we took a break, you were telling me about
5 some of the individuals that you met at the December 12th rally. And you had said
6 Mark Allen.

7 Do you remember any other Proud Boys that you met there?

8 A Some of the handles are going to sound a little funny.

9 Q That's fine.

10 A Savahoe.

11 Q And do you know his real name?

12 A I don't.

13 Q How do you spell Savahoe?

14 A S-a-v-h-o-e, I believe.

15 Q And then --

16 A I'm sorry, S-a-v-a.

17 Q Okay. And then who else?

18 A I'm trying to think. I'm not -- I don't recall.

19 Q Was Mr. Bertino there?

20 A Yeah, I believe he was. Yes. Yeah, that was the event he got stabbed.

21 Q Do you remember talking with any other Proud Boys about plans to go up,
22 either when you'd arrive or where you'd meet?

23 A Not that I recall.

24 Q Okay. I know that you mentioned you're on some Signal chats and get lots
25 of alerts. For either the November 14th rally or the December 12th rallies, were you on

1 any Signal chats that were specifically for coordinating around either of those events?

2 A Signal chats? No.

3 Q Sorry, I meant Telegram.

4 A Telegram? I may have been, but I don't recall.

5 Q Okay. How would you have -- did you know that Mr. Bertino was going to
6 be at the December 12th rally before you went?

7 A By telephone. We had talked.

8 Q Called. Okay.

9 How about any of the other folks, like Mark Allen or Savahoe, had you talked to
10 them or did you know that they were going to be there?

11 A They mentioned on Telegram, but just that, you know, they were thinking
12 about heading up. I mean, there wasn't any set plans for anybody, I don't think.

13 Q Was that -- if you remember -- was that a direct message between you and
14 those two individuals or was it on a group chat?

15 A I may have seen it on a group. No, I don't know if -- I just don't recall. I
16 don't recall where it was.

17 Q Okay. Was it normal for you to message with individual people on
18 Telegram or was it normally a group setting or a group chat?

19 A With me, normally I would -- a phone call.

20 Q Okay. But I'm saying when you were using Telegram, was it normally a
21 group Telegram chat or were you normally talking to individuals?

22 Mr. Hull. If you were, were you viewing or talking as well?

23 The Witness. I was just viewing, I think.

24 BY [REDACTED]

25 Q Okay. So it was less common for you to actually message people on

1 Telegram?

2 A Right.

3 Q Okay. So then I assume if you were viewing, then that was in a group chat.

4 Is that correct?

5 A I believe so.

6 Q Okay. And you don't -- is there like a -- is there an ongoing group chat that
7 you're part of? Or how do they get created?

8 A I don't know. I mean, anybody can create a group in Telegram. But
9 normally the group is created and then is deleted if, you know, it was created for a party
10 or, you know, some type of small get-together. But, you know, it's a short-lived chat if
11 there is one.

12 Q Okay. Then do you think probably there was a group chat created for
13 December 12th?

14 A I don't -- I mean, in Telegram you can add people to group chats, so, I mean,
15 there may have been. Normally, if a chat gets too noisy, I'll turn it off or I'll jump out of
16 it. I really don't pay attention to the names of the groups or stuff like that.

17 Q Okay.

18 A It just gets -- it becomes a hindrance or a bother.

19 Q And then describe to me as far as you're aware, when you're on a Telegram
20 chat, how -- you said sometimes they get deleted or they disappear. Is that right?

21 A Correct.

22 Q Okay. And how does that happen?

23 A Normally, the creator deletes the chat. And I think that deletes everybody
24 in the chat.

25 Q Okay. And then we've kind of mentioned a couple times the event, your

1 friend Mr. Bertino was stabbed at the December 12th event. Were you there when that
2 happened?

3 A I wasn't near him. So it's one of those things I had heard about.

4 Q Were you in D.C. at the time?

5 A I was.

6 Q Okay. So you hadn't driven back yet.

7 A No.

8 Q Okay. What do you know about when that happened?

9 A All I know is what I've either heard word of mouth or what I've seen reports
10 on. So which, I mean, isn't much. I know Jeremy was stabbed. I saw the evidence of
11 the hospitalization. But as far as what preempted it or -- I don't know.

12 Mr. Hull. Excuse me. I beg your pardon. It's about when it happened or what
13 happened?

14 [REDACTED] I was just asking him what happened, what did he know about what
15 happened.

16 Mr. Hull. My apologies.

17 [REDACTED] That's okay.

18 BY [REDACTED]

19 Q Continue, Mr. Thaxton.

20 A So, yeah, other than knowing that it happened, I don't even know the
21 gentleman's name that I think they got for the stabbing. I think there was -- something
22 about he was taken in and then released. But much -- I don't know much more than
23 that.

24 Q Okay. We've spoken a lot about Mr. Bertino, but I just wanted to ask also
25 do you know Mr. Donohoe as well as you know Mr. Bertino?

1 A I do.

2 Q Okay. And what's your relationship with him? Just describe that.

3 A I know Mr. Donohoe was a prior marine like myself. So I think that
4 was -- I've talked to him from, you know, time to time. I think I met him -- 3 years ago?
5 Just seemed like a nice guy.

6 Q And are you closer with either Mr. Bertino or Mr. Donohoe? Do you talk to
7 one more frequently than the other?

8 A I don't know. I don't think so. I think it would be about the same amount.

9 Q Have you, just in thinking about the sort of events and rallies that you've
10 attended with Mr. Bertino, about the same number with Mr. Donohoe?

11 A I would say that's, yeah correct.

12 Q Okay. And then with Mr. Bertino, how often -- let's take the November,
13 December 2020 and January 2021 timeframe, think about that, and how often do you
14 think you talked to Mr. Bertino during that timeframe?

15 A Honestly, I don't know. I wasn't -- I'm not trying to be sarcastic. I didn't
16 keep track of the amount of interactions or phone calls.

17 Q No. That's okay. We can try to ballpark it a little bit. Just like on a
18 weekly basis, was it more than once?

19 A Maybe once or twice. It was -- I mean, it was sporadic. Sometimes it
20 might have been a couple times a week, sometimes no week at all. So, I mean, it was --

21 Q And that's the same for Mr. Donohoe?

22 A Yes.

23 Q And what sorts of -- during that timeframe, if you remember conversations
24 with Mr. Bertino, what sorts of things were you talking about?

25 A Normally, I would let him know if one of what I would consider a bad actor,

1 you know, on -- with antifa was trying to doxx him or put down his name, you know, just
2 letting him know that someone online is putting his business out there.

3 Q Okay. Any other topics that you discussed? How about attending these
4 rallies?

5 A Nothing about attending a rally.

6 Q Okay. And that's -- you never talked on the phone about attending the
7 November 14th or the December 12th rallies?

8 A Not that I can recall.

9 Q And then same questions for Mr. Donohoe. What were you normally
10 talking to him about?

11 A I know there are times I talked to him about there was an event he and his
12 chapter did about a clothing drive for homeless veterans, and antifa elements were trying
13 to doxx him and the organization they were working with from that.

14 You know, calling him, telling him, hey, great job, even though you took -- or even
15 though you guys got put out there, you did some great work for some people who
16 deserved it. I guess toy drives. Even if we wanted to get together for a beer, just to
17 kind of catch up.

18 Q Were there other members -- so it sounds like you talked to them somewhat
19 frequently around that time, sometimes once or a couple times a week. Were there
20 other members of the Proud Boys that you talked to kind of with a similar frequency?

21 A In the past, I guess Bill Whicker would be another.

22 Q Okay. I want to stick more to the November, December, January
23 timeframe.

24 A No.

25 Q Anybody else?

1 A Not that I recall.

2 Q Okay. So you would say those two you talked to more frequently than
3 other Proud Boys?

4 A Correct.

5 Q Okay. And that's to include Proud Boys that were in your own chapter?

6 A Correct.

7 Q Okay. So we talked about November 14th, December 12th. Were there
8 any other rallies that you attended with Proud Boys in the November or December
9 timeframe?

10 A I guess what would you consider, you know, a Proud -- I guess are you trying
11 to ask if this was a Proud Boy event or --

12 Q Just in the same way you --

13 A A lot of these rallies weren't labeled as Proud Boy rallies or anything like
14 that, so --

15 Q I understand that. I just more mean events that you attended with other
16 Proud Boys and knew they were going to be there and planned to meet up with Proud
17 Boys?

18 A And that was past what date?

19 Q We're talking about November and December of 2020.

20 A I don't recall.

21 Q Okay. You can maybe -- sometimes it's helpful to think about it in relation
22 to those other, in relation to them.

23 Between November 14th, when you went to D.C., and then the second time you
24 went to D.C., on December 12th, did you go to any rallies with Proud Boys between those
25 two dates?

1 A There may have been a rally in Raleigh, one or two.

2 Q Okay.

3 A But they were -- I mean, like I said, these things weren't -- it was somebody
4 else having a rally and we would just want to go show support.

5 Q Right. Understood.

6 Did you see Mr. Bertino or Mr. Donohoe in between those two events?

7 A Maybe Mr. Donohoe there was a -- I think there was a lost little girl that
8 was -- that they were wanting help searching for. I did speak to him, Mr. Donohoe, in
9 person then. And I'm not -- there may have been -- there may have been one rally or
10 two with Jeremy that I spoke with him in person. But, I mean, other than that, I don't
11 recall.

12 Mr. Hull. Excuse me. Not to muddy the record at all, but there are two
13 Mr. Donohoes. They're not -- they're twin brothers?

14 The Witness. I believe Charles does have a twin brother.

15 Mr. Hull. So you're only talking about Charles when you talk about Mr.
16 Donohoe?

17 The Witness. Correct.

18 Mr. Hull. Thank you.

19 BY [REDACTED]

20 Q Okay. Moving away from the December 12th rally. I want to talk about
21 the lead-up to January 6th. Let's just start really broadly and just tell me what do you
22 think, kind of in your own words, happened on January 6th? And then specifically, what
23 was the role of the Proud Boys in those events?

24 A To be honest, I don't recognize what that was on January 6th. I know it
25 looked like it turned out whatnot. The reason I was going there or going to D.C., I was

1 going to observe and take in, you know, some history. But I don't know what it turned
2 into, but it wasn't what I signed up for.

3 Q So you said you kind of personally were going there to observe history and
4 just see what happened.

5 A Right.

6 Q What did you understand the Proud Boys as an organization were going to
7 January 6th for?

8 A I don't -- there was -- there really wasn't -- there wasn't a plan or there
9 wasn't anything, a plan talked about or an idea that I can remember. You know, it was
10 some events were going on. I think there was a Trump rally. A couple other patriot
11 groups that I know outside of the Proud Boys, like Deplorable Pride, they had, you know,
12 members that were going or I had talked to that were going to be up there.

13 So just that's -- I guess that's the reason I went. I didn't know of any plan to
14 speak of.

15 Q Okay. When did you first hear that January 6th was going to be an event or
16 an important day?

17 A I think the first was Trump had tweeted something, a friend had told me that
18 Trump had tweeted something about that day. So that's kind of what put, I guess, put it
19 on my radar.

20 Q Okay. Was it -- let's look at -- if we can pull up exhibit 4.

21 And are you able to read that on your phone, Mr. Bertino [sic]? Can we zoom in
22 just to the text part of that and maybe leave a little bit of the image there? Yeah, that's
23 perfect. Right there.

24 Can you read that on your phone, Mr. Bertino [sic]?

25 A You mean Mr. Thaxton.

1 Q I'm sorry. Mr. Thaxton.

2 A Okay.

3 Mr. Hull. Let's not jump ahead. Can you get it from the cache?

4 The Witness. I can read it.

5

BY [REDACTED]

6 Q We can also, since this is the first exhibit we've looked at, if it's easier for you
7 to look on your iPad or on your tablet.

8 A I can see it clearly.

9 Q Great. So the part -- I'll give you a second to look at it. Just tell me when
10 you're done.

11 A Okay.

12 Q And then just for the record, this is -- exhibit 4 is a tweet from Donald J.
13 Trump on December 19th, 2020, and he discusses some election fraud issues. But the
14 part I want to focus on is the end where he says, "Big protest in D.C. on January 6th. Be
15 there, will be wild!"

16 Is that the tweet that you were just talking about?

17 A I believe so. I mean, it looks familiar.

18 Q Okay. And I think you mentioned a friend told you about this tweet. Is
19 that right?

20 A I can't -- I remember somebody telling me about it. And I also remember
21 getting a -- or just seeing people reporting on it on YouTube.

22 Q Okay. And we can pull the tweet down or the exhibit down.

23 And, Mr. Hull, do you mind just muting your mike? It is causing the camera to
24 flick back and forth. Thanks.

25 Okay. So -- I was a little distracted there for a moment. You said the friend had

1 told you about the tweet?

2 A I want to say I know a couple friends of mine had brought it to my attention
3 just because they had read it.

4 Q Okay.

5 A And I might have seen it reported on by, you know, independent journalists
6 on YouTube.

7 Q And were any of the friends that you talked with about this tweet Proud
8 Boys?

9 A I can't recall.

10 Q Okay. Do you remember talking to Mr. Bertino or Mr. Donohoe about the
11 tweet?

12 A No.

13 Q Okay. Did you talk to Mr. Bertino or Mr. Donohoe about January 6th
14 around that time?

15 A Not that I can recall.

16 Q Okay. So when you learned that there was going to be a rally in D.C. on
17 January 6th and that the President had kind of announced it and said that it was -- to be
18 there, will be wild, what was your reaction to that? Did you decide right then that you
19 were going to go?

20 A I actually decided not to go or was leery about going. You know, I hadn't
21 made up my mind about anything.

22 Q Why were you leery about going?

23 A The last time I was there, even our guys were unorganized. There were just
24 things -- it seemed like it was just a waste of time. And just didn't know if I was going to
25 go or not. I hadn't made any -- I saw -- like I said, I remember seeing that tweet, but I

1 hadn't made up any decision yet.

2 Q What convinced you in the end to go to January 6th?

3 A I'd heard a few of my friends in Deplorable Pride were going to go, some
4 other patriot groups, some people that I knew from other States, people that I was
5 familiar with, and just wanted to watch their back, I guess.

6 Q Okay. And just if you could expand on a little more, what do you mean
7 watch their back?

8 A I know these type of things, there's an antifa element that wants to hurt
9 people. And, I mean, from previous events you had people getting attacked walking
10 back to their cars.

11 And I just -- I don't -- I don't think that's right. And it seemed like the police in
12 previous events in D.C. were either slow to act or not acting at all. Just being a
13 law-abiding citizen, that's --

14 Q Did at any point you have a conversation with Mr. Bertino about going to
15 January 6th?

16 A I don't recall. No, I don't believe so.

17 Q Okay. So when -- we're skipping ahead a little bit -- but when you got there
18 on the 6th were you surprised to see Mr. Bertino -- or, sorry, did you talk to Mr. Donohoe
19 about going to January 6th?

20 A There -- I don't -- there may have been a conversation. I mean, I talked to
21 him a few times. But I don't know if the subject of January 6th came up.

22 Mr. Hull. You don't have to guess, remember, on all these questions. You
23 either know or you don't know.

24 The Witness. Right.

25 I'm not recalling the subject of January 6th coming up. It may have, but I don't

1 recall.

2

BY [REDACTED]

3 Q Okay. You mentioned that there were some other groups, like Deplorable
4 Pride, who you knew some members were going up for January 6th. Were there any
5 Proud Boys that you knew were going to be going up for January 6th?

6 A Nobody for certain, no.

7 Q Okay. We talked about chats that you might have been on for November
8 14th or December 12th. Do you remember any Telegram chats about January 6th?

9 A There were a few that I was added to. But like I said, I didn't -- I rarely
10 checked them. So --

1

2 [12:20 p.m.]

3

BY [REDACTED]

4

Q Okay. Can you tell me about those chats?

5

6

7

A I can't say a whole lot, because I -- I -- like I said, I may have -- initially, if I get added to a chat, I say hello, but then, you know, I kind of either mute the -- the alerts or just I am not -- don't want to be bothered by it.

8

Q Okay. Just tell me what -- what you do remember, if anything.

9

10

11

A Just maybe a person replying back to hello. But, like I said, I didn't -- wasn't in -- wasn't checking the chat for any amount of time, so I'm not -- there is not a whole lot I do remember.

12

13

Q Okay. Do you remember when you were added to -- are you -- or let me clarify. Are you recalling one chat, or were there multiple chats?

14

A I know there was more than one --

15

Q Okay.

16

A -- from -- from what I -- from what I recall.

17

Q Okay.

18

19

A I just am not -- I'm not -- I have a hard time remembering what the names of them were.

20

Q Okay. What -- do you remember the first one that you were added to?

21

A I don't.

22

23

24

Q Okay. And -- and I don't necessarily mean do you remember the name of the chat, I just mean can you recall which of the multiple chats was the first one you were added to?

25

A I don't remember which one was the first one.

1 Q Okay. Do you remember anything specific about what was discussed in any
2 of those chats?

3 A Nothing sticks out. I mean, I don't -- I don't remember anything specifically
4 discussed.

5 Q Okay. Is -- does the acronym MOSD mean anything to you?

6 A Is -- yeah, sounds familiar, yes.

7 Q Okay. Do you know what it stands for?

8 A Honestly, I don't. I mean, I've read reports of -- of -- I believe -- I -- I've seen
9 news reports on it, so --

10 Q Okay. And is -- at the time -- let our camera readjust here.

11 You said you read news reports about them. Can you tell me about that?

12 What news reports have you read about MOSD?

13 A I know that Jordan Peterson has posted some -- some articles on it, though.

14 Q Do you remember MOSD being mentioned in relation to the chats you were
15 just talking about?

16 A I -- yes.

17 Q Okay. And what about -- what was said about MOSD, or what was MOSD in
18 the chats?

19 A Like I said, I didn't really -- I didn't view the chat that often to -- to know
20 what was -- or to keep track of what they were talking about.

21 Q I understand. And -- and, you know, I don't expect you to be able to recite
22 the chat or -- or tell me all that much about it, but it sounds like you do remember MOSD
23 being mentioned in the chat. So I'm just wondering what was the context? What is
24 MOSD?

25 A They were --

1 Mr. Hull. Excuse me. Just have objection. I think his testimony was
2 that -- correct me if I'm wrong, but that he recalled mentions of MOSD from
3 Jordan Peterson, who I assume he means by that Jordan Green.

4 The Witness. Jordan --

5 ██████████ He also said that he recalled -- he also said that he recalled MOSD
6 being mentioned in the chat.

7 Mr. Hull. I stand corrected. I didn't -- I didn't get that. Thanks.

8 BY ██████████

9 Q So, Mr. Thaxton, I know you said you didn't have a lot of detail about the
10 memory, or don't have a lot of things that you're recalling, but what do you recall about
11 MOSD being mentioned?

12 A From -- I guess from what I recall is they wanted them -- people wanted a
13 more structured way to rally and not be, I guess, cowboys and do things that would look
14 bad on -- on the fraternity. They wanted, I guess, a -- more or less a guideline of
15 behavior if you go to, you know -- if you go to a rally.

16 Q Okay. And what -- what were some of those guidelines of behavior?

17 A Just be a respectable person. You know, you -- if you're provoked, don't
18 react. If, you know, you -- if you're -- if you're assaulted, you know, look for some law
19 enforcement first before you get into a situation, you know, that -- that could have
20 consequences.

21 Q Do you remember if Mr. Bertino was on these chats?

22 A I believe so, yes.

23 Q Okay. Do you remember any -- anything that he said in -- in the chats?

24 A He may have said hello to me one time, but as far as what he was talking
25 about, I don't know.

1 Q Okay. I want to look at -- and this may be related to some of the news
2 reports that you saw, but are you -- are you aware that recently, Mr. Tarrío was arrested
3 and charged with some crimes related to the January 6th activities?

4 A Yes, sir.

5 Q And have you -- have you seen, or do you know what an indictment is?

6 A I believe I understand what an -- I believe I understand what an indictment
7 is.

8 Q Okay. Have you -- then have you seen the indictment for Mr. Tarrío?

9 A I haven't seen any paperwork for Mr. Tarrío. I've -- I've only heard.

10 Q Okay. I'd like to look at the indictment, and we can pull it up on the screen.
11 And if you have a hard time seeing it, I can read some of the specific parts to you, or we
12 can try to figure it out on your tablet. But just in general, let me know if you're having a
13 difficult time following the document or what we're talking about.

14 So if we could pull up exhibit 7.

15 Mr. Hull. Can you find that on your tablet, Jay?

16 The Witness. Hold on.

17 Mr. Hull. I think for this, you might want to --

18 The Witness. Yeah, I've got it open.

19 Mr. Hull. Thanks.

20 BY [REDACTED]

21 Q Okay. And are you -- you have the document open?

22 A I do.

23 Q Okay. You see how it's arranged by paragraph numbers? If you scroll to
24 the second page, you'll see some of those.

25 A Okay.

1 Q Okay. If you could scroll to paragraph 16.

2 So I'll -- I'll explain to you. In -- there are multiple people that are indicted in this
3 document. Mr. Tarrío is one of them. And there are some people that are discussed in
4 the indictment that are named, like Mr. Tarrío and the other people indicted, and then
5 there are some people that are not named. They're just given -- so, right here in 16, you
6 can see there is a person-1 that's identified.

7 Do you see that?

8 A Yes.

9 Q Okay. And then -- so 16 -- paragraph 16, I'll read it for the record, and you
10 can follow along with me. It says, "While in Washington, D.C., on December 12th, 2020,
11 several Proud Boys were involved in an altercation in which Proud Boys members were
12 injured, including a knife wound suffered by person-1."

13 Do you know if that's Mr. Bertino? Do you know anybody else -- any other Proud
14 Boys that were on that chat that were -- suffered a knife wound on December 12th?

15 Mr. Hull. As you're --

16 The Witness. I don't --

17 Mr. Hull. -- looking at this document for the first time ever?

18 The Witness. I don't -- I don't recall. I mean, I don't think -- I don't know.

19

BY [REDACTED]

20 Q Can -- do you remember anybody else being on the chat that was there on
21 the 12th and stabbed by a knife?

22 A No, I can't.

23 Q Okay. And then, just to kind of confirm, or add some more details about
24 person-1, can you scroll to paragraph 40? And just let me know when you're there.

25 A Okay. I'm there.

1 Q Okay. So this paragraph 40 mentions an individual named Pezzola,
2 Dominick Pezzola. Do you know him?

3 A I do not.

4 Q Okay. Well, it mentions -- paragraph 40 says that, "On December 30th to
5 31st, Pezzola traveled to North and South Carolina to visit person-1." And Mr. Bertino
6 lives, I think you said, in either North or South Carolina or both?

7 A I'm not sure where he lives right now.

8 Q Okay. Did -- do you know that in the past, he's lived in North and South
9 Carolina?

10 A Yes.

11 Q Okay. And have you ever heard of Mr. Bertino being presented with a
12 decorative shield? Does that mean anything to you?

13 A Doesn't mean anything.

14 Q Okay. I'll just note for the record that paragraph 40 notes that "Pezzola
15 brought with him a decorative shield to present to person-1."

16 What I want to -- what I want to ask is -- so you remember being on -- you
17 remember Mr. Bertino being on the chat about MOSD, right?

18 A Yes.

19 Q Okay. Did you ever have any conversations with him outside of the chat
20 about MOSD?

21 A No.

22 Q Okay. And that includes when you were in -- in D.C. Did you ever talk to
23 Mr. Bertino about MOSD?

24 A No.

25 Q Okay. You seem pretty sure about that. I just want to -- I just want to -- is

1 there a reason you know you didn't talk about it? You know, we've talked about the
2 chats, and --

3 A I'm thinking --

4 Q -- you didn't really recall very much in the chat, but you seem a little bit
5 more sure that you didn't talk to Mr. Bertino about MOSD. Is there a reason for that?

6 A I'm just thinking back on conversations, you know, outside Telegram that I've
7 had, and I -- I don't remember MSOD coming up, or MOSD coming up.

8 Q Okay. In the MOSD chat, do you remember -- was there anybody kind of
9 disseminating information or the main person that was talking in the chat, or maybe
10 another way to characterize the person would be like a leader of the chat?

11 Mr. Hull. Excuse me.

12 The Witness. I don't --

13 Mr. Hull. Clarification. What timeframe?

14 [REDACTED] During the course of the time that he had access to the chat.

15 BY [REDACTED]:

16 Q How about I ask this: Mr. Thaxton, how -- what timeframe did you have
17 access to the chat?

18 A I honestly don't recall. I -- I'm --

19 Q Do you know about when -- do you know about when you were added?

20 A I do not.

21 Q Okay. Was -- can we try to do it in relation to January 6th? Was it, like, a
22 week before, 2 weeks before, or a couple days before?

23 A I don't -- I -- honestly, I don't recall.

24 Q Okay. But you do remember looking at the chat?

25 A Yes, I do look at it from time to time.

1 Q Okay. So, when you looked at the chat, was there anybody that was kind
2 of the main person, or one of a couple main people giving information on the chat?

3 A I don't recall. I wasn't -- I guess I wasn't paying that much of
4 attention -- that much attention to who was talking in the chat unless they -- I was
5 tagged, which it will show you a notification if -- if someone mentions your handle, and
6 you can kind of narrow down to, you know, somebody that was asking you a question,
7 but I don't recall that happening.

8 Q Okay. And I know you mentioned there are a couple of different chats,
9 right?

10 A I believe so.

11 Q Okay. What -- do you remember anything about the other chats, like what
12 differentiated --

13 A I think it was --

14 Q -- the chat?

15 A There was one or two chats, I believe, that were named MSOD, so -- or
16 MOSD.

17 Q Okay.

18 A But I don't remember about information --

19 Mr. Hull. Let me just make a -- I guess an objection or a continuing kind of
20 observation for the record, and that is that MOSD -- and this is easy to establish -- that
21 the chat activity substantially -- most of it substantially occurred, you know, in advance of
22 January 6th, so most of the activity you're actually going to see from the Charlotte group
23 is, you know, pre-January 6th, if not pre-2021.

24 And I think that -- that's worth noting here, just to clarify things a little bit,
25 because we seem to be going -- at least in my mind -- and it's very easy to do when you're

1 asking questions in the third or fourth hour, to not make it a -- not make -- not distinguish
2 between MOSD as being set up in the first place, why it was set up, and then anything,
3 you know, that would happen by way of activity or chat between the time it was set up,
4 let's say, January -- December 30th, 2020, through January 6th.

5 [REDACTED] Mr. Hull --

6 Mr. Hull. No, I -- I think -- I think these are fair comments, because what the
7 record is -- and I can see myself doing the same thing if I were in your position. The
8 record is getting a little muddy about what MOSD activity in chats are. There is -- there
9 is -- there was a short-lived thing, but it was -- there is some stages of this, and the stages
10 of it are all very distinct -- discrete.

11 [REDACTED] Thanks, Mr. Hull.

12 I do want to prevent adding information into the record that's not from
13 Mr. Thaxton's memory. You know, I don't want to confuse the record with information
14 that you have that Mr. Thaxton doesn't. So if we can try not to include substantive
15 information when you make an objection, that would be helpful, because I don't want to
16 confuse Mr. Thaxton with additional information that he doesn't actually know right now.
17 Does that --

18 Mr. Hull. That's fair. That's fair.

19 [REDACTED] Do you understand that?

20 Mr. Hull. I do understand that, and I think that's fair, but we did have -- and may
21 be my fault for not objecting to it at the right time or catching it, but we seem to be
22 meandering around in terms of what is MOSD activity and chat activity for the last, you
23 know, 20, 25 minutes. And I think that might be harmful for everybody in the course of
24 this --

25 [REDACTED] Yeah.

1 Mr. Hull. -- but --

2 [REDACTED]. And, Mr. Hull, if we could, going forward, if you have an objection, or
3 you think that Mr. Thaxton doesn't understand the question, I'm happy to ask him does
4 he understand the question, and I'll rephrase it for him --

5 Mr. Hull. I --

6 [REDACTED] -- or if there is any confusion, but I just want to prevent, again,
7 adding substantive information into the conversation that Mr. Thaxton doesn't have
8 himself.

9 Mr. Hull. That's -- that's fair enough, but there has been lots of questions for
10 which foundations have not been laid, and I didn't think it was terribly unfair under the
11 circumstances.

12 [REDACTED] Thanks. And happy for you to just say objection, foundation, and I
13 could ask Mr. Hull or Mr. Thaxton if he understands the question. And, if he does, we'll
14 move on. If he doesn't, I'm happy to either lay a foundation or reword the question.

15 Mr. Hull. We -- we -- we agree.

16 [REDACTED] Okay. Great. Thank you.

17 BY [REDACTED]

18 Q Okay. So, Mr. Thaxton, I think we were just talking about the chat that you
19 remembered MOSD being mentioned, and then I asked you if there were any other chats.
20 And I'm just trying to specify which chats existed, when they existed, so that we can
21 clearly talk about what happened in each of those chats and when. So that's what I'm
22 trying to do now, is understand what chats you remember.

23 Does that make sense?

24 A Yes.

25 Q Okay. So we talked about one chat that MOSD was mentioned in. What

1 were the other chats that you recall?

2 A I just know there -- there was one or two, but I'm not sure what the name of
3 them are, that I can recall being added to.

4 Q Okay. Let's -- from the indictment -- we don't need to look at it
5 now -- there is another chat that's called the Boots on the Ground chat. Does that ring a
6 bell or refresh your recollection at all?

7 A I've heard the name before.

8 Mr. Hull. Objection. Where is that in the record -- in the indictment?

9 BY [REDACTED]

10 Q Have you heard of that before, Mr. Thaxton?

11 A I'm sorry. Did my -- did Dan say something?

12 Q Yeah. He had made an objection, and -- and I'm just asking if you've heard
13 of the Boots on the Ground chat?

14 A I think, yeah, I've heard the name, yes.

15 Q Okay. Great. And was that one of the chats that you're talking about that
16 you were added to?

17 A It could have been. I don't recall. I guess --

18 Q Okay.

19 A -- there were a few that I got added to that -- that I -- so I don't recall, you
20 know, what the names of them are, though.

21 Q Okay.

22 A Like -- but I have heard of the name before, yes.

23 Q Okay. And -- and where did you hear that -- that name, then?

24 A I think I've -- I heard Jeremy speak it before, or at least the name. I've seen
25 the name ousted about in a couple other chats, but --

1 Q And what do you recall Mr. Bertino saying about the Boots on the Ground
2 chat?

3 A Just that it was in existence, but nothing specific.

4 Q Okay. And do you remember when -- when that conversation happened?

5 A I don't recall.

6 Q Was it -- was it while you were in D.C. or at another time?

7 A It was over the phone.

8 Q Okay. Over the phone.

9 Do you think it was before you went to D.C.?

10 A Could have been.

11 Q Okay.

12 A I'm not -- I'm not -- I'm not exactly sure when the -- when the exact date
13 was.

14 Q Okay. So I think you've said you remember Mr. Bertino being in that chat.
15 Are there any other individuals that you -- let's talk about the MOSD chat, the one that
16 we have discussed so far. I think you said you recall Mr. Bertino being in that chat.

17 Do you remember any other individuals that were in that chat?

18 A There -- I don't recall who else was there.

19 Q Okay. Let's look at paragraph 38 of the indictment.

20 Mr. Hull. Page 11?

21 [REDACTED] Page 11, paragraph 38.

22 BY [REDACTED]

23 Q So, here, this is a -- a message that was posted to -- what the indictment calls
24 the MOSD prospective group chat on December 29th. And then it says that Mr. Tarrío
25 proposed a virtual meeting on -- or notified members of a virtual meeting on

1 December 30th.

2 Do you ever recall taking part in a virtual meeting about January 6th?

3 A I don't recall.

4 Q Okay. Did you take part in any virtual meetings related to January 6th?

5 A I don't recall. Not that I know of, no.

6 Mr. Hull. Objection.

7 BY [REDACTED]

8 Q Let's look --

9 Mr. Hull. Objection. Just -- and this is a clarification point. Thirty-eight isn't
10 about January 6th. It's about MOSD. Those are two different things.

11 [REDACTED] I asked if he had participated in any virtual meetings related to
12 January 6th.

13 BY [REDACTED]

14 Q And it sounds like the answer was you don't recall, Mr. Thaxton?

15 A I don't recall.

16 Q Okay. Let's read what is in -- and I'll give you a second. Just tell me when
17 you're done reading paragraph 38.

18 Mr. Hull. Are you able to find it in the indictment? Sometimes it's hard.

19 The Witness. Yes. Yes, I found it.

20 Okay. I've read it.

21 [REDACTED] Okay.

22 BY [REDACTED]:

23 Q I just want to ask -- so there is another person mentioned in paragraph 38,

24 Rehl. That's Zachary Rehl.

25 Do you know Mr. Rehl?

1 A I've met Zach before.

2 Q Okay. When did you meet him?

3 A I believe preCOVID in Pennsylvania, or Philadelphia.

4 Q I'm sorry. I didn't -- I didn't fully hear that. You said COVID in --

5 A PreCOVID. PreCOVID.

6 Q Oh, preCOVID.

7 A Yeah. Philadelphia.

8 Q Okay. And where -- what was the context, or why did you -- how did you
9 meet Mr. Rehl?

10 A Some -- some friends of mine or had said that they were going -- the
11 Philadelphia Proud Boys were going to put, or help with a rally in Philadelphia. I had
12 never been to the city, so when I heard about it, I thought I'd go check it out.

13 Q Okay. And then -- so, after that first meeting, do you recall any other times
14 that you met Mr. Rehl in person?

15 A That was the only time.

16 Q Okay. Did -- did you exchange phone numbers, or did you talk on the
17 phone?

18 A No.

19 Q Okay. And you've -- have you ever talked to Mr. Rehl on the phone?

20 A Maybe -- actually, before Proud Boys, there was a -- apparently a mutual
21 friend that had come down to North Carolina for an anticommunism rally, a female that
22 had introduced us.

23 Q She introduced you at that rally?

24 A No. No. No. It's, I guess, over the phone.

25 Q Okay.

1 A I had met her when she had come down for a North Carolina rally, and it just
2 so happened that was the person she was introducing me to was -- was Zach.

3 Q Okay. And when did she introduce you to him?

4 A It was -- it wasn't an in-person introduced. It just, I guess, through
5 Telegram and -- maybe a phone call.

6 Q Okay. And who is this individual that -- that introduced the two of you on
7 Telegram?

8 A I'm trying to remember her name. I know she ran a Facebook group called
9 Gun Girl. But it's been a while ago, and I'm not clear on her first and last name.

10 Q Okay. And I'm just a little confused. Maybe you can clarify it for me. I
11 think you said preCOVID, you had met Mr. Rehl at a rally, or at an event in Philadelphia.

12 A Correct.

13 Q And then -- and then you said that Gun Girl introduced you to him. Was it
14 again? Was that -- had you already met Mr. Rehl at that time?

15 A No. That was not -- that wasn't -- it wasn't in person when I was
16 introduced to him. I guess the first time I met him was when I went to the rally that
17 the -- the chapter in Philadelphia was having, the first time I had met him in person.

18 Q Okay. Understood. So -- so first you met him in person, and then there
19 was an event after that, or sometime after that that this person, Gun Girl, introduced you
20 on Telegram?

21 A That was -- that was before the -- the -- that was actually before I met him in
22 person.

23 Q Okay. All right. Thank you for clarifying that. That makes sense now.

24 So, first, you met him through Gun Girl over the phone, either on Telegram, or by
25 a call?

1 A Correct.

2 Q And then you met him in person in Philadelphia later?

3 A Correct.

4 Q Okay. And then had -- were there other times that you met Mr. Rehl in
5 person after the rally in Philadelphia?

6 A No.

7 Q Okay. Did you see him at the rally on November 14?

8 A I don't recall.

9 Q Okay. How about for December 12th? Did you see him at the rally on
10 December 12th?

11 A I don't -- I don't recall.

12 Q Okay. Do -- do you recall any phone calls with Mr. Rehl in -- around the
13 December 12th rally?

14 A I don't know.

15 Q Okay. Just looking back at this paragraph 38, then, it describes messages
16 from Mr. Tarrío on December 29th, and it says: "Tarrío advised that upper tier
17 leadership would consist of a three" -- "of a three-person operations section led by Rehl,
18 person-3, and one other person."

19 Does that refresh your recollection at all? Do you remember a conversation
20 about an operations section?

21 A I don't.

22 Q Okay. Do you remember Mr. Rehl on the MOSD chat?

23 A I don't recall that, seeing him.

24 Q Okay. And then, later, there is a discussion -- later in paragraph 38, the
25 next sentence, it says: "Tarrío advised that the marketing section would be led by

1 Tarrío, Biggs, and Nordean."

2 Do you remember any discussion about marketing sections on the MOSD chat that
3 you'd mentioned?

4 A I don't.

5 Q Okay. And then, also, next sentence: "Tarrío advised that the second-tier
6 leadership would consist of eight regional members."

7 Do you remember anything about regional members or groups on the MOSD
8 chat?

9 A I don't.

10 Q Okay. We can pull that exhibit 7 down.

11 We've -- we've talked about whether or not you discussed January 6th with
12 Mr. Bertino outside of the MOSD chat. And I -- and I believe you said that you did not
13 have any discussions with him. Is that correct?

14 A Other than, like, news reports that were coming out, or just opinion pieces
15 that I had seen on You Tube and talking -- you know, have you seen this? Did you -- you
16 know, did you catch -- did you see this, you know, documentary, that sort of thing? But,
17 other than that, no.

18 Q Okay. And when did those -- do you remember the last time you spoke to
19 Mr. Bertino before you went to January 6th?

20 A I don't.

21 Q Okay. Do you remember any time specifically speaking to Mr. Bertino
22 between December 12th, when he got stabbed, and January 6th?

23 A I do.

24 Q Okay. And how many times do you remember speaking to him during that
25 timeframe?

1 A I want to say five or so, just because I knew he had been stabbed and was
2 just checking up on his health to see if, you know, he needed anything, that sort of thing.

3 Q Okay. And -- and other than discussions about his health and the stabbing
4 event on December 12th, do you remember discussing anything else with him?

5 A There was nothing else.

6 Q Okay.

7 A I don't remember discussing anything else.

8 Q Okay. I want to also ask you -- so, in -- in advance of going up to D.C. for
9 January 6th, did you have conversations with any other Proud Boys about going up for
10 January 6th?

11 A Not that I recall.

12 Q Okay. How did you make a plan to go up for January 6th?

13 A It was -- I didn't make a plan. It was just a last-minute decision.

14 Q Okay. And when -- when did you make that decision?

15 A I think maybe the night of the 5th.

16 Q Okay. And what -- do you remember specifically what caused you to
17 decide to go to January 6th?

18 A Just chatter from antifa or from some of the sources I was looking at, friends
19 and -- that I was familiar with, I knew were going to be there. So -- even outside -- I just
20 wanted to go make sure, you know, if somebody was there that was a friend of mine, that
21 they were -- that they were safe.

22 Q And what sorts of things were you seeing about antifa?

23 A Nothing that sticks out. Just concerning chatter.

24 Q What -- what did you think antifa was going to do on January 6th?

25 A Possibly assault people in the streets. I know Jeremy had been stabbed, so

1 that was, you know, high on my mind that, you know, maybe -- anything could -- I was -- I
2 guess I was just thinking anything could happen.

3 Q Did -- what did you do -- so, when you decided to go up for January 6th,
4 what did you do leading up to your departure? What did you do to prepare? Did you
5 bring anything? Did you tell anybody else that you were going? Just walk me through
6 that -- that process.

7 A I didn't really -- there wasn't really any supplies or anything I took with me.
8 Just -- you know, just make sure I had a change of clothes in case I -- in case I was gone
9 more than 24 hours or so, and that was about as much supplies as -- as I took with me.

10 Q Okay. And, for the 6th, do I understand or am I correct that you just -- that
11 was also sort of a day trip? Did you go up -- you drove up overnight --

12 A When I got up there, somebody had offered, you know, a free spot if I
13 needed to crash. It ended up that I needed it, so I took advantage of it, slept for a little
14 bit, and headed back home.

15 Q Okay. And who was that person that offered a free spot to crash?

16 A I'm trying to remember their name. I -- it was somebody I had met when I
17 got there. I was standing out of one of the hotels smoking a cigarette, and I'm just not
18 sure what their name was. They were just generous enough to say, if you need a -- you
19 know, there is extra space if you need to crash.

20 Q And so you were just hanging outside of a hotel, and a stranger offered you
21 the -- a place to crash?

22 Mr. Hull. Objection. Form.

23 BY [REDACTED]

24 Q Do you understand the question?

25 A Not exactly.

1 Q Did -- was this a stranger that offered you a place to stay?

2 A I would say that I had -- had met them before and struck up a conversation.
3 They said that there was a few rooms that somebody they knew had reserved and that
4 weren't going to be used. So they said, you know, if you need a place to crash, then the
5 offer is open. I told them I appreciate it.

6 Q Was this person a Proud Boy?

7 A No.

8 Q Okay. Where had you met this person before?

9 A I had -- when I got there, I had met them before.

10 Q Okay. What time did you arrive in D.C.?

11 A It was about 5 o'clock in the morning, or maybe a little earlier than that.

12 Q Okay. Then maybe just walk me through what you did when you arrived up
13 until the point that you crashed in this person's room, or in a room that this person had
14 access to.

15 Mr. Hull. Objection. Calls for a narrative. Answer it anyway.

16 [REDACTED] You can -- you can answer the question, Mr. Thaxton.

17 The Witness. So, I mean, I got there. I didn't really know where I was going to
18 stay at that point. Like I said, I met somebody when I first got there. It was a person
19 outside of a hotel smoking a cigarette.

20 And then, you know, I started going around the city, taking the sights in, and
21 seeing if there was anybody up there that I -- that I knew, or a friendly face that, you
22 know, I could hang out with. Ended up there was a -- a few members of my chapter that
23 had come up, that I ran into.

24 I told them that, you know, I had -- might -- you know, I might have a hotel room
25 that I was staying at that I would ask and see if -- you know, if they needed a place to stay,

1 that, you know, I'd open -- see if it was okay with the person who had offered it to me.

2 Went to -- later that day, went to the -- out in D.C., where -- trying to remember
3 where was the first place I stopped. I'm trying to -- I don't remember the exact places,
4 but --

5

BY [REDACTED]

6

Q We can -- we can --

7

A I walked --

8

Q We can stop there for -- we can stop there for one second.

9

So you arrived in D.C. around 5:00 a.m. Is that what you said?

10

A Correct.

11

Q Okay.

12

A From what I can gather, yeah.

13

Q And so, at that time, you went out to go find these other members of -- or,

14

while you were out, you ran across --

15

A Just --

16

Q -- members from your chapter?

17

A Correct.

18

Q Okay. That just seems like an odd time of day to be kind of out and about

19

at 5:00 a.m. Had you spent the night driving -- the whole night driving up from North

20

Carolina?

21

A Correct.

22

Q Okay. What -- if you had a hotel room available, you know, why didn't you

23

sleep then, or what -- what was your interest in going out at that time?

24

A I was just excited when I got up there. I guess adrenaline, I just wasn't

25

really -- I wasn't tired, so I didn't -- you know, I didn't need any type of -- of place to stay

1 or anything. And it -- I thought it was -- you know, it wasn't just, you know, people that I
2 knew I ran into. There were people from other groups that I was associated or that I
3 wasn't associated with, but that I knew -- people prior to the Proud Boys that I saw up
4 there.

5 Q Okay.

6 Mr. Hull. I think you answered the question.

7

BY [REDACTED]

8 Q What hotel was this that you ended up staying at?

9 [REDACTED] Mr. Hull, can you mute yourself again? It's -- it's causing the
10 recording to --

11 The Witness. I -- I don't -- honestly, I don't remember the name of the hotel.

12

BY [REDACTED]

13 Q Okay. If I gave you the name of a couple hotels, can you tell me if that jogs
14 your recollection?

15 A Sure.

16 Q Was it the Hotel Phoenix?

17 A I don't think so.

18 Q Or the Harrington?

19 A I don't know.

20 Q Okay. Do you remember at all where it was in D.C., like were there any
21 landmarks that it was near?

22 A I don't.

23 Q Okay.

24 A Maybe a drugstore -- maybe a drugstore nearby, but I don't -- I don't recall.

25 Q How -- do you know where the Washington Monument is, or can you picture

1 the Washington Monument?

2 A Yeah.

3 Q Was it near there, or how far -- about how far from there was it?

4 A I want to say at least 10 blocks, maybe.

5 Q So it was in downtown D.C. somewhere?

6 A Yeah. I mean, downtown D.C., I -- I assume. I'm not sure what downtown
7 D.C. is.

8 Q Okay. Was it the JW Marriott?

9 A I don't think so.

10 Q Okay. The -- the individual that you met that gave you access to the rooms,
11 was this a man or a woman?

12 A I believe it was a woman.

13 Q Okay. And you had -- okay. Where did you -- you said you were outside
14 the hotel smoking a cigarette when you met her?

15 A I -- yeah. I was walking and stopped -- I was walking outside and
16 was -- stopped to smoke a cigarette in front of a hotel, and she was also out smoking a
17 cigarette, so we just struck up a conversation, just being neighborly. And told -- you
18 know, I told her I was from North Carolina and that I was up here, you know, to observe
19 and, you know, take in some history that was -- that was coming because, you know,
20 elections or the certifications don't happen that often. It's every 4 years, so --

21 Q Okay. And you just mentioned the certification.

22 Did -- what did you understand about what was happening on the 6th?

23 A I was a little fuzzy, but, I mean, I -- I knew something -- they were
24 apparently -- I could have this wrong. I guess Pence was -- had a part to play,
25 or something in that process, and -- and that's -- I'm not -- a little -- I don't know much

1 more than that.

2 Q Okay. Where did -- where did you hear that, or how did you learn that?

3 A I don't recall.

4 Q Did you talk to any Proud Boys about the fact that Vice President Pence had
5 some role to play that day?

6 A No.

7 Q Okay. Did -- when you arrived in D.C., I think you said you ran across some
8 members from your chapter that had also come up to D.C., and it was early that morning
9 that you met them. Is that correct?

10 A Correct.

11 Q Okay. And did you not know that they were going to be in D.C.?

12 A I didn't.

13 Q Okay. Where -- where did you run into them?

14 A I don't remember the exact place or --

15 Q Sorry. I didn't mean to interrupt you. What did you say?

16 A I don't recall the exact place.

17 Q Okay. And, if you could -- sorry. If you could just lean a little closer
18 to -- to the phone. It's getting a little bit hard to hear you. There you go.

19 A Is that good?

20 Q Do you remember who it was from your chapter that you met?

21 A I do.

22 Q And who was it?

23 A Fluffy and Red.

24 Q And those are the same -- same folks you saw at the -- at least the
25 November 14th rally?

1 A Correct.

2 Q Why -- you know, if you're in the same Proud Boys chapter, you're all going
3 or you're all going to January 6th, why didn't you talk to each other about going up?

4 A It's -- I mean, in our chapter, it's just not -- it's -- I guess there is no plan
5 that's hatched when it comes to, you know, whatever event. You know, it's -- it's
6 presented, and then, you know, if people want to go, they go. If they don't, then they
7 don't.

8 Q And then I'm -- I'm curious. So I know you said that you were added. We
9 identified the chat where MOSD was mentioned. I know you said you were added to
10 the MOSD chat.

11 How did somebody know to add you to that chat?

12 A I don't know.

13 Q Okay. Do you know who added you?

14 A I don't.

15 Q Okay. Did -- were you aware of any fundraising related to Proud Boys going
16 to the January 6th events?

17 A No.

18 Q Okay.

19 Mr. Hull. Let's take -- let's -- excuse me. Let me interrupt. Let's take a break,
20 why don't we?

21 [REDACTED] Sure. Let's take a break --

22 Mr. Hull. No. I say -- I mean, I sense he's getting a little tired. Wouldn't
23 be -- and, you know, whatever you think. Five minutes, 10 minutes, whatever, all right?

24 [REDACTED]. Let's go on recess, and let's come back at 1:10.

25 Mr. Hull. Yes, sir. All right.

1 [Recess.]

2 [REDACTED] Okay. And then we'll go back on the record at 1:13.

3 BY [REDACTED]

4 Q I wanted to ask: Do -- do you recall what you wore to D.C. on January 6th?

5 A I don't recall.

6 Q Not at all? You don't remember anything?

7 A I remember taking clothes with me to keep warm.

8 Q Okay. Have you seen photos of yourself at January 6th?

9 A I don't know.

10 Q You don't know if you've ever seen a photo of yourself at January 6th?

11 A I don't recall.

12 Q Okay. Let's look -- if we can pull up exhibit 3.

13 Is that you? This is a photo -- there is actually two photos. There is a man in
14 jeans and a jacket, a red hat, and a face covering. Is that you?

15 A Yes, it is.

16 Q Okay. Great. And it looks like you're carrying a bullhorn. Is that right?

17 A Correct.

18 Q Okay. Did -- is that yours? Did you bring that?

19 A No. I was -- I was given it when I got there.

20 Q Okay. And who gave it to you?

21 A I don't recall.

22 Q Okay. Was it another Proud Boy?

23 A I don't believe so.

24 Q Okay. Did you give it back to that person?

25 A I don't remember what happened to it.

1 Q Okay.

2 A I lost it.

3 Q Okay. Let's take down exhibit 3.

4 Now that you've seen that picture, does it remind you at all of anything else that
5 you had or brought or wore?

6 A No.

7 Q Okay. How about just during the course of the day? You know, you had
8 the bullhorn, it looks like, for a period of time. Anything else you remember having or
9 carrying around?

10 A I had a flashlight.

11 Q Okay. What did the flash -- well, why did you have a flashlight?

12 A Just protection. I didn't -- like I said, with previous experience, somebody
13 getting stabbed, I just didn't -- I didn't know what -- I didn't want to be stuck without a
14 way to protect myself.

15 Q Okay. Just -- how would a flashlight protect you?

16 A Well, I mean, I didn't want -- I wasn't going to carry a knife or anything with
17 me. It just seemed logical.

18 Q I guess -- sorry. I'm just confused. And, again, not trying to be thick here,
19 but how would you use a flashlight to protect you?

20 A Defensively. You know, to block or -- I don't know. That's what my
21 rationale was.

22 Q Okay. And I really am just trying to understand your rationale. Flashlight
23 is not the first thing I go to for a defensive weapon. What -- why did you -- why was it a
24 flashlight? Why not, like, a bat?

25 A I don't know. I just -- I don't know.

1 Q Was it a large flashlight?

2 A It was a larger flashlight.

3 Q Okay. Was it metal?

4 A It was.

5 Q Okay. Okay. I think I understand a little more now. I was just confused
6 at what -- what a flashlight would do for you.

7 And then -- so do you remember -- do you remember any information or
8 directives about what to wear when you were at -- at the rally for January 6?

9 A No.

10 Q Okay. Did you plan, or did you go wearing anything that would identify you
11 as a Proud Boy?

12 A No. I wasn't going as a Proud Boy.

13 Q Okay. Did you -- were you with Proud Boys on January 6th?

14 A I'm sure I was.

15 Q Okay. Did you march with a group of Proud Boys down the Mall towards
16 the Capitol?

17 A I was behind that group. I wasn't marching with anybody.

18 Q Okay. Who -- did you see Mr. Donohoe when you were there for
19 January 6th?

20 A I saw him in the crowd, yeah.

21 Q Okay. How close did you get to him?

22 A I may have been 15, 20 feet back.

23 Q Did you have a conversation with him at all on -- on the 6th?

24 A No.

25 Q Okay. Did -- did other Proud Boys wear anything that indicated that they

1 were a Proud Boy at January 6th?

2 A Not that I remember --

3 Q Okay.

4 A -- or can recall.

5 Q I understand, beforehand, you said you didn't receive any direction or
6 information about what you should wear. When you got there on the 6th or afterwards,
7 did you hear -- did anybody tell you that it was a plan not to wear Proud Boys' colors or
8 paraphernalia.

9 A No.

10 Q Okay. Have you since learned that Proud Boys planned not to wear Proud
11 Boys' colors?

12 A I had heard reports, yeah.

13 Q Okay. Have you heard -- have you seen a post on Parler from Mr. Tarrío
14 about wearing black? Does that ring any bells?

15 A I think I've seen that, yeah.

16 Q Okay. Can we pull up exhibit 14?

17 Oh, actually, it is -- you can actually pull that exhibit down. And it's exhibit 8.

18 Sorry. Different Parler post. Exhibit 8.

19 And you can either look at that on your tablet, or if you can see it on your phone,
20 we've got it pulled up also.

21 A Okay.

22 Q And, if -- you can either take a minute to read it if you'd like to, or I can
23 direct you to the relevant part. Just let me know what you'd prefer if you don't want to
24 read the whole thing.

25 Mr. Hull. I assume you -- probably best if you read it, Jay, okay?

1 The Witness. Okay.

2 ██████████. Okay. Just let me know when you're done.

3 The Witness. Okay.

4 BY ██████████

5 Q Okay. In that message, Mr. Tarrío mentions a couple different things, but
6 what I want to focus on is where he says: We'll be incognito and will spread across
7 downtown D.C. in smaller teams.

8 Were -- were you ever divided up into teams?

9 A No.

10 Q Okay. And he said: We might dress in all black for the occasion.
11 Did you notice other Proud Boys dressing in all black?

12 A I noticed a lot of people dressing -- dressed in black and other things.

13 Q Okay. But, specifically, I'm asking, did you notice Proud Boys dressed in all
14 black?

15 A I may have. I saw a lot of people in masks, so I don't -- I don't know if they
16 would be Proud Boys or not.

17 Q Okay. Do you know Ethan Nordean?

18 A I've heard the name.

19 Q Okay. Did -- would you recognize him?

20 A I've seen pictures of him, but if I was standing next to him, I probably
21 wouldn't recognize him.

22 Q Okay. Did you see him -- did you see him on the 6th?

23 A I don't recall.

24 Q Okay. How about communications devices? Did you have a radio when
25 you were there on January 6th?

1 A No.

2 Q Were you communicating with anybody on your phone?

3 A Maybe my wife by phone call, but that's it.

4 Q Okay. Did -- did you use Telegram at all during the day on the 6th?

5 A I don't recall.

6 Q Okay. Let's -- what was -- I know at some point earlier on the 6th, you
7 went back to the hotel and you slept. Is that right?

8 A About 1:30, 2 o'clock, or a little after 2:30 maybe.

9 Q Sorry. Let me rewind time wise a little bit. So you arrive in D.C. on -- at
10 5:00 or 6:00. You're out. You meet some North Carolina chapter friends.

11 Did you sleep at all before you went --

12 A No.

13 Q -- to the rallies? Okay.

14 Okay. So you went straight from driving up all night, getting there at 5:00 or
15 6:00, and then continued through the events of the day until 1:30 or 2:00, when you
16 slept?

17 A Correct.

18 Q Okay.

19 A It was probably after 2:30 from my best recollection.

20 Q Okay. All right. Then -- then, after you met your friends -- do you
21 remember around what time it was when you met your friends from the chapter?

22 A It was earlier that day. The sun was up, so it had to be after 7:00, I guess.

23 Q Okay. And then what did you do after you met your friends?

1

2 [1:26 p.m.]

3 The Witness. Just hung out. Talking about what it was like to be in D.C.

4

BY [REDACTED]

5

Q And then after -- for how long did you hang out?

6

A Um, the majority of the day.

7

Q Okay. When you first met, do you recall where you were?

8

A I -- honestly, I don't.

9

Q Was it outside or was it, like, at --

10

A It was outside.

11

Q Okay. You just happened to run into them?

12

A Yeah.

13

Q Okay. Was it at an event or just on the street?

14

A It was out on the street.

15

Q Okay. After you met -- you said you hung out all day. But I just want to

16

get more specific about kind of how the events unfolded. So you met up with your

17

friends. What's the next thing you remember happening, either going to a place or

18

meeting other people?

19

A I think I remember hearing some people were going to the Ellipse. Um, I

20

think they said it was around 10-ish. So we decided to -- to head up there, just to see

21

what was going on, seeing what was going around. Then from there, we walked behind

22

a big old group for a little while and --

23

Mr. Hull. You answered his question. Let him -- let him ask you the questions

24

and take you through this. You asked -- you answered his question nicely. Let him ask.

25

He'll take you through it.

1 The Witness. Okay.

2 BY [REDACTED]

3 Q So you said you heard about the rally at the Ellipse. Did you go to the
4 Ellipse?

5 A I don't know if I made it all the way to the Ellipse. I know I made it close.

6 Q Okay. At any point did you meet more Proud Boys?

7 A I saw some, but I didn't -- I didn't really go up and hang out with them.

8 Q Okay. Are you aware -- was there a group of Proud Boys at the Washington
9 Monument?

10 A There may have been. Like I said, I was with a lot of people there.

11 Q Did you find yourself -- did you -- did you talk to any Proud Boys anywhere
12 near the Washington Monument?

13 A Just the friends I was hanging out with.

14 Q Okay. Did they join a group of Proud Boys at the Washington Monument?

15 A No.

16 Q Okay. How large was the group of friends that you were with?

17 A There was three or four of us.

18 Q Okay. And then you said -- you described that you walked behind a group
19 at some point. Is that right?

20 A Yeah. I'm assuming it was Proud Boys.

21 Q Okay. Why do you assume it was Proud Boys?

22 A Big guys, big group.

23 Q Did you see people that you recognized?

24 A I think I saw maybe Joe Biggs, maybe a few others that I might have
25 recognized.

1 Q Okay. How large was the group?

2 A I don't know. It was -- it was a big group.

3 Q Was it more than 50?

4 A I honestly don't know.

5 Q Okay.

6 A I was at the -- I was at the back -- I was at the back of them, so I don't
7 know -- really know.

8 Q Okay. And where was Biggs when you saw him?

9 A In the crowd.

10 Q Okay. Was he leading -- was he leading that group?

11 A Not that I could tell.

12 Q Okay. Was there anybody that you could see leading the group?

13 A Not that I could tell.

14 Q Okay. So we talked about a couple different Telegram chats. One was
15 the one that you had seen mentioned of MOSD on. And you had also mentioned, or
16 recalled, a Boots on the Ground chat. Is that right? Do you remember that chat?

17 A Yes.

18 Q Okay. Now that we've been talking about the 6th a little bit, do you
19 remember anything from that chat or when you checked the Boots on the Ground chat?

20 A Not that sticks out, no.

21 Q Do you remember ever looking at the Telegram on the 6th?

22 A I believe I did. Yeah.

23 Q And what do you remember about what you saw?

24 A Nothing that sticks out. Just a lot of alerts going off and seeing that it was
25 just a bunch of mess. And I logged off of it.

1 Q Okay. And what was -- what was the mess?

2 A There was a lot of different alerts. I didn't really investigate what the alerts
3 were. It just seemed irritating.

4 Q When do you -- do you get an alert for every message?

5 A I think so. Yeah every -- every -- or yeah, there's an alert that pops on your
6 phone.

7 Q Okay.

8 A If you're logged off of it, I don't believe it -- it gives you an alert.

9 Q Okay. So you were logged on to Telegram and receiving alerts?

10 A Correct.

11 Q Okay. And -- and even though you were logged on and receiving alerts,
12 did -- are you saying you didn't read the chats or you just don't recall the chats?

13 A I may have checked one or two of the alerts, but I really didn't read into the
14 chat.

15 Q Okay. And when you checked those alerts, what did you see?

16 A When it comes up to your phone, there is normally an icon for a Telegram
17 alert, and it shows you a number of alerts. I -- I opened one of the alerts just to see
18 what it was about. I didn't really pay much of attention, but enough to open it up to
19 clear it off my phone.

20 Q Okay. Did you read what the chat was that you were -- or the message was
21 that you were receiving alert about?

22 A I might have skimmed, but I don't really remember.

23 Q Okay.

24 A I was just checking to see if somebody had tagged me in something.

25 Q Okay. You said you don't really remember. Do you recall anything about

1 what you read?

2 A I don't.

3 Q Okay. I'm going to ask you a couple specific things, and tell me if it
4 refreshes your recollection or if you remember reading anything about these things on
5 the chat, okay?

6 Do you remember any mentions of the Washington Monument?

7 A I don't recall.

8 Q Okay. Do you remember any mentions of anything related to marching or
9 how you should march?

10 A I don't recall.

11 Q Do you remember any mentions of the Capitol?

12 A I don't.

13 Q Okay. Do -- was there anybody that -- that was on the chat -- well, let me
14 ask this: Of what you read, did it seem like the people on the chat were in D.C. there
15 with you or were there some people, like, asking questions about what was going on, or
16 that appeared to not be in D.C.?

17 A I don't recall.

18 Q Okay. I guess what I'm trying to get is just a sense of the -- and let's talk
19 about the MOSD chat specifically. Was that for people that were in D.C. so that they
20 could, you know, figure out where each other were, or was it a chat for information -- to
21 give people information about what was happening in D.C. for people who were not
22 actually there?

23 A I looked at it as any other chat. So I mean, I -- mean I looked at it as
24 much as probably other chats that I really wasn't paying attention to.

25 Q Okay. You mentioned that you were walking around with your buddies

1 that you -- that you met up with and just talking about the experience of being in D.C.
2 What -- what was that conversation like? What were they saying the experience was
3 like?

4 A Just the history of it all. They'd never been to D.C. either or -- I don't know
5 if they -- no. I think one of them made -- I made a joke because I said one of them -- I
6 think one of them mentioned this was the first time they had been in D.C. and I
7 mentioned one of the previous events, which we all laughed about, long trip up, just
8 small talk.

9 Q Okay. And I know -- I know I asked this, but now I'm not recalling. Did
10 you say that you had a radio?

11 A No, I didn't.

12 Q You didn't. Okay. Were any of that group that you were with, people are
13 from your chapter, did any of them have a radio?

14 A No.

15 Q Did they all drive up just like for -- for the day as well, or had they stayed
16 overnight previously?

17 A They drove up, but they didn't know if they were going to spend the night or
18 not.

19 Q Okay. Did they arrive around at the same time you did?

20 A I think they were a little behind me.

21 Q How big is the -- the geographic region that your chapter covers? I know
22 you said it's the Charlotte chapter. Are there any other major cities that are in kind of
23 your geographic region?

24 A I wouldn't -- no, not major cities.

25 Q Okay. Where do the other big cities -- or what are the other cities that are

1 in your region?

2 A Huntersville, I guess Concord would be another one, Albemarle.

3 Q Do you know an individual named Aaron Whallon Wolkind?

4 A Doesn't ring a bell.

5 Q Do you know an individual named Thad Cisneros, or maybe Tad Cisneros?

6 A I do not.

7 Q One other thing -- another thing I wanted to ask you about the MOSD chats
8 or the chat where you remember MOSD getting mentioned, I can -- I can direct you to the
9 part
10 of the indictment where this is discussed, but I think it will be easier to just generally
11 summarize that there was an MOSD chat, and at one point, the first one was deleted, and
12 another one was created. Do you ever remember deleting -- having an MOSD chat
13 being deleted or being told to delete the MOSD chat?

14 A I do remember it disappearing.

15 Q Okay. And when -- when did it disappear?

16 A That I'm not sure of.

17 Q Okay. Was it before or after the 6th?

18 A I don't recall.

19 Q Okay. Do you recall Mr. Tarrío being arrested before the 6th?

20 A I heard reports of that. Yes.

21 Q Okay. Who did you hear about that from?

22 A I forget which news organization it was.

23 Q Okay. But it wasn't from other Proud Boys?

24 A Correct.

25 Q Do you ever remember having a conversation with any Proud Boys leading

1 up to the 6th or on the 6th about Mr. Tarrío's arrest?

2 A I -- I can.

3 Q And what -- what was that conversation?

4 A Just asking -- you know, us asking what we thought it was about, that sort of
5 thing.

6 Q Okay. You said you remembered the MOSD chat that you were on being
7 deleted. Do you remember if another chat related to the MOSD chat was created after
8 the first one was deleted?

9 A There could have been, but I don't know. I don't recall.

10 Q Were you -- do you remember being added to another chat that mentioned
11 MOSD?

12 A Went I went back and tried up to look up Telegram, it showed it was a
13 second one, but I don't remember being added to it.

14 Q Okay. And when did you go back to look that up?

15 A Um, when I received word of the subpoena.

16 Q Okay. And when you looked and you could see that there was another
17 chat, how could you -- how did you tell that there was another chat?

18 A Looked at it -- I tried to see if I could archive anything from Telegram and
19 through the web -- web version. It showed there were more than one. But I couldn't
20 tell what was in them.

21 Q Were you able -- explain that to me a little bit. Why could you not tell what
22 was in them?

23 A There is an archive process within -- or, I mean, an export process from
24 within Telegram. I tried a couple different times and it failed both times.

25 Q Okay. Could you have clicked into the chat?

1 A I tried, but I -- but it wouldn't show me anything.

2 Q Were you -- will Telegram still show you that those chats exist, like today, if
3 you tried to?

4 A I -- I assume. I don't know.

5 Q Okay. I'm just confused a little bit based on my limited knowledge of how
6 Telegram works. Why -- why were you not able to access that chat, even though it was
7 appearing in your Telegram app?

8 A It -- it looked -- I mean, on my phone it wasn't there. That's why I was a
9 little surprised that it was still there when I opened it up on my desktop.

10 Q Okay. So it still exists on your desktop, but just not on your phone?

11 A Well, I was going by the web version through a desktop.

12 Q Right. So that's what I mean. It exists -- you can access your account on
13 your desktop through the web version and see the chat, but it's just not on your phone.

14 A Correct.

15 Q Okay. Can you still click into the chat and read what it said?

16 A I would have to go in and see. I think the last time I tried it -- I don't know if
17 it was just slows the load or what, but it -- nothing came up.

18 Q Okay. When was the last time you tried?

19 A Last week.

20 Q Okay. And what, was there some sort of error message that you received?
21 Or just tell me, walk me through the process of when you accessed the app, what did you
22 see, what did you try to do?

23 A I looked up instructions on how to export a chat, which apparently if there's
24 three dots in a particular chat that you can initiate and export of said chat. I was -- the
25 message came up, said I would have to wait 24 hours and check back, and the export

1 would be done. When I checked back, there was no exports there.

2 Q Okay. Understood. Instead of exporting the chat, do you think you'd be
3 able to just click on the chat, and open it up, and be able to see the messages?

4 A I would have to go back and try.

5 Q Okay. Then, you know, I just want to make sure that the record is clear
6 that you still have the chats available to you through the web portal at Telegram. You
7 tried to export them. I understand that didn't work. But I just want to make sure that
8 you preserve those chats. Don't do anything to delete those now. If what we need to
9 do to see those chats is just take pictures of them or something, that's fine. But those
10 would be responsive to the subpoena that we sent you.

11 And, so, we're going ask Mr. Hull, can you help him collect those chats and
12 produce those?

13 Mr. Hull. Absolutely. And just to make the record a little bit more clear, the
14 reason he was trying to get at those chats and export them and had no success with them
15 in the course of doing that was in response to your subpoena and document request.
16 That's why he was doing it last week.

17 [REDACTED] Right.

18 Mr. Hull. I mean, that was the notion. I think you and I might have talked
19 about that, maybe we didn't. But he -- he -- he really -- he really did try. And he
20 doesn't seem to be very document-laden person, but he tried to get those chats. And
21 he -- he -- and he said a couple times to me that the 24-hour notice thing didn't -- didn't
22 really pay off. He didn't get them when he thought he would. But no, he's done
23 nothing to delete or tamper with any of the, you know, platforms or content of those
24 platforms that he has. But most what he's been talking about in the last 5, 10 minutes
25 it's been trying to get stuff that was responsive to the document-request part of your

1 subpoena to him.

2 [REDACTED] Okay. And also just to clarify for the record, you have not told me
3 that he had access to those chats and that is new information. And so, I appreciate,
4 Mr. Thaxton, you telling us that.

5 Mr. Hull. I -- I think we did talk about the fact that he -- I was trying to get
6 documents out of him and he just -- he didn't seem to have a lot. So you may be
7 correct. But we -- he and I worked on this starting about 10 days ago.

8 [REDACTED] Okay.

9

BY [REDACTED]

10 Q Well, Mr. Thaxton, I just want to let you know and just the -- we are
11 interested in -- in getting those chats in whatever form you're able to produce them.
12 Whether or not the export works, if you're just going to have to pull them up and take
13 screenshots of the chats, we'd like to see those.

14 And then, I just want to make it especially clear for the record that they currently
15 exist and that you should maintain those chats. And doing anything to prevent -- or to
16 delete or alter those documents at this point, given that we've told you our interest in
17 them, would be a crime.

18 Mr. Hull. He's -- he's understood that from the very beginning. I don't think
19 you have to tell him that.

20 [REDACTED] Okay. I just want to make it clear.

21 Mr. Hull. And he talked about -- well, I want to make it clear that that's not what
22 he does, and that's not what he's like. He tried to get these documents. He went
23 beyond actually what I asked him to do in trying to get content from, you know, platforms
24 he wasn't on anymore or active in. And part of that was Telegram chats that he tried to
25 get this stuff. He -- he and I talked about it a number of times in trying to get exported

1 to him within 24 hours and he wasn't able to do it. And I finally said, just you know,
2 That's fine. You've done enough. But he knows -- he knows not to tamper, destroys,
3 or delete anything. All he's trying to do is have a few documents to respond to the -- to
4 the request you made in the subpoena. And that was it.

5 [REDACTED] Okay.

6

BY [REDACTED]

7 Q And then I just want to be clear about specifically, Mr. Thaxton, when you
8 went back and looked, how many -- did you see the Boots on the Ground chat?

9 A I believe I did.

10 Q Okay. And then you said you also saw two MOSD-related chats?

11 A I believe so. Yes.

12 Q Okay. So just for the record, there are three chats.

13 Were there any other chats that you saw?

14 A Not that I can recall right now.

15 Q Great. Okay. And I think we can move on. And Mr. Hull and I and you
16 can coordinate on how to get us those chats after -- after this deposition.

17 So I did want to ask you about another specific part of the indictment, if you can
18 pull back up the indictment. And if we can pull up exhibit 7 and go to paragraph 41.

19 Mr. Hull. Of the indictment? I'm sorry.

20 [REDACTED] Of the indictment. Yes. It's exhibit 7, page 12 of the indictment,
21 paragraph 41.

22 Mr. Hull. I need to get a charging cable for my tablet.

23 [REDACTED] Sure. Why don't we -- why don't we go and recess until 1:55.

24 Mr. Hull. Fair enough.

25 [REDACTED] Then we are in recess now at 1:48.

1 [Recess.]

2 [REDACTED] Okay. Well, let's go back on the record. Let's go back on the
3 record.

4 Mr. Hull. No, no. You really -- you really turned out to be a piece of shit, [REDACTED]

5 [REDACTED] Can I just get --

6 Mr. Hull. Go back on the record.

7 [REDACTED] Can I just get a confirmation that we're on the record?

8 The Reporter. Yes.

9 [REDACTED] Okay. Great. Thank you. And let's also wait for the witness to
10 come.

11 Mr. Hull. He'll be back. He worked pretty hard on this.

12 [REDACTED] I think you had something that you wanted to put on the record,

13 Mr. Hull.

14 Mr. Hull. I do, when he gets back on.

15 The Witness. I'm back.

16 Mr. Hull. Okay. Can we see you?

17 The Witness. You should be able to.

18 Mr. Hull. Yeah. I -- I just would like to say on the record in connection with the
19 discussion that we had about -- the -- the way I heard the question was there was
20 colloquy that sort of insinuated, I think, between Mr. [REDACTED] and my client that he needed
21 to preserve documents, not delete them, not tampering, that would be a crime. When
22 in fact, contrary to what he had said to me after I brought it up, although we may not
23 have discussed it verbally or orally on the phone, I gave to [REDACTED] an email dated March 1st,
24 10 days ago, on the same day. It was a copy of an email that I got from Mr. Thaxton on
25 the very same day, talking about what he had done to go through, in particular, on

1 Telegram, to export this stuff back to him, to do this 24-hour thing. He also talked to me
2 about it. There's a little bit of gloss here in terms of what he said to me. And I would
3 be glad to do an affidavit in that respect. But he looked diligently for documents. And
4 off all these platforms.

5 He also has a note on March 1st email that I would like to put in the record, along
6 with anything that came before it or after it that he started deleting sort of get
7 more -- some of these platforms so he would have more room, memory, space on these
8 platforms, you know, and on the devices that he uses. He's not a device-heavy guy. I
9 guess he has a phone, a relatively new tablet. But your suggestion that -- that he wasn't
10 forthcoming with the documents when I had already sent you an email showing how hard
11 he'd looked to get them for you. And -- and you and I have even talked a little bit on the
12 phone that he didn't have a lot, but we were trying.

13 Well, he has a record of this that he made that I gave to you. And I -- and I
14 think -- you know, it would be nice if you apologized to him about the fact that you
15 insinuated that -- that he wasn't forthcoming, and that it would be a crime for him in the
16 future to delete records or things that you guys have asked for in your subpoena. Your
17 subpoena came, you know, pretty quickly. We jumped on it as soon as we could. I
18 didn't have a lot. I told you I -- I wish he'd had more documents to give you. But we
19 didn't delete anything. And we did try to export to Mr. Thaxton. He did try to get
20 these things. He's not maybe as technically proficient as some of the other people are
21 here, probably more than I. I think you owe him an apology, and I'd like to hear that.

22 I'd also like to see you put this in the record that there's an email chain that's on
23 or about March 1st where he makes very clear, he does an accounting of what he's tried
24 to do to respond to your document request. He worked on this really, really hard.
25 He -- he wished he had had more to come up with, but for technological reasons, you

1 know, he just didn't get it. But he wouldn't destroy anything. And for you to suggest
2 that he did, really kind of -- it was a really no-class thing to do. So once you apologize to
3 him, we can get on with this.

4 [REDACTED] Can we just have Mr. Thaxton turn his camera on?

5 The Witness. It should be on.

6 [REDACTED]. Okay. Great. Thanks, Mr. Thaxton.

7 I'll just state for the record that obviously we disagree, and I disagree with your
8 characterization of the events.

9 I will make clear for the record, Mr. Thaxton, I did not mean to insinuate that you
10 have deleted or were trying to delete any documents. I just wanted to make sure you
11 understood the importance of maintaining those documents. And I didn't want you to
12 get yourself into a situation where you didn't understand the importance of that.

13 So what I think we would like to do at this point, because those records are
14 relevant to the questions I'm asking you -- and, you know, I understand that when you
15 look back, or sitting here today, you don't recall those messages. But since they exist,
16 they'd be helpful in our conversation.

17 So what we're going to do and not this second, but in a minute we're going to go
18 into recess. And we will -- we may call you back at some later time to complete the
19 deposition. But for now, what we're going to do is use the time to let you access those
20 chats. And if you need to take screenshots of them, like, control P, print them, or you
21 can even take screenshots of them with your phone. Any way that you can, we'd like to
22 receive those chats. And we'll do that quickly so that then, you know, I don't want to
23 keep you in this deposition longer than we need to.

24 Mr. Hull. Well, let me ask you -- sorry to butt in.

25 Mr. Thaxton, can you do any more than you've already done to try to produce

1 these chats on your -- on your Telegram account starting with that? On March 1st, you
2 give me a relative -- relatively lengthy and detailed email that showed some labor in
3 trying to get a lot of these things responsive. Actually going beyond what was asked for
4 just so that everybody would understand that you were making a good-faith effort to do
5 the document production. Can you do anything more than you've already done
6 technically?

7 The Witness. Not that I know of.

8 Mr. Hull. Okay.

9 [REDACTED] Are you --

10 Mr. Hull. Then I'll put that -- then I'll put that -- then [REDACTED] can work on that with
11 me since you're not a technical -- a technological expert, at least not on --

12 [REDACTED] I just want to ask -- let me ask a couple more specific questions.

13 Mr. Hull. No. I'm not -- I'm not finished. I'm not -- I'm not finished. We're
14 about ready to go anyway. This is -- this has gotten a little out of hand, and maybe it's
15 because he got tired and didn't answer the questions right away, or I didn't object when I
16 should have objected.

17 [REDACTED] Mr. Hull --

18 Mr. Hull. What you -- what you suggested --

19 [REDACTED] On the record.

20 Mr. Hull. -- about him?

21 [REDACTED] On the record --

22 Mr. Hull. -- shame on you.

23 [REDACTED] On the record, Mr. Thaxton stated that he thought he could click into
24 the chats and still read them.

25 Is that true, Mr. Thaxton? If you went on to the web application and clicked on

1 to one of the specific chats, would you -- would you be able to read them?

2 The Witness. I haven't clicked in any of them. I just tried to export them.

3 [REDACTED] Okay. Could we do that? Could we do that now? Can we try
4 to --

5 Mr. Hull. What you -- no. I think what you said was that he could take
6 screenshots of this. That's fine. He didn't say that that was possible to do.

7 [REDACTED] Well, I just asked him if he thinks he would be able to click into the
8 chat to view them.

9 Mr. Hull. Do you think you can get them all that way, Jay? Really?

10 The Witness. I don't know.

11 Mr. Hull. I mean, I -- I think it's been -- it's pretty clear here that -- that he tried
12 to get what he could get. I know for a fact that he would have probably taken
13 screenshots if there'd been anything to do, but he's trying to export all of it. I gave you
14 a record of it. And yeah, we can put this in recess, but we are out of here.

15 Bye.

16 [REDACTED] Mr. Hull? Mr. Hull?

17 Mr. Hull. What? Go away.

18 [REDACTED] We are not in recess.

19 Mr. Hull. Go learn -- go learn something. You just recessed us. Come on.

20 [REDACTED] Mr. Hull.

21 Mr. Hull. Yeah.

22 [REDACTED] He just said that he hasn't tried to click into the chats. We're not in
23 recess.

24 Mr. Hull. No, no, no, no, no, no.

25 [REDACTED] We are on the record.

1 Mr. Hull. No, no, no, no. No. I said, he can --

2 ██████████ Let Mr. --

3 Mr. Hull. I said, he can -- he has produced to you -- he's produced to you enough
4 to give you an idea that he's preserved the records and he doesn't know how to get them,
5 or make screenshots, or do anything with them. That's really obvious.

6 ██████████ It's not, Mr. Hull.

7 Mr. -- let me ask Mr. Thaxton this question, have you tried to click into the chats
8 to view them?

9 The Witness. I have not.

10 ██████████ Okay. Then I would like you to try to do that. And then we can
11 determine right now for the record whether or not you're able to access and view the
12 chats. Is that going to be okay with you, Mr. Thaxton?

13 Mr. Hull. No. And we're not -- it's not okay with me. We're going to do
14 that -- we're going to go going to go back and look at this. We are going to get some
15 help if we need it. We will spend some money doing it and getting it the right way.
16 But we've already given you kind of a roadmap to where these things are in the March 1st
17 email that you should make a part of the record. And I'm asking right now that you do
18 that. But I -- I don't think it's appropriate to go on anymore and try to get things from
19 him he's already tried to get. I think that if he'd been able to, like, get all of his Telegram
20 chats over the last 3 or 4 years -- and he wasn't trying just to get response approach, he
21 was just trying to locate them all. So that takes some sorting. And, you know, a
22 little -- a little bit of nuance here and there. And we will do that, but I don't think we
23 need to do that now.

24 So why don't we recess and come back after I've finished that process with him?
25 I would be glad to do that with him.

1 [REDACTED] We're not going into recess quite yet.

2 Mr. Hull. Well, then, it's on me.

3 Jay, take off. You're done. I'm done too. Bye.

4 [REDACTED] Mr. Thaxton --

5 Mr. Hull. Mr. Thaxton --

6 [REDACTED] -- please do not leave the call. And Mr. Hull, you're not able to call
7 this into recess.

8 Mr. Hull. I just did.

9 [REDACTED] We're still on the record. I note for the record that Mr. Hull has
10 directed his client, Mr. Thaxton, to leave the Webex.

11 Mr. Hull, are you still on the line?

12 Mr. Hull. [No response.]

13 [REDACTED] I'll just note for the record that Mr. Hull appears to still be on the
14 Webex. And based on what we can see from the Webex he's able to hear me and is not
15 responding.

16 We'll -- let's go into recess right now. Let's just hang out for a few minutes.

17 We'll go into recess and we'll see if Mr. Hull comes back.

18 [Recess.]

1

2 [2:38 p.m.]

3 [REDACTED] We'll go back on the record for a second. I'll just finish up and just
4 note what's happened since then.

5 Okay. So we're back on the record at 2:38, and I'll just note that Mr. Hull left the
6 deposition and directed his client, Mr. Thaxton, to also leave the deposition.

7 I have tried to call Mr. Hull three times at this point. He's not responded. He
8 responded to my email asking for him to call me to let me know that he has other
9 obligations right now, and I've reached out to try to contact him again.

10 And we will go into recess now.

11 [Whereupon, at 2:38 p.m., the deposition was recessed, subject to the call of the
12 Chair.]

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Certificate of Deponent/Interviewee

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

Witness Name

Date